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Existential aspects of human existence and the human-centered paradigm in public administration

Екзистенціали Людського Буття та Людиноцентрична Парадигма в Публічному Управлінні

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Abstract

This article analyzes the philosophical doctrine of the spiritual nature of man as the fundamental basis of his existence. The main focus of the analysis is Viktor Frankl's book "The Unconscious God," which presents an original anthropological theory encompassing all levels of human existence. By perceiving man holistically, this perspective contributes significantly to understanding human nature as a unique form of being. According to Frankl, the spiritual dimension can manifest both consciously and rationally, as well as unconsciously and irrationally. The crucial aspect lies in awakening and activating this spiritual principle within individuals, even if they are unaware of it. In his research, Frankl delves into dreams as a means of exploring the manifestations of the spiritual unconscious, and he conducts an in-depth analysis of conscience as a spiritual existential. This study's relevance stems from the growing prevalence of noogenic

Анотація

У статті аналізується філософська доктрина духовної природи людини як основи її існування. Основна увага аналізу приділяється книзі Віктора Франкла "Безсвідомий Бог", яка презентує оригінальну антропологічну теорію, що охоплює всі рівні людського існування. Шляхом голістичного сприйняття людини, цей погляд значно сприяє розумінню природи людини як унікальної форми буття. Згідно з Франклом, духовна дименсія може проявлятися як свідомо і раціонально, так і безсвідомо і ірраціонально. Ключовим аспектом є пробудження та активізація цього духовного принципу у людей, навіть якщо вони про це не усвідомлюють. Франкл досліджує сни як засіб дослідження проявів духовного безсвідомого, а також проводить глибокий аналіз совісті як духовного існуванційного. Актуальність цього дослідження впливає з зростаючої поширеності ноогенної неврозу серед освічених та розвинених осіб у

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neurosis among educated and developed individuals in contemporary society, characterized by a profound sense of meaninglessness and an existential void. Essential existential elements fade from people's worldviews, transforming concepts like love, faith, hope, responsibility, and conscience into mere mental categories. A deeper understanding of this nature represents a crucial step in overcoming the noogenic crisis and facilitating further human evolution.

Keywords: human nature, meaning, noogenic neurosis, spirituality, spirit, spiritual unconscious, existence, faith, conscience, existential vacuum.

Introduction

In this article, we will address the topic of human spirituality in the existential, essential sense, as it was understood by existential philosophers, in particular, Viktor Emil Frankl. The orientation of their philosophical thought is in many ways similar to the philosophical orientation of the French philosopher G. Marcel. Being religious, and believing people, both scholars made great efforts to comprehend the essential, being nature of a human being. Their philosophy is highly anthropocentric. Regardless of religious affiliation, and regardless of religiosity or non-religiosity in general, there is something that unites all people without exception: their spiritual nature. Man is not just a rational animal; he is a special kind of being. The presence of a spiritual foundation makes a person truly human, and the further evolution of humanity is largely related to its deeper study and understanding. Moreover, what is very important, this understanding gives us serious grounds to speak with greater confidence about the possibility of overcoming the current noogenic crisis.

Theoretical Background

According to I. Nikolaieva, from a theoretical and methodological point of view, it is important to note that in the twentieth century, the theoretical existential problematics of human existence became a nodal theme of philosophy. The studies of M. Heidegger, J. P. Sartre, R.-M. Rilke, and other philosophers and poets have gained wide resonance in the body of contemporary philosophical and cultural thought and thus have had a huge impact on the entire spectrum of social processes of culture and civilization. Meanwhile, such existentials of human existence as loneliness, death, and fear have emerged as subjects of scientific interest.

сучасному суспільстві, що характеризується глибоким почуттям безглуздя та існувальної порожнечі. Суттєві елементи існування виглядають з світогляду людей, перетворюючи поняття, такі як любов, віра, надія, відповідальність та совість, на просто ментальні категорії. Глибше розуміння цієї природи є важливим кроком у подоланні ноогенної кризи та сприянні подальшій еволюції люд.

Ключові слова: природа людини, сенс, ноогенний невроз, духовність, дух, духовне несвідоме, екзистенція, віра, совість, екзистенційний вакуум.

The profound cultural, ideological, and value crisis that has befallen civilization has exposed the fundamental foundations of human existence. For this reason, thinkers who paid attention to the doctrine of existentials proposed conceptual variants of the philosophical combination of the meanings of place and existentials in modern man.

