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Ecophilosophical and Ecopsychological Aspects of Sustainable Consumption and Lifestyle

Ekofilozoficzne i ekopsychologiczne aspekty zrównoważonej konsumpcji i stylu życia

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Abstract: The aim of the article is to outline the philosophical and psychological dimensions of a sustainable lifestyle based on responsible consumption. In the author's opinion, moderate consumption and an ecologically balanced way of living should, for their durability, have a broader mental and worldview background. The article will present and compare the concepts of the eco-philosophy of Henryk Skolimowski and the ecopsychology of Theodore Roszak in terms of cognitive, ideological, and axiological propositions of these concepts that can form the motivating basis for responsible living on Earth. In the author's opinion, apart from the economic dimension, the adoption of ecological ethics and of ecological sensitivity is crucial for the permanent rooting of sustainable consumption patterns in people's attitudes. Ecophilosophical and ecopsychological concepts can significantly help in this, contributing to human sensitivity to environmental issues related to the contemporary ecological crisis. The ecophilosophical and ecopsychological approach, in the author's opinion, need each other because they use complementary perspectives and methods of building ecological awareness. In the process of environmental education and shaping sustainable life attitudes, they are equally necessary for the effectiveness of achieving the goals of education for sustainable development and promoting an environmentally responsible lifestyle in society.

Keywords: sustainable consumption, sustainable lifestyle, ecophilosophy, ecopsychology, eco-ethics, frugalism

Streszczenie: Celem artykułu jest zarysowanie filozoficznego i psychologicznego wymiaru zrównoważonego stylu życia opartego na odpowiedzialnej konsumpcji. Zdaniem autora, umiarkowana konsumpcja i ekologicznie zrównoważony styl życia powinny mieć, o ile mają być trwałe i stabilne, szersze podstawy mentalne i światopoglądowe. Artykuł porównuje koncepcje ekofilozofii Henryka Skolimowskiego i ekopsychologii Theodore Roszaka pod kątem ich propozycji poznawczych, ideowych i aksjologicznych, które mogą stanowić motywującą podstawę dla praktyki odpowiedzialnego życia ludzi na Ziemi. Zdaniem autora, dla trwałego zakorzenienia wzorców zrównoważonej konsumpcji w postawach, oprócz wymiaru ekonomicznego, kluczowe jest przyjęcie etyki ekologicznej i kształtowanie wrażliwości środowiskowej. Koncepcje ekofilozoficzne i ekopsychologiczne mogą w tym znacząco pomóc, przyczyniając się do zwiększenia wrażliwości człowieka na kwestie związane ze współczesnym kryzysem ekologicznym. Zdaniem autora, podejścia ekofilozoficzne i ekopsychologiczne potrzebują się nawzajem, ponieważ wykorzystują uzupełniające się perspektywy i sposoby budowania świadomości ekologicznej. W procesie edukacji ekologicznej i kształtowania zrównoważonych postaw życiowych są one w równym stop-

niu niezbędne dla skuteczności osiągnięcia celów edukacji na rzecz zrównoważonego rozwoju i upowszechniania w społeczeństwie odpowiedzialnego ekologicznie stylu życia.

Słowa kluczowe: zrównoważona konsumpcja, zrównoważony styl życia, ekofilozofia, ekopsychologia, ekoetyka, frugalizm

Introduction

Consumption is a complex phenomenon, process and system that can be characterized in economic terms but go beyond strictly economic aspects. The economic base of consumption is formed by the structure of the consumer's income and savings; the type and quantity of goods and services available on the market and purchased by the consumer; the existing infrastructure and logistics of consumption (supply chains, enterprises, sales points); as well as general conditions, such as the level of economic development and the rate of inflation. The non-economic determinants of consumption include broader social and cultural factors: prevailing habits, fashions, trends, value systems and ideologies functioning in society. In the era of global challenges and contemporary ecological crisis caused by the dominant (industrial) economic model, normative goals for consumption are formulated by the concept of sustainable development. Within the Millennium Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 and set to be achieved by 2030, it is directly related to goal no. 12: *Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns*. A durable pattern of consumption that meets the sustainability criteria can be defined conjunctively as (Niedek 2009, 31):

- a. consumption of a sufficient number of goods and services to meet real needs and achieve a high quality of life, without unnecessary waste of products, materials, and energy;
- b. consumption with a preference towards ecologically and socially sustainable products;

- c. dematerialising (minimising and saving) the use of natural resources and preferring the consumption of services rather than things.

