

## СТРУКТУРАЛИЗЪМ И УСТОЙЧИВО РАЗВИТИЕ

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*Резюме: Тази статия е напомняне, че опитите за налагане на различни идеологии обикновено водят до структуралистски уклони в науката. Структуралистските подходи, както показва историята, често водят до социално инженерство. В този смисъл статията представя опасенията на автора, че идеологизирането на устойчивостта в развитието на страните може да породи нова форма на структурализъм в научните среди и производното на структуралистските подходи, социално инженерство. Едно от сериозните притеснения относно идеологизирането на устойчивостта е опасността от ерозия на социалния капитал, чието наличие е ключово условие за социално развитие и просперитет. Разглеждат се и възможностите за пренос на икономическа стабилност в този контекст.*

*Ключови думи: структурализъм, устойчиво развитие, социално инженерство, социален капитал, ерозия на социалния капитал.*

## STRUCTURALISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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***Abstract:** This article is a reminder that attempts to impose different ideologies usually give rise to structuralist bias in science. Structuralist approaches, as history shows, often lead to social engineering. In this sense, the article presents misgivings that the ideologizing of sustainability in the development of countries may give rise to a new form of structuralism in scientific circles and the derivative of structuralist approaches, social engineering. One of the serious concerns about the ideologisation of sustainability is the danger of erosion of social capital, which is a key condition for social development and prosperity. The possibilities for transferring economic stability are also considered in this context.*

***Key words:** structuralism, sustainable development, social engineering, social capital, erosion of social capital.*

### **Introduction**

The debate between structuralists and antistructuralists has lasted for more than three centuries. In fact, structuralist ideas were found in earlier times. Starting with Plato's "ideal state," we go through Thomas More's island "Utopia" and reach Tomaso Campanella's "City of the Sun." In older times, structuralist ideas were seen as exotic theories. There are no attempts to translate these theories into social practice.

The development of technologies for communication, information and total control give a strong impetus to structuralist attempts to reform society and the way people live and work. In this line of thought, the new idea of "sustainable development" is, on the one hand, another structuralist experience. On the other hand, "sustainability" is in clear conflict with any structuralism. Sustainability implies preserving traditions. Sustainability requires the preservation of people's livelihoods, of social structures such as the quality of the social status quo and a change mainly in the quantitative parameters of production and consumption in accordance with demographic processes. However, if this "resilience" begins to be imposed ideologically and almost "by force" on certain societies and peoples, there is a danger that we will get another failed structuralist experiment like Stalin's communism, Hitler's Reich or the Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea.

### **1. Structuralist deviations in the unipolar world**

Modern political economy is in duty to society in the context of studying the grounds and factors of the future development and economic growth. It has to find a sort of a "moral justification" of the economy (the economic activity) and wealth<sup>1</sup>. Wealth in this case should be understood as a "condition for overcoming the external dependence of man, a way to get free from the power of nature". Mankind in its organic entirety should be a subject of the economy.

In our interrelated and interdependent world of "multilateral equilibrium"<sup>2</sup> there are no more distinct centers of economic power. Until recently, the

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<sup>1</sup> Георгиева, С. Идеята за „икономическия“ човек във философията на С. Н. Булгаков. - // Човешкият фактор при прехода към пазарна икономика. - Варна: Издателство на Варненския свободен университет (ВСУ), 1997, с.88. (Georgieva, S. The idea about the "economic" man in the philosophy of S.N.Bulgacov. - //The human factor in the transition to market economy. – Varna: Publishing of the Varna Free University (VFU), 1997, p.88.)

<sup>2</sup> Гилпин, Р. Глобалната политическа икономика: Разбиране на международния ред. - София: Издателство "Дамян Яков", 2003, с.167. (Gilpin, R. Global political economy: Understanding international order. – Sofia: Publishing "Damian Jakov", 2003, p.167.)

development and dynamics of national economies have been stimulated by the complex competition in all fields (economic, military, space, social), induced by the “rules” of Cold War. There were two systems, two centers – the USA and the USSR along with their allies and a balanced “unbounded world” between them.

