
CAPITALISM AGAINST ITSELF (CRITICAL VIEWS AND INSIGHTS)

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*Social engineering is rarely successful, but visions
of a better future are always necessary
(Lester Thurow)*

Abstract: The pragmatic mass conscience and behavior of individuals towards the achievement of private and public wealth sets the accumulation of capital as its leading motive and factor – it creates jobs, goods and income. As it turns into a lifestyle, it becomes a mass principle of modernity which has led to renaming it to capitalism. This, however, poses the question – does modernity not problematize the relationships economic – non-economic activities, capital – labor, private – public interests, national – global dependencies? On balance, does it not ignore the moral nature of man contrary to its initial humanistic spirit? The article makes an attempt to defend this hypothesis as it takes into account the views of a number of established social erudite scholars; the judgements are supported by empirical proof leading to the conclusion that by evolving, capitalism all by itself prepares the need of a reorganization of social life on a new basis. As a result of the presented arguments, we reach the conclusion that successful countries will rely primarily on the free multifaceted development of each individual. With a view of all this, we need a complete (economic, spiritual, social and legal and political) vision of a positive change which shall harmoniously direct its resources to all spheres of life. This would secure: spirituality – ideas, culture and meaning; economy – material prosperity; morality – virtue; legal and political sphere – social peace, harmonious and just social order.

Keywords: Capitalism, anti-Keynesian revolution, private and public interest, anthropocene.

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Introduction

For centuries, the conceptual framework for uniting the individuals in the society has been God as an abstract causality. It has inspired protection of the subjects by the ruler and their pious behavior. It has aimed at achieving a society which is an expression of “God’s order” which shall morally discipline people. The contemporary age demythologizes this order. Doing away with the theoretical Middle Ages, the Renaissance and The Age of Reason has created a humanistic image of social life which respects the dignity of man himself. It inspires the civil (bourgeoisie) revolutions (in the Netherlands – 16th century, in Great Britain – 17th century, in America and France – 18th century) which have paved the way to modernization. The beginning is set by the English Magna Carta (1215) and the ideas of the prominent artists – from Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Leonardo to many others who create the French Enlightenment and the American dream. Those ideas find expression in the Declaration of Independence of the USA (1776) and the French Declaration of the Rights of the Man and of the Citizen (1789). They idolize the very free and rational man based on the new “social mechanics”.

Firstly, in the foreground, we see the promotion of human rights and freedoms, including the right of property, happiness, and security. The basis is the market and the competitive organization of human activity as a social mechanism which does not depend on anyone. Bearing in mind the ratio between the demand and the supply of goods, it forms the level of prices and the income from property (land or capital), from entrepreneurship or from labor and everyone is remunerated according to his/her merits. Secondly, this is the significance of the state and legal order which protects from human irresponsibility; it shall secure the rule of law, the separation of powers, democracy and parliamentarism. This is the basis for the emergence of pragmatic mass conscience and behavior of the individuals for the achievement of private and public wealth. The accumulation of capital becomes the leading motive as it creates jobs, goods, and income. It transforms into a lifestyle and becomes the main principle of modernity which has led to renaming it to capitalism.

According to A. Smith (1723-1790), one of the “fathers” of the theory of liberal capitalism, by controlling human vices (selfishness, passion for wealth and pleasures), the new social order turns them into a virtuous power both for personal advantage and public good. On the one hand, each individual, as long as he/she is just – writes Smith, is entirely free to pursue his/her interest. Guided by “the invisible hand of the market”, he/she is engaged only in activities whose product has the highest demand and which, therefore, is the most beneficial for the society. This leads to the realization of the private interest as it satisfies – through the market – the interests of all individuals, hence the public interest.

On the other hand, the state, by providing social order – public security and justice, creates conditions for the realization of the private interest itself. Because of the possible malice and wastefulness of state authority, emphasizes A. Smith, the society can thrive not only at the existence of freedom, but also of perfect justice (Smith, 1983, p. 331, 435, 437, 658). J. von Justi (1717-1771) adds the necessity of a “watchful civil society” which shall secure a just country. According to J. Madison (1809-1817), because people are not angels, there shall always be state control over their behavior as social actors and a persistent control over the actions of the government itself.

In the 19th century, during the reign of Queen Victoria, liberal capitalism turns into social ideal for many peoples. It finds expression in the puritan moral values of strenuous labor, self-discipline, sense of duty, temperance in everything, honesty and justice, but also the flourishing of science, education and the arts – standards of high culture which turns man into a master of his own nature. They are accompanied by both the economic liberalism – the stimulating basis for entrepreneurship, trade, competitiveness and material wealth, and the constitutionalism and political liberalism. Being alleged as applicable to many purposes, this order draws people to the new social environment. Having practically achieved a fruitful connectivity of human activities with the institutions, Great Britain becomes “a workshop, a merchant, a banker and a carrier of the world”, whereas its technological, economic and social progress – a role model. This overshadows the negative effects of the aspiration to accumulate capital described by authors such as Charles Dickens and Honoré de Balzac.

