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Sostenibilidad, urbanización y civilizaciones: enfoque en España

Sumario:

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Resumen:

Los problemas que dividen a la gente - conflictos interculturales, interétnicos, interreligiosos - frenan la reacción de la comunidad mundial para resolver los problemas globales comunes, que deben unir a la humanidad. En el contexto de los problemas del desarrollo global, se enfatiza en el papel de España en el diálogo entre civilizaciones, sus actividades dentro del Club de Roma, su experiencia en formas de la urbanización inteligente y maneras de lograr el desarrollo sostenible.

Palabras clave: *Desarrollo sostenible, sostenibilidad urbana, civilizaciones, ecociudad, Capítulo Español del Club de Roma.*

Abstract:

The problems that divide people - interreligious, interethnic, intercultural conflicts – slow down the reaction of the world community for solving common global problems, which should unite humanity. In the context of global development issues, it is emphasized on the role of Spain in the dialogue between civilizations; its activities within the framework of Club of Rome; its experience in smart urbanization and ways to achieve sustainable development.

Key words: *Sustainable development, urban sustainability, civilizations, eco-city, Spanish Chapter of the Club of Rome.*

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Sustainability, urbanization and civilizations: focus on Spain

Katerina Fédorova

Introduction

The beginning of the XXI century starts with a multiplicity of economic, financial, environmental, demographic, migration, food challenges. They are interrelated and mutually reinforced, which led to a global systemic crisis. The efforts of national anti-crisis policies have mostly failed. It once more underlines that the contemporary world and its problems have become global, so they require efficient and effective global solutions.

The key role in the long-term investigations of global development issues plays the Club of Rome¹. The prominent work of the Club was "The Limits to Growth" published in 1972, which laid a foundation stone for the modern concept of sustainable development and opened a discussion about the formation of a new model of global partnership. The authors of "The Limits to Growth" warned that if the growth of population, production, resource exhaustion and environmental pollution continue, the physical limits of growth on the planet will be reached in the middle of the XXI century. This will lead to an abrupt decrease of population, uncontrolled economic downturn and degradation of ecosystems. In contrast, the proposed model of global balance - sustainable development – means cooperation of demographic, economic and environmental fields (Meadows, Meadows, Randers & Behrens, 1972, p. 23-24).

There are many approaches to the interpretation of the concept of sustainable development; in different languages it has subtle shades of meaning. In this article is used the classical understanding of this concept, which was set in constant use after the report "Our common future" in 1987. This report was presented by Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of Norway at the meeting of World Commission on Environment and Development, also named the Brundtland Commission, which she headed.

So, sustainable development is a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (World Commission On Environment and Development, 1987).

Therefore, the purpose of this research is a comprehensive analysis of the ways for sustainable development in the contemporary system of inter-civilization relations and the role of Spain in it.

The research methodology was based on: a systemic approach which was used to form a holistic view to the system of contemporary global crisis. Neo-institutional analysis method served for deep investigation of all branches and levels of the

¹ The Club of Rome – is an international non-governmental association of independent policy, business and science leaders, for a long-term holistic analysis of the humanity and planet development. It was founded in 1968.

evolution of crisis and its management. The method of extrapolation demonstrated what Spain will be in the future, if its development continues in the same way. The methods of retrospective and situation analysis served to study the impact of global challenges to international relations.

For this, article is logically divided into five sections, where Spain's progress towards sustainability, urbanization and inter-civilization dialogue is discovered gradually and in details. The first chapter outlines the features of the evolution of sustainable development; it is argued that the transit of global society from exploitative model towards sustainable development requires civilizational and cultural transformation of humanity and de-bureaucratization of modern system of international relations. The second, third and fourth chapters present a detailed research of sustainable development and sustainable urbanization contemporary peculiarities focusing on concrete examples of Spanish experience in the construction and development of eco-cities, which is useful for other countries. Special attention is given to the global research of the Club of Rome, named "2052: A Global Forecast for the Next Forty Years"; and also to analysis of the Spanish Chapter of the Club of Rome and its internal regional groups. The final, fifth chapter is devoted to the research of the role and place of Spain in the inter-civilization context of international relations. Generally, these five sections form a coherent scientific panorama of global processes of sustainable development, urbanization, inter-civilization relations and the role of Spain in them that provides comprehensive conclusions and form the basis for further research.

1. Civilizational transformations and global society

In the history of humanity there was no experience of function a global equilibrium model (sustainable development), that means a continuation of socio-cultural evolution. This system can remind the geopolitical model of balance of power, but in the sense of juxtaposition of concepts of 'people-capital'. Demographic and economic boom with unregulated exponential² growth put pressure on the ecological state of the planet. The solution is to stabilize and taking control of political, economic, environmental, demographic, social and cultural areas, which are deeply interdependent. Global balance also

provides equal distribution of vital resources among all citizens of the world (per capita), thanks to methods of birth control and capital reorientation from industrial economy.

The key idea of "The Limits to Growth" is that the growth has a physical boundary, and that the humanity went beyond this limit in the 80-s of the XX century. Moreover, in 2030 people will need two Earth planets to satisfy the present needs of humanity. Now, economic and demographic growth is not an indicator of success and progress, but of self-destruction and degradation of human civilization. And this destruction is very fast and uncontrolled, because of exponential nature of this growth. A criticism that fell on scientists and scepticism about the limitations of economic and demographic growth impeded to realize the threat and actively began practical actions at the end of the XX century. Nowadays, some ecosystems have already disappeared, and humanity has lost that standard of living that could be ensured to everyone.

After 20 years, scientists renewed their investigations and released the book "Beyond the Limits" in 1992. From the title of this book it becomes clear that their preventions are already realized and the international community must respond urgently, because the consequences are inevitable. Next update "Limits to Growth: The 30-Year Update" was published in 2004. This is a more detailed, clearer explanation of state of the planet and humanity, and the prospects of their further interrelation.