While on one pole of the poles of the confronting world the principles of the free market are imposed, at the other pole the scales of “social engineering” strike with their blow and inefficiency they created, with the help of its megalomaniac structures and works (The Belomor channel, The Volga-Donche channel, The Baikallo-Amur railway etc.)

Today the world is economically united and geopolitically unipolar. This is the pole of the market and the capitalism linked with it. In world’s collisions, conflicts, competitions and contradictions neither the “class” of Karl Marx, nor the “mass” of Vladimir Lenin and the “race” of Adolf Hitler could win – the US case (treasury, exchequer) will win. It wins because the most powerful, most concentrated, the highest productive capital is behind it.

It is a widely spread perception that the capital is a product of a powerful industry, modern technologies and good management structures which succeed in mobilizing the energy of millions of trained and performing, professionally specialized individuals in their activity.

For a period that lasted merely a century this understanding is quite reasonable. It is supported by facts, investigations, analyses and results from the capitalist development – a separation of the society between two poles: poverty and richness. These are the poles that are expanding more and more, shrinking as “shagreen skin” the majority of individuals, referring themselves to the so called “middle class”.

Today’s unipolar world is unstructured (disrupted). For centuries now, the technologies, institutions and values have been the generator of the social

development. “The changes or the elements of confusion which we experience are caused by the individuals who do not allow anymore to be ordered what to know and do, where to go and be”<sup>3</sup> Today’s reality is a chaotic, virtual world, inhabited with capable individuals and their “branch-images”<sup>4</sup>. This is a world in which, seemingly “the rules and regimes might be or are important determinants of the result from economic activities”<sup>5</sup>. In contemporary terms, this is the world in which everything is somehow unharmonious, a word with endless in number probable balancing points”<sup>6</sup> if we refer to the “Nash equilibrium” as a situation which no gamer has the stimulus to avoid.

What an irony, the millions until recently harmonic individuals, following their dreams, create a world, which in all criteria is non-harmonic as society. Society today is not only chaotic and non-harmonic, it is unclear. The ideas about national and international are diluted. Until recently, consumers focused their attention on “where certain product has been produced”. The mark “Made in the USA” was a symbol of touching the dreams for the millions of consumers around the world. Later in time, important becomes “who the producer is” and not “where the product is manufactured”. Today, important even is “who the consumer is”. And what we can say about tomorrow? It is difficult to give a simple answer. Maybe the “possibility for virtualization of the welfare goods” will be of importance, so that we are able to share them with our “branch-images”<sup>7</sup>?

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<sup>3</sup> Нордстрём, К. Ридерстреле, Й. Фънки бизнес: Бизнесът на бъдещето. - София: ИнфоДАР, 2003, стр. 109. (Nordström, K. Riderstrele Y. Funky Bussines: The business of the future. – Sofia: InfoDAR, 2003, p. 109.)

<sup>4</sup> Атали, Ж. Речник на XXI-ви век. - София: ЛиК, 2000. (Atali, J. Dictionary of XXI century. – Sofia: LIK, 2000.)

<sup>5</sup> Гилпин, Р. Глобалната политическа икономика..., с. 167 (Gilpin, R. Global political economy...p. 167)

<sup>6</sup> Пак там, с. 167 (Ibidem...p. 167)

<sup>7</sup> Атали, Ж. Речник на XXI-ви век.... (Atali, J. Dictionary of XXI century...)

## **2. The structuralist division of capital and the economic realities of modernity.**

While for “physical capital” and “human capital” it is possible to develop and increase through financial investments, the financial impact on social capital can only be indirect. There is no possibility to create trust, mutual assistance and support between people through direct funding as well as to form various aspects of public culture - political, economic, social, behavioural, etc. Financial investments may help to maintain certain institutions and certain types of infrastructure which can contribute to bringing people together. Institutions such as clubs, sports complexes, entertainment centres and infrastructure components of the urban environment such as memorials, monuments, parks, museums, libraries, etc. undoubtedly contribute to strengthening and developing the institutional and culture dimensions of “social capital”. But there is no guarantee that the presence of institutions and infrastructure will surely bring the necessary for the social development positive and effective enough, in the economic context, “social capital”.

