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THE PROBLEM OF SEARCHING THE MEANING OF HUMAN EXISTENCE: CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

Purpose. The purpose of the article is the analysis of the reasons and grounds of the crisis in the sphere of meaning-making, as well as searching answers to the questions about the meaning of human life in the contemporary world, which are maximally relevant in connection with the escalation of global problems, revealing the points of convergence between various theoretical positions, evaluation of their heuristic potential. Theoretical basis of the research is the historical-philosophical, comparative and system approaches, as well as the analysis of philosophical insights in the field of global studies. Originality. Originality lies in the fact that this article is the first attempt to conduct comprehensive analysis in the problem of the sense of the Existence as it is presented in the first quarter of the 21st century and to relate it with the modern social situation that is characterized by a complex range of interconnected and interdependent anthropological problems of our time. Authors emphasize that the main reason in the crisis of meaning is that a man has lost touch with his roots, which is wildlife. He has created an artificial structure, civilization to satisfy his needs and finds no way to the transcendental, which is the true House of his being. Conclusions. A human must refuse from false self-conceit concerning his potential omniscience and omnipotence, cease dictating his own rules to the Existence, determine the boundaries of his freedom and try to clearly realize his place in the objective structure of being. The global situation can change for the better only if a dramatic change in the area of meaning-making happens. The decisive force, which may encourage nudging to the positive changes, can be either the free will of people who have realized the criticality of the situation or external natural and social circumstances that will make people reorganize radically. The proper prioritizing, a deep awareness of universal goals and solidarity between people could be the value basis that will become the foundation to find the meaning and create a more favorable future.

Keywords: human; reason for existence; being; cognition; global problems; transcendental

Introduction

Expanding the boundaries of the cognizable world, a man became stronger in his confidence that the world was filled with the deepest order and meaning. There is growing confidence that a part of this world has comprehended, and what it is a secret today will be revealed sooner or later. The triumph of order and meaning of the Existence seemingly is predetermined since the beginning of time. However, changes in society and the discoveries of science of the last two centuries make one doubt strongly in the faithfulness of the above maxim. The civilization created by people, on the one hand, is full of internal insoluble collisions, on the other hand, it has come into sharp conflict with nature, which threatens the very existence of the human race. Many problems have a planetary character, at the same time efforts to rectify the situation are fragmented and ineffective. The number of problems is growing rapidly, while the chances of solving them are fewer and fewer. As a result of this, the mood of a person's powerlessness in the face of out-of-control circumstances and the meaninglessness of all the efforts made by him are growing. The question arises: what are the reasons for the total sense of the meaninglessness of the Existence, where and in what a person can find support, how to be strengthened in the fact that a crisis with greater or lesser costs will be overcome and new prospects for development will open?

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As Tufan Kiymaz (2019) correctly noted, "The problem of the meaninglessness of the Existence traces back to ancient times, and among the philosophers who proposed solutions to this problem, there was no consensus on what is actually being discussed" (p. 147). However, in Modern age, in connection with the expanding horizons of the world perceived by a man, this problem has acquired new significance.

I see the terrifying spaces of the universe that enclose me, and I find my-self attached to a corner of this vast expanse, without knowing why I am more in this place than in another, nor why this little time that is given me to live is assigned me at this point more than another out of all the eternity that has preceded me and out of all that will follow me. (Paskal, 1995, p. 192)

Expanding the boundaries of the world, available to a man, originated not only delight and awe, but also caused horror, a sense of personal insignificance prior to the infinite power and incomprehensibility of nature.

Expressing a general feeling in the meaninglessness of current events and the futility of human efforts to change something for the better, the subtle psychologist and analyst of his time A. Schopenhauer wrote:

...the constant charm and disappointment, as well as the whole character of life in general, seems to be more likely targeted and intended only to awaken the beliefs in us that there is nothing in the world worthy of our aspirations, struggles and desires, all the blessings are worthless, all the world is completely bankrupt, and life is such an enterprise that does not pay back its costs... (authors' transl.) (Schopenhauer, 1992, p. 63)

He expressed a general feeling when, along with the progressive moods characteristic of his time, there was a growing sense of anxiety about where society was moving and what would happen to a person.

