

Global Transformations of Individualised Societies: Implications and Lessons to Be Learned*

ANATOLIY KOLOT¹

ABSTRACT. In this work, we have studied the theoretical aspects of nature, effects of formation and development of two phenomena of our time — individualisation of personality and formation of individualised societies. The study evidences that social life in the context of individualisation has both multiple opportunities for self-actualisation, individual's prioritisation and contradictions, unexpected consequences and asymmetries that surround 'individuals'. The flip side of the individualisation trend includes lack of stability, predictability, sustainability of a society members, weaker involvement of economically active population in group interaction, as well as erosion of cultural solidarity, 'atomisation' of people due to loss of usual, traditional social relations.

This article contains the author's concept of overcoming the 'negative', false individualism. There might be much sense in the idea suggesting that the opposition between individualism and collectivism, an individual and society, freedom and socialisation can be overcome, but not by removing of some elements, or underrating of some values, or ignoring the need for their development. The inclusion of opposing phenomena and processes in today's more comprehensive and complex mental schemes helps us deploy efficient and socially relevant projects for sustainable economic and social development.

KEYWORDS. Individualisation of personality, individualised society, freedom of personality, socialisation, 'negative' individualism.

Introduction

It would be fair to say that any person lives in three worlds — the world of nature, the world of human-made technology and institutions, and in the world of other people (society). To make sure that life in these complicated worlds is acceptable, human-oriented and sustainable, a person needs to gain knowledge about these worlds. A special place in this system is taken by scientific knowledge arising as a result of professional cognitive activities in the realm of people, in their societies. Systematic, interdisciplinary

*This article was translated from its original in Ukrainian

¹ **Anatoliy Kolot** — Doctor of Economics, Professor, Head of Personnel Management and Labour Economics Department, Director of the Industrial Relations Institute, Vice rector in Charge of Research and Academic Affairs at Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman. He is an Honoured Worker of Science of Ukraine (2006). Since 2011 — a Member of the International Academy of Higher Education. Author of more than 270 scientific works. Main research areas: industrial relations, global economy: human dimension, global transformation of social and labour area, staff motivation, social policy. E-mail: kolot@kneu.kiev.ua

learning of this world (the world of people) must constantly identify its dominants and trends, the challenges it faces, and make conclusions that are to be used at all levels of the social hierarchy to ensure sustainable social and economic development.

We should state that the representatives of various areas of science (economic, sociological, philosophical, etc.) have found convincing evidence and the social development practice confirms that *the trends of evolution of the world* in question (human world) include some increasingly noticeable and progressing elements such as *individualisation, self-identification of personalities that later led to the formation of the so-called individualised societies*. Even before the end of the twentieth century, there had been enough signs that allowed concluding: asymmetries in personal and social progress, and further formation of individualised societies in a dominating format are the components of modern challenges to sustainable social and economic development.

Later processes in social organisation and functioning of social systems proved that this scientific diagnosis was correct and underlined the urgent need for finding a new format of relations in the man – nature, man – society, individualisation – socialisation, man – social and labour area systems, and for searching new ways to optimise social relations. To support the previous idea we would like to underline that individualisation of personalities and formation of individualised societies are the global trends that can be classified as general civilisation trends in terms of depth and scope of the social transformations they involve. They include changes in the main components of the organisation of life of people and society, formation and functioning of a new multi-dimensional fabric of social relations in the system of priorities and value hierarchies.

Methodological Format of Research

We shall try to look at this range of issues, on the one hand, from the general philosophical perspective, and on the other hand, in terms of the challenges and problems facing social and labour area under conditions of individualisation that covers more and more members of society, progresses and changes the form of society and influences all components of both economic and non-economic worlds.

First of all, we should note that liberal concepts and theories are the ideological basis of individualisation in its broadest sense. The development of liberal economic thought has a long history and dates back to the ideas of liberalism reviewed and further studied in the works of the founders of classical political economy. Liberalism was recognised and became especially popular in the second half of

the 20th century when it gained the status of a *meta-ideology*. It was the period when liberal principles and practices become the alpha and the omega of theoretical debates and ideological battles². Liberalism of the early 21st century is a powerful trend of the global economic thought that generally develops within the neoclassical economic tradition protecting economic liberty, individualisation of personality, development of private property, equilibrium of economic systems and free competition. The review of literature on these issues shows that the nature, characteristics and consequences of individualisation of personality and formation of individualised societies are studied by an increasing number of both foreign and Ukrainian researchers. The range of opinions on the above-mentioned today's phenomenon has been and remains very diverse and not facilitating the formation of modern philosophy and beliefs about the exact role and implications of individualisation in its broadest sense.