The realities of the Kovid pandemic are extremely illustrative of this. The restrictions imposed by the pandemic situation do not allow the use of all this "socializing infrastructure" - clubs, sports complexes, entertainment centers, monuments, parks, museums, libraries, etc.

In this case, the role of the type of “economic organization” should also be taken into account. Let us remember that under the conditions of the so-called “real socialism” in most socialist countries all such institutions, clubs, sports complexes, entertainment centres and infrastructure components of the urban environment such as memorials, monuments, parks, museums, libraries exist formally and even function in reality.

However, in socialist countries almost nothing of the “social capital” accumulated in the period before the “socialist construction” has remained for purely political reasons. Totalitarian government pursued with all its repressive apparatus any unsanctioned by the state initiatives for association and integration of certain groups of people (Post-totalitarian government in the former socialist countries still continues today this line with other, less obvious repressive means).

In totalitarianism people have formal rights to members only in government-supported structures and organizations which are ideologically and politically manipulated. In these organizations the mutual assistance and support between people are predominantly shown. (Post-totalitarian organizations and parties are hidden government-supported ones. They are manipulated for the benefit of the ruling elite, connected and supported by the ruling elites in developed Western countries in an international plan, while connected and supported by the powerful groups of the shadowy business in an intra-national plan. This means that again there is showiness of the real relationships and interactions between people). Briefly said, citizens in post-totalitarian democracies live in conditions of total lack of “social capital”. Even cultural patterns and aspects - management, organizational, legal and other culture - are distorted by the totalitarian propaganda and the following decades of manipulation of people’s perceptions and mind.

In order to have “social capital”, a society should have the necessary “human material”. The talk is not only about a quantity of people. Undoubtedly, the population growth is an important and determining factor for the occurrence and development of “good” or “bad” “social capital”. Much more important in this case is the quality of people. Here again we come to the role of the genotype and the phenotype for the formation of the individual.

Émile Durkheim claimed that sociology was ahead of economics on the path to deeper layers of human motivation. He accused economists that they

simplistically considered the interaction between two market players. According to economists, when two human beings meet, they will exchange goods at a mutually advantageous basis, voluntarily and reciprocally. Durkheim, however, argued that “market exchange needs non-economic societal norms which dictate that sellers and buyers should bargain peacefully and not to plunder and kill themselves with guns in their hands.”<sup>8</sup>

Rules, norms and the order are formed in different micro-communities in which each individual resides in the process of their development and maturation. They are both a component of the “human capital” and the “social capital”. As separate knowledge of the norms, rules and the order, they are a component of the “human capital”. As an idea for public use, as a construct which ensures the effective interaction between people, as the basis for a “social contract”, the norms, rules, and the order are part of the ‘social capital’ of a society. As noted by F. Fukuyama, “human obedience to the rules has a strong biological basis, too: people want to follow the rules and the others should also observe them. If they do not do it, they feel guilty, and they meet other people’s infringements with anger.”<sup>9</sup>

Namely, the phenotype is in practice the perception of certain types of rules and the formation of good habits from parents, relatives and friends in adolescent age in individuals. In this case, it is determining, but the genotype, which is inherited from the biological parents of each individual, exercises no less influence.

If the patriarchal family performed primarily the role of a transmission of the rules, norms and public order in the past, today many institutions interfere in the formation of the phenotype of individuals.

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<sup>8</sup> Durkheim, E. *The Rules of Sociological Method* (Glencoe, Ill.): Free Press, 1938, p. 23-27, Цитирано по Фукуяма, Ф. *Големият разлом*. – София: Рива, 1999, с. 162. (Quoted from Fukuyama, F. *The Great Fault*. - Sofia: Riva, 1999, p. 162.)

<sup>9</sup> Фукуяма, Ф. *Големият разлив*. - София: Рива, 1999, с. 163. (Fukuyama, F. *The Great Disruption*. – Sofia: Riva, 1999, p. 163.)