Even having all information about the economic and ecological condition of the environment, the international community reacts very poorly. During the international meetings, forums, conferences politicians continue to follow personal, national, regional interests - but not global. The lack of systemic thinking among political leaders slows down the solution of important problems that should have been already resolved. The lack of awareness of responsibility led to dramatic consequences: the resources of future generations are used and the quality of life, which could be ensured to all people of the world, now is out of reach.

Definitely, to begin the sustainable development model function, we should upgrade the existing system of values in international relations. Earlier, for example, the industrialization, the race to a competitive economy, the possession of oil and gas resources have always been considered as indicator of power, influence and strength of the state. For now, it is the cause of global challenges

² Exponential growth – (on demographic example) it is the acceleration of population growth proportionally to the increase of population.



because of wasteful exploitation of the planet ecological resources, anthropologization, exhaustion and collapse of many ecosystems, etc. All stated above, leads to permanent social and economic crises.

The restart of values - from consumerism and the profit-minded industrialists to sustainable development - is some revolutionary expectation to the international community. For instance, agricultural progress needed a thousand years, industrial revolution - a hundred years, and an informational one - only decades. For the civilizational transformation of worldview we have several years. And this transformation should take place in all corners of the world; the understanding should come to every member of society at the same time. Otherwise changes will not be effective and revolutionary (Assadorian, 2013).

Essentially, that the transformation of values gradually begins from developing countries, leaving behind highly developed actors of world politics. Such civilizations as African, Latin American, Japanese, Sinic, Hindu and Buddhist³, were first who felt the global environmental collapse, because of their climatic, geographic, economic, demographic vulnerability. Moreover, poor countries had no experience of such possession of capital and power in the world, to evaluate progress and development as Western civilization (Huntington, 1997).

However, each of these civilizations has already felt the increased intensity of natural disasters, the effects of pollution, shortage of drinking water, tropical deforestation, overfishing, depletion of the planet's resources and others. On the one hand, these people are forced to leave his home, where life is no longer possible, and on the other - Europe and the US are overflowed of migrations. It does not solve the problem and does not better the situation of any side.

Colonialism, imperialism and consumerism have recently considered as prerogative of the highest civilization. The concept "The West and the Rest" identified other civilizations as less developed periphery countries of world politics. Nowadays, Western civilization stays in permanent systemic crisis, mainly because of overconsumption and overuse. Sinic and Hindu civilizations are also coming to this point with their demographic collapse and the highest level of contamination.

In contrast to Western civilization appeared associations of countries with rapidly growing economies, which expanded the geography of world politics. Among them: BRICS and forthcoming MINT - Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria,

Turkey; CIVETS - Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey and South Africa; Next Eleven - Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Turkey, and Vietnam (Slater, 2010). This trend transforms the global cooperation priorities, but still based on the outdated scale of progress, with GDP rate as indicator.

On the one hand, Western civilization countries try to help and overcome the consequences of natural disasters around the world; a lot of NGOs support those who suffered. On the other hand, the same national governments and transnational corporations (TNCs) make an irreparable damage to the planet ecosystem. Presently, the consequences felt both by developing countries and Western civilization countries as well.

The collapse of environmental sustainability aggravates energy crisis, hunger, unemployment, ethnic conflicts, interreligious confrontation, arms, human and drug trafficking. All these generate splashes of cruelty and lack of tolerance around the world because of the same problems - global problems. Crises in other civilizations do not occur separately somewhere on another planet, and Western civilization is not situated on an unattainable Olympus. Everybody understand it, but what else should happen to get the real actions started?

These global issues are common to each person on the planet and integrate each citizen from each civilization to equal meaning - global citizen. It is impossible to exist for a long time a system of social relations, where for some people spending millions for a house, cars, watches, jewellery - is a style of life, and for another - drinking water, food and clean clothes - is a luxury. And the history of revolutions, wars and disasters has repeatedly proved it. The only difference is that the current system of growth, self-enrichment and consumerism leads to the collapse not only the lowest social class, but also the environment in which we all live.

The global society is quite young, unconscious and capricious as a child that does not want to be treated and still wants more sweets, despite of a stomach ache he has already had.

The evolution of global society and its further raise of awareness emphasizes on the necessity of global governance. For this, such idea should be fully supported by the public, whose principles will be transformed later into a common global political strategy, effective for the whole world. The main feature of this type of global management should be neo-institutional restart of habitual system of international

³ The classification of S. Huntington used.

relations. This system must be different by such points like: effectiveness, decisiveness, being ready to response, de-bureaucratized system (O'Neill & Terzi, 2014).

Obviously, not everyone considers the transition to a completely new model of consumption, economy and conservation as a positive turn. The goal of TNCs that act according to scenario "business-as-usual" is to preserve and increase their own capital. They are still not ready to save the environment and their future. Nevertheless, some of them evaluate the dependence of the global financial crisis on environmental issues, so they redirect their business to the alternative energy framework.

However, the consumer model change is not only about TNCs, but also refers to national legislation. National policy must go further than the CO₂ emissions limits – it is a total lifestyle transformation. Every sphere of production should be changed; a system of monitoring for the realization of clean economy is to create; scientific think tanks for the development, implementation and new technological support have to be stimulated. These changes will take a large piece of the state budget, but simultaneously will create many jobs and reduce unemployment.

Political leaders, who are responsible for the further development of the world in the XXI century, should realize that environmental issues touch upon not only biologists and botanists. It is an origin of ethnic conflicts, terrorism, polarization of society and many other problems. The population should consume within the potential of renewable resources, use natural reserves in accordance with their recovery cycle.