When studying the above-stated range of issues, we should first of all refer to a subtle matter such as dialectic of personal (individual) and social aspects, relationship and interdetermination of personal and public interests and values. Liberal concepts and theories state that we should not worry about the public interest as, in fact, we know little about them and do not really understand them; we can seek to reach better results but make the situation even worse. This leads us to the conclusion: people should only worry about their personal interests as this is the way to protect public interest.

The First Global Revolution, the Club's of Rome report, says: '... as each person is biologically and socio-culturally unique, the emphasis should be on the individual aspect. "Collective" values are often the outcome of a choice made – or worse, imposed – by those holding the reins of power, who and want at all costs to impose their values on the rest by showing contempt for others' values, by even attempting to suppress them. "Collective" values can only be taken into consideration when there exists true freedom and a high level of cultural development.'³.

Studying the essential characteristics of the concept of individualisation of personality, we should pay attention to the differences in the definitions in this area that exist in philosophical and economic literature. For example, philosophical literature mainly sees individualisation of personality as a phenomenon, process of significant weakening of a person's dependence on its

² See: Liberalism: Anthology – 2nd ed. /Compilation O. Protsenko, V. Lisovyi. – Kyiv: Prostrir Publishing House, Smoloskyp, 2009. – P. IX [In Ukrainian].

³ King A. The First Global Revolution/A. King, B. Schneider. — Moscow: Progress-Pangea Publishing House, 1991. – P. 300-301 [In Russian].

social environment, group or on other external social determinants. Philosopher G. Diligenskiy says that individualisation is an individual's higher level of autonomy, freedom⁴.

The economic literature, individualisation is seen in both the context of a growing autonomy of individuals and diversification of a person's characteristics that shape his/her human and social assets and cause differences in motivational mindset. Therefore, here we deals with autonomy of individuals and increase of knowledge and competence wealth, personalised characteristics such as qualities, skills and capacities of each individual.

Individualism in its traditional sense, as noted by Louis Dumont, sees an individual as a spiritual, independent, autonomous and, in fact, non-social being⁵. It would be fair to note that: 'methodological individualism, or atomism, defines that social and collective actions derive from independent individual actions.'⁶ Nobel Prize winner F. Hayek notes that 'the key characteristic of individualism is respect for an individual as such, i.e. recognition of absolute sovereignty of a person's attitudes and aptitudes in life, no matter how peculiar it is, and the belief that each person should develop his/her abilities.'⁷ M. Blaug in *The Methodology of Economics* states that in contrast to 'methodological holism', a concept that suggests that social theories should be based on the behaviour of all groups of individuals, methodological individualism is a system of beliefs that implies that social theory should be based on behaviour of individuals⁸. Methodological individualism derives from the fact that the explanations of economic, political and social phenomena only become appropriate when they are based on individuals' beliefs, values and decisions.

It should be emphasised that individualisation of personality is not a phenomenon of recent decades, or even the last century. Impartial scientific analysis shows that in the last three or four centuries Western civilisation has been and remains influenced by the ideology of individualism, individual freedom precedence over collective and public interests and goals.

When reviewing the development of the theory, and especially practice of individualism in the historical context, we underline that in the ancient world lives of individuals conformed to general interests of society. That world could be described by a significant dependence of an individual on his/her family. According to the

⁴ See: *Diligenskiy G. //Issues of Philosophy*. 1990. — No. 12. — P. 39 [In Russian].

⁵ See: *L. Dumont Essays on Individualism/L. Dumont*. — Dubna: Phoenix Publishing House, 1997. P. 72 [In Russian].

⁶ *Bazylevych V. D., Hrazhevska N. I., Haidai T. V., Leonenko P. M., Nesterenko A. P. History of Economic Studies: Coursebook* – Kyiv: Znannya Publishing House, 2004. — P. 1007 [In Ukrainian].

⁷ *Hayek F. The Road to Serfdom/F. Hayek*. – Moscow, 1992. – P. 18 [In Russian].