Today's "social capital" is very different from the "social capital" in the past. Urbanization as a global phenomenon tears at a large extent former micro communal (local) and patriarchal clan-and-tribal ties. Alienation in big cities often tempts people to breach the order and rules. At the same time, urban environment offers a whole range of structures and institutions – clubs, entertainment centres, cultural centres, educational (schools, colleges and universities) and power (military barracks, schools, training centres, polygons) institutions, etc, forming new aspects of relationships, friendships, support and mutual assistance between people. In contemporary people are more mobile, more open, more communicative than their predecessors and those features of the modern "social capital" are also a result of investments, but not only and solely cash investments – they are investments in time, effort, emotion, in inclusion of one type of social networks and exclusion from another type of such ones.

Today, labour is "pushed aside" by the industry and pressed into the service sector. Moreover, it loses ground there, too. There is not much to the day when no more than 10% of the economically active population will create the material wealth of the world and will transform it from the points of production to the points of consumption.

In the recent decades in developed countries, managers, employees and workers differ not so much in real ways than in virtual ways. They communicate mostly with 'branch-images', as called by G. Attali in "Dictionary of the Twenty-First Century"<sup>10</sup>, than with real people. Virtual reality does not recognize borders. Through the resources of global communication and information networks it penetrates to every corner of the planet.

Today, on the place of the famous, specific "flesh and blood" owner, we have milliards of anonymous corporate owners in the face of huge numbers of

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<sup>10</sup> Атали, Ж. Речник на XXI-ви век...(Atali, J. Dictionary of the XXI century...)

pensioners whose pension funds are invested in various business sectors in national and multinational corporations through shareholding.

### **3. Structuralism in the twentieth century and its results**

Most contemporary authors implicitly impose the assumption that someone else creates the economy as dynamic, as a process, as economic development and prosperity. Our task, as its analysts and researchers, is to try to understand it and explain it. Marxist economists even want us to change it through the social engineering, realizing large-scale plans for social restructuring and for social development, which, finally, has always proven to be welfare for a narrow circle of persons and endless misery for the majority of people undergoing this kind of social engineering. The just past twentieth century was full of examples of famine, epidemics, mass murders, spiritual brutalization and genocide of entire nations and nationalities as a result of the social engineering of dictators like Stalin, Hitler, Mao-Tse-tung, Kim Il Sung, Idi Amin, Saddam Hussein, Pol Pot and Ieng Sary, Ho Chi Minh and many others. Not all of these misfortunes are due to the application of the economic doctrine of Karl Marx and his vulgarizers: Friedrich Engels, Vladimir Ulyanov - Lenin, Karl Kautsky, Rudolf Hilferding, Georgi Plekhanov, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht and many others. Their example in social practice, especially that of Vladimir Ulyanov - Lenin, an ideologist and organizer of the massive dislocations of the social strata in the former czarist Russia, is copied into the social sphere by almost all modern dictators from Mussolini and Hitler to Saddam Hussein and Fidel Castro. In this sense, Marxist economic doctrine has caused more misery to mankind than all other structuralist teachings, representing processes and phenomena in the social sphere as taking place outside the will and consciousness of people and as managed by hidden, deeply below the surface of phenomena and processes, laws.

The principal idea of structuralists, who are also moral relativists, according to Paul Johnson's words - the author of "Modernity", is that "human attributes and activities are governed by laws in a way which is analogous to the way in which scientific laws govern inanimate nature. Hence, the function of social sciences is to discover such laws and then the society should act according to their findings"<sup>11</sup> . The development of economic science in almost the entire nineteenth century is subjected to similar structuralist ideas and creates new forms of intellectual utopianism, the most significant among which is Marxism. The special feature of the Marxist economic doctrine is the strong suggestion of the need for forced social engineering. It is the latter which to the most extent discredited intellectual utopias, including Marxism, in the second half of the twentieth century.