2. Spain in 2052

However, the long-term analysis continues. Co-author of "The Limits to Growth" and co-founder of the project "World3" Jorgen Randers presented his report "2052: A Global Forecast for the Next Forty Years" on the Club of Rome meeting in May 2012. According to the investigation it was proved that among all global issues the environmental one will be the hardest. In the middle of the XXI century the global warming will increase and cause droughts, floods and fires, lack of food and water, which will increase the society polarization, inequality and migration flows. After years of research, J. Randers and more than 30 researchers of globalization have come to the following conclusions:

- The concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere will rise, and temperature increase by 2°C in 2050; and by 2,8°C in 2080, which may provoke irrevocable climate changes.
- Global population will rise by 8.1 bn. people.
- There will still be 3 bn. poor people in 2052.
- The world GDP rate will grow much more slowly, than expected because of low growth workforce productivity in developed countries.
- The global economy, which is presently dominating, will face great stagnation, especially in the USA.
- China will be an example of excellence thanks to its ready-to-act ability.
- BRICS and a dozen of countries with developing economy will demonstrate the progress.
- The adaptive process of humanity to hard restrictions on the planet has already begun, but the reaction of people will be still insufficient.
- The humanity has a reserve - 40 years to avoid the most negative consequences of multiyear overconsumption (The Club of Rome, 2012).

According to the forecast stated above, the author extrapolate it on Spain and make further findings.

1. Global warming will be a real environmental challenge for Spain. The influence of dry and hot climate makes southern, eastern and central autonomous community the most vulnerable to drought. Because of the proximity to the African continent hot winds will intensify and become more frequent, among them: leveche - Saharan wind that blows in Murcia and Alicante; bochorno - Andalusia, Castilla-La Mancha and the valley of the river Ebro; Solano - Extremadura and Castilla-La Mancha.

The lack of coherence of environmental policy with other branches of internal policy leads to a bunch of paradoxes that once again proves that ecology cannot be considered separately. The environmental component should be an obligatory part of policy in every ministry. For example, Spain is the leader in Europe for the number of dams - it is about 30 dams for every million inhabitants. At the same time, Spain is one of the most vulnerable EU countries according to the water stress level. If in 2050 the temperature increase by 2-2,5°C, precipitation will decrease by 10% and humidity of ground by 30%. For hot Spain, it would mean environmental, agricultural, food and economic crises (Rovira & Polo, 2015).

This degradation is already evident. Here are some of the environmental challenges Spain was



faced: tornado in Malaga in 2009; flood in Galicia and Asturias in 2010; an earthquake in Lorca in 2011; a storm in Andalusia, Murcia and Malaga in 2012; wildfire in the Canary Islands in 2012; accident of tanker "Prestige", which spilled 77 000 tn. of oil near the coast of Galicia in 2012; forest fires in Galicia and Catalonia in 2013, 2014, 2015. Previously, these answers of nature were once in a hundred years, but now we see that they occur more frequently. Moreover, all these natural disasters are happening side by side with high temperature records every summer.

So, the existing problems of air pollution, water resources, drought, natural and environmental disasters will aggravate the Spain's situation. In the future CO₂ emissions will continue to rise. Unfortunately for now Spaniards already need three Spains to absorb all emissions. The internal water demand increases annually by 13% because of urbanization and population growth. Natural disasters have become more frequent and destructive – it is the result of human activity. And the consequences of their destruction are becoming more and more difficult to recover.

2. The Spain-US relations are a priority for both sides. Multilateral cooperation in almost all fields is strengthened by dialogue in the context of EU and NATO. United States are interested in Spain as the Iberian point in the Mediterranean, an ally between the EU and Maghreb countries, the Christian and Islamic world. Spain is a unique mediator between Western and Latin American civilizations. Spain has become one of the most important foreign investors in the US in such sectors as iron and steel industry, alternative energy, infrastructure and financial services.

In recent years, bilateral relations between these two countries gained strengthening and deepening. Transatlantic region was identified as a second of the main directions of foreign policy by the Government of Spain (La Moncloa, 2015). The fight against terrorism obtains a special place in bilateral relations. Spain also suffered from attacks by Islamic radicalism, and is partner of international coalition led by the US against Daesh (Islamic State). Taking into consideration the fast growth of impact and armament of Daesh, it is obvious to predict that the main efforts of both Spain and other European countries will address to solve this problem.

3. Bilateral relations between China and Spain will be enhanced and obtain priority. It should be noticed that the real breakthrough came in the years of government J. L. Rodriguez Zapatero. The "Plan Asia" he developed was a large-scale, long-term program for development

of Spain-Asia Pacific relations. At the beginning of XXI Spain haven't got embassies in New Zealand and Singapore, and there were no M. Cervantes Institute in most of Asian capitals, such as Beijing, Tokyo and New Delhi.

Spanish diplomacy has noticed the Asiatization of the world order and paid special attention to the rise of new global financial and economic actors. Therefore, as well as diplomatic and economic breakthrough, Plan Asia was expanded on educational support, cultural exchange programs, new training and scientific institutions for Asian issues which were established in Spain, and vice versa in China, Japan, South Korea and India.

China also considers Spain as a very perspective economic partner going beyond traditional vision as European consumer-country. Geopolitically, China is interested in Spain as in a global mediator in dialogue with Latin America and Maghreb countries. The economic component of the Spanish-Chinese relations is coming to a new, enhanced level. Over the past three years, China has invested about \$1.5 bn. in Spanish economy and become one of the top ten largest foreign investors in Spain. Chinese consumers mostly prefer traditional Spanish goods - ham, wine, olive oil, etc. (Ginés, 2015).

Thus, the Spanish historical role as inter-civilization partner still has continuation in XXI century, integrating not only Western, Hispanic and Islamic civilizations, but also a Sinic one. These relationships were built for centuries and became one of the key processes for economic and cultural globalization. Such transformations formed intercultural global image of Spain and attracted investors from whole world. Additionally, Spanish is the second language in the world after Mandarin, what serves both countries in promoting their invisible presence and influence in world politics.

4. Spain budget is too much limited for solving global environmental problems. That is why government will be extremely passive to this issue, which eventually will cause serious complications. The mortgage and financial crisis in 2008 was very destructive for Spain. The biggest problem was the large budget deficit. Now, in terms of anti-crisis policy is very difficult to focus on environmental issues. In terms of unemployment and the budget deficit citizens could not understand why government spends money to the ozone hole or restoration of water resources, but not for social needs.