Such effects are the humanistic ideal and its initial reaction through the established modernity. To a large extent, this is how it is accepted even today. Logically, the question is if it has remained like this. Having evolved, does modernity not problematize the relationships between economic and non-economic activities, between capital and labor, private and public interests, national and global dependencies? On balance, does it not ignore the moral nature of man contrary to its initial humanistic spirit? I will try to defend this hypothesis taking into account the views of a number of established social erudite scholars; I will support my judgements with empirical proof leading to the conclusion that by evolving, capitalism all by itself prepares the need of reorganization of social life on a new basis.

1. Towards a Newton's social mechanism and Faustus' culture

The evolution of the capitalist social order begins with the passion for Newton's mechanism explaining the world. However, referring it to social life mixes natural and social laws which require holding responsibility for time, place, customs, traditions and mostly – for man himself. At that, the industrial revolution, which has changed life radically, is considered a triumph of modernity. Technologies and the competitive market and economic organization of human activity assume a leading role. It is considered a natural and deserved reward for entrepreneurship which shall improve the quality and magnitude of capital, it shall secure competitiveness as well as profitable jobs for the paid labor sector.

This is acceptable as long as the desire for profit does not turn into an end in itself at all costs. However, as early as the dawn of the “new time”, Thomas More (1478–1535) ironically claims that honesty will be possible only if it brings profit. Charles Montesquieu (1689–1755) warns the French that in England (similarly to today's Bulgaria) instead of virtues, people talk about money, deals, property and positions. Freedom through laws is replaced by freedom from laws. It also vouches for such a social structure which, by bringing up honest citizens, will be good both for the individual and for the society. (Montesquieu, 1984, pp. 74-75).

As they say, God is always followed by the Devil. In Germany, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) interprets the social change through his tragedy *Faustus*. His hero, tempted by the demon Mephistopheles, loses his soul as the price for acquiring knowledge and goods – a metaphor of what in truth the new man is like. Thus gradually, and increasingly, in many countries, it is not only money that motivates the individuals' behavior. The emergence of a Faustian culture, from a precondition for the freedom of choice in a competitive and market environment, becomes the basis of life. Later, Thomas Macaulay (1800–1859) makes the prophecy that capitalism, following this path, will inevitably find itself under a double threat. Some will insist for more and more rights and freedoms, which will encourage anarchy as freedom without social order. Others, on the contrary, will protest against freedom turning into permissiveness as this will lead to moving towards despotic order without freedom. This becomes a fact in the world, and in Bulgaria at the time of Aleko Konstantinov and Petko Rachov Slaveykov, today we witness it with the rebirth of capitalism.

Capitalism has never been a crystal, it periodically transforms. The American politician Henry George (1839–1897) admits that modernity through homo sensualis and homo sapiens has given birth to homo faber – “the manufacturing man”, “the blacksmith of his own fate”. However, on the one

hand, those who dictate the order today are cartels and trusts having oligopolist and monopolist power, eliminating free competition and dictating unilaterally the prices, whereas on the other hand, social inequality and the polarization of the society increase. Human spirit weakens; individuals change their socio-cultural orientation. There is a boom of illegal acts which corrupt human behavior in order to derive undeserved benefits. The struggle for material wealth, luxury, vainglory, and power prevails. Social interactions give way to contradictions. As with every age, according to Henry George, modernity does not make an exception; on balance, it reaches to the exhaustion of its structural and functional suitability as a social generator. He goes on to conclude that we also need to search for a new social order which reconstructs social life. (George, 1933, pp. 393–396).

After the golden age of its liberal-classical version, capitalism is problematized as a type of social arrangement, on the one hand, by the increased technological and economic domination of large capital; on the other hand, by the disproportion between the received and the deserved by social actors which increases social inequality especially by ignoring the legal and moral norms as parameters of the living environment. Thus, we come to a social disharmony – an expression of twisting the social development. Instead of humanism, we witness the triumph of commercialism which imposes the painful need to expect money out of anything.

At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, there is a development of nationalism and international competition. World wars and social revolutions break out, competing social systems of liberal capitalism, fascism, and totalitarian socialism form. Social life, characterized by already deep moral and cultural value differences and norms, hence – the different ideologies and character of state authority, has led to crises. Abandoning the well-known as an ideology and experience Marxism, what do contemporary pronounced erudite scholars tell us about this?

