

**Natalia Shovkoplías**

Slovakia  
Academia Istropolitana Bratislava  
Richard Stahel, Comenius University, Bratislava  
Slovakia

**Some ideas on the global crisis and on the period of  
new world-view orientation of the civilisation**

*„A poet can grasp the nature better than a scientist“  
(Novalis)*

The word „*crisis*“ belongs undoubtedly to those that appear in all the possible languages. It is obviously connected with the fact that the state of things, which are denoted with the word crisis, is in a certain sense a concomitant sign of the human civilisation, including the European one. At present, in the time of *global* or *universal* understanding of the crisis situation, we do ask more than ever: do we belong to the world, are we its component, or is our world ours?

According to Peter Sabo „every deep crisis of the society is the outcome of mutual interaction of sets of outer and inner causes, the lack of knowledge or unwillingness of the substantial majority of inhabitation to actually perceive this state as a crisis“ (/1/, 65)

According to the opinion of a Russian-American sociologist Pitrim Sorokin the present „crisis is not usual ... it regards also the whole western culture and society in all its areas. It is a crisis of art and science, philosophy and religion, law and morality, habits and customs, it is a crisis of the social, political and economic organisation, a crisis in a family life as well as in a matrimony – shortly it is a crisis of the whole way of life, thinking and behaviour of western society. To be more precise : **it roots upon the decay of the basic form of western culture and society, which has been prevailing in the last four centuries.**“

/2/

Let us try to examine some inner causes of the crisis and to highlight some ideas and visions of specialists and important personalities from the middle- and east-european area about the possibilities of its overcoming.

A long-lasting split of science and church, which may be best illustrated by the refusal of the theory of evolution from the side of the church, started in the time of Middle Age. The teaching of F. Bacon, R. Descartes and Newton set the principles of the mechanic world explanation, which brought the materialism to the world-rule. The result was the splitting of knowledge and the loss of the compact picture of the world for centuries. The follow-up retreat from the ethics caused the „ inability of science to fulfill its very original aim: to increase the grasping of the world around us and to use this grasping for the sake of everybody (/3/, 68). The elimination of the moral issues from the scientific research led also to the fact that a present-day scientist ( in majority of cases) does not carry any responsibility for his discovery. His role is to produce notions ... In this connection Patoëka notices that sciences have broken the universum and have created a kind of poly-versum out of it and now they are unable to compose it back.

A holistic (compact) view on world can contribute to the transformation of science and society, so that the scientific knowledge becomes united with the spiritual, religious world explanation again. A physician Fritiof Capra came with a new system biology, with an organic and holistic vision of reality. The space, according to Capra „ is not a mechanic programmed machine, but a dynamic unity, whose parts are mutually connected and which can be understood only as a picture of the cosmic process“. He emphasizes also the importance of non-linearity, which is a component of holistic environmental thinking /4/. Capra was inspired by the model of cultural dynamics by a British historian Arnold Toynbee (1889 – 1975).

According to Tonybee the civilisations do not arise as results of favourable geographical conditions, but thanks to creative reaction on a very difficult situation from the side of a minority of individuals. The destiny of cultures depends on the fact if and how people react to challenges, tasks, which they have to face. The fall and decay of a civilisation appear when the community, instead of a creative reaction to new, topical challenges, reacts mechanically – by dogmatizing of barren ideas and techniques that used to be creative in the past. Toynbee shows by precise work and factographic material that cultures do not owe for its origin to their surrounding area and the surrounding area – if natural or human – cannot cause their fall. Culture cannot die „unless there is a spark of God in creative power in us still alive, till we take part in the grace to set this fire in us ...“ (/5/, 64). According to Toynbee a civilisation arises, culminates, falls and dies. Time spans of these curves are big and usually denote thousands of years.

According to Capra this model may be used to depict the development of European civilisation. The symptoms of global crisis indicate that **the society has already crossed its culmination point and at present it is in the state of decay**. It depends only on us if we are able to distinguish the ways of „turning-point“, in which we are now and to contribute to the repeated rise of our civilisation (/3/, 71).

