

For Further Social Development, Peaceful, Safe and Useful for People

O dalszy rozwój społeczny pokojowy, bezpieczny i korzystny dla ludzi

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Abstract

In the 21st century, social progress based on the idea of the earlier Enlightenment (productivity, rationalism and respect for private good) brought humanity to the brink of the abyss. Its further continuation threatens to destroy humanity, and maybe even our planet. This warning is included in the first and second report of the Club of Rome. Therefore, the authors of the second report from 2017, Ernst Ulrich v. Weizsäcker and Anders Wijkman, recommend creating a New Enlightenment. This is a challenge for the present generation – the last one that can and should do this to protect humankind from cataclysm. Above all, one has to stop the irresponsible and harmful social progress, which crosses the limits of growth. However, not everyone agrees with this. Some people (e.g. S. Pinker) claim that one does not need a new Enlightenment. On the contrary, one needs to continue the development of the ideas of early Enlightenment and to guide yet more by reason and science to ensure an increase in productivity and prosperity. In addition, the problems of the modern world are not as great as it is presented in the reports of the Club of Rome. One can solve them using reason and science. Therefore, instead of weakening the role of reason, one should strengthen it by eliminating elements of irrationality from people's thinking and behavior. In addition, all negative effects of the Enlightenment are finally useful. So, there are two opposing concepts to get out of the impasse. One is utopian and the other is excessively realistic. As usual, extreme ideas are not the best. Therefore, one must seek for a way out between them and find some golden mean.

Key words: social development, civilization, existential threats, New Enlightenment, New Ethics, transformation of consciousness

Streszczenie

W 21. wieku postęp społeczny realizowany na podstawie idei dawnego Oświecenia (produktywności, racjonalizmu i poszanowania dobra prywatnego) przywiódł ludzkość na skraj przepaści. Dalsza jego kontynuacja grozi zagładą ludzkości, a może nawet naszej planety. To ostrzeżenie zawarte jest w pierwszym i drugim raporcie Klubu Rzymskiego. W związku z tym autorzy drugiego raportu z 2017 r. – Ernst U. v. Weizsäcker i Anders Wijkman - zalecają stworzenie Nowego Oświecenia. Jest to wyzwanie dla teraźniejszego pokolenia - ostatniego, które może i powinno tego dokonać, by uchronić ludzkość od zagłady. Jednak nie wszyscy zgadzają się z tym. Niektórzy (np. S. Pinker) twierdzą, że nie potrzeba nowego Oświecenia. Trzeba nadal rozwijać idee dawnego i jeszcze bardziej kierować się rozumem, produktywnością.

Słowa kluczowe: rozwój społeczny, cywilizacja, zagrożenia egzystencjalne, nowe Oświecenie, nowa etyka, transformacja świadomości

*Wir verfügen über genügend Wissen,
die erforderlichen Veränderungen für den Erhalt
der Welt zu schaffen¹*
Ernst Ulrich v. Weizsäcker

1. Social development and civilization progress

The best definition of development in the broad sense is such, which is as if a common denominator or a synthesis of many definitions that one can find in literature: *Development is a sequence of such irreversible and directed changes taking place in the structure of an object, which can lead to the change of its identity* (Sztumski, 1988). During development, the structure of an object may simplify or complicate. In special cases, when the changes exceed the boundaries of the object's identity, the development leads to its disintegration. Development can be progressive or regressive depending on whether it realizes by means of repetitions or of novelties. When one evaluates positively a progressive development because of some criterion, then one talks about a progress. In other words, progress is such development, which for some reason benefits people or when people evaluate it well. Social development being a particular form of development in the general sense is defined as a *directed social process, as a result of which there is a continuous growth of certain variables, important for a given society or community* (Sztompka, 2005). In popular awareness, social development one usually connect with progress, with a better possibility of achieving goals, using more and more energy and better technology, rising achievements in science, higher productivity, quality, creativity and happiness. Therefore, one believes that social development aims at improving the standard of living and the growing happiness of people. In the meantime, progressive social development does not have to be beneficial to humanity, but at most for certain groups. This is evidenced by the fact that the current social development, in principle, spontaneous, caused more and more troubles and contradictions until it brought today humankind about the edge of a precipice. This was mainly because of its intensity and pace, which have been growing steadily for the past five hundred years, and the most in the last five decades, in proportion to the technological progress and the spread of monochronic culture. Social development realizes in many domains of social life, such as knowledge, technology, trade, services, communication, transport, politics, art, entertainment, etc. independently of each other. Therefore, if one talks about social development, then one means about the development of all his domains in all aspects, not only of the chosen ones. However, one speaks often intentionally about the develop-

ment of the whole society, when in fact it develops only in one or several areas.