The puritan spirit, thinks the prominent sociologist and economist Max Weber (1864–1920), facilitates the construction of the modern economic order, but it is gradually left out. It is replaced by the technologies and the desire for material possessions which have become a lifestyle. Social resources are directed primarily to the material sphere to the detriment of the non-material human activity and the spiritual transcendence of man. The reason for this deviation, according to Weber, is also the transformation of rationalism into bureaucracy. Along with the decline of the religious moral norms, this leads to formalism and adventurism. Because of this, modern society misses on the moral imperatives of Christianity and on the humanistic spirit of the Enlightenment. People do away with the sublime and the ethical; consumerism

and the uncontrolled thirst for wealth and pleasure which replace the humanity in man prevail (Weber, 1993, pp. 37, 192–1948).

A severe critic of modern society is also the French geneticist and Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine laureate Alexis Carrel (1873–1944). He claims that natural sciences, technologies, and economy are favored at the cost of the development of the humanities – medicine, psychology, ethnography, history, philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, philology, pedagogics, etc. Social life is technology and economy oriented, but it is accompanied by moral decay of man himself such as psyche, upbringing, attitude towards life, ethics, aesthetics, etc. The strive for quantity of goods has separated people from the spiritual as a quality. Money and the obsession with goods have become the essence of civilization. This, however, does not lead to more morality, intelligence, security, or peace. Alexis Carrel poses the question – is it necessary that the production and consumption of useless products at the cost of natural and social environment increases as this demoralizes man? They are detrimental to the human spirit, morality, and intelligence; they do not get rid of injustice. The development of the sciences on man and his existence is limited to the strive for mechanicism. Scholars are distracted by man himself, by his spirituality and strive for transcendence. Bearing all this in mind, Carrel concludes that it is time we rejected the evolved doctrine of modern society which has become a dogma (Carrel, 1935, pp.70–71, 285, 353–354).

On the same basis, and also because of the hunger for wealth, criminality and a breakup between the elite and the masses, the French sociologist Raymond Aron (1905–1983) concludes that the modern world has already lost its fascination and has disappointed us (Aron, 1972). José Ortega y Gasset (1883–1955) turns Henry Georges’ thesis that every social engine sooner or later is exhausted into a scientific theory. He writes that modern age, which begins as early as the Middle Ages at lower levels of life, has achieved a greater “repertoire of life”; it has raised its historical degree and by globalizing itself, it has achieved completeness. This has led to the creation of conditions for involution – turning, retreating, and deviating from the primordial human values of the Enlightenment ideal. The strive for seeking pleasure and ignoring the renaissance principles and rules of behavior prevails. José Ortega emphasizes that every type of society is bound to oblivion when it abandons the ideals and principles for which it was established. All previous civilizations, including the great Rome, perished for this reason. This is also the fate of modernity (Ortega y Gasset, 1993, pp. 53–54, 96–99). The French sociologist Raymond Aron, on the basis of the greed for wealth, the criminality and the divorce between the elite and the masses, concludes that the modern world has already lost its fascination and has disappointed us (Aron, 1972).

In the 20th century, after the world wars (mainly in Europe), liberal capitalism evolves in socio-democracy and in a welfare state. What follows is the so-called “glorious thirty” (1945–1975) of significant economic growth and fairer allocation of resources; this allows a wider access to education and health care, as well as more moderate social inequality. Nevertheless, the lack of objective prerequisites for such an order and the deep economic crisis in the last quarter of the 20th century corrupt this model. What also collapses is the commanding and administrative socialist system that exists parallel to this model and the world moves towards the entire domination of the capitalist form of organization of social and economic life.

2. Critical assessment of today’s capitalism

Contemporary capitalism evolves in corporate globalism. Computer networks control the access to information and the choice of goods without efficient regulation of their business models for generation of profits. The Faustian culture with its characteristic and unstoppable strive for commerciality, money and consumerism continues to reign. However, the growing extraction of natural resources with of view of the accumulation of more and more profits threatens the equilibrium of the ecological systems which is a constituent condition for human existence. To a lesser or larger extent we witness the reign of oligarchism – an alliance of the economic and political power. The belief in ideologies and political systems has weakened. There is a process of dissolving of state, class, political, cultural, etc. borders. There are environmental and technical disasters, interethnic, religious and social conflicts. There is global terrorism everywhere. We witness a “new exodus”. There is a contradiction not only among the great powers, but also among countries with high quality of living and others which feel wronged. The strive for luxurious material life and the efforts for defending human rights have so far failed to put an end to injustice. Moral values have faded away. The deviation from the humanistic ideal has deepened. There is the emergence of undermining structural and functional tensions which are not so easy to overcome. This pressure has led to the formation of two contradicting on a global scale versions of capitalism – the western neo-liberal and the politically motivated and governing capitalism (mainly in Asia). In short, what is their distinction?