The works of Erazim Kohak contribute to the understanding of the nature, causes and consequences of the modern crisis. Kohak is convinced that the main cause is **the ambiguity of a man, who is a component of the world and a stranger in it at the same time**“. This „ambiguity probably „belongs to the mankind from the very beginning, from the stage of hunting and gathering“... A distance caused by reflexion that distinguishes human species from the rest of the nature, is not an incidental deviation. It is our own way of being of us, **natural strangers**. The recognition of a man as a natural stranger does not have to lead necessarily to despair or to the loop-like approach to out-of-human nature. Mankind is able to live in harmony with the nature, but this harmony cannot be left to the spontaneity of feelings. Eco-nostalgia is not eco-philosophy. It demands acception of responsibility and conscious endeavour to create permanently sustainable ways of life“. /6/ These ideas on the „core“ of a man are developed by Emil Páeš in his work „Angeology of history“: A man cannot be understood as a deity of a soul and a body, but only as a unity of three components – a body, a soul and a spirit... Everywhere a man is mentioned only as a psychophysical being – and nowhere as a psychospiritual.“ (/5/, 55)

A thinker and a humanist Albert Schweitzer painfully perceived the fall and decay of ethical and philosophical values of European culture. In this connection he talks about the crisis of thinking. The way out of the cultural crisis is in the revival of critical thinking and ideals of genuine humanity according to him. His philosophy can be summarised by the sentence: „It was love to the entire creatures that made a human being out of a man „.

**The reconciliation of modern science and religion is historically absolutely necessary.**

The endeavour to connect „faith to sense“ reached its maturest shape in the person of Tomas Akvinský (1226-1274) and his teacher Albert the Great (1200-1280). „ The sense is the best help and defender of the faith... The existence of God is provable by sense and does not have to be the subject of faith and the same regards the soul, the life after death, the angels etc. The existence of God becomes obvious in the moment when a man takes the effort to think about world as he knows it “. (/5/, 55)

Akvinsky realised that the theology itself can be developed only in horizon of the whole reality, out of which any element must not be excluded. His programme became „ the theologically based mundanity and theology open to the world“ ... T. Akvinsky creates the last big and really Christian synthesis of sense and faith as generally true one – the following attempts were only partial. As one of such attempts can be regarded the Theosophy society which was founded in 1875 in New Yourk by Henry Steel Olcott and Helena Petrovna Blavatskaja. The aims of this society, which were declared at its origin, are topical also at present :

1. To create an universal brother-like relationship of mankind, regardless various religions, nationality, sex and social status .
2. To develop the knowledge of the true core of the whole religious life.
3. To examine deeper spiritual powers, which are hidden in the human naturality and the entire world.

The embodiment of scientific discoveries into the context of religious picture of the world will help to give them back their spiritual sense. The relationship between science and religion should develop from mutual tolerance into mutual acceptance. This message of reconciliation is carried by the highest officials of world religions. The Pope John Paul II. denoted globalization as the epoch of changes, which must be guided, or otherwise it can turn against the human dignity and universal goodness. "„It is necessary to globalize love as well as sympathy", said the Pope on the meeting in an Italian city of Isola del Gran Sasso which was oriented on the issues of globalization. The Pope expressed fears that unless globalization is based on universal ethical principles, it becomes only a new version of colonization. His Holiness XIV Dalajlama – the spiritual and political leader of Tibet, talks about the necessity of sympathy, kindness and generosity, overwhelming wisdom and universal responsibility for all life beings.