Political economy itself as a kind of 'ideological science' is not to be blamed for this development of things in the society of totalitarian states. The American economist Paul Krugman noted in the Preface to his book "Peddling Prosperity" "it turns out that along with the continuous accumulation of knowledge in economics there is a constant search for doctrines which will serve to populist prejudices, whether meaningful or not."<sup>12</sup>

In this case, we insist to differentiate our perceptions and approach to the capital components analyzed by one more theory. We have in mind the 'theory of future stable society' of theorists of the Worldwatch Institute in Washington, D.C., the USA for monitoring the world development on problems of building a viable society. In our opinion, teams led by Lester Brown, Sandra Pastel and Christopher Flavin create a certainly structuralist concept. At this stage, it is limited only to

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<sup>11</sup> Джонсън, П. Съвременността: Светът от 20-те до 90-те. - София: Изд. "Св. Кл. Охридски", 1993, с.566. (Johnson, P. Modern Times: A History from the 1920s to the 1980s. Sofia: St Kliment Ohridski Publishing House, 1993, p. 566.)

<sup>12</sup> Кругман, П. Амбулантно благополучие: Икономически разум и безумие във времето на гаснещите надежди. - София: "Дамян Яков", 1999, с.12. (Krugman, P. Ambulatory Well-Being: Economic Reason and Madness in a Time of Fading Hopes. - Sofia: "Damyan Yakov", 1999, p.12.)

‘drawing a picture of the future’ without claims for social engineering. But as far as building a stable modern society requires a clear and accurately defined vision of society, the creation of such a “clear and accurate picture” reminds very much of “clear and accurate picture of the future communist society”, which caused the greatest conflicts and collisions of the past twentieth century.

If the authors limit themselves only to the definition that a “stable society is a society which meets its needs without jeopardizing the prospects of future generations”<sup>13</sup>, suspicions in the structuralist bias may be withdrawn. But the fact is that claims continue to the outlines and indicators of stability in society<sup>14</sup>

It is a fact that the history of economy does not know cases of reaching the most favourable limit of various economic indicators in any country in any historical period. In this case it can be assumed that each optimized model of economic development based on optimized threshold values or on a set of indicators is an idealization that cannot be reached. In the best case it can serve as a kind of a guide and criterion for economic success or failure of specific economic policy but nothing more than that.

Structuralist experiments in part of the countries in the world to build a system other than capitalism, the so-called “socialism”, show that its (the capitalism’s) roots are much deeper. It is not a “superstructure” phenomenon but it has a basic character. Where there is exchange, there is market.

If there is exchange and market, there will be money. Once there is money, it will be invested. The focus of this investment is determined by social values and opportunities for return of investment. However, investments mean entrepreneurial

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<sup>13</sup> Браун, Л. Истинското състояние на планетата. - София: Христо Ботев, 1990, с. 319.  
(Brown, L. The True State of the Planet. - Sofia: Hristo Botev, 1990, p. 319.)

<sup>14</sup> Бекярова, К. Пипев, И. Съвременни икономически теории. -София: БУЛВЕСТ-2000, 1993, с. 55-70. (Bekyarova, K. Pipev, I. Modern Economic Theories. – Sofia: BULVEST-2000, 1993, pp. 55-70.)

activity. The latter always seeks the most effective and most profitable solution to every economic problem. In terms of democratic freedoms, the most profitable solution to economic problems is achieved through open and mutually beneficial exchange of commodity and factor markets. The encounter of holders of different factors of production - land, labour (to some extent this is the human capital) and physical capital of factor markets in terms of equal rights and gender equality naturally gives rise to capitalism. It has long been in latent form due to the lack of democratic freedoms and due to personal interest of rulers and representatives of the higher castes who prefer non-economic solutions to their economic problems. When the necessary factors to promote democracy - political pluralism, elections, civil society and other such constructs, are present, then the way to the development of capitalism is cleared. In times of established democracies in countries like Victorian Britain and the United States after the Civil War 1861-1865, we already see “capitalism” not as sporadic outbreaks of effective business decisions in certain places and periods, but as a system which gradually began to impose itself globally through the development of overseas trade and over the whole complex of relations that today we call “international economic relations”.

Socialism, after all, is nothing more than a belated attempt to return society to its “pre-capitalist” state of civil helplessness before the out-of-economy repressive power solutions to major economic problems of production, exchange, distribution and consumption of goods. It (socialism as an attempt for social, political and economic practice) managed to do precisely this: to condemn one third of mankind to regression and misery.