To be environmental reforms become popular, they must be an obligatory part of every public or private institution, regardless of the

field of its activities. It should not be applied only to Spain or EU member states; it is concerned to each state of the world. The forecast "2052" stipulates that the international community will respond very slowly, because decision makers do not belong to the most vulnerable social class or region of the world. They are still confident that this will last forever. But the forecast also indicates that the humanity has about 40 years to avoid collapse, which will affect everyone, regardless of his position and capital.

3. Spain's eco-cities and sustainable urbanism

Meanwhile, Spain's environmental policy continues to develop. A good example is **Lorca**, province of Murcia, which was almost destroyed by the earthquake in 2011. There were destroyed a lot of buildings: homes, schools, churches. During the reconstruction, municipal administration of Lorca decided to make a transit to a model of sustainable development. Rebuilding city again, a new strategic plan was based on sustainable energy, smart economy, eco recycling and efficient use of solar resources.

Most of Spanish cities have a huge solar potential. Hence, they have found benefits in their climatic features and have realized that drought is not only dehydration of soils but also a good opportunity for the solar energy development. Having set as a goal to achieve productivity of 10 000 megawatts of solar energy, Spain became the best European energy supplier and the world leader in concentrated solar power (CSP). Unfortunately, the crisis of 2008 froze many investment projects and plans because of restrictions to more than 500 megawatts per year capacity. For many investors this meant bankruptcy and slowed down the development of the industry.

However, some cities have begun to move to a model of sustainable development, gradually becoming eco-cities, among them: Sarriguren, Valdespartera, Tudela. Other cities are still at the stage of transit from overconsumption to harmonic existence with and within nature, and to conservation of resources for future generations. Of course, most of them are still not perfect, but it is a good start for the environmental transit, to which finally will come all the cities in the world.

The author emphasizes that a base of the cities' eco-efficiency should be: a multilateral scientific approach for design; regular financing; public understanding and support. The reason

of eco-cities is not only construction – it is a brand new lifestyle, new kindergartens, schools, hospitals, courts and banks. This should not turn into a new cottage towns marked 'green' - this is a new paradigm of worldview to consumption, customs and habits. This is a civilizational transformation of public culture, a new format of relations 'man-nature', which will accept all and follow it, so our future generations can exist.

Sarriguren, near Pamplona, Navarra, has received the highest award - the European Urban and Regional Planning Award 2008, in the category Environmental / Sustainability as the best EU eco-city. The initiator of the construction of innovative eco-city was the Department of Environment, Planning and Housing of Navarra. Comprehensive interdisciplinary approach included interaction of three factors: the reduction of emissions, energy and water saving, and the use of renewable resources (Jiménez Gurucharri, 2004 p. 48-50).

In Sarriguren were implemented: the use of solar panels on all buildings; thermal insulation of houses; efficient water use through recycling; reducing light pollution⁴; increasing green areas, including: 46 % streets were greened; 9 km. footpaths in the city green areas were paved and 6.5 km. cycle lanes were build (Jiménez Gurucharri, 2004 p. 42-44).

The sustainability of **Valdespartera**, near Zaragoza, Aragon, based on four pillars: affordability - 97% is council housing; infrastructure – there are a lot of recreational, sports and cultural facilities in residential areas; bio-climatic architecture – the use of renewable resources, alternative energy and development of ecological corridors; integrated urbanism - urban planning to have every people of all origins and social classes feel comfortable.

Population of Valdespartera is about 25 000 persons who live in 10 000 apartments for people with low and middle income. In the eco-city there is the Centre for Sustainable Urbanism and Energy Efficiency (*Centro del Urbanismo Sostenible y Eficiencia Energética*), which studies, verifies and demonstrates to people the results of sustainable development in Valdespartera. Also, the Centre provides cultural and information policy, demonstrates to people different ways for saving, using alternative energy, advantages of social transport to private. So, this eco-city project does not close when construction is complete, but continues and improves with the community that lives there.

⁴ Light pollution – is one of the environmental problems. This is the violation of rhythm and intensity of daylight on certain territory as a result of artificial light sources that cause anomalies in the lives of plants and animals.



Eco-city Valdespartera is a part of the cycle of research of Harvard University, in the context of which also studied eco-city Vauban, near Freiburg, Germany, and Solar City, Linz, Austria. Research work was concentrated on architectural design, urban planning, and efficient use of public space for the development, innovative technologies and strategies. Based on the research of Valdespartera's model for sustainable technologies, there are following advantages: energy balance system; eco recycling pneumatic system; use of energy-saving materials and technologies in urban design; irrigation model that does not harm the water system of the region. The main feature of eco-city project success was big people's support of Zaragoza.

There are also some disadvantages: insufficient transport options from eco-city to the centre of Zaragoza. This encourages residents to use private cars instead of social transport. Also, the excellent irrigation system is not fully used yet. In comparison with Sarriguren, Valdespartera has similar problems that can be concerned to the national level. In both eco-cities water management and social infrastructure has lack of coherence (Schroepfer, Werthmann & Hee, 2009 p. 71-72).

Tudela. Spain collaborates with Scandinavian countries in the development and building of eco-cities. In their project "Joint ECO-City developments in Scandinavia and Spain" 2005-2012 the key objectives were: eco-buildings construction, smart energy, popularization the possibilities of alternative energy, efficient use of renewable resources. Among cities-participants were: Tudela, Spain; Trondheim, Norway and the cross border community of Helsingør (Elsinore) and Helsingborg - the closest point between Sweden and Denmark.

The objectives of the Tudela, the Chartered Community of Navarre, included: to ensure the energy efficiency of buildings (to restore the old and build new ones); to reduce CO₂ emissions of dwellings; to implement mass use of solar energy; to observe the socio-economic changes in connection with the integration of renewable energy supply. The main attention was paid to Lourdes, Queiles and La Azucarera districts (Montoya, 2012 p. 25). It should be noted that Luis Casado Oliver, Unión del Pueblo Navarro (UPN), who led the city of Tudela 2003-2015, made a great contribution to the development of Tudela sustainability (Casado, 2007).