The measure of social development is the progress of civilization. Civilization means the state of society at every stage of its development. In other words, social development is a process, and civilizations are its phases or states. Main components of civilization are culture (especially material), knowledge (especially scientific), technology and economy. Generally, the measurers of civilization are material and cultural goods, predominance of rational thinking and the sum of skills and achievements in the fields of technology, knowledge (scientific), culture, architecture (urban planning), customs, organization of society, etc. Civilization is a system, and its structure consists of the mentioned components and relations (interactions) between them. The systemic approach requires holistically and comprehensively to perceive civilization, to study and evaluate it. The evaluation of civilization is relative depending on which of its components one takes into account. Generally, not all of its elements develop equally. Therefore, a given society can be more civilized due to one of its components and at the same time less civilized due to the other. Evenly or – using fashionable word – sustainable development of civilization happens very rarely and lasts for a short time. Most people see in the advancement of civilization something lofty and the source of benefits, something what brings society closer to perfection, universal well-being and happiness. Therefore, one believes that subsequent levels of civilization bring humanity closer to perfection, universal well-being and happiness. For that reason, people want to be more and more civilized. Pejoratively, one calls a *barbarian* a person who has not crossed the frame of earlier civilizations. One ignores the fact that civilization develops on a spiral and allows for repetitions at an increasingly higher level. Therefore, contemporary civilization, especially Western, makes people barbarians again. It is so, because the development of consciousness, spiritual culture and personality does not keep up with the development of technology, science, economics, trade, material culture, management methods, social organizations, etc. The stigma of the past eras – especially the elements of savagery, cruelty, and irrationality – still prevails in the consciousness of the masses, and the level of spiritual (non-material) culture is still lower than of the material culture. These are the basic contradictions of social and civilization progress, which are intensifying, bringing humanity astray and leading social evolution to a dead end. That is why the American essayist, poet and philosopher, Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) rightly believed that *Humanity will eventually die from civilization*. Our times fully con-

¹We have enough knowledge to make the necessary changes for the preservation of the world (Weizsäcker, 2017).

firm the validity of his prophecy. Contemporary civilization, developed primarily based on modern technologies (nanotechnology) and artificial intelligence, especially for military purposes, which is subordinated to the ideology of unbridled consumption and the dominance of economics over ecology, poses a serious threat further existence of humanity and the earth. Mass media increasingly shock us and scare with information about the rapidly approaching destruction and about various astronomical and social phenomena that confirm apocalyptic visions. There are more and more reports about the fulfillment of biblical, Fatima, Nostradamus and other predictions about the end of the world in several dozen years because of the flood, climate warming (from heat and drought), nuclear or bacteriological war and asteroid collision. At now, biggest threats to humankind are weapons of mass destruction, extreme weather events, natural disasters, failure of climate change mitigation and adaptation, and water crisis. (Gray, 2019) Recently, the Parliament, the Commission and the European Council announced the report of the European Strategic and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS) on global trends up to 2030, *Challenges and choices for Europe*. It states that in the next 10 years, global warming will bring great economic and environmental damage, and then – in this century – it will lead to extinction of the human race. Earlier, cities where by 2030, two-thirds of humanity will be living, will be transformed into *Sin Cities* completely poisoned, polluted and controlled by crime and violence. (Broniatowski, 2019). Should we then disregard on the ground of unjustified optimism, that if they have not been fulfilled so far, that they will not come true in the future? Possibly, not to the end, because these threats grow and accumulate proportionally to the progress of civilization and at some point they can reach a critical state and exceed it. Some political, scientific and religious leaders, among others Pope Francis as well as ecologists and people of art are aware of this. Many of them see a way out in the liberation from the chains of consumerism and in the resignation from the pursuit of profit. They claim that this would be possible thanks to the modernization of idea of Enlightenment and ethics.