Being the fruit of the Anti-Keynesian revolution (Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher), contemporary neo-liberal meritocratic capitalism has a mission not to obstruct anyone’s positioning and to achieve its goals. However, there is no equality of opportunities. The big business exercises control over the capital, commodity, cash and information flows, thus dominating state policy

as well. Within these frameworks, there is a trend towards the unification of the received high income from the possession of tangible and human capital (of large entrepreneurs, managers, web designers, IT specialists, investment bankers, physicians, athletes, stars of the showbusiness, etc.). More or less, these are the same individuals. Official figures show that the relative ratio of those who have such income in the USA has increased from 15% of the population in 1980 to around 30% in 2017. As a result, as summarized by Branko Milanović, there is already an overlap and dissolution of the classes of capital and labor (Milanović, 2020, pp. 51, 53).

The bee in the honey of neoliberal capitalism, ironically claims Yuval Noah Harari, is the growing social inequality. Timothy Snyder, an American historian, points out that in 2012 in the USA a family from the first 0.01% of the wealthiest ones is 1,120 times wealthier than an average American family. The wealthiest 10% of the population own 76% of the whole wealth; according to the Swiss bank Credit Suisse, in today's Russia, this ratio is even higher – 89% (Snyder, 2018, p. 309). Niall Ferguson, a Scottish historian based in the USA, also thinks that the world has reached an anomaly which is expressed in the amputation of humanity from the unstoppable cult to money and worship of material luxury as a type of culture. (Ferguson, 2009, p. 10). As summarized by the Harvard sociologist Daniel Bell, it is not the Humanism of the Enlightenment that dominates but the Faustian culture which has replaced the precious with the commonplace – an expression of the distortion of social development (Bell, 1994, pp.231–238). Kazuo Ishiguro, a Nobel Prize for Literature laureate, is right to claim that there are astonishing achievements of science, technology and medicine – they all bring life-saving benefits. However, they do not soothe the generations which are tired of empty hopes. The competition for supremacy between the great powers returns; it threatens with cyberwars and insecure future (Ishiguro, 2018). Pope Francis, in his address from 3 March 2021, warns that the existing path to development is detrimental and the world needs solidarity, peace and brotherhood. Steven Pinker, a Canadian psychologist, claims that the institutions of the Enlightenment are an expression of virtue and responsible thinking; thus, he goes on to argue that even in today's conditions a responsible choice is required. It is the choice to update the ideals of the Enlightenment which have become even more pertinent than ever (Pinker, 2018, pp. 312–314, 317, 422–424). His thesis is even more important bearing in mind that the contemporary technological revolution (according to Yuval Noah Harari, Luke Ferry and many others) has grown into a transhumanitarian revolution.

Motivating capitalism is essentially different. By Weber's definition, it serves to achieve economic goals – not spontaneously, but with the help of political power as a referee (Weber, 1993, pp. 12, 14, 20). Today, the same thing

is happening in China. Deng Xiaoping is the first to realize that socialism cannot exist in poverty and it is not possible to overcome capitalism without acknowledging its achievements. China takes this path, but without “bourgeois liberalization”. By using official figures (from China and the World Bank) Branko Milanović, a long-term expert of the World Bank, proves that it is namely about capitalism: production through privately owned land and capital; employed or self-employed persons; market determination of commodity volumes and prices. In 1978, nearly 100% of the main goods in China are produced by state enterprises following a state plan; twenty years later, this ratio shrinks to about 50%, whereas in 2015, it is under 20%. At the beginning, the prices are determined by the state, whereas today – mainly by the market. This is the reason for the high economic growth, hence China’s rise to the world scene. Being politically motivated, China’s capitalist model becomes a role model in other countries in Asia, Russia and even Bulgaria (Milanović, 2020, pp. 126–131). As claimed by Timothy Snyder, from the end of the “cold war” to the financial-economic crisis in 2008, the influence of the West to the East is very strong; then there is a twist – the influence of the East to the West prevails (Snyder, 2018, pp. 20–21).

In China, however, there is a quasi multiparty system, but not a separation of the authorities; the rule of law is selective. The state provides favorable conditions for private activity, but it also exercises strict control on unwanted competition. Bureaucracy is selected according to merit (past or present) and is favored on the basis of achievements and loyalty. The regime has its own “representatives” in the bureaucratic elite and the entrepreneurship environment; this forms the political and capitalist class. Because of the dissolution of the borders between work duties and business interests, there is corruption and growing social inequality which erodes the moral fundament of the society. Official figures show that the total wealth of the members of China’s National People’s Congress in 2018 (under the Purchasing Power Parity) amounts to 660 billion US dollars (Milanović, 2020, pp. 130, 139, 152–158).