Within the implementation of eco-city goals a significant problem appeared - mortgage crisis 2008 in Spain. Almost all constructions had been frozen, except social housing. In such

circumstances, to build eco-dwellings with innovative energy sources seemed impossible. Many plans for the construction had to be abandoned, such as: eco-luxurious apartment complex and golf courses nearby Tudela. After long political negotiations at regional and national levels, was decided to redirect the project attention to building social housing and refurbishment of an old quarter inside the town.

One of them was Lourdes quarter, which mainly has three, four and seven floors houses built during the 50-70-s of XX century. This quarter considered as a poor in Tudela, there lived mostly unemployed, pensioners, families of migrants. Thanks to the project "Lourdes Renove" it was 25% of apartments became energetically efficient by installing biomass boiler, thermal insulation of building's facades, windows and roofs (Montoya, 2012 p. 26-27). A cycle of workshops "Sustainable Tudela" was organized where apartment owners could join to the project. This understanding and people's support also played a prominent role.

In Spain, there are other cities and regions that have made their choice in favour of sustainability, alternative energy and eco-efficiency: Alicante, Valencia; Arte, Castilla-La Mancha; Avilés, Asturias; Haro, La Rioja; Malaga, Andalusia and others (Fundación Metrópoli, 2015). Transformational projects in these cities belongs to Alfonso Vergara and his international fund "Fundacion Metropoli", which provides the innovative research for cities and territories to harmonize the processes of urbanization and sustainability. Realization of projects took place in cooperation with local municipalities and investors, which ensured a comprehensive support and high efficiency.

To the global projects of "Fundacion Metropoli" in the field of urbanization belongs "Proyecto CITIES". It is a global research of 20 cities-innovators with their leading universities from around the world, there are: Bilbao, Singapore, Medellin, Curitiba, Dublin etc. The researchers tried to identify the unique outstanding achievements - Components of Excellence - by which city obtains a high level of success in the economic, environmental and social fields.

As a result of the research was born the concept of "Smart Places" (*Territorios Inteligentes*) - it is urban areas that using high technologies are successfully faced the challenges and risks of globalization. Such global nucleuses are different by their responsible position towards global challenges, sustainable development and sustainable urbanization. The base of their success is de-bureaucratized

governance, openness for innovations, and unique approaches and methods to solve the problems of globalization.

Also, innovative researches for sustainable development and urbanization incorporate different areas of activity in common studies and projects. For example, to monitor the eco-efficiency of cities in Spain, the University of King Juan Carlos I in collaboration with FCC⁵ created a Cities Observatory "Tendencies Eco-Cities" in 2014. Common efforts of academics and construction engineers focused on identifying and forecasting the major problems of implementing the principles of sustainable development in eco-cities. Particularly, it touches upon infrastructure; energy efficiency; waste management and water usage (Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, 2014).

Therefore, the demographic problem is added to the environmental and energy one, as the key reason of eco-cities dynamic growth. It becomes obvious that forced urbanization leads to uneven concentration of population. Currently, 7 of 10 people in Spain are cities-resident (Fundación BBVA, 2010 p. 8), taking into account that 43.7% of Spaniards continue to live in their natal place (Fundación BBVA, 2010 p. 13). Rapid growth of population in urban areas anticipates the demand for labour that leads to further increase of unemployment and exacerbation of socio-economic problems. It is of importance to note that it is not only urban, but also the demographic crisis. On this account the exponential growth of population is a difficult challenge for the economy, environment and territory of the state, as the researchers "The Limits to Growth" warned in 1972.

4. Spanish Chapter of the Club of Rome (*El Capítulo Español del Club de Roma (CECoR)*)

Focuses on trans-disciplinary research of global issues; offers alternative formulas for their solution; conducts informational activities for better understanding the interdependences of global issues in a world system. Based on the studies it was emphasized on four basic positions that should be the first steps towards transitive paradigm to sustainable development:

1. Economic and Financial aspect. The main challenge - current economic model that is leading to the collapse of humanity. Required: a full transformation of market mechanisms

from speculations, greed and over-exploitation to financial sustainability and for better society. A new understanding of the role of the economy, markets and finance in the new system of global prosperity is needed. A fair distribution of wealth, inputs and outcomes to eradicate poverty is to achieve.

2. Environment. The main challenge - lack of decisive action and proper attention. Global climate change put into action the series of imminent consequences: biological and social, political and climate, energy and geopolitical. Required: to save and restore tropical forests; to stop destroying ecosystems and to preserve biodiversity; to implement mechanism for sustainable development with political will, support and sufficient funding.
3. Social aspect. The main challenge - unemployment. Required: a radical re-engineering of global system in order to achieve full employment. To establish a new economic, environmental and social policies to reduce poverty. To create a new actual work system, taking into consideration that the labour becomes more automated and needs less human resources.
4. Governance. The main challenge - government inefficiency and inadequacy to the contemporary world. Required: an absolute institutional transformation with actual goals and humanist values. The systemic update of national and international relations must base on a key principle - every person is now a global citizen. The rights of every person must be respected and protected anywhere in the world. A man must become the centre of New Renaissance, but not capital, money, profit, and etc. (Capítulo Español del Club de Roma, 2012).

CECoR annually publishes a report about the activities of the organization. There are annexes in which include additional achievements of regional groups. The most active participants in regional policy represented in CECOR by the Basque Country, Catalonia and Valencia. Each of them has their own group in the Spanish Chapter. Also begin to work the groups of Aragon and Extremadura. Madrid Group is the coordinating centre for local groups, and conducts its own activities as well.

Basque Group is a regional initiative to spread global Top Topics at the level of the Basque Country. Among them: issues of socio-

⁵ Fomento de Construcciones y Contratas, S.A. (1900) – Spanish leading company and world giant for infrastructure and construction. Among shareholders are such business magnates, as George Soros and Carlos Slim. The most distinguished objects of recent years are: Puerta de Europa in 5 Madrid, 1996; The Torre Bankia – situated in Madrid, is in top 5 of the highest skyscrapers of EU, 2008; New Europe Bridge between Bulgaria and Romania, 2013.



cultural development; scientific and technological progress; economic and environmental problems; international law and human security. All researchers are conducted from the processes of globalization considering different levels of the world system structure: regional, national and global. It is studied a close relationship between world global crisis and globalization challenges of different nature - environmental, economic, financial, demographic, political, social, and cultural.