The tragic twentieth century marked by unprecedented human casualties and destruction in history, highlighted new angles of the problem under consideration.

"At any street corner the feeling of absurdity can strike any man in face. As it is, in its distressing nudity, in its light without effulgence, it is elusive" (Camus, 1990, p. 28).

The advent of the age of reason to which enlighteners referred, by all accounts, is postponed indefinitely.

A paradigm change in the interpretation of meaning is also traced by B. Hubner.

Beginning from the age of Enlightenment, a man is no longer considered and determined primarily from the viewpoint of a heteronome, a powerful other – God, the state, telos, meaning, idea – that is, ideologically, but the other is more and more viewed by a man from the viewpoint of himself, the needing human I, anthropologically. (Hubner, 2006, p. 11)

The value center shifted significantly towards anthropocentrism, and this led to rather contradictory results.

The need for a new raising of the stated problem is dictated by the fact that "it does not receive due attention from the scientific community" (Kiymaz, 2019, p. 147), as well as all the authors who considered it could not take into account the new circumstances that had opened up in the modern information digital age, characterized by a growing divorcement from naturalness and an ever-greater going away into artificiality. Human civilization has fallen into such a deep crisis that it turns the present into absurdity, makes senseless the past, and induces to imagine the future rather pessimistic. Never before in human history, has the Existence seemed so meaningless as it is today. Is it possible to imagine a greater irony of history than a situation when, by the efforts of the people themselves, their existence is menacingly approaching the final ending.

The methodological base of the study was composed of works Hubner (2006); Frankl (1990); Skinner (2018); Bostrom (2016); Shmidt and Koen (2013); Danilov-Danilyan and Reyf (2016); Kurzweil (2002); and articles (Kiymaz, 2019; Phillips, 2019), which represent the most relevant ways to solve the problems under consideration.

Purpose

The purpose of the article is to analyze the causes and foundations of the crisis in the sphere of meaning-making, as well as searching answers for questions about the meaning of human life in the contemporary unpredictable world, which are actualized maximally at present, revealing the points of convergence between various theoretical positions, evaluation of their heuristic potential.

Statement of basic materials

Since a man has become sentient and realized the whole depth of this finding, he cannot tolerate the meaninglessness of the world around him, as well as with the internal meaninglessness, disorientation and incoordination of his own consciousness. Regardless of whether this seems pointless or real, a person is trying by all forces to overcome such a state. For this, to a large extent numerous spiritual practices are devoted – mythology, magic, religion, philosophy, art, science – they have been created over millennia in the history of human culture.

In a first approximation, the boundaries of being coincide with the boundaries of human self-knowledge. These boundaries are constantly expanding, they reached impressive dimensions to date. There is no doubt that this process will continue, opening new horizons both within the mega world, the Big Universe, and in the micro world, promising new discoveries.

Cognition is determined by horizons of values and senses within which any human activity takes place. In the cognitive process, people are driven by what they believe in, what they consider to be true, meaningful, or meaningless. If, for example, you consider the world or some part of it to be totally meaningless, this will identify a specific strategy for behavior in this world. If we assume that everything that is going on is filled with a deep, incomprehensible meaning, then another strategy follows. The boundaries of being in this way are determined by the boundaries of meaning. To a large extent, by whether we judge the world from the standpoint of eternity and infinity, or we believe that all things in the world and the Existence as such are limited in space and time. Where do the boundaries of meaning go, what is their meaningful part – these questions that worried philosophers of the past continue to remain relevant today.

A person, in reality, cognizes himself, limits of his physical and intellectual capabilities while cognizing being, expanding its boundaries. Without knowing these boundaries, he cannot fully realize what his purpose in this world is, why nature has rewarded him with such a perfect tool of knowledge, like reason. Perhaps those who claimed that a person with his mind is an instrument of Nature (Substance, Absolute Spirit) through which Nature (Absolute Spirit) perceives itself, becomes transparent to it (Hegel), is not so wrong. To gain insight oneself as such would be an extremely tempting goal.