The opposite of sustainable consumption is unsustainable consumption, which can be characterized as:

- a. consumption of goods to an extent which is excessive in relation to the necessary needs and on a larger scale than required by an adequate quality of life, resulting in a waste of resources and energy;
- b. consumption of unsustainable products – directly or indirectly harmful to the environment and to the health of the people producing and consuming them;
- c. excessive use of resources, raw materials, water and energy in relation to the productive capacity of the environment and its ability to assimilate pollution and waste.

Unsustainable patterns of consumption dominate the modern economy and Western societies and are responsible for the degradation of the natural environment. Along with the widening scale and manifestations of the ecological crisis – the global loss of biodiversity, increasing pollution of waters, soil, air, and food, as well as the climate crisis – the need to change the unsustainable consumption patterns is becoming more and more urgent. The formulated directions of the necessary changes are becoming radical and they are formulated in an increasingly alarmist tone (Skubała and Kulik 2021). Analyses summarizing the activities aimed at sustainable consumption so far show that most of them are ineffective and require adopting new approaches and implementing

innovations in the functioning of societies and people's lifestyles (Cohen 2019).

Dariusz Kiełczewski and others distinguish three psychological dimensions of consumption: cognitive, emotional, and behavioural, which are interconnected. A responsible consumer is the one who has specific consumer competencies defined as "the theoretical knowledge and practical skill, distinguishing a given person with easiness of an efficient, effective, responding to qualitative expectations, fulfilment of needs of lower and higher rank while maintaining responsibility for the choices being made" (Kiełczewski et al. 2017, 107). The essence of competences as regards sustainable consumption is "an optimal reconciliation of personal, social and ecological roles by the consumer. It is about setting up a synthesis – to make that the proper fulfilment of the social and ecological role was for the consumer a source of their personal satisfaction and something that raises the general state of satisfaction with the living quality and standard they have reached" (Kiełczewski et al. 2017, 106). In this psychological aspect, sustainable consumption contributes to an increase in the quality of life, i.e., establishment of an optimal balance between material consumption and satisfaction of intangible needs (Kiełczewski 2004, 58). The dividing line in this sphere is marked by Fromm's life attitudes: "to have" and "to be" (Kiełczewski 2007, 38). It is important, because "behaviours aimed at sustainable consumption are in great conflict with the hitherto adopted lifestyles and purchasing preferences, so, they require a complete change of behaviour and mental habits" (Kiełczewski et al. 2017, 106). Parallel to the necessary changes in the economic system of production-consumption, changes are needed in the systems of values, worldview, and culture.

A comprehensive study of the determinants of sustainable consumption leads to its broader aspects and to the concept of a sustainable lifestyle. This category covers a) external conditions: social, cultural,

economic, political, and environmental; b) internal conditions: cognitive, ideological, axiological; c) psychological: personal, emotional and subjective. So, the lifestyle based on sustainable consumption is conditioned by many different factors and can be analyzed from many perspectives; it also has fairly extensive literature (Lubowiecki-Vikuk et al. 2021). According to Jensen, an analysis of lifestyle in the context of sustainable consumption requires an inquiry into values, motives, personality traits, behaviours, habits, and identification of socio-cultural relations (Jensen 2007). An adequate approach to the analysis and implementation of a sustainable lifestyle requires therefore humanistic, in particular philosophical (including axiological and ethical) as well as psychological insights. The quality of life and well-being are the central categories that mediate the economic, philosophical and psychological approach to sustainable consumption and lifestyle. From the psychological perspective, the sensitivity and emotional dimension, related to well-being, is of particular importance.