⁸ See: *Blaug M. The Methodology of Economics/M. Blaug*. – Moscow, 2004. – P. 374, 100.

findings of many influential sociologists and political scientists, society then imposed its members a system of collective requirements, a range of strict rituals that can be hardly afforded by a modern individual⁹. For example, in ancient Greece people mainly existed due to the support of and for the state, and the significance of social life was at the forefront. Later, individuals began to separate from polis and gradually estrange from social problems. The results of this separation are contradictory because, on the one hand, an individual freed from his/her regular duties and rituals, requirements produced by society, and, on the other hand, this person started to experience group and class restrictions. According to the renowned philosopher N. Berdyaev, at the early feudalism stage people still existed in corporation, a certain continuous space where they did not feel like isolated atoms but were a part of the whole. Berdyaev says that this situation ceased to exist during the period of modern history¹⁰.

In the era of formation of a capitalist economic system individualisation of personality develops intensively as a phenomenon of its weakened dependence on social environment, and of social groups on other external or social determinants. Both in theory and in practice individualisation is seen as the highest level of an individual's autonomy and freedom. The theoretical, ideological bases of individualisation as a social phenomenon are liberal theories about a self-made man. A self-made man as a phenomenon of the new, capitalist era does not exist under the rigid pressure of social circumstances and has greater freedom of self-expression.

The reality is that the present conditions continue to intensify the formation of a new type of personality. In societies of the late 20th – early 21st centuries, social priorities did not belong to groups, parties or classes but to personalised, autonomised, individualised personalities.

We emphasise that modern people are ceasing to be the role-specific personification of particular high-status social groups. At the same time, a personal component of a modern individual has been undergoing profound changes during the society transformation that became unprecedentedly intense in the last decade of the previous century and is still happening now. A. Toffler, a world-known social scientist, writes: 'It would be unreasonable to think that fundamentally changing material conditions of life do not affect

⁹ See: *Baudoin I.* Introducere în Sociologia Politică/I. Baudoin. — Timișoara Editura Amacord 1999. — P. 128 [In Romanian].

¹⁰ See: *Berdyaev N.* The Meaning of History/N. Berdyaev. — Moscow: Mysl Publishing House, 1990. — P. 125 [In Russian].

individuals, or rather social issues. We change people by changing the underlying structure of society'¹¹.

Transformation of the personality component of modern humans means that 'an unexpressive person', 'someone who is like everyone else' is substituted by a personality with 'a face that has an uncommon expression' and their own 'autonomised' ego. According to A. Toffler, 'superindustrialism requires and creates a person who is different from other individuals, not robots, rather than a standard, 'mass man'¹². It should also be underlined that in the present situation we observe a dramatic reduction in the reliance of the personality component on the innate status characteristics such as class, place of residence, ethnicity, gender, religion, etc. At the same time, we can see a fast growth of importance of personally acquired qualities – education, skills, experience, attitudes, motivations and personal competencies.

As we have already noted a modern personalised, individualised personality is less often identified with particular social groups and is more independent, unique in behaviour, thinking and lifestyle. Autonomisation and individualisation of personality is directly related to phenomena and life characteristics such as *sovereignisation, growing freedom, independence, self-sufficiency and self-responsibility*.

We should underline that the development of the personality individualisation phenomenon is accompanied by another phenomenon – individual choice expansion. It means that humans are potentially gaining a much better access to what was created by both nature and people who belong to different societies, cultures and eras. The expansion of individual choice also includes new capabilities as to selecting the place of residence, study and/or work. It enriches life by combining the potential of individual choice and individualised personality. The undoubted advantage of individualisation is a growing freedom, weaker social control, avoiding strict group standards of behaviour, and a higher innovative behaviour. The development of a new, individualised personality also influenced the relations in the man – society system. For example, when a personalised, individualised personality comes to the forefront, it is 'appointed' to play the lead role instead of a tribe, group or nation.

At the same time, we would like to emphasise that social life in terms of individualisation of personality is filled with both self-actualisation opportunities, prioritisation of individual interests and contradictions, paradoxes, unexpected consequences, asymmetries that surround 'individuals'. Celebrating the triumph of

¹¹ Toffler A. The Third Wave/A. Toffler. — Moscow, 1990. — P. 601 [In Russian].

¹² Toffler A. Future Shock/A. Toffler. — St. Petersburg, 1997. — P. 241 [In Russian].

individualisation in modern history, which is fuelled by liberal theories, mechanisms and market economy relationships, we emphasise that individualisation should not be absolute and comprehensive at this stage. Moreover, it has been proved by theory and confirmed in practice that autonomisation and individualisation of a man only work for human and social development if reasonable limits are observed in this area. No matter how much a person values their independence and freedom, they will feel the need to belong to a certain community, participate in certain collective (joint) projects, be a subject of collective interaction. We insist that overcoming the restrictions, imposed on people when they belong to a group, class or caste community, from obsolete norms and traditions as well as from total submission to state institutions does not mean that society disappears as an institute from life of individuals, or their exclusion from social life, or their disregard for social values.