Generally speaking we miss „**planetary thinking**“ – the level of grasping and unifying of individual factors and causes. A very interesting „planetary“ grasping of global crisis can be found in the works of a renowned Russian philosopher and artist Nikolaj Roerich: „How can we denote the ill state of the planet? Let us denote it „the fever of poisoning“. Choking poisonous gases, gathered due to lower layers of noosphere / in Russian „tonkogo mira“/, have been separating the planet from the other worlds /mirs/ capable to bring help. The destiny of the Earth can be ended by a gigantic explosion if this poisonous layer is not eliminated. The huge acceleration / of streams of thoughts/ sets into motion the entire society. We expected that this acceleration would be necessary only for individual countries, but it seems that it is indispensable for the whole planet.“ (/7/, 35)

Actually what hinders us – apart from obsolete materialistic ideas – to accept but also to examine the idea that there is **noosphere**, an independent psychic and thoughtful sphere of the Earth, which penetrates through everything and which surrounds similarly as the atmosphere? What makes us not to suppose that this noosphere is an invisible continuation of nature, that there are streams, waves, tides and ebbs, similar to the air and water streams in it ? A Russian geo-palaeontologist Vladimir Vernadskij was convinced that the **noosphere** existed and that psychic potentials of various qualities, created by human thinking, that had accumulated over the time in it, caused vast historical events /8/.

### **The change of approach is unavoidable.**

A modern man seeks a new world view. According to Marina Ārnogurská „ in the last decades there has been a qualitatively completely new syncretization of mankind on our Planet, which has necessarily brought absolutely unexpected consequences of mutual influences and pressures of its various world-view, philosophical and ideological traditions. Modern syncretizing mankind seek at the same time their new, self corresponding world-view backbone, which cannot be any of the existing ideological backbones of individual former world civilisations.“/9/

According to Jozef Tillich „our modern civilisation is waking up to the conclusion that there is no vision about the basics of reality and their place in the space...We are now at a destiny-like crossroad... It is worth to contemplate over the fact what can be offered to us from other cultures and how have we been able to use this offer so far.

Our civilisation study and regard the alert consciousness as the only state of consciousness worth attention, eastern cultures but also all the so-called natural nations pay the same attention to the study of dream states, trance, ecstasy and similar states, which are regarded by our culture to be more or less pathological ones, that are undesirable for a rationally thinking man.“

An amount of eastern systems of thoughts can become inspiring for us, their real impact on the environment did not bear comparison in confrontation with the attack of a consume way of life not better than our traditions of Christianity and humanism. In this confrontation our strict scientific conceptions have been failing, too.

The analysis of causes of this failure shows that „**our attitude to the world is restricted by the way of knowledge we have chosen ourselves**. One way of knowledge concentrates on the outward, phenomenal, objective side of the world, which is recognized empirically and described by the language of science. Each of the recognizing objects has also its inner depth, which can be recognized only by interspection and interpretation. Interpretation in the broadest sense means an *empathic inner resonance, consonance by*

*feeling as the opposite to the objective view from outside. Only the surface can be seen, the depth must be interpreted – and that means the other way of knowledge.*" (/10/, 53)

In this context also the ideas elaborated by Pales in his literally pioneer work "Angeology of History" are a challenge to the necessity of „world-view change". According to Pales „spiritual world is not only some philosophical suggestion but a living reality, which we all are experiencing immediately in our inner. We only cannot make sure it as such, because we do not cultivate appropriate conceptions."

Positivistic science insists that the spiritual world is only hypothetical and not empirical. It is a deceiving concept. The inner world is real in the same way as the outer one. Both are empirical. Only the outer one can be perceived by physical senses, the inner one – only by spiritual senses. „By subjective senses the same objective world is perceived from inside" - states Pales. (/5/,50)

According to Tillich „ the main problems of Gaia are not the industrialization, ozon holes, overpopulation or up-usage of unsustainable sources. The main problem is mutual understanding and mutual agreement in the noosphere on how to deal with these problems." (/10/, 51)

What can help us to reach this agreement? Pales thinks that a suitable tool is „spiritual science, that is something what is spiritual and scientific unanimously, something what is not restricted only to material sphere but it is also not a subjective impression. The science must expand over the frontiers of the material world and religion must deepen itself to holy science.. Only the complete man- that is with his thinking, feelings and will.. – can reach the spiritual basics of the space. Each world-view is rooted on deeper emotional and willed principles. A constructive way out lies on the fact that a man starts to clean his sub consciousness. Thinking is not unconnected to the feelings, but the feeling can be cleaned. They can be ennobled, raised over personal, egoistic tendencies to over-personal, eternal contents.. We recognize by love. Unless this is grasped, the scientists will grope forever." (/5/, 597)