According to its potential capabilities, a person with his intellect could perform as the "king of nature", stand at the top of the life hierarchy. However, a negligible minority of people engaged in truly creative activities corresponds to this ideal. The behavior of most of our contemporaries is absolutely not in line with this mission. Their actions are aimed at solving momentary, mundane tasks that are far from the goals of self-knowledge of the Absolute Spirit.

Previous visions concerning the meaning and meaninglessness of the Existence, prior to the scope of changes occurring today, are completely leveled out. The question about the direction of transformations in the sphere of meaning acquires epoch-making significance. It is not enough for a thinking person to simply survive and give health progeny. The meaning of the Existence is not so banal. The details are still not completely clear, but one thing is not in doubt: no matter what happens in society, it should be sought deeper than it seems to the ordinary consciousness.

The crisis of the value sphere occurs against the background of the accelerating movement of the Earth's civilization, the direction of which seems rather uncertain. We live in conditions of the fourth industrial revolution. As Skinner (2018) correctly asserts, "The colossal effect of the digital revolution, which begins the fourth age in human history, is that for the first time we all got in touch with each other" (p. 25). The major role is played by communications provided by information and computer technologies. The machine is becoming more and more decisive in the foreground, and it is radically different from those that were created at the dawn of the industrial revolution. Contemporary smart machines are capable of carrying out operations commensurate with the intellectual activity of men. Currently, computer thinking looks simpler and more primitive, in comparison with the wealth of a person's mental life. However, the edge between natural and artificial intelligence is gradually blurring and this process is gaining momentum.

One can completely agree with N. Bostrom, who pointed out that:

Pioneers in the field of artificial intelligence, despite all the belief in the

inevitable appearance of artificial intelligence that is equal to human one,

for the most part, denied the appearance of a supersanity that surpasses

the human mind. It seems that their imagination ... has just run dry, and they easily passed the inevitable conclusion: the next step will be the birth of superintelligent machines. (Bostrom, 2016, p. 15)

Indeed, science and technology are frequently found with completely unusual processes. Already at the molecular level, the differences between organic and inorganic are not so obvious. At the level of atoms and elementary particles, talking about the living and the rational does not make sense. Meanwhile, the nervous processes morphologically are precisely the flow of electrical signals and biochemical reactions that occur in the structures of the central nervous system, including the brain. In other words, what we call the movement of thought is largely accomplished at the level of atoms and elementary particles.

Something similar happens in modern computers, although they are created on a different material basis. The operations performing in them are identical in many respects to what is happening in the human brain. Kurzweil emphasized:

After the brain is connected to non-biological structures, they will begin to develop and strengthen biological structures. And with each new generation of technologies, our intelligence will grow and the volume of machine intelligence will also grow. Which, ultimately, will lead to the fact that the non-biological part of us will prevail over the biological ... About this is a singularity. (Kurzweil, 2002, p. 10)

A natural conclusion suggests itself: if progress in this area continues so rapidly, it is possible that robots, created on the basis of artificial neural networks and ultrafast quantum computers, will surpass humans both in terms of their structure and in the part of their intellectual functions.

It is regrettable, but hopes of numerous philosophers and religious thinkers from Socrates and Plato to T. de Chardin and J. Maritain to see that biological evolution will be replaced by spiritual evolution and it will have no limits, are not justified. We are not going in the direction of ever-greater spirituality, but increasingly technological. Instead of the noosphere, we got the Internet: it is a pulsating and changing mental picture of the planetary human consciousness with all its reasonable and unreasonable sides. Having left aside the issue of the Global Network content, which deserves a separate discussion, we note that the speed of all processes in the new information environment is rapidly increasing. The man as a biological being is not created for such speeds; he is not able to instantly process terabytes of information. However, technical devices with elements of artificial intelligence do an excellent job of these tasks. Prerequisites are created so that in the distant (or not-too-distant) future, robots perform their tasks without any human intervention (Skinner, 2018, p. 94). A situation may arise that a person, as the weakest link in a new super-technological civilization, will

become completely redundant. This will be the end of human biological evolution and a transition to a new quality that one can only speculate about (Joe, 2019, p. 5). This circumstance not at all adds optimism regarding the meaning of human existence. It is unlikely that anyone will agree that the meaning of human history is to create an artificial superintelligence and to disappear from the planet themselves.