Together with obvious benefits gained by mankind on the way of winning freedom, autonomisation and individualisation of people, we should mention the potential and real losses for individuals and societies from great breakdown of relations between members of society and social institutions. With all freedoms achieved by societies over a long period of time, there must remain a broad social space beyond which people should not go as it would inevitably affect human and social development. We ought to take for granted that there are many problems that can be only solved by participating interaction, use of a potential of common interest and joint action.

Individualised society is a society where an absolute supremacy belongs to individual values; it is not an antipode but a certain contrast to a society of collective values. In an individualised society, solidarity and collective socialisation lose their traditional values; atomisation of society takes place. In his worldwide known book, Z. Bauman sees individualisation as a denial of forms of sociality¹³. The author distinguishes three main characteristics of an individualised society:

- person's loss of control over the most important social processes;
- a growing uncertainty and vulnerability of an individual to progressing uncontrollable changes;
- person's desire to give up achieving long-term goals for the sake of obtaining immediate results that eventually disintegrates both social and individual parts of life.

¹³ *Bauman Z. The Individualized Society/Z. Bauman; [transl. from English. ed. V. L. Inozemtseva]. Moscow: — Moscow: Logos Publishing House, 2002 [In Russian].*

Ukrainian and foreign practice provide the evidence that the reverse side of the coin – the growing individualisation in its current form – is expressed in weaker role of collective values, erosion of solidarity, mass signs of social disintegration and lower potential of collectivism. We would like to focus on the so-called J. Kamfner's paradox which suggests that ever growing number of people are willing to give up social freedoms in exchange for individual ones. In other words, if people are well paid, have decent living conditions, receive high quality healthcare services, travel, enjoy their lifestyles, they are less willing to intervene in the public space, show political activity, protect freedom of speech, etc. Therefore, *personal space is expanding*, a , *while public space tends to diminish*. Such transformations and metamorphoses contribute to the evolution of consumer philosophy by sacrificing the developed social consciousness. In our opinion, the existing simplified and one-sided interpretations of the relationship between individual and social aspects, private and public interests are just an ideological step, intentional or unknown attempt to conceal, disguise the decline of moral and spiritual potential of society, moral degradation of an increasing proportion of population, devaluation of social values.

We expect that Z. Bauman's observation as to the unpredictable rules that exist in today's society will remain relevant for at least 15-20 years. Indeed, we are all witnesses of the process when the majority of the actors of industrial relations experience doubts about the existence of more or less stable and clear rules in the new economy and society that is being globalised. At the turn of the millennium, employed population has an increasing feeling of 'separation of time', fragmentation of living conditions. Older generation remembers the years of their youth when professional and qualification growth was mainly planned for a long term, and the obligations of the actors of industrial relations were long-lasting. Under today's conditions, which are becoming a rule rather than an exception, a person ceases to feel the owner and creator of his/her environment while there is a growing sense of helplessness, desire to escape from reality, state of deep uncertainty and concern. Everything that surrounds a person is changing so fast that it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain the integrity of their own world, make reliable plans for professional growth and personal life.

The implications of the progressive individualisation of personality include a growing loneliness, 'atomisation' of a person due to the loss of usual and traditional social relations. Today's practice adds up new types of loneliness that is compensated by a more and more intensive involvement of people in the virtual cyberspace. Real, direct social contacts are more often replaced by virtual. The essence of another controversy in this area is that

according to A. Toffler, individualisation builds up a person's potential but makes human contacts more difficult: '...the more individualised we become, the more difficult it is for us to choose a life partner with similar interests, values, habits and preferences. Friends are hard to find, too. Everyone is becoming more demanding in their social relations'¹⁴.