Researches and numerous awareness-raising events of Basque Group emphasized on a principal role of science and high technologies in the nearest future of humanity. According to the forecasts, by the 2020 such areas as business, trade, medicine and security will feel a radical transformation, thanks to the rapid development of IT, bio- and nanotechnology (Uriarte, 2009 p. 26). In XXI innovation is constantly accelerated and technological revolution is a key tool to solve global problems of humanity. In recent years present progress has changed our perception of time, distance, security, and communications.

Possession of high technology has become one of the types of power, because the information revolution has proved that a good hacker is not worse than a powerful army. Innovation-exporting countries become increasingly influential on the international stage, and society in all civilizations becomes more informational and global. Uriarte (2009) clearly demonstrates the level of global information progress: 90% of Basques have no idea about the 30-year war in Europe (1619-1648), while 99% Basques know a day 11 of September 2001 (p. 22). So, today people can find information about any event happened in the world without even leaving home.

It may seem that globalization erases borders between countries, continents and civilizations, but it just makes them transparent. Interethnic and interreligious conflicts and migration collapse now clearly prove that the borders and walls still remain. These issues systematically and deeply investigated by the Basque group in book "Globalization. Global, European, Spanish and Basque challenges. Crisis and solutions in the XXI century"⁶. The inevitable and uncontrollable consequences of exponential growth lead to financial, social, migration and environmental crisis. To solve the negative effects of globalization, humanity must change the existing exploitative concept of behaviour and unite for the common benefit of all nations and decisive actions.

Interestingly, in a panorama of global society Basques and Catalans are less and less consider

themselves as a part of Spanish society, while simultaneously considering themselves as a part of unified world civilization. Their dialectical worldview of 'together-apart' depends on the level of the world system structure – 'national-global'. Mistrust and aversion to the central government based on the consequences of the collapse of the Great Castile Empire, which for centuries integrated nations and ethnic groups for common ideas and ambitious targets. Since the state and national interests have changed to satisfaction of personal interests and ambitions, a central government lost its political credibility to the provinces.

In fact, Catalan and Basque economy are necessary not only for Madrid, but for all autonomies. So, why is it only a dialogue between Basque Country/Catalonia/Valencia/Galicia/etc y Madrid? Definitely, the rest of autonomies also feel the lack of national idea, integration, target and strength of unity. That is why other provinces do not force to keep Catalonia or the Basque Country as a part of the nation-state, considering these separatists tendencies as a failure of the Madrid's policy. Truly, the unity of the nation must be built and maintained by a central government, and society must be inspired by common purpose of co-existence. The role of every social class and every city must fulfil appropriate direction of the national interests of the state. Every citizen and every province must feel a mutual responsibility, usefulness and exclusive role in the dynamic society of their country. Hence, they will be able to become an effective member of the global civilization, where only common efforts can help to solve global problems of humanity (Ortega y Gasset, 2014).

Valencian group is an important forum for analysis, discussion and forecasting of global problems of humanity. This regional group was established at the beginning of XXI for independent Valencian research of the most relevant and important issues of our time. Multidisciplinary approach has involved more than a hundred people from different fields: scientific, political, economic, cultural and social. The most prominent Valencian studies were: cycle of innovation in biomedicine, genetics and nanotechnology, which was published in the book «La medicina del futuro» in 2009; and a series of works devoted to the migration processes in the book «El desafío de la inmigración» published in 2011.

As for the Valencian migration policy, it is of importance to note that its experience is one of the most successful examples in European Union.

⁶ Original text – "Globalización. Desafíos mundiales, Europeos, Españoles y en el País Vasco. Crisis y salidas en el siglo XXI".

Although, it faced some very difficult issues. Valencia is one of the four largest autonomous communities of Spain (including Madrid, Catalonia, Andalusia), which has the most numerous flow of migrants from all over the world. It is home to over 120 nationalities: in some municipalities, such as Torrevieja, the great majority of the inhabitants are foreigners (Núñez, 2011 p. 83). Such a multi-ethnic, multi-confessional, heterogeneous society must be integrated for common security, human rights and justice.

In the present multicultural European society, the migration should not be perceived only as a problem of newcomers. The responsibility for assimilation process has both migrants and the host society. This balance of responsibility in Valencia called "compromise of integration", which practically realized in the host schools. Essentially, that such step was unique for Spain. These schools were opened by Valencian Government for any of its resident, where during 40 hours of lectures a new citizen learns more about the political, historical, legal, economic, social, cultural and linguistic characteristics of Valencia (Núñez, 2011 p. 87). In 2008 this was confirmed at the legislative level⁷.

Valencian experience of migration management is now extremely important, both for Spain and Europe. Migration crisis 2015 was a clear testimony to the failure of the EU to respond quickly and effectively. Moreover, that crisis exposed the fundamentals of the most European problems - lack of unity. De facto, the EU is no longer a political organism that able to implement unified policy and decisive action in international relations. Fragmentation of each member state interests leads to far-fetched compromises that do not solve the problems both inside and outside Europe.

The author underlines that now Europe has to take responsibility for mistakes in Syria, Ukraine, Iraq, South Asia, etc. European infantilism and indecisiveness can be called diplomacy, but for hot-spot countries and for millions of peoples that live there – it is a grief. And now the EU has to share this grief with migrants who are homeless and landless now. They do not go to Europe for a better life; they go for preserve the lives.

Catalan Group also develops research of the Club of Rome in its region and in their language for popularization of global innovative study among Catalans and for promoting the image of Catalonia in the world. Discussions and reports

of Catalan Group go beyond the usual focus of the Club of Rome investigations. To gain deeper inside the sustainable development and non-renewable resources issues, members of the Group raise other problematic aspects of human development in the contemporary world system.