The crisis of the sphere of meaning-making is not least connected with the ecological situation that has developed at the present time. Subjecting a comprehensive analysis of this situation, V. I. Danilov-Danilyan, and I. E. Reif justifiably conclude:

For many centuries, the biosphere has unsuccessfully resisted this destructive human activity. But, starting from the first decade of the 20th century, the man and nature interaction transformed, seeming to, into a new quality: unidirectional changes that had never been observed before occurred in all environments, and their speed continues to grow steadily. And this means that the biosphere's own compensatory capabilities are no longer able to withstand the influence of civilization, which, on the scale achieved, become destructive. And this unprecedented environmental crisis developed in full view of only one or two generations. (Danilov-Danilyan, & Reif, 2016, p. 30)

Moving towards the scientific-technical progress and expanding the boundaries of the being comprehended by them, people have evolved into the leading force on our planet, they subjugated all other living beings and forced them to serve them. However, their activities gave rise to such serious problems that they threaten to bury humanity under their own weight. Some of them are being resolved, others are just about to start, and some of them look so complex that there are no technological or financial opportunities to resolve them. The saddest thing is that there is no common will aimed at finding a way out of a difficult situation. Instead of concentrating the declining resources and directing them on the right track, people senselessly waste them in order to establish their momentary mercantile goals. The value system is substantially deformed, instead of activities "from the viewpoint of eternity", on the expectation of a long-term perspective, most people and leaders of nations live by the principle of "here and now" (Shapoval, 2019, p. 45).

The boundaries of meaning are not just blurred, sometimes it seems that the meaning is completely lost. Metanarratives are excluded from public and individual consciousness, concern for things that are extremely simple and primitive comes to the fore. Meanwhile, an increasingly complex society requires ever more complex people who can solve non-trivial problems and take responsibility. Fundamental, life-meaning issues one cannot be avoided, moreo-

ver, without their solution it is impossible to resolve the contradictions of the modern stage of civilization development and further advance.

The more a person learns the world, the more often he comes to the idea of the total meaninglessness of all things, both socially and naturally (Frankl, 1990). Not only human society, but everything in this world seems marcescible, moving towards decay and death. As it turned out, the Universe as a whole had its beginning and will have an end. Once again, the ground is falling away underneath, a person feels lonely and lost in a world alien to him. The world existed billions of years before man, and it will exist after him. Not with us, everything began and not with us will end. It becomes more and more obvious that people are not the pinnacle of being, but only the next link in a long chain, in which even the next links are shrouded in mystery, not to mention what is beyond the horizon. Understanding this, it is necessary every time to search for new foundations of your activity, to create new meanings so as not to become a slave to the forces natural or generated by people themselves, or even completely dissolve in being. According to Anthony Phillips (2019), "On second thought, a person, to a large extent, has nothing to rely on except for his value and axiological foundations, the belief that being is full of higher meaning" (p. 463). Only we have yet to solve it.

Originality

The attempt is made to carry out a comprehensive analysis in the problem of the meaning of the Existence, as it is presented in the first quarter of the 21st century and to relate it with the modern social situation that is characterized by a complex range of interconnected and interdependent anthropological problems of our time. The authors emphasize that the main reason in the crisis of meaning is that a man has lost touch with his roots, which is wildlife and having created an artificial structure to satisfy his needs – civilization – he finds no way to the transcendental, which is the true House of his being. The loss of meaning is the loss of connection with the integrity of being. A new gaining of meaning is possible through the restoring of the said connection.