From a narrow economic perspective, to change consumer behavior and attitudes towards a more environmentally friendly one, it is enough to have access to information on the environmental effects of a given consumption pattern and to better inform the consumer about the quality parameters of the purchased products and their environmental impact. According to ecologically oriented philosophy and psychology, the following are necessary a) a deeper diagnosis of the causes of consumerism and excessive human interference with nature; b) deeper rooting of pro-ecological attitudes, motivations, and behaviors in the structure of human consciousness and mentality – in the consumer's value system and in his ethics. Otherwise, pro-ecological behavior will be shallow and will be a passing phenomenon, susceptible to ideologies and fashions. Broader concepts of ecological philosophy and environmental ethics were formed in the West from the 1970s. A little later,

psychological propositions began to emerge, arguing that the condition of ecological change should be a change at the personal-level, noting a deep connection between the nature of man and Nature. An example of comprehensive eco-philosophical proposals relating to the issue of consumption and postulating ethical regulations are the deep ecology of a Norwegian philosopher, Arne Naess (1912-2009) and the eco-philosophy of the Polish philosopher working in the USA, Henryk Skolimowski (1930-2018). The works of Paul Shepard (1925-1996) and Theodore Roszak (1933-2011) are an example of parallelly formulated ecological proposals reaching fundamental worldview and axiological changes, on the basis of broadly and holistically understood psychology, which will be outlined below.

1. Ecophilosophical foundations of a sustainable lifestyle

The important stimulus for the development of ecological reflection in philosophy and other fields of social sciences and humanities was the growing awareness of threats related to the development of technical civilization and its negative impact on the biosphere (Waloszczyk 1996, 200). Ecological issues were taken up on the basis of many humanities and social sciences, leading to the emergence of their pro-ecological trends and fields (Kiełczewski 2001). In terms of philosophy, one of the most popular and widespread concepts is deep ecology, created in the early 1970s by Arne Naess and later developed by Bill Devall and Georges Sessions. This philosophy is characterized by eight principles formulated by its authors, four of which concern the need to change consumption and production patterns to more ecologically sustainable (Devall and Sessions 1985):

- Humans have no right to reduce the richness and diversity of life forms except to satisfy their vital needs.
- Policies must therefore be changed. The changes in policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological

structures. The resulting state of affairs will be widely different from the present situation.

- The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent worth) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great.
- Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to participate in the attempt to implement the necessary changes.

The educational process should, according to Naess, result in resistance to the forces of consumerism: advertising, mass culture, and hyperconsumption (Naess 1992). According to A. Neale, the main goal of the creators and practitioners of ecophilosophy was to change the awareness of people. Excessive consumption was perceived as a lack of well-educated eco-awareness, which in turn resulted in a lack of the need to make more environmentally friendly choices (Neale 2015, 150). Henryk Skolimowski in his first manifesto of eco-philosophy, entitled *Ecological Humanism*, formulated the general idea of “The World as Sanctuary” (Skolimowski 1974). According to him, the basis of any worldview, be it mythological, philosophical or scientific, is Cosmology – understood as the basic assumptions and the most general knowledge and beliefs about the world – what exists and the possibility of getting to know it. The core of any cosmology is the main metaphor on which the most general assumptions about the world are based. In the case of modern cosmology, it was a Newtonian-Cartesian vision of the world as a great clock, operating according to mechanistic and deterministic laws. From a given cosmology, a specific philosophy emerges, postulating certain values, and these mainly affect the directions of activities undertaken by man (Skolimowski 1992, 12).

Cosmology → Philosophy → Values → Action

Fig. 1. Relationships between Cosmology, Philosophy, Values and Action according to Henryk Skolimowski.

The eco-cosmology postulated by Skolimowski is based on a vision of the World as a place endowed with the sanctity of Life, opposite to mechanicism and determinism. It is the basis of the eco-philosophy, which Skolimowski understood metaphorically as the tree of life, and practically as a systematic drawing of consequences from the very assumption that the world is a sanctuary (Skolimowski 1999). In this concept, man and mind, as well as their spirituality, are a natural result of cosmic evolution, understood as a process of increasing complexity aimed at the emergence of biological and psychical life, and then noetic (mental) life. In terms of eco-cosmology, the Cosmos (the Universe) is an ontological extension of Oikos, being the place and home of man and other living creatures¹.