In recent years, Catalan partner's attention has focused on issues of economic efficiency towards sustainability, in the present financial and economic crises. It should be stressed that finding ways to overcome this crisis and its consequences diverted the European countries' attention from urgent necessity in transition to sustainable economy and energy. GDP rate and population growth are no longer the only indicators of success and power of the country. Now it is considered as overconsumption, exploitation, inefficient use of resources. In the XXI century the path to economic renaissance is a new sustainable economy and new indicators.

Regional research of Catalan Group, as well as other local groups can be characterized by the famous phrase "Think global - act local". They study the relationship between the exacerbation of global problems of humanity and the spread of aggression, violence and intolerance in society. Thus, the lack of effective and coherent global management for global problems solution opens a new wave of conflicts in the world these years. In this context, the small regional cells of sustainability become very important: think tanks for global action; eco-cities; reserves for plants and animals recovery; corporations that maintain green energy and etc.

Active information policy of Catalan institutions devoted to the interlinkages between environment, energy, resources and social relationship has brought good results. Moreover, Barcelona became an interethnic, intercultural and interreligious platform for debate and analysis of the Mediterranean and the Middle East issues. Therefore, in 2013 the Club of Rome opened an office in Barcelona. The main concept of Catalan Group declared as practical support of innovative projects to improve human development and achieve economic and social welfare through respect for human rights and human dignity, justice and equality (Valero, 2013).

5. Participation of Spain in the dialogue of civilizations and religions

Spanish factor of European policy develops intercontinental, interreligious and intercultural dialogue in the Mediterranean on the basis of

⁷ Ley 15/2008. 5 de diciembre. Integración de las Personas Inmigrantes en la Comunidad Valenciana.



partnership and cooperation. Barcelona is situated in a strategically important geopolitical position and plays key role in the dialogue between cultures, religions, ethnicities and civilizations. The practical realization of this position was the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) also known as the Barcelona Process (since 1995), which has recently celebrated 20 years. On the latest Conference of the UfM, which took place on the 22-23 of July 2015, gathered a number of international organizations. Among them: the European Union; the Alliance of Civilizations; Anna Lindh Foundation and KAICIID (King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue).

The practical results of multilateral meeting were identified for implementation in three main areas: education, information and youth. It was adopted an action plan to create a network of institutions and think tanks, to deep the coordination of institutions that take part in intercultural dialogue and to formulate future action plan for each partner of meeting. Also, it was accepted a document in which will be recorded all successful examples of intercultural and interreligious cooperation (United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, 2015). Such international efforts shape a community of the most influential and famous people in the world who are ready to act. Despite on national and ideological differences they unite for normalization of inter-civilization climate.

It should be noticed that the Alliance of Civilizations was the most successful response to the Huntington's concept of the Clash of Civilizations. The initiative of J. L. Rodriguez Zapatero and R. T. Erdogan under the auspices of UN in 2005 created a new paradigm of cooperation between states and nations to prevent global inter-civilization and inter-religious conflicts. The proposal of creation the Alliance of Civilizations belonged to Spain was not a coincidence. Iberian Peninsula has always been a unique region, where Christians, Jews and Muslims lived for centuries in. Their co-existence took a form of a single, authentic culture, resulting in a huge cultural heritage in Spain.

The format of interaction between civilizations in the XXI century is radically different from that level of inter-civilization relations which existed before for centuries. Such radical changes were made by globalization, information revolution and technological progress. Society became global

and this equalizes all civilizations with respect for human rights and freedom. In this context, it is of high importance for Western civilization to support groups and societies from Asia, Africa and Latin America, to keep the orientation of these states in Western orbit. It is necessary: to change the profit-minded and exploitative fundamentals of cooperation with other civilizations to the mutual respect partnership with less developed countries; as well as to foster a more coherent and multi-level cooperation inside the Western civilization, particularly between its European and American parts.

In this regard, it should be taken into account the significant differences in the level of economic power inside Western civilization. This further divides the homogeneity of its political strategy, especially after the financial crisis of 2008. The consequences still have huge affect on interstate relations within the European Union. Crisis and post-crisis processes have become a catalyst for disintegration processes within the EU. The founding members of the EU, considering themselves as the core of European integration, began to separate from those members who joined later. The initiative "Europe of Regions", which was created to support the principle of subsidiarity in the EU, has become destructive and has resulted in reinforcement of separatist movements in multi-ethnic states.

The role of the nation state as the primary source of residence grows weaker. People are more likely to identify themselves not with the country, but with the city or region. These examples include: Catalonia, Basque Country, Manchuria, Scotland, Holland and others.

The realities of polycentric system underline the global significance of large cities and make the capitals of advanced countries the "global cities"⁸. Global city - is not just a metropolis that has high agglomeration. This is an important element of the global economic system, which provides political, economic and cultural impact on all macro-regions of the Earth. Global city gave impulse to a new dynamics to analytical understanding of territorial hierarchy. During the research it was studied such city indicators, as: gross domestic product, population size, agglomeration occupancy, number of foreigners, number of billionaires, subways length and passenger traffic, airline passenger traffic, etc. The concept of global city concentrates on the ability to face the challenges of globalization and to obtain economic benefits from these processes (Sassen, 1991).

⁸ The term belongs to Saskia Sassen that she used in her research «The global city» and applied to London, New York and Tokyo. In May 2013 in Madrid, she received the Prince of Asturias award in social sciences for her nearly twenty year's study of global cities.

Global city brings its original pattern to the system of inter-civilization relations. There are the most important cross-border financial flows go through them, poorly controlled by nation state. It leads to global cities possess and manage global economic processes, along with the national economies. The same power and global political influence has the government of global city, because the city problems reflect actual problems of modern humanity. Their local policy and decisions depends globally on how successful and efficient these problems will be solved. Therefore, the political, economic and diplomatic power of global cities became one of the key elements of a consolidated policy of global governance.