A vicious circle is formed with the deployment of individualisation processes: to fulfill their potential people must exist in an individual society, but in order to become a personality they need the right resources and capacities that are denied by the new order being established. The reality is that an economically active person is becoming more and more individualised but at such a great extent that it makes them extremely unprotected because they fall out of a dense fabric of dependence and interdependence that still exist in society. Robert Castel, a renewed French sociologist, stating unwanted and sometimes irreversible changes in the labour area at the turn of the millennium says: 'Today, the social issue is again based on the existence of 'useless for the world', unnecessary people as well as on many related situations described by instability and economic insecurity. This indicates the growth of a new type of mass vulnerability... formation of attitudes to work in the long term looks paradoxical. It took centuries of victims, suffering and coercion — rule of law and order, pressure of needs and hunger — to fix workers in their workplaces and then to retain them with a whole range of 'social benefits' that determine a status constituting social identity. And when this 'civilisation of labour' seemed to have finally made everyone recognise itself as 'hegemony of wage labour', the space cracked reviving people's old fears of 'living a day-to-day existence'¹⁵.

One of the greatest sociologists of our time A. Touraine states: 'Individualism has become widespread. We are moving towards disappearance of social norms that are being replaced by economic mechanisms and pursuit of profit. We can conclude that the main issue of sociological analysis is the study of disappearance of social actors that lost under their ground or because of voluntarism of states, parties or armies, or as a result of economic policies that permeate all areas of social life, even those that seem far from economy and market logic'¹⁶.

According to Bauman, societies in the 21st century demonstrate, on the one hand, rapidly increasing complexity of economic

¹⁴ *Toffler A.* The Third Wave/A. Toffler. — Moscow, 1990. — P. 583 [In Russian].

¹⁵ *Castel R.* Les Métamorphoses de la Question Sociale. Une Chronique Du Salarariat/Robert Castel; [transl. from French ; general ed. by translator N. A. Shmatko]. — St. Petersburg: Aletheia Publishing House, 2009. — P. 538 [In Russian].

¹⁶ *Touraine A.* Sociology without Societies/A. Touraine//Socis Publishing House. — 2004. — No. 7. — P. 70 [In Russian].

processes, and on the other hand, more obvious fragmentation of human activities. This explains the phenomenon of our time when societies gain more and more signs of anti-humanism, and a modern man, according to the scientist, becomes increasingly disoriented, limited and helpless.

Societies that once fought for becoming transparent, invulnerable and free of unexpected surprises, Bauman states, now find out that their capacity is fully dependent on variable and unpredictable mysterious forces. 'Events, mainly the most important of them, become uncontrollable... which causes paralysis of political will, loss of faith in significance of collective action and in dramatic changes in life achieved through solidarity. The current situation is often regarded as appropriate, as the highest need that, if intervened by people, will cause harm to them.'¹⁷ To support this Z. Bauman notes: 'Certainly, one may say that there is nothing particularly new in this situation, that working life has been full of uncertainties since time immemorial, however, the present uncertainty is of a brand new type... Uncertainty of our time is a powerful *driver of individualisation*. It separates instead of uniting people, and since it is impossible to say who can take the lead in this situation, the idea of 'common interests' is becoming more and more vague and eventually even unattainable. The present day's fears, anxiety and sorrows have a form that makes us suffer alone. They are not added to others or accumulated in a 'common goal' or have a 'natural address'¹⁸.

There is a clear link between the phenomenon of individualisation spread with changes in direct application of labour and especially with the processes that cause massive use of unusual forms of employment. Z. Bauman notes in this regard: 'When employment becomes short-term and loses clear perspective (not to mention guarantees) and then becomes episodic where, in fact, all the rules relating to the game of career advancement or dismissal are cancelled or tend to change long before the end of the game, there are very few chances for rooting and building mutual loyalty and solidarity. In contrast to the times that are described by long-run relationships, there is now hardly a serious incentive for the more critical interest in the study of arrangements that turn out to be temporary in any case. Place of work is seen as a camping site where a person stops for a few nights and can leave it at any time if the conditions that had been promised are not ensured...'¹⁹

Why does the phenomenon of individualisation, including autonomisation, personalisation, sovereignisation of personality,

¹⁷ Ibid. — P. 67.

¹⁸ Bauman Z. The Individualized Society/Z. Bauman; [transl. from English. ed. V. L. Inozemtseva]. Moscow: — Moscow: Logos Publishing House, 2002. — P. 30-31 [In Russian].

¹⁹ Ibid. — P. 31.

showed its dramatic development at the turn of the millennium? The author believes – as do many other scholars – that the key events, when the individualisation vector was expressed globally, had profound changes in their format, drivers and institutional frameworks of contemporary economies and societies. These changes have a double nature. On the one hand, *they include global transformations in public life with the components such as unprecedented agility, mobility, openness to global information and communication expansion, changes in popular culture, instability, variability, unpredictable consequences of social change.* ‘The uncertainty of our day is a powerful individualising force. It separates instead of uniting people’²⁰.