In the field of view of existential thought, a person is considered, first of all, in the face of existence and eternity. In this context, the existential unity of philosophy and art is revealed. Researchers see the basis for this in the fact that the intentionality of existence itself is manifested in the temporal and procedural. Existence is fundamentally unstructured, while having an internal need for its topologization, uncentered, but intensified by an internal aspiration to the center of the self (or to possible centers), intentioned on the edge as a place-tops where the understanding of loneliness, death, and fear takes place (Berreby, 2011), (Bulka, 1978), (Cooper, 2003), (Längle, 1994), (Marseille, 1997), (May, 1978), (Lehmann & Klempe, 2015), (Palma, 1976), (Palmer, 2009), (Bychko, 2001).

The grounds of existentials are initial uncertainty, antinomianism, immanent potentiality, permanent provocativeness, a test of integrity, symbolization of the random, non-structured, non-hierarchical (Pattakos, 2010), (Ponsaran, 2007), (Popielski, 2005), (Pytell, 2001, 2006), (Rohr, 2009), (Smith, 2011), (Weisskopf-Joelson, 1975), (Yalom, 1980), (Weber et al., 2009).

The creator of logotherapy, a prominent Austrian psychiatrist, neurologist, philosopher, author of

31 books, and a world-renowned person, Viktor Emil Frankl, in his studies of human beings, especially in his works of recent years, paid great attention to the spiritual dimension. In 1948, Frankl's book "Der Unbewusste Gott" was published, based on his doctoral dissertation on the relationship between psychotherapy and religion (therefore, in some editions, the title "Der Unbewusste Gott: Psychotherapie und Religion").

The book "The Unconscious God" was first published in English in 1975, but later some publishers began to publish it under the title "Man's Search for Ultimate Meaning". By doing so, they wanted to make it clear to the reader that this book is a continuation of the author's life's work: understanding the meaning of human existence on some deeper, universal, but at the same time sacred level. Over four decades, Frankl made various changes and additions to his book, and by its seventh edition in German (1988), the book contained 12 full-fledged essay chapters. In them, the author revealed the results of his reflections and research on human nature and attempted to present the structure of the human inner world with its spiritual center and peripheral mental and physical areas. Moreover, Frankl analyzed several spiritual existentials, including consciousness, and made several profound remarks about the transcendental qualities of consciousness, the peculiarities of spirituality, and its manifestations in the conscious and unconscious (including dreams). This book has become a worldwide bestseller, unlike "Man's Search for Meaning," perhaps because it is written in a more academic language, the text itself is replete with philosophical considerations, special terms, and quotations, including Latin ones. However, in a sense, this work shows the depth of Frankl's philosophical anthropological thought much more clearly. Therefore, it is of exceptional theoretical and practical importance both for professionals in the field of philosophy and for specialists working in various fields of the humanities, where an in-depth knowledge of human nature is required.

Philosophy, and philosophical anthropology in particular, has not yet developed a unified understanding of what spirit and spirituality are. In existential philosophy, the spirit is often opposed to the mind (especially by religious existentialists Berdyaev and Shestov). In rationalist philosophical systems (Spinoza, Leibniz, Descartes, Hegel), the concept of "spirit" is equated with thinking and consciousness. Meanwhile, in irrationalism

(Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard) such aspects of the spirit as intuition, feelings, will, and imagination are considered (Holovko, 1997), (Kvit, 2003), (Petrov, 2013), (Raida, 2004), (Rius, 1998).

Frankl sometimes refers to the deepest dimension of man as spiritual, but sometimes as noological (from the Greek "nus" - mind). He does not separate spirit from reason, although he does not equate it with it, considering such irrational manifestations as intuition as an integral part of it. His philosophy can be partially compared to the religious existentialism of G. Marcel, which was sometimes called "Christian neo-Socratism."

Frankl also polemicized with Freud (starting in the 1920s), with his psychoanalytic theory, which did not have a place for the spiritual nature of man but fully explored its instinctive unconscious manifestations. C.G. Jung and then R. Assagioli, A. Maslow, and S. Grof explored the spiritual and mystical aspects of man more deeply, as well as peak states of consciousness, expansion of consciousness as a result of spiritual crises, altered states, and various types of religious experience. Some researchers call Frankl the forerunner of transpersonal psychology. However, it should be noted that S. Grof himself believed that Frankl emphasized the conscious search for meaning and did not recognize, for example, perinatal dynamics, where this topic is considered in the context of transpersonal death and rebirth. Grof believed that it is impossible to comprehend the meaning of life through simple intellectual analysis and logic, it can only be made up. And he contrasted such far-fetched goals of life with deep inner transformations that occur empirically, in contact with a certain spiritual reality that reveals to a person the preciousness and miracle of life. Frankl, while appreciating transpersonal experiences and partially investigating manifestations of the spiritual unconscious in the dreams of his patients, nevertheless preferred to be on the border between dimensions, including transcendence. To activate the noological dimension of a person and direct the intention towards understanding personal meaning, Frankl considered it much more important to use the so-called Socratic dialogue, which includes rational, logical thinking. However, he considered awareness and full involvement of the mind in some spiritual phenomena, such as conscience, necessary only at a certain stage, but normally these manifestations of the spiritual unconscious should be natural in humans, without additional considerations.