#### **4. The structuralism of totalitarian society and the erosion of social capital.**

We will try to prioritize the individual aspects of the erosion of social capital in totalitarian conditions, without claiming the universal validity of the proposed

ranking. The offered option that can be accepted by colleagues and readers can be a basis for future discussions on the issue. There is no unambiguous assessment of the totalitarian heritage, neither in Bulgaria, nor in the other former socialist countries, nor in the democratically-looking Western space. The current text would probably have many opponents, but the scientific debate should be conducted with arguments, not emotions. We cannot present all the arguments, all the facts and data in support of our main thesis that totalitarian systems of the socialist type destroy social capital. This thesis is not original, but it is still launched by authors who have lived and developed outside this type of totalitarian systems - F. Fukuyama, J. Attali, P. Johnson, Z. Brzezinski and others. We have not yet met Bulgarian or Russian or other authors from the former socialist bloc who try to launch and defend this thesis. Of course, this does not mean that there are no such authors, but obviously they are not given a high platform and enough publicity.

Specifically, the aspects of erosion of social capital in totalitarian conditions in the context of a certain structuralist policy and management philosophy are the following:

1. Liquidation of the political freedoms of the citizens and the public groups;
2. Expropriation of large and medium property / and subsequently of any kind of private property / in order to destroy the economic independence of individuals. As a consequence, the economic freedom of individuals is eliminated.
3. Prohibition and restriction of the right of free association of people for pragmatic purposes. Only bureaucratic associations, imitations of professional, sports, youth and cultural unions, strictly controlled by the totalitarian government, are allowed. / For example, according to the Russian writer V. Voinovich in a period in the history of the Union of Soviet Writers, this casino structure is led by a "writer" whose work is a single book of 47 pages entitled "Taiwan - a real Chinese land",

but on the other hand, the "chairman" in question has the rank of colonel from the prevailing KGB.

4. Seizure of any initiative first by individuals, then by formal associations and social groups and its delegation entirely within the prerogatives of totalitarian rule. No one outside power has the right to take an initiative of any kind.

5. Imposing a system of universal suspicion and mutual surveillance, instilling a sense of fear of totalitarian rule through repression and concentration camps.

6. Imposing an ideological division of the people into loyal to the government and unreliable according to purely subjective criteria.

7. Conducting ideological discrimination. The faithful and the comfortable are launched and the unreliable and the inconvenient are repressed.

8. Restricting access to good education and normal development of those who are ideologically unreliable. This process leads to mass marginalization of totalitarian societies and the development of a number of negative processes and trends - progressive alcoholism, growing in size and age range drug addiction, very mass prostitution, lack of respect for any intellectual property and almost open computer piracy, organized crime, human trafficking, organ trafficking, smuggling, etc.

9. Destruction of the historically established and imposed through the main religions - Christianity, Islam and Buddhism value system, which preaches peace, love and mutual assistance between people and its replacement with the extremely nihilistic principle "Everyone save himself."

10. Ideological exchange of values, in which in a society there are people who are naive idealists and those who are reckless in achieving their selfish goals, in which the former become easy prey for the latter. The long-standing practice of ideological "brainwashing" puts something like a "time bomb" in the public space

in post-totalitarian countries. The events in post-Tito Yugoslavia are sufficiently indicative of how social, ethnic and national conflicts can degenerate and what damage they can inflict.

Thus arranged aspects of the erosion of social capital in totalitarian states show only the rough outlines, the general contours of this erosion. The truth is that it is much deeper, much larger and extremely "polyvalent" as projections on all aspects of public life in both totalitarian and post-totalitarian space. Each of these aspects of the erosion of social capital can be the basis for a more detailed study of this process. The purpose of such knowledge is to avoid historical mistakes and to "overcome" stereotypes about the recent past. As Cyril Parkinson points out in "Parkinson's Law"<sup>15</sup>, in terms of past periods of life and work, people tend to develop the so-called "legendary-fairytale complex." This is a complex where the past looks much better than the present and we remember only the good and positive sides. Our idea is, as far as we can, with this text to counteract such a "legendary-fairy-tale complex" compared to the recent totalitarian past of a quarter of humanity.