2. The ideas of New Enlightenment and New Ethics

Professor Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker (physicist, biologist, politician, former President of the Club of Rome, member of the Bundestag and Dean at the California Environmental College in Santa Barbara)

²Ibidem

³ The first report was presented in the book D. & D. Meadows and J. W. Forester, *Limits to Growth* (1972). The scientists' prognosis has shocked citizens, politicians and industrialists who learned that excessive industrialization, exploitation of natural resources, destruction of habitats, soil depletion and population growth would lead to suicide

said that utilitarian economics and analytical philosophy are no longer able to meet the challenges of tomorrow's world². Although today, fifty years after the establishment of the Club of Rome, we live more ecologically, economically and socially, still the governments of many countries, economic entities and ordinary citizens ignore its resolutions and recommendations of ecologists. In addition, development, focused on overproduction and overconsumption of material goods, which bring more and more profits, is achieved at the cost of the rapidly progressing exploitation of natural economic resources and human capital, environmental devastation and growing social contradictions. The threat of real, inevitably and rapidly approaching destruction of the human species because of uncontrolled, carefree, irresponsible and unbalanced economic growth, fueled by spiral of growing overproduction and overconsumption, did not yet reach the consciousness of many people. One states in the second report of the Club of Rome³ that the new generation is probably the last one that can prevent a collapse. However, it has to realize that now it is its turn to act and that it must take matters into its own hands without looking at others. E. U. Weizsäcker proposes that – until it is still too late – to begin the *New Enlightenment*, thanks to which the durable balance of all social forces will become the common goal of all humanity (Weizsäcker, Wijkman, 2017). He sees in this the best alternative to save humanity and our planet.

People are aware of the threats caused by climate change (warming), overpopulation, biodiversity destruction, oceans pollution, atmospheric poisoning and soil degradation. However, there is a big threat that is hardly talked about. This is the threat to global peace that has been growing since the end of the Cold War, but most of all in the last few years. The risk of World War III has never been as high as it is today, when it is increasingly difficult to rule in nuclear weapon-holding superpowers. Especially, when ignorant, stupid and unpredictable persons rule. Unfortunately, the leaders of industrialized countries are losing their logical ability and wisdom more and more. *National leaders of developed countries behave like children confusing longings, false premises and pious wishes with reality* (Nowacki, 1983).

E. U. Weizsäcker points to two causes for the threat of world peace now. The first is the exercise of power by the elite of world financiers, which much more decide on the fate of the world than state governments. For them, humanitarian reasons in general, and ecological ones in particular, are not im-

of humanity if one were not stopped them in time. The authors called for political factors to establish a stable world system by using more efficient technology, protecting the environment, recycling raw materials and stopping population growth. The goal was a state of equilibrium that would enable a good material standard of living for people.

portant, but only profit, money and gaining power over state governments. The second cause is the exercise of political power by people who are incompetent, corrupt and guided by bad will (Pawlowska, 2019). Earlier, Ludwig v. Mises (1881-1973) wrote about it: *There is no more dangerous threat to civilization than a government of incompetent, corrupt and evil people*. Then, Robert Delavay wrote: *Authority x stupidity = self-destruction* (Delavay, 2005). According to E. U. Weizsäcker, politicians cannot eliminate these threats. It is possible in result of the transformation of people's awareness thanks to New Enlightenment and New Ethics. On the fundament of the new consciousness, New Policy may appear, i.e. such one that will lead to a global balance between justice and productivity and the pursuit of wealth. Until the Adam Smith' times law and morality limited economics. Unfortunately, from the twentieth century on the contrary – economics decides about law and morality more and more. In the future, the new ethics should restore the domination of morality over economics.