Aims

The article aims to study the existential of human life through the example of the philosophical work of V. Frankl.

Methods

Such general scientific methods as descriptive, continuous sampling, contextual and component analysis, methods of philosophical anthropology, existential analysis, phenomenology, and hermeneutics were applied in the article. In terms of methodology, the work is focused on hermeneutics as a set of approaches and methods for interpreting and analyzing the content of a philosophical text.

Results and Discussion

Frankl was against the fact that Freud sought to make a person a mere "object" of psychoanalysis. According to the scientist, a person is a special case when his or her objectification will not help to study him or her in a more detailed and scientific way, but, on the contrary, will only reduce understanding. Will a person become understandable if he or she is seen as a mechanism, a thing, or an object that other researcher-technician works with, breaking down this mechanism into atoms of ego motives to fix it later (Frankl, 2011a). Such an approach to the study of a person, considering him or her from a mechanistic standpoint, inevitably destroys the holistic perception of the human personality, which is unacceptable to an existentialist humanist. Based on his personal experience, largely tragic, and his observations of a large number of people, Frankl concluded that in addition to unconscious, in fact, instinctive ego motives, humans have other motives, spiritual ones, which, being natural, also constitute a deeper layer of human nature.

According to Frankl, man is not only a puppet of impulses, because psychological phenomena are not so much determined by impulses and instincts, and being human does not mean simply being driven by them. The man initially has the freedom of choice, and many of his intentions are not physiologically libidinous, but spiritual. Otherwise, how could a person not only survive but also maintain a human face in a concentration camp or in other emergencies (famine, war, near death with incurable diseases, in situations of choosing death or betrayal, etc.) if he were simply an instinctive being seeking pleasure? However, he has both instinctive depth and spiritual height. Unlike an animal, a human being

can fully subordinate his or her instincts to higher ideals and values. An animal is limited by its instincts, but a human being can rise above them, refuse them, and choose freely. And this freedom is higher than the urge, it is inherent in man from the very beginning.

Let us pay attention to one of the key manifestations of spiritual consciousness, conscience, which is the subject of two separate chapters, "Existential Analysis of Conscience" and "Transcendental Quality of Conscience." When the connection between the self and spiritual unconsciousness is barricaded, a person becomes deaf to the voice of conscience and, consequently, ceases to understand his or her responsibility for his or her actions. Frankl's voice of conscience is the voice of the subconscious God himself, sounding inside a person. For all its rationality and awareness, conscience, like love, is initially irrational and intuitive. Just as there is a logical and analytical understanding and a pre-scientific understanding, conscience is a spiritual understanding that does not depend on the existing morality in society and precedes any understanding of values. Thus, it is in no way reducible to the superego according to Freud's theory. The explanation of the reason for a choice often occurs after the fact. Conscience foresees something that does not yet exist but can become real. In this sense, it is similar to love, which reveals hidden potentials that can become real. Conscience cannot be formulated in a categorical imperative because it is always individual and intuitive. Too much attention to thinking about conscience and the right choices can block the natural manifestations of conscience from the spiritual unconscious. Likewise, too much attention to the logic of the creative process can disrupt harmony and block the creative flow. Conscience should become a spontaneous existential act. Awareness is only an intermediate stage in the formation of a personality, and it is not an end in itself. The same goes for the search for meaning. Reflection and awareness on this topic are only an intermediate process. The goal is to reconnect with the spiritual unconscious, where the sense of meaning arises naturally. Thus, meaning is more intuitive than analytical and cannot be created or invented.