## **5. Danger of a new kind of structuralism - the stability in development imposed by green theories**

Green theories and the concept of sustainable development and sustainable growth carry the risk of a new type of structuralism. What is special in this case is that the effect of this structuralism is not social engineering, but technological restructuring and reorientation. However, the end result risks being the same as for social engineering. Rich nations to become even richer and more prosperous, and poor and backward countries caught in the grip of their imposed resilience to continue living in polluted nature and in an unhealthy environment. Imposed

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<sup>15</sup> Паркинсън, С. Законите на Паркинсън 2. – София: Профиздат, 1989, с.274.  
(Parkinson, S. The Laws of Parkinson 2. - Sofia: Profizdat, 1989, p.274.)



beyond sustainability is in danger of "preserving" the unfair allocation of resources. Rich countries to continue their consumer policies and lifestyles, and poor countries to experience permanent shortages of resources, food and fresh water.

Sustainability should be realized and enforced not even by force, but within the most economically developed countries - the United States, Japan, Germany, Britain, France, Canada, Australia. What is being observed is that developed countries are promoting and promoting the sustainable development of economically backward countries. This is unacceptable from the point of view of global ethics.

Global environmental ethics has different dimensions and definitions, but the main aspects of its manifestation are the following:

Ecological degradation in any nation inevitably impinges on the quality of life in others. Much of the current environmental crisis is rooted in the widening gap between rich and poor nations. Environmental ethics suggests that we may have an obligation beyond minimizing the harm we cause to our fellow human citizens. It suggests we may also have an obligation to minimize the harm we cause to the ecological systems and the biodiversity of the Earth itself.

Rich nations consume an inordinate share of the world's resources and produce an unsustainable amount of pollution.

The U.S. makes up 4.6% of the world's population, but consumes 25% of all oil production and generates 50% of all toxic wastes in the world.

If all the residents of China were to match American consumption, it would take four extra planet Earths to support them using current technology.

If we accept the already known definition of sustainable development, that it is a development that allows "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Benefits must be available to all humans, rather than to a privileged few. Economic growth

alone is not enough. Political stability, democracy, and equitable economic distribution are needed to ensure that all benefit.

Many ecologists view continual growth as impossible in the long run due to limits imposed by non-renewable resources and the capacity of the biosphere to absorb wastes. Others argue that through the use of technology and social organization, we can manage to meet our needs and provide long-term (but not infinite) growth.

Indigenous (native) people are often the least powerful, most neglected people in the world. At least half the world's 6,000 distinct languages are dying. Indigenous homelands may harbor vast percentage of world's biodiversity. Recognizing native land rights and political rights may often be a solid ecological safeguard as indigenous people have a rich knowledge of local habitats.

The salient environmental question:

How much is enough?

How much economic growth?

How much materials and energy?

Limits on growth are not popular. But the problem with unrestrained economic growth is that, unless technology or people change significantly within a generation, environment problems will change in degree from significant to severe.

## **6. What should be done to neutralize the structuralist approach to sustainable development in the modern world?**

In principle, it is necessary to follow the following directions in environmental and sustainable development:

Expanding the horizons of people forming responsible attitude to what goes on in the municipality, the State and the world;

Mobilization of resources – natural, economic, human;

The realization of dialogue with stakeholders, decision making and collaboration for their implementation;

Partnership with business in the process of sustainable development on the basis of the mutual interest;

Systematization and dissemination of good practices.

The following actions and measures by the state and the participants in the process of imposing sustainability can be specified:

- Transparency, consistency and persistency;
- Consideration and dialogue with civil society;
- Decentralization and focus on local problems;
- Reporting and addressing the factors "corruption";
- Achieving consensus and bring the laws into action;
- Integration and working with experts and interested parties;
- Administrative capacity building, reporting success.

With regard to informing the public and training towards sustainability, the following actions can be recommended:

Increase and formation of consciousness/laws/ through use of the media of communication ;

Training for the media to think in the direction of sustainable development;

Development of indicators for sustainable;

Development information sharing at all levels of human rights protection ;

Education and capacity building for local authorities, business and media.