It is not necessary to reject the Old Enlightenment – from Descartes to Kant – to whom humanity owes to many achievements in the spheres of science and technology and the discovery of the most valuable for European culture significance of individualism, private property and non-interference of the state into the private sphere. Today, however, private goods do not require already such protection as public goods that are more at risk. The Old Enlightenment invented in the 17th and 18th centuries encouraged the social progress of the *empty world* when the population was only about one billion and when ecosystems were still largely intact. The New Enlightenment should give solutions to the problems posed by the *full world* with seven times more people. Today, there is a need for a new ethics that would free people from thinking in terms of an unbridled market economy, and replace the habits of short-term thinking with far-reaching thinking. Acting according to the principle of presentism or recentivism *there and now* is a source of greed (of the desire to get rich), wrongly understood globalization and deregulation of financial systems, and therefore of these all what lies at the base of people activities, which damage

our planet and us. It is necessary to create a basis, on which new equilibrium could be built between man and nature, speed and stability, equality and efficiency, individual and common good, by using for example traditions of Asia or Hopi Indians, whose cultures last invariably since several thousands of years. Presently living generations are the last ones, which can make a global reconstruction of agriculture, housing, transport and energy supply for 7.5 billion people in order to avoid irreversible crossing ecological boundaries of the economic growth. The more so because of present scientific and technological achievements as well as financial possibilities are much better for creating an ecologically sustainable world than ever before. However, the thing is, to use knowledge, technique and financial resources to save humankind. It is diligently necessary a truly new starting point for the development of new philosophy and ethics, because of materialistic selfishness has emerged on the base of old philosophy and ethics and become recognize as the most effective motive force of today's world. Unfortunately, it has proved to be a tool of destruction too, that has led to the critical situation. Pope Francis dedicated the encyclical *Laudato Si'* (Pope Francis, 2015) to the deep crisis of ethical values in the present world. Even earlier, in 1968, the Club of Rome called for changing the system of values. Moreover, in 2015, the United Nations adopted the *Agenda 2030* containing 17 goals⁴ for sustainable development and 169 tasks, which in the next fifteen years should stimulate people activities in areas of key importance to humanity and our planet⁵. However, if we do not stop the destructive effects of material growth, in a dozen years the world will look even worse in terms of ecology than now. In the first in history report on the state of humanity, the Club of Rome warned against a catastrophe, if humanity, guided more by economic than by ethical values, would exceed dangerously the material limits of the Earth. Since then, a lot has changed. We have sufficient knowledge to stop current trends of irresponsible development and to reject some philosophical concepts and beliefs that prevent us from making the desired changes for preserving our world and species. It is true that knowledge, technology and finances allow for the

⁴ Sustainable development goals: 1. Eliminate poverty in all its forms, around the world. 2. Eliminate hunger, achieve food security and better nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. 3. Provide all people of all ages with a healthy life and promote well-being. 4. Ensure high quality education for all and promote lifelong learning. 5. Achieve gender equality and empower women and girls. 6. Provide access to water and sanitation to all people through sustainable water management. 7. Provide everyone with access to stable, sustainable and modern energy at an affordable price. 8. Promote stable, balanced and inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all people. 9. Build stable infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and support in-

novation. 10. Reduce inequalities in countries and between countries. 11. Make cities and human settlements safe, stable, sustainable and inclusive. 12. Ensure patterns of sustainable consumption and production. 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its consequences. 14. Protect oceans, seas and marine resources and use them sustainably. 15. Protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainable forest management, fight against desertification, halt and reverse the process of soil degradation and halt the loss of biodiversity. 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies, ensure access to justice for all people and build effective and accountable, inclusive institutions at all levels.

