

Topic 7. The human being and the society (I)

1. The human being problem in the history of philosophy.

Philosophical anthropology.

2. The human origin problem in philosophy. Anthroposociogenesis.

The human as the social being.

3. Values of the human being.

1. The human problem in philosophy is one of the most complete and complex. Anthropology has close contacts with sociology, pedagogics, psychology, etc.

Philosophic interpretation of the man is distinguished by its interest in more general problems of the human being. Philosophy studies the specific character of the man's existence.

The most important questions in philosophical anthropology are: anthroposociogenesis, sense of life, freedom and necessity in human actions, etc.

Already I. Kant insisted that all philosophic questions could be solved by the answer to the one: "What is the human being?" On the boundary of 19th-20th centuries the human problem became central in philosophy. The existential problem got intensified, that is questions of the sense of life and human being values were central. The ontological and gnoseological questions fade into the background. At present the human scope of problems is also very important actually it is the main one. It is natural because the human problem becomes the

topical question in the crisis periods for the man and society. This crisis is not exhausted until now.

So philosophical anthropology is the direction which studies the man, his nature and his essence.

In the ordinary consciousness the human problem is not obvious because here man definitely stands out of the world, his uniqueness causes no doubts.

But in philosophy a man (or a human) is a problem because studying him we cannot use only scientific, rational approaches. Each science goes to “preparation” of the man and a simple sum of knowledge doesn’t give the required image. Philosophy has always tried to comprehend the human’s wholeness; it has tried to produce its own ways of human essence cognition.

In Antiquity the man was a part of the Space, he was a microcosm who in his manifestations was subordinated to the destiny, the highest force. Such a human image is called **cosmocentric**. Greek thinking is bodily, the soul is the engine. Not only people but animals and plants also had such an engine. Those who could read and swim were called people because thinking by the whole body means the possession over it.

Christianity in the Middle Ages tied together the spirit and the body in man though they were opposed to each other. Man is the intermediate being between angels and animals (as Thomas Aquinas considered). Human flesh is the arena of low passions and wishes; it is

the devil's brood. Only the soul needed the concern that included the bridling of the flesh. God and the soul are attracted to each other and there is nothing else (Augustine). All things are subordinated to God's will.

In such a situation man believed not in himself but in God, therefore this human image is called **theocentric**. The ideal of man was the saint, and all knowledge was opened only in afflatus. The main characteristic feature of man was heart but not reason and the main humane feature became love to God.

The New Time saw in man first of all the spiritual essence and admitted the human reason autonomy in the cognition process. Since this point man believes in himself, in his reason force. This human image is called **anthropocentric**. Cognition became the basic activity sphere and reflection became the main way of cognition. The laws corresponding to the human reason laws are ruling the world. Any project can be created in the human mind and realised in reality. The way of realisation is education and enlightenment. The relation to the nature is domination. Christian idea of history movement to the Kingdom of God was transformed into the historical progress idea.

In 19th century attention was removed to the consciousness problem, to the spiritual beginning of man, the essence of which could be identified with something rational (Hegel) or irrational (Nietzsche, Schopenhauer).

Marxism considered man to be a subjective being. Man was always

connected with things; therefore human activity cannot be reduced only to consciousness, it is only one of human abilities. Man is also a social being. The society is created by people but the society also forms man, socialises him. Man is culturally directed and has new feelings – will and love. Man's nature is social and everything man does is formed in a social way. If a child grows out of the human surrounding he or she stays on the high animals psyche stage. But Marxism didn't go further the educational, rational approach. The irrational human behaviour was explained only by the "inhuman conditions". So without exploitation and social inequality man was to become harmonic and developed. However this position remains the utopia.

Freud on the contrary insisted that consciousness is irrational and it is ruled by the unconscious. Culture strives to taboo the basic instincts (aggressive and sexual) but man cannot overcome his biological nature. So the source of problem is situated in man himself, in his psyche but not in the society.