On the other hand, *some of the increasingly powerful drivers of individualisation are information and communication technologies that change both the technical foundations of the new economy and the lifestyle in societies.* J. Naisbitt was right when he mentioned: ‘New technologies such as computers, cell phones and fax machines are the triumph of the individual over the collective’²¹.

In fact, today’s selfish individualism and self-centeredness are developing under the influence of both ‘marketisation’ of social relations and information that is a powerful individualising driver. ‘New information technologies can make people extremely self-centered... Users of information are becoming more and more fascinated by themselves... they start to realise that they have nothing to do with other people – they are simply too busy.’²²

Many members of society believe that the price paid by modern societies for the existing format of the global market and growing individualisation is too high. Zygmunt Bauman warns: ‘Uncertainty, hesitation, *lack of control over events* all cause anxiety. It is this anxiety that we pay as the price for new personal freedoms and new responsibilities. No matter how much pleasure these freedoms give in other aspects, many people find this price too high... They would gladly live in a less complex and, therefore, less frightening world, the world with simpler options, inevitable rewards for right decisions and clear and unmistakable signs of appropriate choice. The world where everyone knows what to do to be right. The world that is not full of mystery and expectation’²³.

²⁰ Bauman Z. The Individualized Society/Z. Bauman; [transl. from English. ed. V. L. Inozemtseva]. Moscow: — Moscow: Logos Publishing House, 2002. — P. 30-31 [In Russian].

²¹ Naisbitt J. Megatrends 2000/J. Naisbitt//21st Century Ahead: Prospects, Predictions, Futurologists. — Moscow, 2000. — P. 461 [In Russian].

²² Cornish E. The Cyber Future/E. Cornish//21st Century Ahead: Prospects, Predictions, Futurologists. — Moscow, 2000. — P. 203-204 [In Russian].

²³ Bauman Z. The Individualized Society/Z. Bauman; [transl. from English. ed. V. L. Inozemtseva]. Moscow: — Moscow: Logos Publishing House, 2002. — P. 110 [In Russian].

Therefore, the modern global economy and the world of labour are described by the trend of individualism. This makes the following questions especially relevant: *What are and will be the benefits and difficulties, risks for a working person who is an individualised personality? How can we reconcile, coordinate the new opportunities and risks when an economically active person exits collective life? What does ‘to be protected’ mean today, when we see a deploying process of ‘overcoming wage labour’ and developing societies of ‘mass individualism’?*

The metamorphoses of a working person’s status, that became more intense in the last two or three decades and are going on, can be described as a simultaneous motion and a contradictory combination, interaction of *two forms of individualisation*. One of them can be viewed as ‘positive’ individualism associated with growing autonomy, independence, greater ability to self-actualisation. The other one, ‘negative’ individualism, is associated with loss of communications with the team a person relied upon in the most recent past, with lack of support from the team or other institution, and with a range of other negative consequences. Robert Castel wrote: “‘Negative’ individualism exists because it is defined in terms of lack: of respect, safety, guaranteed benefits, stable relations...”²⁴

‘Negative’, excessive individualism is one of the anomalies of modern life which drew attention of many renowned researchers. They also emphasise that the personal and the social, freedom and socialisation are not absolute phenomena but require coordinated, dialectical development.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry underlined that there is only one true value – person-to-person contacts – and that we only breathe freely when we are linked with our brothers with common goals that are beyond us. We would like to cite Eric Fromm who said that a person really feels lonelier, more isolated from the surrounding world and at the same time cannot and will not tolerate loneliness, and realises that his/her happiness depends on solidarity with other individuals, sense of ownership in the past and future generations²⁵.

The development of ‘negative’ individualism continues with the support of liberal theories that evolve though in a very contradictory way. Liberalism as a theoretical, ideological trend emerged to overcome one of the global extremes – supremacy of the social over the individual. As this theory evolved and was implemented in practice *another extreme emerged – exaggerated, unnatural supremacy of the individual over the collective, social.*

²⁴ Castel R. Les Métamorphoses de la Question Sociale. Une Chronique Du Salarial/Robert Castel; [transl. from French ; general ed. by translator N. A. Shmatko]. — St. Petersburg: Aletheia Publishing House, 2009. — P. 543 [In Russian].