A feature that distinguishes humans from other species is the mind, awareness, and self-awareness as well as creativity, and the ability to take responsibility for oneself and one's surroundings. Skolimowski considered the emergence of ecological consciousness – symbiotic towards the totality of life and the world, which opposes the exploitative and dominant mechanistic consciousness, alienating, dividing, and focused on the particular interests of the individual, group, and species – as the key stage of noetic evolution. Man's realization of belonging to a larger whole, which is the ecological environment, sensitivity to its state, and taking responsibility for its well-being and future, is a turning point in the process of evolution of the human species. The ecological transformation of our mentality, culture, and civilization is the condition for human survival, which he often expressed in

the statement that “the 21st century will be an ecological century, or it will not be at all”.

The ecological awareness emerging at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries is part of a new, holistic, and ecological paradigm, which is also participatory. New values emerge from it, which should guide an ecological man (*Homo ecologicus*) in his actions. Ecological and ethical behavior is a form of human participation in the world, which is conducive to both physical and mental health, as well as to maintaining the balance and sustainability of the environment. Skolimowski sees the sources of mental disorders in disorders of the participation of the natural part, which is man, in the whole of the biotic community (community of life): “Our modern times are afflicted with all kinds of mental diseases and disorders because human beings have been denied the right to participation. An outburst of various forms of therapy in our times is a hidden response of life to reestablish the right to participation. All therapy is an attempt to bring the person back to meaningful forms of participation” (Skolimowski 1994, 182).

Participation is a way of restoring a disturbed balance and healing damaged relations between a person and his environment. It makes possible to overcome pathological individualization and alienation of man from the community of being and Life on Earth. In the cosmological dimension, the holistic participation means conscious presence of the mind in the world (Cosmos) and participation of the world in the mind, without which it is inconceivable. The world is not only passively reflected in the mind as in a mirror but is created by the mind through its sensitivities: sensual, emotional, cognitive, spiritual. It is through us, beings endowed with mind and various sensitivities, that the Cosmos gets to know and contemplate itself. This shows the fundamental, organic

¹ A science that develops an interdisciplinary, natural and humanistic view of the environment and the Cosmos as a place of human existence is Cosmoecology (Korpikiewicz 2020).

unity of man with the place of his birth and life – the World. Forgetting about this relationship, man alienates himself from Nature and himself, suffering enormous spiritual losses, which he wants to compensate for with excessive consumption. In this approach, the world is treated as a collection of exchangeable resources, and development is understood as progress in their appropriation and commercialization, in the name of never-ending growth and consumption.

As Ignacy S. Fiut sums it up: “However, a quick pace of life causes a drop in its quality, namely the occurrence of mass stress, civilisational, mental and spiritual diseases, cultural de-rooting and social alienation, mainly due to the media that keep false euphoria among people, which, as a consequence, has unleashed on the mass scale existential fear that is concealed under the enhanced and redundant consumption. (...) In Skolimowski’s assessment, the main cause of this is the lack of spiritual balance in people. It is well reflected in modern art, and which results in loss of awareness of the need for responsible self-limitation in action, self-development, and therefore the ability of creative self-realisation, thus as a consequence they resolve to unlimited freedom of choice, realised in the unlimited forms of consumption” (Fiut 2009, 39, 42).

By analyzing the causes of the disturbing relationship between humans and the environment, Skolimowski identified the source of this disorder, like many other ecophilosophers, in a mechanistic paradigm, founded at the beginning of the modern era by F. Bacon, Galileo, Descartes, and Newton. This paradigm resulted in a reductionist image of the world, implying an instrumental, manipulative and exploitative attitude towards nature and people, as well as towards knowledge and cognition (*scientia est potentia*), promoting such values as: effectiveness, efficiency, controllability, instrumentalization, use and progress. According to Skolimowski, these values are embodied in modern technology, in which the instrumental and conquering approach to the world, treated as

a collection of things to be used, reaches its apogee.² They stimulate the materialistic economy of continuous production and consumption growth, at the expense of the environment (consumerism) and at the expense of spiritual development, culture, and autotelic values. It results in an ecological, social, psychological, and cultural crisis manifested in the relativism and nihilism of the postmodern era. Although he created eco-ethics as practical guidelines for responsible and committed behavior in the era of the ecological crisis, Skolimowski did not develop the psychological and therapeutic threads of his eco-philosophy. Therefore, it is worth considering the main assumptions of pro-ecologically oriented psychology (ecopsychology) against this background.