A Russian scientist S. Lazarev has similar ideas: „ Individual, egoistic consciousness without love is more and more harmful to the world. It is a tendency of capitalism. But collective consciousness, if without love, is even more dangerous. According to many people the socialism and a disaster are the same conceptions. An individual consciousness that was created in the west, contributed to the movement of civilisation... Today mankind has reached a situation when it is egoistic to have collective consciousness, if without love, it is even fatal. It means that there must be certain change of consciousness, where there will be either material or spiritual values or love at the first place. Especially the love to the Creator, the very reason. An origin of a new religion will not solve anything. It is about connection of religion and science. Religion must get more and more closer to science, logics and analysis and science thus to God, love and morality. To such morality that is not based on individual or collective consciousness but on the love to God, to love as such. There are such tendencies in the world, it means that mankind have hope to survive." (/11/, 56)

These ideas correspond with the ideas of Tillich: " if we talk about „**world-centrism**", we mean qualitatively higher level of consciousness, based on a higher level of moral responsibility. „**World-centrism**" means a responsible relationship to the world as a unit, its biological and material values, first of all to intellectual, ethical and spiritual values, appropriate to the state of development reached on this planet." (/10/, 54)

The ideas of Jozef Vavroušek correspond with these contemplations, too. „Very often, the reality of European-American culture is the underestimation or ignorance of other civilisations, which is based on unreasoned feeling of superiority and aggressive behaviour towards such civilisations, in the pastmilitary, now economic and cultural. This leads to evolutionally ethically undesirable dominance of European - American way of life in various areas belonging to other cultural circles and to the elimination of differences among various civilisations. The mankind lose in this way cultural diversity, which is not only its priceless heritage, but also the basic suggestion of its ability to adapt to unforeseeable changes of conditions.

*The alternative is the mutual tolerance, endeavour to intune into the situation of citizens of other countries, better recognition and understanding of other civilisations and the endeavour to draw a lesson from their culture and experiences.* (/12/, 57)

5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Ethics and Environmental Policies  
BUSINESS STYLES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
Kyiv, April 2-6, 2003

---

**Bibliography:**

- /1/ Perspectives of Permanently Sustainable Ways of Life, collection of lectures, publishing house of Palacky University, Olomouc, 1997
- /2/Pitrim Sorokin: The Crisis of Our Time, Prag, 1948
- /3/ Sabo P.: Some Ideas on the Global Crisis.. In: collection Perspectives of Permanently Sustainable Ways of Life , Olomouc, 1997, p.68-70
- /4/Capra F.: The Turning Point: Science and the Rising Culture, William Collins Sons &Co., Glasgow, 1984
- /5/Páleš E.: Angeology of History, Sophia, Bratislava, 2001
- /6/Kohák E.: Phenomenology and Ecology – Mainstay and Co- dependence, In: Filósof.èas. 45, No. 3, 363 – 378, 1997
- /7/Nikolaj Roerich: Obèina, Riga , 1926
- /8/ Vladimir Ivanoviè Vernadskij: Noosfera i èelovek. Izbrannye Soèinenija, Academia nauk, Moskva, 1954
- /9/Āarnogurská M.: We Are in the Time of Crisis of Philosophy..., In: collection of contributions from the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary meeting SFZ, Bratislava – Prešov, 1998
- /10/Tillich J.: Eastern Tradition and Present-day World, In: collection Perspectives of Permanently Sustainable Way of Life, Olomouc, 1997, p.51 – 55
- /11/ Lazarev S.: Diagnostics of Kharma, kn. 4, Slovart, Bratislava, 1998
- /12/Keller J.: Contemplation with Jozef Vavroušek, G plus G, Praga , 1995