liquidation of many important problems and contradictions that have accumulated because of deliberate, but uncontrolled economic growth. In the new report of the Club of Rome, we find a way out of the deep ecological crisis in the transformation of consciousness (*metanoia*) of the world managers, thanks to such a change of the value system that the spiritual values and not the material values would be the most important ones. But nobody and nothing will force them to do so, except their own environmental conscience that they do not have. Only the ecological conscience, on the power of the moral imperative, would dictate them to give up, at least partially, the multiplication of profit and money in their bank accounts for the sake of the environment, future generations, the common good, and our planet. Such *metanoia* encounters serious resistance from the power elites and their consciousness. Thus, the faith of the authors of this report in the implementation of their recommendations is founded on an unrealistic assumption. Believing in the good will of new generations in engaging them in the implementation of the New Enlightenment is also illusory. For now, young people do not show great interest in that. Only here and there, students organize demonstrations for environmental protection. They have too many ongoing troubles and matters that do not allow them to cross the horizon of the present and care for the future of humanity and the world. They are too much rooted into old value systems and ways of thinking. In addition, their main goal is to survive *here and now* as best as possible, according to the principle *to have is more important than to be*. It is also illusory to cut oneself off by a thick line from the philosophical and cultural tradition and habits, stereotypes and ways of thinking encoded and inherited since centuries. The postulate of changing the system of ethical values requires an explanation, what a value system should be appropriate for the new enlightenment. Based on the authors' reference to the *green encyclical* of Pope Francis *Laudato Si'* one can guess that it would be a system resulting from Christian ethics. In this encyclical, as in the earlier ones on environmental protection – *Pace in Terris* (1963) and *Redemptory hominids* (1979) – one claims that the universal recognition of Christian values in directing with them in the relationship man-environment would be the last resort. It is difficult to deny that many Christian values, like in other religions, are of universal and supra-historical character. However, the problem is that there are less Christians as followers of other churches together, and many Christians do not respect the ethical principles of their church. Despite the efforts made over two thousand years, Christians failed to disseminate their ethics to a satisfactory degree. Now, the chances of the Christian church's moral leadership are scarce on a global scale, because the Catholic Church has found itself in a deep moral collapse because of corruption of its

hierarchs through the capitalist system, their greediness of wealth and power, and of the sexual licentiousness. In this encyclical, the Pope confirmed that in the conditions of growing uncertainty of tomorrow, collective egoism and increased greed appear. Everyone wants to buy, own and consume as much as possible. Therefore, it is unlikely that someone would accept the boundaries that nature sets for him, and that he want to be guided by the common good. Pope Francis, however, deludes himself that persons who respect pro-environmental attitudes, behaviors and activities, organized in social movements like consumers, could force the ruling elite to follow them and give up the primacy of economic values. Only sporadic and local consumer movements forced entrepreneurs and managers to change their behavior. This is another optimistic illusion based, for example, on such fictional thinking: if not all people will no longer buy a commodity, this will lead to its price reduction. However, the problem is that people are various and there are always those who can afford it, and they certainly will not participate in such movements. He also errs that humanity will want to return to the level of primitive communities' civilization. There is no longer the time when a stick, bag and faith in salvation would be enough for happiness, as Christ did. The same applies to changes in the moral attitudes of the ruling elites in democratic systems. Theoretically, thanks to the parliamentary and local elections, it is possible to eliminate individuals who are unworthy of holding public functions. However, the practice is quite different. It is not the individual or the sovereign who chooses the authorities, but only one or other authority elects itself with the help of individuals. The more complex a political system is, the lesser role play individuals, increasingly greater role play the croupiers of the world's history (financial elite), who shape the history according to their own discretion and interests. (Sztumski, 2011a) Thus, the concept of Francis resembles a castle built on ice; it is beautiful, but it is built on a fragile and deceptive fundament. The implementation of the ideals of the New Enlightenment and the New Ethics can proceed as a result of the massive awakening of people and the shaping of their ecological awareness and ecological conscience, and thus as a result of educational efforts. However, it is a long-term process, and people must act faster and faster to prevent a catastrophe. Never before has time put so much pressure on human activity as now. In addition, shaping ecological conscience can be effective in appropriate social conditions, which will appear in result of the change of present economic and political system in the global dimension. This could be fastest done thanks to the world revolution. Nevertheless, its preparation - the organization of the masses and the growing of revolutionary consciousness – also requires a long enough time. Therefore, it is difficult to find an opti-

mal, real and effective way out of the state of ecological collapse in which humanity found it.