2. Ecologically sensitive psychology

The authorship of the term ecopsychology and the creation of its main concept is attributed to Theodore Roszak, an American historian of ideas who became famous for his analysis of youth movements in the 1960s as Counter Culture. However, the first systematic reflections on psychological grounds on the causes of the contemporary ecological crisis were carried out in the 1970s by Robert Greenway, postulating the concept of psychoecology (Greenway 1995) and Paul Shepard. A comprehensive interpretation of green psychology was also presented by an American psychologist Ralph Metzner (Metzner 1999)³. According

² In this perspective, Skolimowski would also criticize the so-called transhumanism aiming at human cyborgization and the maximum technicization of life.

³ The name “ecological psychology” was already used in the 1950s – 1960s for research on human perception and behavior in natural surroundings (outside the laboratory) by researchers such as James Gibson, Roger Barker, and Urie Bronfenbrenner. Although their approach was characterized by a departure from behaviorism, a systemic and holistic approach, and emphasizing the importance of the environment for human and his development, strictly ecological themes were essentially absent in their research and works (Bańka 2002).

to Shepard, the key issue of ecopsychology is the question of why man destroys his habitat – the environment of his life at all. In his opinion, in order to understand destructive human behavior, it is not enough to know the history of ideas, although we are currently dealing with the largest gap in history between the dominant philosophy and the Earth (Shepard 1998, 2-3).

However, Shepard did not see the sources of the contemporary crisis in the relationship between man and the environment in the modern dualism, but several thousand years earlier, on the threshold of the Neolithic era, when an agricultural civilization emerged, and the lifestyle of the human species changed from hunter-gatherer to sedentary. The increasing scale of nature's transformation over time has led to the creation of a completely artificial environment, that does not correspond to human nature or our biological and psychological needs. According to Shepard, this prevents natural development and maturity, resulting in the structural alienation of man from nature and psychological consequences in the form of mental disorders and diseases. Civilization madness (title of Shepard's book) is the opposite of natural order and ecological balance.

According to Shepard, the expression of the childhood immaturity of mankind is fantasizing about omnipotence and eternal expansion, narcissism, and egocentrism, not distinguishing between reality and fiction, illusions, inconsistency, and irresponsibility. These features have become a permanent element of the personality of modern man. Civilization and its institutions have created systems to sustain this immaturity. An example is an economic system based on compulsive consumption. It is supported by the Western mentality (especially, as Shepard emphasizes, the American), which is characterized by obsessive overconsumption, waste and a desire to achieve immediate gratification here and now. The psychological effects of immaturity are, according to Shepard: escape into addiction and

escapism, violence and destruction, depression, indiscriminate use of psychotherapy, susceptibility to manipulation. The ecological effect is the destruction of the natural environment, unprecedented in history. The overeating the world becomes an unconscious, desperate substitute for self-development. Contemporary man is plunged into insane helplessness, unaware of his own and ecological boundaries and the possibilities of his internal development, destroying himself, the world, and his future (Roszak, Gomes and Kanner 1995, 32).

Contrary to P. Shepard, Theodore Roszak did not see the causes of the contemporary ecological crisis until the agrarian revolution, but like the vast majority of ecophilosophers in expansive western culture and in dualism that has dominated the western cognitive paradigm from the second half of the 17th century. According to Roszak, the Western system of values aims at control, domination, manipulation, and effectiveness that is responsible for the destructive attitudes and actions of humans towards the environment, people, communities and other cultures. The aim of his project of ecopsychology is to build a bridge between the Person and the Planet, between the external (world) and the internal (soul), between ecology and psychology. The division into internal (mental) and external (physical) reality negates the obvious fact that the mental is also inside the world (in the world), and the world is reflected in our mind.