²⁵ See: Fromm E. The Fear of Freedom. Man for Himself. — Minsk, 2004. — P. 57 [In Russian].

It seems that even at the beginning of the 21st century humanity has trouble with mastering the truths highlighted by ancient philosophers. For example, Aristotle emphasised that the golden mean is a positive property of any activity and in people should seek to achieve it in their charity²⁶. The works of ancient philosophers contain the warning that excess in human actions leads to mistakes while deficiency is a result of inefficient work. This means that the golden mean is the best model of behaviour for any person. According to Aristotle, courage is a midpoint between fear and intrepidity. He also concluded: 'Therefore, charity is a deliberately (consciously) acquired quality of soul which is in the subjective midpoint and defined by mind, as it would be defined by a sensible person, the middle of two evils – excess and deficiency.'²⁷ We reiterate that liberalism that emerged as the ideological basis for overcoming the absolute supremacy of the social over the individual, social life over personal life, became extreme as it developed; its current trend tends to destruction of dialectic, natural link between the personal and the social, the individual and the collective. Obviously, the 'positive', 'reasonable' individualism, that has for a long period been a powerful driver of social development, has transformed into its opposite and is becoming one of the causes of unsustainable development.

Therefore, the evolution of the social changes we are reviewing in this analysis started from total subordination of an individual to his/her family, group, corporation, state and transformed into his/her isolation, autonomisation. But everything has its limits, and if we break them, we will ruin the system of natural interactions. We must admit that with the current format of individualisation, autonomisation of personalities we observe massive estrangement, devastation, loneliness, abandonment, indifference. This will suppress, destroy human nature in the same way as did the external coercions in the previous eras. Extreme selfishness desolidarity, degradation of collective values are threatened by sustainable development of people and society.

Exaggerated focus on individual needs, ignoring the collective, public interests turns a person into a creature contemptuously named 'one-dimensional man' by Herbert Marcuse, a renowned philosopher of the 20th century.

History has many times proved that extreme positions, unilateral paradigms, artificial structures, that cause supremacy of one concept over the other, distort social architecture and public order. Dialectical understanding of the relationship between an individual

²⁶ See: *Aristotle*. Ethics (Nicomachean Ethics). Minsk: Filosofskaya Mysl Publishing House, 1998. – P. 168 [In Russian].

²⁷ *Ibid.* – P. 179.

and society must affirm, anticipate and assume their interaction and mutual influence. A human being only becomes a personality in their community representing a special type of people-to-people relations. An individual lives in society, but society also lives in an individual; he or she is both a product and creator of society.

Possibly the main question arising in connection with the foregoing is: is it practical or not to implement the mental schemes and forms of social organisation and management technologies that would really ensure a combination, coordination of individualism and collectivism; autonomisation and solidarity; individual and social interests? In other words, is it possible to overcome the 'negative', 'bad' individualism?

We are convinced that if people use of scientific knowledge, overcome the stereotypes of economic thinking, extreme and one-sided approaches, the issue of optimisation of the individual and the collective, individual and social interests may be solved.

Conclusion

Modern individualism is increasingly combining independence, autonomy, self-empowerment with lack of stability, predictability, sustainability of society members who mainly belong to themselves, are no one's people and limited in their ability to join particular labour teams. This gives reason to believe that one of the key trends of the current world of labour are the development of desocialisation process, weaker involvement of economically active population in group interaction, spread of social fragmentation. Therefore, the urgent task facing every conscious person, especially scientists, is to measure, realise the depth of the challenges of our time, to evaluate their own potential and ability to respond to them so that the outside world becomes safer and more favourable for sustainable development.

A reasonable and extremely productive solution may be achieved due to the idea that suggests that the opposition between individualism and collectivism, an individual and society, freedom and socialisation, individualisation and social security, personal liberty and safety can be overcome, but not through removal of any elements or underestimation of any value or ignoring the need for its development. In order to change the surrounding world for the better we should learn to think and act differently. A human being as a biological, social, spiritual creature, with their individual interests, is not an antipode to society and, as is, cannot threaten it. Similarly, the efforts aimed to strengthen the role of social values of collective solidarity and to promote collective security and social safety do not limit personal freedom or threaten the implementation

of individual interests. Ideally, there should be no 'Berlin Wall' between an individual's socialisation and freedom. Socialisation does not deny normal privacy or mean an unconditional limitation of an individual by society. The human existence philosophy suggests that an individual living in society cannot be completely free of it. Society can and must set for an individual certain conditions and standards of life but also provide opportunities for better self-actualisation. We see socialisation as a process of inculcation, cultivation in an individual the qualities, behaviours, values that help them interact with other people and institutions. An individual can be considered to be socialised if he/she has properties and abilities required for activities in various areas of social life, work, beyond the individual's purely personal interests.