The liberal-meritocratic and the politically motivated capitalism is opposed by the vision of the European Union for social development. It is the first power that puts an end to modernity in its present state and projects new beginnings in both interpersonal and interstate relations, among which a major place is occupied by the diverse development of the human factor. According to the American economicist and sociologist Jeremy Rifkin, in its essence, the EU’s vision occupies a higher place than the “American dream” which is an expression of and aspiration towards material wealth (Rifkin, 2005).

The EU debunks the understanding of social development as an endless upward spiral of amassing material wealth which exhausts natural resources. The core of this new ideology is dominated by the adjustment of the institutions

to the human behavior as a measure and framework and of the human behavior to the institutional requirements of lawfulness and morality with a view of justified achievement of both material wealth and spritual and social development. The United Nations (the United Nations Development Program) also defend the principle of development of the strengths and abilities of every individual through new quality of life such as harmony, sustainability, environmental equilibrium and peace.

We are not an isolated island. “The wind of change”, however, has found us without adjustment experience, appropriate institutions and watchful civil control. After the coup in 1989, we pronounce through the Constitution, that we are a democratic, lawful and social country and that our economy is based on free economic initiative without monopolism and unfair competition. We are also an EU member state. However, we have become an object rather than a subject of change. Formally, we have adopted the principles that govern the EU, but we are also strongly influenced by other great powers. Our country has resulted in a *mélange* that faces grave problems. The immoral attitude towards state assets and the strive for the fast accumulation of wealth by certain circles have deformed the living environment. We dislike the new status quo, but we care only about ourselves which damages our public interest. There is a growth of emigration and a leak of “brains” because we do not have sufficient activities which create high added value and well-paid jobs. As a population we decrease, but we do not follow a stimulating demographic policy. Both material and non-material activities (management, security, health care, education, media, sports, entertainment, etc.) become more and more commercialized at the cost of their essential functionality. We speak about a democratic change, but we continue to be undisciplined as citizens and we do not achieve unity with a view of a more favorable personal and public life. We believe that power is in unity, but we do not have a strategy and policies leading us to unity of action in order to realize in practice the desired future and to turn it into a sustainable social normality. We live in an extreme struggle for power with a view of social positioning and benefits. We do not realize that our society is nothing but an objectification of our own behavior in all social processes. Bearing all this in mind, our great expectations turn out to be “outfoxed” by group interests. The power is usurped by Grandfather Slaveykov’s “Money Queen”, and we vulgarly fight for a better positioning. If we maintain this social arrangement and this mentality, we cannot become an orderly and prosperous country. This is the picture of our existence, a result of the factor interests – an imperatively necessary positive change.

3. Towards a harmonization of private and public interests and development of the abilities of every man

What is closest to the feelings and conscience of people is their interests – a natural strive for sought-after acquisitions and conditions with a view of a better life. Having found realization according to their attractive force, they are indispensable factors of social development. Inherent to them are the predicates “personal”, “private” and common (“social”, public) interest – each of these having its own meaning.

Personal interest is the individual’s strive for everything that enchants the mind and the heart – goods, spirituality, career advancement, home coziness, communication with counterparts, attachment to ideas and causes. The social environment burdens the materialized personal interest. The realization of the personal interest, however, mainly as knowledge and possessions is socially burdened with a secondary meaning of private interest – an expression of the right of the individual to possess, use and control what he/she owns, excluding other individuals.

The common (social, public) interest springs from the fact that we live in a society which means (according to the prominent culturologist Tzvetan Todorov) that the individual shall exist with “the others” within the established moral and legal norms and rules (Todorov, 2009, pp. 5, 8, 14–15) It is an awareness that no one in him/herself is self-sufficient.

It is wrong to think that common interest is a sum of private interests. However, in truth, there are inseparable goods and services (technological and social infrastructure, health care, education, social order, national and social security, defense, quality of the environment, etc.) in favor of all individuals as a social stratum, due to which it is of common interest. Funded through taxes, the access to them neither deprives nor decreases the opportunity of everyone else to benefit from them. The state, if it is altruistic (and such it is by default), imposes its role through clearly defined policies such as objectives, means and tools for action, but by conforming to the norms and rules with a view of security, justice, and social peace. Therefore, satisfying the social interest is a function not only of the realized private interest, but also of the actions of the state authorities in the public sector itself.

The real social problem is whether the private and public interests contradict or mutually push each other, or they are in a harmonious adhesion leading in the same direction. The unnatural growth and domination of the private interest at the cost of the public one changes the essence and structure of the social arrangement, the way of life and its quality. It leads to one-sidedness and incompleteness of life as the quality and social positioning of man are measured with the owned material wealth, not with his/her own development as

an individual and citizen. (It is not by accident that recently in Bulgaria a criminal has justified his actions with the notion that man is nothing unless he has money).