At the deep level that ecopsychology tries to reach, human nature is connected with the nature of the world – Nature. Therefore, the suffering of nature caused by human interference, and on a global scale by the expansion of civilization, manifests itself through us in the form of suffering of the soul, which are various kinds of mental disorders and diseases. It follows that without healing the environment, it will not be possible to eliminate the causes of the modern epidemic of mental disorders and diseases resulting from an increasingly degraded environment. The voice and

scream of the Earth, in the title of Roszak's main opus, manifests itself through us, humans, through our sensitivity and consciousness, and through the suffering of the Earth through the diseases that affect us as a result of a polluted and unhealthy environment.

According to Roszak, the source of many contemporary mental disorders is the pathological relationship between humans and nature. The psychopathology of our everyday life is created by ecological problems: global warming, increasing environmental pollution, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, etc. Roszak draws attention to the fundamental pathology of urban-industrial culture and, at the same time, to the ineffectiveness of the actions based on the "shock and shame" strategy and rational argumentation, taken so far to counteract the destruction of the environment. This, in his opinion, is similar to admonishing a pyromaniac "that he sets fire". Roszak explains environmentally destructive consumerism in psychological terms as compensation for the alienation of man from the Whole, Meaning and Nature. He also notices, like Skolimowski, the basic ties between the adopted vision of a person's place in the world (in the Cosmos) and the fundamental sense of existential meaning.

According to Roszak, ecopsychology is a science, which will help us to understand both the deep meaning of our mental suffering related to experiencing the ecological crisis and destroying the diversity of Life on Earth, as well as designing effective ways of overcoming this crisis. To do this, according to Roszak, culture must change, because the mere awareness of the sources of the contemporary crisis and reflection on its causes and effects is not enough. Roszak, therefore, sees the causes of the present crisis in human relations with the environment, and its prospective cure, in culture.

Unlike Skolimowski, he sees the key role in the transformation of our culture into a more pro-ecological one, not in philosophy, but precisely in psychology, although it sets goals and tasks similar to those

of Skolimowski: "The great changes our runaway industrial civilisation must make if we are kept the planet healthy will not come about by the force of reason alone or the influence of the fact. Rather, they will come by way of psychological transformation. What the Earth requires will have to make itself felt within us as if it were our own most private desire. Facts and figures, reason and logic can show us the errors of our present ways; they can delineate the risks we run. But they cannot motivate, they cannot teach us a better way to live, a better way to *want* to live. Thus, must be born from inside our own convictions (...) A modern science of the soul that is adequate to its task must minister to that discontent as something that is more and other than sexuality-based, family-based, or socially-based. In our time, the private psyche in its search for sanity needs a context that embraces all that science has to tell us about the evolution of life on Earth, about the stars and the galaxies that are the distant origin of our existence." (Roszak 1992, 47).

In the need of this invigorating cosmological and ecological knowledge as the basis for the ecological transformation of our mind (*metanoia*), Roszak converges essentially with the vision of Skolimowski, who believed that we are the eyes of the Cosmos, through which the Cosmos knows itself. According to Roszak, we are the voice of the Earth, through which our planet obtains its awareness and self-knowledge. By getting to know our planet and the entire cosmos more broadly, we get to know ourselves and our genesis. The awareness of the beauty and wonder of existence and the world builds our strength to resist the destruction that ecological (and cosmological) ignorance causes in our environment. Roszak notices that the needs of our soul are analogous to the needs of nature; we need mental health, the balance of mind, and peace of the soul, just as natural ecosystems need undisturbed functioning (homeostasis). A summary of the differences and common elements of Skolimowski's

eco-philosophy and Roszak’s ecopsychology is presented in Table 1.

