

PHILOSOPHICAL SCIENCES

«DIMENSIONAL ONTOLOGY» OF V. FRANKL AS AN ATTEMPT TO OVERCOME THE CONTRADICTIONS OF EXISTENTIAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL DEFINITION OF MAN

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Speaking of the problem of man in philosophy without much stretch, we can say that any philosophizing is to some extent a philosophizing about man. However, recent history confronts us with a fundamentally new type of man and, accordingly, fundamentally new attempts to comprehend the phenomenon of man from a philosophical basis. The catastrophic nature of the revolutionary upheavals and the two world wars involuntarily on the one hand became a catalyst for social mobility, and on the other – gave rise to a number of meaningful life issues, the main leitmotif of which was the feeling of «futility» of human life.

As for the actual philosophical attempts to rethink the new, «new» man (the man of modern times), then the first positions should be given to the philosophy of existentialism and philosophical anthropology. Between the representatives of philosophical anthropology and the philosophy of existentialism immediately arose a philosophical controversy with clear attempts to differentiate their own positions, which was dictated by the common subject of philosophical discourse. The main «stumbling block» for both representatives of philosophical anthropology and the philosophy of existentialism is the concept of «human nature», the prehistory of which dates back almost from the first philosophical attempts to understand the world.

The position of existentialists on this issue is irrevocably categorical: «In the eighteenth century, the atheism of philosophers eliminated the concept of God, but not the idea that essence precedes existence», – says J.-P. Sartre, – «man possesses a certain human nature. This human nature, being a «human» concept, is present in all people. This means that each individual person is only a special case of the general concept of «man»... Atheistic existentialism teaches that even if there is no god, there is at least one being whose existence precedes the essence, the being

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that exists before it is defined, some concept, and this being is a person or, according to M. Heidegger, human reality» [4, p. 322–323].

As for philosophers-anthropologists, on the contrary, they consider the existentialist vision of man too immersed in the subjectivist attempts to know the subject by the cognitive means of the subject itself. Thus, H. Plessner in his program work «The Levels of Organic Life and the Human: Introduction to Philosophical Anthropology» emphasizes the differences between the existentialism of M. Heidegger and his own philosophical teachings: «...if we have to distance ourselves from Heidegger's research... mainly because we can not recognize the main Heidegger's position... according to which the study of extrahuman existence must necessarily be preceded by existential analysis of man. This idea shows that he is captive to the old tradition (which found expression in various forms of subjectivism), according to which a person who asks philosophical questions is existentially closest to himself and therefore, looking at the object of his questions, interested in himself. In contrast, we defend the thesis that man differs from all other beings in that he is neither closest nor farthest to himself, that it is because of this eccentricity of his form of life that he finds himself in the sea of being and thus not looking at the non-existent nature of its existence, it belongs to one series together with all the things of the world» [3, p. 98].

However, carefully reading both quotations can be seen in the positions of both thinkers in addition to differences and much in common, in particular, the main postulate of existentialism that existence precedes essence, in our opinion, is fully consistent with Plessner's statement about the non-existent nature of human existence and its anticipating himself in the sea of being. At the same time, H. Plessner and other representatives of philosophical anthropology do not recognize human subjectivity as the main starting point of philosophizing about man, not unreasonably trying to rely on something more important in their search and putting forward the following credo: «Without human philosophy – no theory of human life experience. Without the philosophy of nature – no philosophy of man» [3, p. 99].

However, it is obvious that the efforts of philosophers-anthropologists to know man are, so to speak, apophatic. If apophatic theology starts in the knowledge of God from the list of characteristics that are not god, then «apophatic anthropology» focuses on what man is not an animal. Very eloquent in this sense are the following arguments of H. Plessner, in which he seeks to formulate the essence of what he calls «eccentric positionality»: «Man as a living thing, placed in the middle of his existence, knows this middle, experiences it and therefore transcends it. He experiences a connection in the absolute here-and-now, the total convergence of the environment and her own body in relation to the center of his position and

therefore is no longer bound by it. He experiences the immediate beginning of her actions, the impulsiveness of her motives and movements, the radical authorship of his living existence, the standing between action and action, choice, as well as passion for affect and attraction, he knows himself free and, despite this freedom, chained to existence, which hinders her and with which she must struggle. If the life of an animal is centric, then the life of a man is eccentric, it cannot break the centering, but at the same time comes out of it. Eccentricity is characteristic of the human form of being towards the environment» [3, p. 126].

Upon careful consideration of the above quote, the worldview and even terminological commonality of H. Plessner's reasoning cannot fail to catch the eye, which constantly emphasizes the presence of man among other things in the world in the status of «living thing» and at the same time speaks of man's «exit» in the «radical authorship» of his existence with similar thoughts of the criticized M. Heidegger: «Human being can act in relation to being only because it is put forward in Nothing. Going beyond being is carried out at the very core of our existence. But such a way out is metaphysics in the proper sense of the word. This means: metaphysics belongs to the «nature of man» [2, p. 26]. Let us ask the question: is Plesner's «eccentric» position of a person who is «out of balance, out of place and time, into Nothing» [3, p. 136] is also quite metaphysical? And why is it so difficult to grasp and describe this «human in man» without resorting to metaphysics?

In search of an answer to this question, the eminent German psychoanalyst, the founder of logotherapy V. Frankl, seeking to characterize the special unity that is a person, develops a special «dimensional ontology» (ontology of measurements). The psychoanalyst suggests comparing projections of the same object in different planes. For example, if a glass, the geometric shape of which is a cylinder, is projected from three-dimensional space into two-dimensional planes corresponding to its longitudinal and transverse section, then in one case we get a circle, and in another – a rectangle. Thus, the projections seem to contradict each other, while remaining projections of the same object. In addition, V. Frankl draws attention to the fact that in both cases as projections we get closed geometric shapes, while the glass is an open vessel, which can also be filled with some liquid.

«How to apply all this to a person now? – asks a prominent psychoanalyst in his report «Pluralism of science and the unity of man» – man, likewise, if he reduces specifically the human dimension and project it on the planes of biology and psychology, is reflected in them so that these projections contradict each other. After all, the projection into the biological plane reveals somatic phenomena, while the projection into the psychological dimension reveals mental phenomena. In the light of the dimensional ontology, however,

this contradiction does not call into question the unity of man – as the fact of the mismatch of circle and rectangle does not contradict the fact that they are two projections of the same cylinder. But let us remember: it is useless to seek the unity of the human way of life, which overcomes the diversity of different forms of life, as well as the resolution of such contradictions as the antinomy of soul and body, in those planes on which we project man. It can be detected only in the highest dimension, in the dimension of specifically human manifestations» [1, p. 51].

Continuing the analogy with a glass as an open vessel, which can always be filled with something, V. Frankl speaks of the «openness» of man, his orientation to himself, referring to the anthropological research of M. Scheler, A. Gehlen and A. Portman, more once again emphasizing the danger of identifying man with his biological and psychological «projections»: «Just as an open vessel in horizontal and vertical projection on a plane gives us closed figures, so man on the biological level is reflected as a closed system of physiological reflexes, and on psychological level – as a closed system of psychological reactions» [1, p. 50-51]. Thus, in our opinion, V. Frankl manages to reconcile the existential and anthropological approaches to man within the framework of his proposed «dimensional ontology», while strengthening the strengths of both approaches.

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