However, as historical experience has shown, the hypertrophy of the common interest with a special view on common life also leads to social distortion. This is due to the fact that man's own will is limited and he is forced to wait for commands and accuse others of his status. Because it is inefficient, former socialist countries eventually reach involution which is the turning to private market social organization. It is based on models which are characteristic of past times.

Therefore, the path which we have to follow is not the one of struggle between the right and the left. Favoring some interests at the cost of others results in the dramatic history of the 20th century. The lesson is that satisfaction of the common interest only through the private one, or the private interest through the common one is fiction which contradicts human nature. It is necessary to overcome their one-sidedness as a selfish strive for money, property, and luxury, or only as an altruistic devotion, but also pushing (when possible) towards concealed asocial behavior. Basically, the new info-technological environment imperatively requires the formation of individuals with diverse business traits that are adequate to it as a factor of increasing demand and deficit supply – more necessary than everything and everywhere.

For this reason, there shall be social reorganization, which, firstly, equates the economic, spiritual, socio-cultural, legal and political life. This is a necessary prerequisite for the entry-exit functional harmonization and adhesion of the private to public interest. Respectively, secondly, the symmetry of interests means that we witness the formation of a social integrity totally corresponding to the requirement of time for diverse human development as an axial public principle of arrangement. It is the condition, as stated by Bulgaria's prominent social psychologist Ivan Hadzhiyski, by which we shall guarantee the common good through persistence characteristic of our private deeds without expecting a "manna from the state". The changing world more and more imposes such way of social development.

The combination of private with public interest is not fiction. It is Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) who has taught that the domination of private interests only leads to conflicts from the point of view of some – due to lost profits, not of others – due to injustice. It calls for harmony between human aspirations and the common interest. Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) vouches for a social order which synchronizes the economic aspects of life with the intellectual, social, political and moral ones. According to Voltair (1694–1778), the laws limit freedom, but it is namely conforming to them that is the condition for freedom for everyone. James Madison (1751–1836) emphasizes on the

strong state authority which shall defend the rights of the individuals and public order itself. What is also true, however, is the warning made by Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835) that the role of the state shall be measured so that the conscious man does not lose his dignity and expect salvation by others and accuse them for their misfortunes.

All this is not alien to man. Throughout his existence, man has built in his soul not only greed, but, to some extent or other, humanity which drags him to communication and unity. They make him interested in the welfare of the other individuals with whom he cohabits with a view of a good living environment so that there are no obstacles to the complete human self-realization and the attainment of happiness. Thus, neither the private nor the public interest can be neglected as they function synchronously and put the basis of a new more humane social order.

The search for symmetry of the interests has found expression in what Anthony Giddens calls “the third way” of society. It is the (sociodemocratic or christiandemocratic) unification of the private and the market organization of the economy with the correcting social policy of the state and the private enterprises themselves. The grounds for this is namely the mutual functional unification of the private with common interest so that they become a prerequisite which shall facilitate everyone’s welfare. In order for this “third way” to be sustainable in time, however, there shall be one really important precondition. It is the essential change of the capital and labor. The formation of namely this precondition has resulted in today’s evolution of capitalism.

The world is in a visible state of postmodern rearrangement. We are now under the influence of an unprecedented in its radicality technological revolution. There is an accelerated implementation of ICT, artificial intellect, automation, robotization, etc. The network-connected computers analyze, project and manage activities of any nature and trace the emergence of a new global order. Bearing in mind the increased incorporation of artificial intellect in devices and products in the USA, we can talk about “intelligent industry”, in the EU – about digital revolution, whereas in Germany, laconically, about “Industry 4”.

As a result, in the opinion of a number of scholars, capitalism mutates in a new type of society. Having technological grounds, the economy transforms into a “symbolic” screen-information and a digitally governing system – as a result, we have a flexible network structure which controls global capital, commodity, cash and information flows. There is a change in the means of production, servicing, travel, communication, education, entertainment, etc.

Peter Drucker (1909–2005) calls the newly-formed society “postcapitalism” which functions on a supranational basis. The national state has lost its positions, but its institutions remain influential as political tools operate in harmony with regional and other supranational international institutions.

Everything relies more and more on the “knowledge” factor which replaces, in terms of significance, the traditional factors of capital and labor in their classical sense. As a result, according to Drucker, the developed countries already enter an advanced postcapitalist phase.

The forming capitalist society, according to Drucker, will differ from existing capitalism, but it will be neither anticapitalist nor antisocialist. The market will remain an efficient unifying force. However, the center around which social groups, parties, values and interests will form will be knowledge. It will be the main source of wealth, not the earth, the labor and the capital. There will be a development of external economic necessities and activities with scientific and educational, sociocultural, health and recreation and entertainment character. Bearing this in mind, claims Drucker, the acquired knowledge, functional skills and competences, which are turned into technical and managerial innovations, are the main source of added value and competitiveness (Drucker, 2000, pp. 13, 49, 58–59, 70–75, 194–196).