In the 20th century the irrational idea of human essence was predominated (Russian religious philosophy, existentialism). The irrational theories were confirmed by the events of the 20th century which forced to doubt real rationality of human behaviour.

The situation in which man found himself in the 20th century was exactly expressed by M. Scheler: "Nowadays man doesn't know who is he but he knows that he doesn't know that".

The human's way is problematic and it is senseless to define his eternal ideas, essence and purpose. Each man must by himself realise his purpose in the world. Exactly this point distinguishes the man of the thing: he is not specialised, not completed and open to the world.

The importance of human problem in the 20th century caused the forming of special direction in philosophy – philosophical anthropology.

Philosophical anthropology is the philosophy of man that chose as its subject the “proper human” being sphere. This direction tries with the help of anthropological principle to explain the man and the surrounding world, to understand the man as the unique phenomenon of life, as the creator of culture and history.

Philosophical anthropology as a science was prepared by the many-centuries development of the philosophical thought. Its forming began from the Feuerbach philosophy and completed in 1920^s.

M. Scheler was the founder of philosophical anthropology. He insisted that the man had no ready instincts so he must create a new order. It is for want of development that a new branch of life was defined; it began from the human. Man is a being defined by his defects. He is characterised by the non-specificity of his organs, the absence of instinctive filters, and the vulnerability from the environment. This openness to the world becomes the fundamental principle of human contact with the surrounding.

Culture is understood as the necessary result of instinctive-vital

human sphere, it creates ethics, law and social institutes.

The theoretical sources of philosophical anthropology are:

- 1) “life philosophy” (Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Bergson);
- 2) biological and psychophysical discoveries and doctrines (Balk, Teilhard de Chardin, Freud).

The task of philosophical anthropology (according to M. Scheler) is to unite scientific, philosophical and religious understanding of man. So the human image broken into thousand pieces must be gathered together.

There are three directions of philosophical anthropology:

- 1) biologic-anthropological (Scheler, Plessner, Gehlen);
- 2) religious-philosophical (Lotz, Hammer, Buber);
- 3) culturological (Landman, Rothacker).

1) biologic-anthropological:

– From the biological point of view a human is a sick animal, the false step of life;

– The principle which makes a man the man is the opposite one to life generally. So the man must take root out of the natural world, must become eccentric;

– Absence of the base causes the need in addition. So the man in his activity is directed at the irreality, at the artificial means, that is culture.

2) religious-philosophical:

– The man was created as the crown of the being but he is the

highest one only in the world of things. He is a shadow for God;

- Through the sin the man comprehends his divine essence and goes to the divine in him;

- The cognition is based on the objectivity principle when the thing cognition takes place for itself without the selfish ends. The highest expression of the objectivity principle is love.

- Love is the joy and the gratitude for the existence of our external attitude subject and for his being such as he is.

- In the relations “I–You” the man must give himself to another one resting the same. Such an attitude makes every subject absolute and raises the man to God.

3) culturological:

- Human is the creator and the creature of culture. He needs to create his world narrowing it to the habitat. The latter differs from the animals’ habitat because in the human one a special group (professional, social, ethnic, etc.) inhabits not the animals’ species.

- Everything not belonging to the cultural sphere is perceived by the man as alien, threatening, not-human.

- The human and the animal live on different bases from which we must understand them.

- The true beginning of the man is spirit; it forms the human body and his being.

So philosophical anthropology with different approaches and directions tries to understand what the man is in his fullness and

wholeness.

2. The human is a social being and his conscious life activity differs from the animals' life activity. So one of the most important problems in philosophy is the formation of human as a rational, social and active being.

The theories of biological origin of the man are called anthropology. **The theories of the human origin as the rational and social being are called anthroposociogenesis.**

Earlier there was a **religious doctrine** about the creation which is not rejected until now.