Civilizational identification of the people in the world is changing rapidly. The human society feels started process of unification, merger of civilizations into a single one, called global society. A personality perceives this world that is changing rapidly and itself in this world different. Not all groups of people perceive positively the process of world unity, worrying about losing its identity. They continue to strengthen the walls between civilizations despite it have become transparent. That is the reason, why at the beginning of XXI we can see re-Islamization of Middle East, Pan-Slavism of Russia and progressive Asiatization of the world affairs.

We witness growing importance of religion, often in the form of fundamentalist movements and radical groups which manipulate people. In the context of the lack of confidence to their national governments, people lost belief in their future, so look for hope in their historical past. Spiritual and political leaders often play on citizens' religious affiliation, ethnicity or linguistic minority. These political games divide society and convince people that we have more in different with each other than in common.

Among all civilizations the least aggressive and belligerent is a Buddhist one. According to the Huntington's classification, it is also the least powerful in international relations, so he paid so little attention to it. However, regarding the purposes of sustainable development, which are essential for the survival of humanity, this is the first civilization in the ability to achieve them. The principles of Buddhism and sustainability are particularly common, there are: a harmony in relationship with nature; unity and equality of all people; modest consumption and use; balance in everything; deep self-control, awareness and responsibility. In Buddhism every person is charged with responsibility for his

deeds, and everybody must be wise and aware enough to exist not affecting the interests of others. It is very seem on Sustainable Development Goals. The civilization that uses resources efficiently and effectively, maintains the environment with smart economy, lives in peace and mutual understanding among themselves, is able to provide health and welfare to everyone.

Spanish Chapter of the Club of Rome also supports values of Buddhist civilization. In 2014 CECOR with SGI⁹-Spain sponsored an interfaith symposium titled "Beliefs, Sustainability and Human Development" at the CaixaForum Madrid. The meeting gather around common issues people from different sectors of activity and political or religious beliefs. Members of SGI integrate Buddhist philosophical values in everyday life, following the concept of the unity of humanity and environment. Within the framework of the UN, SGI contributes to the development of education and literacy, supports activities to protect the environment and maintains the realization of Sustainable Development Goals. At the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) in 2012, SGI organized an official side event "The Future We Create" dedicated to the role of education and study in a shaping of sustainable future. The intellectual forum brought together specialists from different areas - disarmament, economy, human rights, and environment - to share experiences and lessons in education activities, information technologies and global cooperation.

The cultural transformation is essential for survival of present civilization and it is already must be built. Inaction and ignoring are key reasons of continuation and deepening of the global problems of humanity. It should be noted that following the UN Millennium Development Goals 2000-2015 it was done a lot, but actually there was no one problem been solved. Moreover, there were new emerging conflicts, problems and diseases appeared. UN can no longer just give advices, having such power and resources. We must act and do so effectively.

The next step of the UN is Sustainable Development Goals which were adopted for 2015-2030 years to achieve. But what kind of world will be waiting for us in 2030 if the mechanisms for solving global problems remain unchanged? In the SGI's report "The World in 2030" it is been emphasized that humanity has no time for non-professional politicians, and leaders who ignore responsibility. We are all

⁹ Soka Gakkai International (SGI) - international secular Buddhist movement, headquartered in Tokyo, with more than 12 mln. of partners from around the world.



competent, responsible and able to help, especially people from developed countries (Sachs, 2015). Every of us have to be responsible for his house, business, activities. There are many examples of how one wealthy man helped hundreds of disadvantaged people, and 7 bn. of people - is a very great power.

CECoR and SGI leaders in the joint book emphasized on the need of humanist revolution for mankind that would change people's attitude to nature and to each other (Hochleitner & Ikeda, 2008). It is impossible to solve global environmental problems following the old principles of economic growth, profit maximization and resource over-exploitation. The new paradigm of the co-existence of 'man-man' and 'man-nature' goes beyond any benefits and focus on saving resources for the continuation of life. Before our eyes takes place the birth of a new civilization, a common and global one among all still existing civilizations. And we all, the people, have to support its development towards peace, security, harmony, well-being and welfare for each inhabitant.

Conclusions

Civilization of consumption should be changed into the civilization of awareness. The information revolution provides the possibility for all people from developed countries to know and understand the real situation about people who live below the absolute poverty threshold. And it is much worse than they could imagine. Global responsibility has to be spread to the entire hierarchy of the international system - from welfare of global citizen to prevent conflicts between civilizations.

Global problems of overconsumption and overpopulation are environmental challenges for all civilizations. The understanding of commonalities of these issues has to unify humanity into a single civilization - global society. It is necessary to transform the traditional paradigm of human existence on the planet. There is no more time for hybrid wars, for battles for geopolitical influence in the region, for shady exchanges of land resources and adoption of fictitious agreements. The world community can no longer ignore it, and must be jointly and actively prepared for global consequences, be able to respond quickly and coherently.

The consequences of growing generation of consumption, cultivation of profit-minded paradigm of life, culture of omnipresent advertising and over-exploitation of resources have led to the increased impoverishment of the

peoples from the less developed countries. Moreover it has resulted in global systemic crisis and collapse of the whole planet. The beginning of the path to a new paradigm of existence on the planet is eco-cities that have changed for low consumption and smart economy.

Spain is an active supporter of transition to sustainable development model, a leader in alternative energy technologies, an innovator of the eco-cities development and sustainable urbanization. Spanish experience and achievements in eco-cities construction are important for other Spanish and European cities that are still in the transit process. Problems of rapid, uncontrolled growth of urban population in the context of the unemployment, mortgage, financial, migration crisis and growing inequality in the EU could encourage Spain to the systemic transition towards sustainable development.

An original scientific approach of Spanish Chapter of the Club of Rome distinguishes among other national associations because of: the poly-ethnic character of Spanish society; the geopolitical situation of the country; its role in the interreligious and inter-civilization dialogue. The activities of its regional groups, which function in Madrid, Catalonia, the Basque Country, Valencia, Aragon and Extremadura, demonstrate responsibility of that regions and non-indifference to the problems of global development. These elements of awareness from around the world form fundamentals of a unified system of global society.

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