3. Maybe the New Enlightenment will not be need

A year after the publication of the mentioned E. U. Weizsäcker book of, as if in defiance of the report of experts of the Club of Rome, appeared the book of the Canadian-American social psychologist Steven Pinker *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress* (Pinker, 2018). The author questions the legitimacy of the pessimistic perspective of further social development, which is included in the report of the Club of Rome, and presents its own vision, exaggeratedly optimistic. Perhaps he believes in the proverb of the technocrats: *What technology can destroy can also repair*, or he defends neoliberal economists and economists who are committed to maintaining current economic and political trends at the expense of the environment and the future human species to make a profit. He responds negatively to the questions: *Is the world really falling apart?* and *Is the ideal of progress obsolete?* According to him, people live longer; they become healthier, freer and happier, even though the world faces serious problems⁶. One can solve them thank to further more intensive use of reason and science as recommended the earlier Enlightenment. One should not evaluate social progress badly based on loud headlines and apocalyptic prophecies, but positively based on facts. He presented these facts on seventy-five charts, which show that statistically the majority of people live longer, healthier, prosperous, safer, happier and more peaceful than ever before, not only in the West. He claims that the driving force of social progress, which contributes to the improvement of human fate, is not some cosmic or mystical force, such as universal ecological conversion, but science and human reason (together with artificial intelligence). Therefore, he appeals for further development of rationality, because only reason can lead humanity out of the collapse and ensure further so-

cial progress, as what the reason has earlier destroyed, it can repair now. The problem, however, is that reason alone cannot repair anything. In addition, human being is not a robot, but a rational and at the same time, an irrational being. He does not act just as his reason dictates to him, but he is also guided by irrational premises – intuition, emotions, beliefs, myths, etc. These factors are as good as the rational ones, and life proves that they are often even more effective, S. Pinker marginalizes threats of terrorism, nuclear war, social inequalities, global warming and artificial intelligence. (Pinker, 2012) Based on analysis of the sources of skepticism and fear S. Pinker comes to the following conclusions. People are not irrational beings by nature. One needs no religion to ground morality. Modernity has not led people into loneliness and suicidal tendencies. Not everything will die or disappear because of nuclear war, scarcity of resources natural, climate change and artificial intelligence broken off the chain⁷. He argues that one needs even more reason, science and humanism to deal effectively with problems and to sustain human progress. S. Pinker defends seventeenth-century Enlightenment values – reason, science and humanism – in the development of which he sees a panacea for the troubles of the modern world. He claims that they are threatened by contemporary trends such as religious fundamentalism, political correctness and postmodernism. Moving away from them would cause huge losses for humanity. Possible existential threats that critics of social progress fear does not exist in reality. One publicizes them in order to turn humanity away from the path of rational progress and to continue it in a senseless way. This favors the spread of religion what is clear from the content of Pope Francis's *green encyclical*. Although on the other hand, the concept of rational progress bases on secular worldview and promotes its dissemination. Admittedly, S. Pinker recognizes the negative effects of progress resulting from the growing social inequalities (mainly economic), nuclear weapons, artificial intelligence, terrorism, etc., but maybe deliber-

⁶ This claim is doubtful. It is true that thanks to the progress of medicine, the statistical person lives longer than before. On the other hand, however, also thanks to this progress, people are more and more often ill, and they are more and more frail and unable to live without the use of various support devices and artificial organs. Most people (in the world population scale) cannot afford treatment and purchase of support devices or transplants. It is not true that people are becoming more and more free. On the contrary, they are more enslaved because (paradoxically) neoliberalism has led to the new enslavement (Sztumski, 2011b). The thesis about making people happy by progress under the capitalist system is doubtful. Certainly, some are happy, others – no, depending on what criterion happiness is assessed.

⁷ The fear of terrorism is unjustified, because for example, an American is 3,000 times more likely to die in a traffic accident than in a terrorist attack. Economic inequality is

not as a lack of prosperity or misfortune in poor societies. In addition, the world as a whole becomes equal. Even where economic inequality is growing, the poor are constantly getting rich and using technological innovations. Creating technological innovations that make the poor slightly richer, and rich yet rich, is rather a positive phenomenon. He attributes the blame for the use of nuclear weapons to the anti-enlightenment forces, because no one who is guided by reason will allow it. Moreover, the scientists have developed the design of the first atomic bomb because they had to defeat Hitler. If there were no Nazis, there would be no nuclear weapons. One does not need to be afraid of the potential extinction of humanity because of the use of nuclear weapons. Fear of accidental catastrophes caused by artificial intelligence is unfounded, because, for example, moving cars alone reduce the number of accidental road accidents.

ately he reduces their size and significance. The point is for people not to be afraid of these threats exaggerated by the Club of Rome and to ignore them in everyday life. Let them live peacefully, let the rich get richer, let the poor grow poor, let the soldiers go boldly for mass slaughter in the event of a nuclear war – let the world roll over the old path marked out by liberalism, bandit capitalism, consumerism and anti-ecologism. They do not need to worry about the far future, because it will somehow be so, as it has been so far. One has to take care of what is here and now. Surely, not all of Earth will fall into ruin, not all people will die in the war, because of starvation, being in a poisoned environment, diseases of civilization or one or another catastrophe. *Keep smile!* Enjoy what you have, that you still live, no matter how, in what a condition and how long.