In addition to extensive analyzes of the genesis of the contemporary crisis in the relationship between Man and Nature, Roszak included a synthetic interpretation of his ecopsychology in eight principles. They say that the path to ecological awareness leads through awareness of the content of the ecological unconscious, which includes the natural history of the evolution of the Cosmos, Earth, and Man. Just as the aim of earlier therapies was to discover the repressed contents of the human unconscious, the aim of ecopsychology is to awaken the innate sense of interdependence with nature, hidden in ecological ignorance. Ecopsychology seeks to heal the more fundamental alienation between the recently formed urban psyche and the centuries-old natural environment. Roszak recommends a return to children’s and women’s sensitivity to nature – creating an *ecological Self* from childhood, through sensitizing children to nature. Shaping ecological responsibility for the environment should be a function of an *ecological Self*. In his opinion, anything that contributes to the development of small social forms and the acquisition of personal power strengthens the *ecological Self*, and

anything that leads to large-scale dominance and suppression of personal power undermines the *ecological Self*.

Breaking unity and harmony with nature is traumatic, making modern man susceptible to all addictions, the most telling example of which, according to C. Glendinning, is the dependence on technology: a technocentric, technocratic and addictive psycho-socio-economic system embodies the mechanistic principles of standardization, linearity, efficiency, fragmentation (Glendinning 1995, 45). Artificial and driven by an obsessive rule of consumption and a continual increase in productivity, the socio-economic environment produces an “All-Consuming Self” that eats away at the planet Earth and its future. The unrestrained and unsatisfied rule of consumption is proportional to the inner, spiritual emptiness that results from the unfulfilled natural and deep needs of belonging, union, and love. It is the absorbing and dominant Self that M.E. Gomes and A.D. Kanner refer to as “Separative Self” – separated from the wider social and ecological context (Gomes and Kanner 1995, 115).

Since its initiation by Roszak, ecopsychology has developed both towards a biocentric radicalization inspired by deep

Table 1. Summary of sources and main assumptions of the eco-philosophy of H. Skolimowski and the ecopsychology of Th. Roszak (elaborated by the author)

Sources and assumptions of Roszak’s ecopsychology	Sources and assumptions of Skolimowski’s eco-philosophy
S. Freud: the concept of the individual unconscious (human biologicality, instincts)	K. R. Popper; T. Kuhn: philosophy of science, evolution of paradigms
C. G. Jung: the concept of the collective unconscious as a species evolutionary heritage	Teilhard de Chardin: evolutionary theology A.N. Whitehead, A. Schweitzer, M. Gandhi
Deep ecology biocentric egalitarianism	Holistic eco-ethics, moderate anthropocentrism
Criticism and rejection of: mechanism, dualism, materialism, scientism, positivism, reductionism, existentialism, pessimism.	
The meaning of the non-intellectual dimensions of the mind (sensitivity, feelings, values, care, trust, love). Epistemological equality of science, art, and religion	
Socio-cultural revolutions of the 1960s: rejection of consumerism (urban-industrial culture), pacifism, Holism, ecofeminism	
Processual, systemic, and evolutionary perspective; New Physics and Cosmology: Anthropic principle, Gaia hypothesis	
Ecological Self rooted in Ecological Unconscious	The Participatory Mind
Psychological transformation	Metanoia

ecology (Fischer 2002) and towards a broad approach to the psychology of sustainability (Scott et al. 2021). The practical direction of the development of ecopsychology – its operationalization in the form of practical applications is ecotherapy. Its first definition was coined by an American pastor, Howard Clinebell and relates to a reciprocal form of healing whereby personal healing is initiated through mindful immersion in nature, which in turn empowers a person with an invigorated capacity to conserve the Earth (Clinebell 1996).

Conclusion

The proposal that integrates the philosophical-ethical and psychological-existential approach in the form of a sustainable lifestyle pattern and a responsible consumption attitude based on H. Skolimowski's eco-ethics is frugality. The English word *frugality* reflects all three values: economy, moderation, modesty. Recognizing frugality as the central and general determinant of the sustainability attitude, its dissemination and practice in everyday life can be described exactly as *frugality*. Frugality is understood by Skolimowski as follows: "Frugality is a vehicle of responsibility, a mode of being that makes responsibility possible and tangible, in the world in which we recognize natural constraints and the symbiotic relationships of a connected system of life. To understand the right of others to live is to limit our unnecessary wants. The motto in one of the Franciscan retreat houses reads: "Anything we have that is more than we need is stolen from those who have less than they need". (...) *Frugality is an optimal model of living vis-à-vis other beings*. A true awareness of frugality and its right enactment is born out of the conviction that things of the greatest values are free: friendship, love, inner joy, the freedom to develop within. (...) On a higher level still, *frugality is grace without waste*. (...) frugality is not a prohibition, not a negative commandment (be frugal or be doomed), but a positive precept: *be frugal and shine with health*