In the 19th century after the Darwin's theory appearance the **labour theory** of human origin originated. F. Engels was its author. According to this theory the labour formed the man. During the labour activity the human hand became more flexible and free. Simultaneously the brain developed, people lived in common, so the need of intercourse appeared (namely the speech appeared). All those factors were decisive in transformation of the monkey into the man.

But there are opponents to this theory. They ask why people's ancestors began to work. Why modern primates don't work and don't change now? If we consider that labour was the primary force not the thought we have not enough arguments to explain the transition from the instinctive labour forms to the teleological ones. At the same time those transitions occupied a very short time period – only 1 thousand

years, that is too short for common evolution.

Nevertheless labour gives us a real possibility to explain the anthroposociogenesis process. It also helps to explain the displacement of genetic to social forms of inheritance. This way the man realises new cultural manners of human adaptation to the world; so the social history begins.

The **symbolisation theory** appeared as the opposite of labour doctrine. It was offered by American philosopher L. White. He considered that human's adaptation to the world is provided by specific symbolic manners. Even the method of teaching which displaced for man genetic ways of information transfer can exist only with the help of symbols (the language). First symbolisation as the universal principle uniting all the cultural forms was suggested by the German philosopher E. Cassirer. He insisted that man is a symbolised being. This peculiarity makes difference between the man and all the animals; and it is the condition of culture existence.

So each human is a social being. It makes difficulties in definition of the human concept.

Human is a representative of biological species but a peculiar kind of specie that makes culture the way of adaptation to the environment.

Also, the man can be defined as **the concept that characterises the virtues and the abilities inherent to all the human kind.**

Frequently the man is called an individual, a personality and an

individuality.

An individual is a separate man who is the bearer of certain social virtues. This concept allows us to study the dependence of human behaviour on the existing social groups and institutes.

An individual is the term describing a separate man.

The social essence of a human is expressed by the personality concept. The personality is the activity subject who has certain consciousness, self-consciousness and world-outlook. The personality realises their social functions, their place in the world, and simultaneously they are the object of social relations.

A personality is the concept describing a man as a representative of the society.

The personality problem in philosophy is the question of human essence, his place in the world and the history. The society analysis is impossible without understanding of a personality. The personality is formed in socialisation process.

A personality socialisation is the human social virtues forming process.

Every personality has a certain structure which includes all the culture levels and its core is the world-outlook.

Besides a personality is a concrete historical phenomenon because every epoch produces its specific social type of person.

An individuality and a personality fix different sides of human social significant virtues. An individuality is estimated for their

originality, a personality – for their independence and strength. An individuality stresses the peculiarity of human social virtues. Every epoch forms its values which define human behaviour.

An individuality is the concept expressing the inimitable human peculiarity.

So many people so many individualities. Each man has his own memory, attention, thinking, etc. It is not clear yet how much an individuality is defined by the inheritance and how much by the surrounding.

3. Spiritual life is one of the most important questions in philosophy as well as the problem of values which underlie the spiritual.

The value is an individual attitude to the thing, event or phenomenon important, significant to the man.

Values are studied by axiology.

Axiology is the philosophical doctrine about values and their nature.

The most general division of values includes the spiritual values and the material ones.

But there are values that can't be called either spiritual or material. Those are the values guaranteeing human life: health, safety and material sufficiency as well as the relations in the society assisting in personal self-realisation and the freedom of choice.

Spiritual values are moral, legal, political, religious, aesthetic values which constitute the human being in culture. Following these values

the man comes to the questions about sense of life, freedom and responsibility, morals and moral values.

Morals are the sum total of the behaviour rules and norms which coordinate the human life.

Morals are studied by ethics. Ethics is the philosophical doctrine of morals and their different systems.

The most important feature of the moral attitude to the reality is the estimation from the good and the evil positions, from the ideal and the duty point of view.

There are also religious and aesthetic values which play an important role in human life.

So the man, the human is one of the most complex phenomena which is the most important problem in philosophy now.