This applies equally to faith, hope, and love. The appeals of various religions such as "just believe and everything will be fine" are futile. These kinds of human spiritual activities cannot be summoned or ordered. Faith, hope, and love cannot be felt or experienced on command from the outside or on command of one's rational

desire. These manifestations of the spiritual unconscious cannot be objectified, embodied, or achieved by will and effort. With increasing tension and intensity, they simply disappear. The quintessence of Frankl's understanding of conscience and its transcendent nature may be the aphorism quoted by the author: "Be the master of your will and the slave of your conscience" (Frankl, 2000). That is, with all the consciousness and clear understanding of one's responsibility to oneself and the world, the true reality of conscience for Frankl is spiritually unconscious. Conscience is not reducible to the attitudes of the superego (as in Freud's psychoanalytic theory). Ontologically, it is a purely human phenomenon, which cannot be understood unless its transcendental origin is assumed. Understanding the existential qualities of human reality is enough to explain human freedom, but it is not enough to explain responsibility, which cannot be reduced to instincts. The psychological fact of conscience is an imminent, partial manifestation of a whole transcendent phenomenon, and is essentially a mediator between the self and something far superior to it. The notion of conscience as a natural, basic manifestation of the spiritual unconscious sounds rather paradoxical. After all, it turns out that the deep nature of any human being is spiritual, and all the best human manifestations, including conscience and love, are natural to him or her. However, we are all well aware of numerous spontaneous human manifestations of cruelty, stupidity, and heartlessness. That is, a natural question arises: if there is a conscience in the spiritual unconscious, can't there also be a lack of conscience in the same deep dimension of a person? However, according to Frankl, these phenomena are formed later, in the mental dimension. Society, with its education, upbringing, system of values, etc., partly plays a negative role in this. Although the topic of society's influence on a person is hardly ever touched upon, his philosophy suggests that a person is not born a villain, but becomes one due to certain external and internal conditions and circumstances. In support of the theory that the deeper layer of man is spiritual, we can recall the cases of repentant Nazis or other criminals. Many such cases are described in classic works of literature, for example, in *Crime and Punishment*. There is a lot of evidence that even the most brutal criminal can have a conscience if he does not have serious mental disorders. For example, the entire German nation still expresses remorse for fascism. It's just that not all criminals find themselves in conditions where remorse can become possible and their conscience can be freed, so some continue to sin.

On the other hand, it is a legitimate question, perhaps faith is not a deeply rooted spiritual quality of a person after all, but simply a drowning man's cunning, grasping at straws in difficult situations? But then what about the striking fact cited by Frankl: "God did not die even after Auschwitz"? Faith in God is either unconditional or it is not faith at all. Unconditional faith (stemming from the spiritual unconscious) remains and recognizes even the fact that six million people died in the Nazi Holocaust. Unconditional faith disappears when faced with the tears of a single innocent child. True faith is not bargaining with God: "Until six thousand or even a million victims of the Holocaust, I kept my faith in You, but now there are more than a million dead, I am sorry, but I must give up my faith." And Frankl cites striking data: among those who went through the experience of Auschwitz, the number of those whose religious faith deepened-despite, not because of, this experience-far exceeds the number of those who abandoned their faith. "Just as a small fire is extinguished by a storm, and a large fire is strengthened by it, so too is weak faith weakened by difficulties and catastrophes, and strong faith is strengthened by them." (Frankl, 1986, 2005, 2011b). In other words, he believes that if faith were a simple form of the mind, of the psyche, it would not stand the test of hard and very cruel facts.

Conclusions

Due to his cautious attitude to transcendental experiences and peak states, Frankl did not fully explore such inner spiritual possibilities that are revealed, for example, in meditation practices and in obtaining transcendental experiences in transpersonal psychology, during clinical death, etc. Such experiences are known to religious people of various denominations. Frankl was more interested in the religious and moral aspect of this issue than in the philosophical approach, as such researchers of the transcendental nature of man as S. Grof and others have done. The scientist also attempted to analyze dreams as manifestations of the spiritual unconsciousness of man. However, intuition, insights, mystical experiences, and other irrational spiritual manifestations have not yet been sufficiently comprehended by philosophers and studied to a very small extent by scientists, but their study will be a step forward in understanding human nature, in particular its spiritual dimension.

Meanwhile, probably everyone who has read Frankl's works could not help but note his boundless faith in man and humanity.

Throughout his life and work, he demonstrated this faith, remaining an authentic researcher and philosopher.

"No one can make us believe that man is exalted above the animals when we can show that there is a suppressed angel inside him" - this leitmotif is present in many of Frankl's works, in particular in the book *The Subconscious God*, where he convincingly promotes his faith. This idea resonates with Berdyaev's idea that along with the "abyss of darkness, contradictions, and torment," man also contains "the image and likeness of God and the creator of values." Despite his idealism, romanticism, and partial religiosity, Frankl is a profound existential philosopher whose understanding of man is humanistic, and positive, and offers hope for the possibility of solving many individual and universal problems. His study of the integral human structure with a central spiritual core is a significant contribution to philosophical anthropology, which helps to better understand the phenomenon of man as a spiritual being and his development in the process of evolution.

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