There is clear evidence of the change expressed in the emergence of “partnership productions” and “shared” (under Rifkin and Mayson) or “collaborative” (under Klaus Schwab and Luc Ferry) economy. Because with these productions no one is the owner, as a new type of production they are basically different from capitalism. In its basis, it is the free reproduction of information products used through sharing with almost zero marginal cost. Through their digital devices, people become co-producers of information which turns into knowledge. What is imposed is a lifestyle through “shared networks”, on the basis of which Paul Mason concludes that this will result in a new world (Mason, 2016). Bearing in mind the possibility of the 3D printing of goods with zero margin costs and the “uberization” of transport (through Uber’s “wild taxis” which we use at lower prices), we see the deficiency of goods, respectively, the invalidity of the principle of scarcity as a motive for capitalism. According to Luc Ferry, this is because the network services between private persons rely primarily on the temporary use and sharing, which brings freedom, rather than on the property, which enslaves (Ferry, 2017, pp. 29).

Increasingly, this will be the environment because of which the capital will lose its existing socio-semantic meaning of an axial principle of functioning of the society. Capital and labor more and more remain resources for the creation of goods and income, which dissolves its existing social essence. As a result, as many scholars claim, today it is not always clear which are capitalists, and which are employed persons because of their blending. On the one hand, it seems that most of those who exercise a certain activity are only employed persons who receive payment or wages, whereas on the other hand, most of them are “capitalists” as well.

According to Theodore Schultz (recognized as “the father” of the theory

of human capital) this is because people possess knowledge as a type of intellectual property which grows exactly as the economic value of the knowledge itself and the practical skills do. They are intellectual capital that cannot be expropriated by its users (Schultz, 1961). Manuel Castells also considers “new capitalists” (around one third of the employed persons) those who possess and implement special knowledge which secures them an entirely new status. They work for no one (master, boss) but for the organization which has employed them, or they are self-employed. Relatively “new capitalists” are also all employed persons who make pension and insurance payments which can be characterized as “deferred salaries”. However, being advised by financial brokers, they amass huge funds which are invested in activities that increase the capital turnover in favor of the investors themselves. It is also important to note Castells assertion that “new capitalists” do not consider themselves such; neither do they consider themselves proletariat in the classical sense. They are not united on either social and class basis or on political and ideological one. They have power not only because they own resources including information which they use practically and with a great effect by controlling and correcting investment, commodity, and cash flows. Because of this, on balance, what matters is not the diversity of capitalists and capitalist groups of flesh and blood, but the faceless collective capitalist embodied by highly competent employers who, through electronic networks, manage integrated financial flows and secure themselves income from salaries, royalties, and dividends from the financial assets they own. It is namely this that is determined as the state of the nationally independent economies and societies (Castells, 2004, pp. 454–456). Because the market as a mechanism does not guarantee honesty and humanity, there is, for sure, (as put by Arnold Toynbee) agents “predators”, and also “parasites”. Along with top bankers, company managers, high ranking advisors, etc., quite a few of those who today are considered capitalists are speculators, drug dealers, money launderers, criminal bosses, etc.

In fact, as well as with physical capital, knowledge and skills are only a capacity and it is only their efficient use that brings meaning to capital, which at the same time is labor. This fact clearly shows the intertwining of capital and labor and their blurring as categories. This is because of the dissolution of the status of “capitalist”, “worker” or “employee”. It is an expression of the essential change of both capital and labor. Capital itself is the product of labor, but having been the ruler so far, it has made its parent a subordinate. The radical digital revolution also changes the labor process. There is a turn – what dominates is the physical, not the human capital. On the one hand, those that “work” are automated and robotized technological lines with artificial intelligence; on the other hand, human activity more and more becomes observation, innovation, programming and monitoring of this process. Thanks to this, man ceases to be an indirect, production agent. From a subordinate he becomes a

ruler. From a synonym of unbearable burden, labor is transformed into a cognitive, projecting, observing, controlling and regulating activity. The active man is more independent, more creative, more responsible and more irreplaceable. Man is better educated and uses artificial intelligence tools. This is due to the fact that computerization and distance management of production processes unites knowledge, technology, and the production of goods. This constitutes the necessary condition for the success of the “third way” of social development.