This concept contains a contradiction. On the one hand, it emphasizes importance and role of reason and science, and on the other hand, it questions the experts' rational reports and scientific forecasts.

5. The choice of a golden mean

Today, we have simultaneously two competing concepts of the exit from the deepest crisis for the centuries, in which humanity found. Both seem credible, because they refer to facts, but each of them to others. The first of these draws attention to these facts, which prove that humanity, in result of social progress from the old Enlightenment, has almost reached the limits of further social and civilizing development. The transgression of the *limits of growth* endangers destroying of civilization, human species, and Earth. Therefore, further social progress must be made on the ground of the new Enlightenment. The authors of this concept see the main reason cause of the crisis in the growing role of reason and rationality, and therefore they value more the irrationality. The condition for the conversion of the old Enlightenment into a new one is the change of the way of thinking, initiated by Aristotle's classical rationalism and developed by successive philosophical systems, up to the beginning of twentieth century. One could replace this rationalist and enlightenment way of thinking by the ecological way of thinking that derives from philosophical environmentalism. (Sztumski 1997; Sztumski, 1998; Sztumski, 2012). Contrary to algorithmized and calculated thinking, such as in the old Enlightenment, it does not recognize reason as the only authoritative and reliable criterion of truthfulness and evaluation, as the most reliable source of knowledge, and as the basis of morality. Therefore, it appeals to reasonableness, which consists not only of reason, but also of feeling, intuition, faith, life experience, and subjective experience of the world. Ecological thinking is biocentric, anthropocentric, cosmocentric and prospective. The starting point and goal is a man as an individual and his local environment, but he is directed towards an

ever-wider environment and human species. It has in mind the survival of individuals and the human species for as long as possible. It plays the role of the evaluation criterion to evaluate attitudes, behaviors and human actions: good is what favors the harmonious unity of human with his environment and the survival of humankind. The transition from Enlightenment thinking to ecological one seems to be this radical change of consciousness that is referred to in the report of the Club of Rome.

The second concept emphasizes the facts that show the benefits of social progress, implied by the ideals of the old Enlightenment, and therefore one should not change into the *new* one, especially radically. It omits, conceals or marginalizes facts about the harmfulness of social progress. The author of this concept blames irrationality for the crisis and therefore acknowledges reason together with artificial intelligence the most important motor force of progress and calls for further development of rationality and improvement of reason.

Only this can ensure further calm and responsible social development. The concept of S. Pinker reflects a one-sided view of social progress. It shows it as something wonderful, which does not generate so serious threats mentioned in the report of the Club of Rome, although it has some negative effects, which actually turn out to be beneficial for people.

It is not necessary to change the enlightenment style of thinking, to which humanity owes such rapid and enormous progress of civilization and the rising standard of living. On the contrary, one needs to inspire people to make efforts for social progress, without bothering them with unwanted side effects. It is necessary to continue the Hegelian *March of Reason* and to eliminate the elements of irrationality from the consciousness and life of people.

The contemporary generation faced a dilemma, which concept to choose, guided by the good of humanity, at present and in the future. This is a typical dilemma for choosing the lesser evil, because none of them is fully satisfactory, safe or ensuring a better future. The first is beautiful, but utopian, and not very conducive to the development of rationality, and the second is real, but it deprives man from the elements of spirituality and transforms him into a robot-like and indifferent creature. The choice depends on the answer to the question whether a man is more a material or spiritual being. However, we do not know that. Perhaps he is sometimes more material and sometimes more spiritual being. Therefore, there is nothing else to try to find a golden mean in the form of a synthesis of what is good in both concepts. The point is the future social progress should shape people, who do not overestimate rationality and not underestimate spirituality, by people balanced in respect of matter and spirit, reason and emotions, self-interest and common good, and other pairs of opposites that they face every day.

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