and grace. (...) Aristotle was already aware of the beauty of frugality when he wrote that the rich are not only the ones who own much but also the ones who need little. (...) You cannot be truly reverential towards life unless you are frugal, in this present world of ours in which the balances are so delicate and so easy to strain" (Skolimowski 1992, 213-214).

In the context of the above-characterised balanced pattern of consumption, sustainable lifestyle, and ethics of consumption, frugality can therefore be defined as a **permanent ethical disposition of the character of a human being aimed at satisfying consumption needs in a moderate, economical, and modest manner, opposing the consumption of excess and wastage, and aware of wider social and environmental consequences of the acts of consumption** (Niedek and Krajewski 2021). The condition for this attitude is therefore recognition of real and genuine consumer needs, having ecological awareness and knowledge, and directing life energy towards more spiritual than material development (deconsumption and dematerialisation of consumption). Table 2 presents a comparative comparison of the features of the consumerist (overconsumption) attitude with the frugalistic one.

Frugality is one of many possible forms of practicing a sustainable lifestyle, next to the increasingly popular minimalism, freeganism, and the Voluntary Simplicity movement (Niedek and Krajewski 2021). The authors cited earlier also qualify and characterize as sustainable lifestyles: Fair Trade, Values and Lifestyles Segmentation, Lifestyle of health and sustainability, Wellness, Hygge, Lagom, Slow living, Smart living, Low-carbon lifestyles (Lubowiecki-Vikuk et al. 2021, 97). In the ecopsychological perspective, as well as in the light of the assumptions of positive psychology, a balanced lifestyle can perform (psycho)therapeutic and prophylactic functions both in the area of human impact on the environment and the sphere of negative psychological

Table 2. Comparison of the characteristics of consumerist and frugalistic attitudes (elaborated by the author).

Features of a consumerist consumer attitude	Features of a frugalistic (sustainable) consumer attitude
Satisfying egoistic desires and whims	Satisfying real needs
Ostentatious and snobbish consumption	Modesty
Waste	Recovering
Compulsive consumption	Consumption resulting from real needs
Overconsumption	Sustainable and moderate consumption
Consumption of cheap and perishable goods (low-quality products, junk food)	Consumption of durable and high-quality goods (in particular of ecological quality)
Predominance of consumption of material goods	Consumption of intangible goods (knowledge, art, beauty, services) – focussing on personal, spiritual, and interpersonal development
Self-centred consumption, without awareness of ecological and social effects and costs	Consumption aware of the social and environmental impact
Hedonistic consumption (aimed at instant gratification “here and now”)	Consumption aware of the pre-consumption stage (origin, way of producing products) and post-consumption stage (way of managing post-consumer waste)

effects of the progressing ecological crisis. Changing the lifestyle to more sustainable and taking practical actions for the environment may be an element and a positive effect of the eco-therapy process, through its links with the client’s everyday life (Buzzell 2009).

From a psychological perspective, the issue of sustainable consumption focuses on identifying the consumer’s real needs, desires and motivations, as well as broad psychological and psycho-social factors of his consumption choices and consumer behaviour. From the ecopsychological perspective, particular attention is paid to such pathological phenomena in the behaviour of society like compulsivity, compensation, narcissism, and addiction – the features of consumerism. This is a valuable complement to the characteristics conducted from the philosophical, axiological, and ethical perspective, which may be of key importance for increasing the effectiveness of the practical implementation of the pattern of sustainable lifestyle and responsible consumption in society, including designing effective activities and projects in informal and formal education for sustainable development and in pro-ecological pedagogy.

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