It is evident that today, the central place is occupied by the “educated man”. As claimed by Paul Drucker, knowledge and culture are a source of intellectual, moral and spiritual development, which turns man into a creative force which, in unison with the institutions, will unite labor, capital and natural phenomena with a mission that will go beyond the economic goals. It is namely the educated man – the individual with knowledge as a standard for success that is the emblem, symbol, archetype which determines the standard of behavior, including the values, convictions, duties, responsibilities of everyone (Drucker, 2000, p. 228).

Conclusion

The foreseeable future cannot be other than the prevalent contemporary real trends. The vision about it, as said by Lester Thurow, is necessary as a starting point of strategies and policies. The world is truly going to a phase of postbusiness and a society of knowledge. It is a logical consequence of the long evolution leading to physical labor in direct struggle with nature towards machine labor in order to subdue it; from machine labor to intelligent electronic activity. Throughout the world, the organization and the management become dominant as they presume knowledge and skills – they are the expression of the multifaceted development of man’s strengths and abilities. Without it, nothing essential can be done.

So far, the most important factors have been landowning, for which there have been wars and emigration, then the transfer of capital and expansion leading to world wars for power and influence. A quintessence of the ongoing processes is now the new place and role of the educated person. It seems that the development of man’s strengths and abilities will be the axial social arrangement principle as a public response. It will be the reliable criterion for the efficiency of the social arrangement and the quality of life, not man’s boasting with his wealth. Man himself as a self-worth and business capacity which finds expression in the prosperous society, is what gives meaning and direction in life.

As claimed by world erudite scholars, we now live in the transition from

“Holocene” to “Anthropocene”, i.e., the age of man. Man himself becomes important, from personal point of view – as upbringing, intellect, multifunctionality and culture; from a public one – as a facilitating, not obstructing the social development force and direction of change. Only in this way and through a synchronization of the interests can we achieve (as mentioned earlier) a change “with human face”. Capital and labor will increasingly be viewed as resources without any other semantics. It will signify the attainment of a new social normality – an expression of the individual, not the common welfare which unites the individuals and the social groups in a civilized type of society. It could reveal the broadest possibilities for the development of both the strengths and abilities of every man according to his capacity and the social environment itself. It is the highest criterion of social normality.

The model of social order that shall solve this problem is neither the neoliberal, nor the political customer-motivated capitalism. The way is the socio-liberal democratic order, ennobling the competitive-market relationships and human behavior with humanistic social and moral values. As suggested by Steven Pinker, democracy is a form of management on the edge – with such force that shall prevent people from plundering each other without the state attacking and plundering them so that they can live in security and have freedom without anarchy and order – without tyranny (Pinker, 2018, pp.213–214). This democracy and the threats from technological nature increase the necessity of people who strive not only and not so much for material luxury and entertainment, but for individual diverse development. Today, it is the scarce restrictive factor which breeds the monstrous international competitiveness for the attraction of talents. However, it is not simply an economic need, but also an expression of conscience for the self-worth of man as an individual and citizen. Because of this, as claimed by certain scholars, it is in the agenda of certain countries, of communities of countries and international organizations (Socio-economic models. The world’s experience, 2005, p. 45). It is defended as a principle by the United Nations Development Program and by the European Union itself (Rifkin, 2005). This is the basis of the harmonization of the material with the spiritual interests, the private with the public ones, the civil rights and freedoms with the duties and responsibilities.

In Bulgaria, academician Georgi Danailov (1872–1939), a prominent scholar in Political Economy at Sofia University and the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics in Svishitov, is one of the first academics to realize the necessity to follow this way. In the past, he writes, our science was limited to material needs. Today, it takes into account the spiritual needs whose significance starts to prevail. Social ideal is that social order which creates opportunities for the development of the strengths and abilities of every man” (Danailov, 1934, pp. 14, 23).

This is the cause which can unite us as a nation. It is not by accident that as early as the times of ancient Rome, it is thought that there is not greater strength and larger wealth than people. Today, it is namely human development that shall guarantee that no people are socially excluded from the radical merger of the physical, digital and biological technologies, which leads to an overtechnological and connected world (Schwab, 2016). We will witness the emergence of new values, interests, mentality and aspirations; they will give to their representatives significance which does not arise from the achieved material luxury, but from themselves as individuals with culture, business multifunctionality and social contribution. Success will visit those countries that rely mainly on the free multifaceted development of each individual. With a view of all this, we need a complete (economic, spiritual, social, legal and political) vision of positive change, harmoniously directing the available resources to all spheres of life. Thus, they could provide: spirituality-ideas, culture and meaning; economy – material prosperity; morality - virtue; legal and political sphere – social order, harmonious and just social order.

These could constitute the necessary “deep change”. It is stimulated by the contemporary technological revolution, content – a change of the model of functioning of the society and a guarantee – the development of the strengths and abilities of people, the rule of law and the alert civil society – these shall secure watchful and controlling institutions.

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