

IDEA OF HAPPINESS AND BASIC INCOME

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In the ancient world the idea of happiness was presented in various interpretations, but the most thorough study of this problem can be considered the doctrine of Aristotle. According to the etymology: "*Eudaimonia*" (according to Aristotle – true happiness) consisted of two parts – *eu* (good) and *daimon* (deity), that is literally meant that a virtuous person is under the protection of the gods.

During the historical development of mankind, both the idea of happiness and the ways of its solution have undergone dramatic changes. It is no secret that the modern human is no longer just a *zoon politicon* (Aristotle), an *imago Dei* (Augustine) but also (to a greater extent) *homo economicus*. The tension between the desire to be a social being and the desire to get maximum benefits converts the idea of happiness into the category of unattainable utopias. Today, the idea of unattainable happiness is becoming widespread, and the pursuit of happiness is turning into a search for ways to "recover" and to revive.

In our opinion, the idea of Basic Income (Universal Basic Income) could be one of the possible ways of removing the tension between the *zoon politicon* and *homo economicus* in the pursuit of happiness. Within this idea, the transition from the negative concept to the neutral concept of the person is relevant. This concept was proposed by one of the participants of the conference BIEN 2019 Kristiina Hyryläinen.

“The neutral concept of human means that all human beings are equal, valuable, and perfect as human beings without any comparison, just like all the other living creatures are allowed to be. Every one of us strives to do one's best. There are more good deeds than evil deeds in the world today. Only deeds do matter, and everyone is responsible for one's own: every act contains either a reward or a penalty. It is clear that in the right conditions, it is easier for a person to do well than in poor ones. That is

why everyone must be guaranteed the best possible conditions to live a decent human life”²⁴.

Interestingly, the neutral concept of man, proposed by the Finnish researcher, is in line with the opinion of the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben. In the book “The Kingdom and the Garden” (2019), Agamben proposes to consider true human nature as Paradise on earth: "man is capable of all things, but no one owes anything," "man is a creature of opportunity," "many people whose eyes have been opened, they have embodied the Kingdom of the Spirit and are living on earth in a state of paradise innocence”²⁵ In this sense of happiness can be considered as an objective mental form, formed within a certain culture, a socially defined "model" of human existence, which acts as a measure of individual existence.

Thus, understanding the introspective vector of happiness (which, however, is directed outwards – to love, to give, to serve) it can be facilitated by the transition from a negative (sin, guilt) to a neutral (value, perfection) concept of a person. But ignoring the external factors will be a mistake. Protection as a component of the definition and achievement of happiness is very important. We believe that one of the effective remedies in the context of human economic freedom can be the idea of an unconditional basic income – the best conditions for a decent human life are guaranteed. In the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the implementation of such an idea is more than actual.

START-UP PROJECTS IN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

Alexander Soloviev

Russia

Social Movement “Basic Income Russia Tomorrow”

Russia

In March 2019, Social Movement “Basic Income Russia Tomorrow” (a member of the BIEN Worldwide Network) launched a pilot basic income payment project.

²⁴ Kristiina Hyryläinen. From Negative Human Concept to Newtural Human Concept // 19th BIEN Congress Hyderabad, India. URL: <https://basicincome.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Kristiina-HyrylainenNA.pdf>

²⁵ Giorgio Agamben. *Il Regno e il Giardino*. Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 2019. P. 2-4.