These principled approaches do not guarantee that a possible structuralist approach to sustainability in development will be avoided, but to some extent create an opportunity to move in the desired direction. For us it is important for economically developed countries to set the "right tone" in establishing sustainable "harmony" globally. Simply put, it is advisable for rich and prosperous nations to

be the first to move towards sustainability. To minimize the "environmental footprint", to reduce as much as possible harmful emissions, to minimize the consumption of resources and energy sources, to switch to an environmentally friendly way of life, work and consumption. Only then would they have the moral right to impose sustainable development policies in the rest of the world. The promotion of sustainability in the development of economically backward countries against the background of preserving the parameters of resource and energy consumption by rich countries will reproduce structuralist effects and disparities globally and will once again lead entire societies to degradation and misery.

## **7. On the possibility of transferring economic stability**

Analogous to the thesis for transfer of economic instability in the system of international economic relations by means of the foreign trade, the currency exchange, by the foreign debts and by the system of direct foreign investments, we can support the thesis of international transfer of "economic stability". It is logical that the prosperity and the development are transferred in a similar way, as the cyclic instability and the inflation effects are transferred by means of the system of international relations.

Among the evident canals of transfer of "economic stability" are:

- the direct foreign investments;
- the translation of positive managerial, production and organizational experience (for example, the American experience in quality control and in the production of faultless production is successfully applied and completed in Japan);
- academic and scientific exchange;
- the development of information-communication networks;
- innovation transborder transfer;
- labour migration and etc.

Certain insights regarding the synchronizing and harmonizing processes are present in other authors as well. Instead of “synchronization” of investments and accumulation of the different capital components J. Rifkin, for example, uses the expression “restoration of the appropriate balance between the world of culture and the one of trade.”<sup>16</sup> The realization of this “restoration of the appropriate balance” is defined by Rifkin as one of the most important challenges of the “age of access” defined by him. It is to change the postindustrial, information society and its immanent network infoeconomy. The reason for the presence of such challenge, according to J. Rifkin is the circumstance, that the “cultural resources are subject to risk of overexploitation and depletion in the hands of trade, just as in the case of natural resources during the industrial age.”<sup>17</sup>

We do not have answers to many questions. We do not know how globalization will develop? We do not know when and how Bulgaria will join the Eurozone? We do not know how companies will react to changes in the tax situation? How will this affect trade unions and how to weaken their power? All these questions show that indicators of sustainable development are difficult to define and predict. For this purpose, let us recall the words of the Nobel laureate prof. Joseph Stiglitz, from his article in The New York Times under the headline “Inequality Retards Economic Recovery”:

“The good news is that our thinking has gone through a major revision: earlier we asked ourselves how much growth we are willing to sacrifice to achieve a little more equality. We now realize that we are paying a very high price for the rise in inequality. At the same time, we realized that reducing inequality and

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<sup>16</sup> Rifkin, J. The Age of Access. – Sofia: Atik, 2001, p.16

<sup>17</sup> Rifkin, J. Cited work, p. 16

promoting growth are intertwined, complementary goals. All of us, including our leaders, need to gather all our courage and foresight and finally cure this disease."<sup>18</sup>

### **Conclusion**

There is no way to invent something like a recipe for preventing structuralist attempts to impose a policy on "sustainable development", regardless of whether we are talking about a separate country like Bulgaria or any other country or group of countries in the world. Simply taking into account the negative historical experience of social engineering and social experiments, the consequences of which still cause problems in large parts of the planet. It is good to be more careful and tolerant in evaluations and in initiation certain these and concepts, no matter how tempting and beautiful they are. It is good for the big western economies to set an example and be the first to realize the desired sustainability in their development before offering sustainable development as a concept for future development of the third world countries. If they succeed in this direction, their example will certainly be followed by other countries.

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<sup>18</sup> Stiglitz, Joseph E. Inequality Is Not Inevitable. - New York Times June 27, 2014  
<https://www.nytimes.com/topic/person/joseph-e-stiglitz>