Therefore, socialisation means human adaptation to the norms of collective life. It facilitates the integration of a person in society and sets certain limitations intended to prevent the spread of anti-social, selfish actions. Normal, balanced socialisation implemented without bigotry or undue effort is naturally accompanied by the affirmation of human freedom. Only the extreme, unnatural forms of socialisation deny, suppress human freedom and individualisation.

In our opinion, there must be a different perception, both in people's minds and in practice, of dependencies that exist in the systems of freedom – socialisation, individualism – collectivism, freedom – individual security, personal – social. Scientific thought that is still attracted by extremes *should focus on searching for other synthesised ways of development*. We have to refuse from extremes and overcome the 'either-or' dilemma. Theoretical, methodological 'extremism', that led to mass separation, distancing of ideological trends with opposing, irreconcilable attitudes, must be left in the past. Involvement of opposing phenomena and processes in modern, more spacious, comprehensive mental schemes can help us work out effective, socially relevant projects for sustainable economic and public development.

References

1. *Aristotle Ethics (Nicomachean Ethics)*. Minsk: Filosofskaya Mysl Publishing House, 1998. – P. 168 [In Russian].
2. *Baudoin I. Introduction to political sociology*/I. Baudoin. – Timișoara Editura Amacord 1999. – 316 P. [In Romanian].
3. *Bauman Z. The Individualized Society*/Z. Bauman; [transl. from English. ed. V. L. Inozemtseva]. Moscow: – Moscow: Logos Publishing House, 2002. – 390 P. [In Russian].
4. *Bazylevych V. D., Hrazhevskaya N. I., Haidai T. V., Leonenko P. M., Nesterenko A. P. History of Economic Studies:*

Coursebook – Kyiv: Znannya Publishing House, 2004. – 1300 P. [In Ukrainian].

5. *Berdyayev N.* The Meaning of History/N. Berdyayev. – Moscow: Mysl Publishing House, 1990. – 175 P. [In Russian].

6. *Blaug M.* The Methodology of Economics/M. Blaug. – Moscow, 2004. – 416 P. [In Russian].

7. *Castel R.* Les Mütamorphoses de la Question Sociale. Une Chronique Du Salariat/Robert Castel; [transl. from French ; general ed. by translator N. A. Shmatko]. – St. Petersburg: Aletheia Publishing House, 2009, – 576 P. [In Russian].

8. *Cornish E.* The Cyber Future/E. Cornish//21st Century Ahead: Prospects, Predictions, Futurologists. – Moscow, 2000. – P. 203-204. [In Russian].

9. *Diligenskiy G.* //Issues of Philosophy. 1990. – No. 12. – P. 39. [In Russian].

10. *Dumont L.* Essays on Individualism/L. Dumont. – Dubna: Phoenix Publishing House, 1997. 304 P. [In Russian]

11. *Fromm E.* The Fear of Freedom. Man for Himself. – Minsk, 2004. – P. 57. [In Russian].

12. *Hayek F.* The Road to Serfdom/F. Hayek. – Moscow, 1992. – 176 P. [In Russian].

13. *King A.* The First Global Revolution/A. King, B. Schneider. – Moscow: Progress-Pangea Publishing House, 1991. – 344 P. [In Russian].

14. Liberalism: Anthology – 2nd ed. /Compilation O. Protsenko, V. Lisovyi. – Kyiv: Prostir Publishing House, Smoloskyp, 2009. – 1164 P. [In Ukrainian].

15. *Naisbitt J.* Megatrends 2000/J. Naisbitt//21st Century Ahead: Prospects, Predictions, Futurologists. – Moscow, 2000. – P. 461. [In Russian].

16. *Toffler A.* Future Shock/A. Toffler. – St. Petersburg, 1997. – 464 P. [In Russian].

17. *Toffler A.* The Third Wave/A. Toffler. – Moscow, 1990. – P. 583. [In Russian].

18. *Touraine A.* Sociology without Societies/A. Touraine//Socis Publishing House. – 2004. – No. 7. – P. 67-70. [In Russian].

The article was received by the editorial board on 03.03.2014