Conclusions

The results analysis in this article allows us to draw the following conclusions. The major causes of the crisis in the sphere of meaning-making are that a person was captured by false self-conceit about his potential omniscience and omnipotence, on which he continues to insist, despite the fact that being convinces of the opposite. It is necessary to cease dictating his own rules to the Existence, to realize the limits of his freedom, and try to clearly define his place in the objective structure of being. Only if radical changes in the sphere of values and senses occur, the global situation can change for the better. The decisive force that will lead to these changes can be either the mind or free will of a person who has realized the criticality of the situation, or external natural and social circumstances that will make him relate to the being in a very serious manner. The proper prioritizing, a deep awareness of universal goals and values, solidarity between people can become the foundation for finding new facets in the meaning of human existence.

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ПРОБЛЕМА ПОШУКІВ СЕНСУ ЛЮДСЬКОГО ІСНУВАННЯ: СУЧАСНИЙ КОНТЕКСТ

Метою статті є аналіз причин і підстав кризи сфери смислопородження, а також пошуки відповідей на питання про сенс людського життя в сучасному світі, що актуалізувались у зв'язку із загостренням глобальних проблем, виявлення точок дотику різних теоретичних позицій, оцінка їх евристичного потенціалу. Теоретичний базис дослідження склали історико-філософський, компаративістський та системний підходи, а також аналіз філософських напрацювань в області глобалістики. Наукова новизна полягає у тому, що в статті вперше зроблена спроба провести комплексний аналіз проблеми сенсу сущого, якою вона вбачається у першій чверті XXI століття, пов'язавши її з сучасною соціальною ситуацією, яка характеризується складним комплексом взаємопов'язаних і взаємозалежних антропологічних проблем сучасності. Акцентується, що основна причина кризи сенсу полягає у тому, що людина відірвавшись від свого коріння, яким ϵ жива природа, і створивши для задоволення своїх потреб штучну структуру — цивілізацію, — не знаходить шляхів до трансцендентного, що є істинним Домом її бугтя. Висновки. Людина повинна відмовитися від помилкової зарозумілості про своє потенційне всезнання й всемогутність, перестати диктувати сущому свої правила, визначити межі своєї свободи і спробувати ясно усвідомити своє місце в об'єктивній структурі буття. Тільки в тому випадку, якщо відбудуться кардинальні зміни у сфері смислопородження, глобальна ситуація може змінитися на краще. Вирішальною силою, здатною підштовхнути до позитивних змін, може стати або вільна воля людей, які зрозуміють всю критичність ситуації, або зовнішні природні та соціальні обставини, які змусять людей кардинально перебудуватись. Правильна розстановка пріоритетів, глибоке усвідомлення загальнолюдських цілей і солідарність між людьми могли б стати тією ціннісною основою, яка буде підставою набуття сенсу і створення більш сприятливого майбутнього.

Ключові слова: людина; сенс існування; буття; пізнання; глобальні проблеми; трансцендентне

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ПРОБЛЕМА ПОИСКОВ СМЫСЛА ЧЕЛОВЕЧЕСКОГО СУЩЕСТВОВАНИЯ: СОВРЕМЕННЫЙ КОНТЕКСТ

Целью статьи является анализ причин и оснований кризиса сферы смыслополагания, а также поиски ответов на вопросы о смысле человеческой жизни в современном мире, которые предельно актуализированы в связи с обострением глобальных проблем, выявление точек соприкосновения различных теоретических позиций, оценка их эвристического потенциала. Теоретический базис исследования составили историко-философский, компаративистский и системный подходы, а также анализ философских наработок в области глобалистики. Научная новизна заключается в том, что в статье впервые сделана попытка провести комплексный анализ проблемы смысла сущего, как она представляется в первой четверти XXI века, увязав ее с современной социальной ситуацией, характеризующейся сложным комплексом взаимосвязанных и взаимозависимых антропологических проблем современности. Акцентируется, что основная причина кризиса смысла состоит в том, что человек, оторвавшись от своих корней, которыми является живая природа, и создав для удовлетворения своих потребностей искусственную структуру цивилизацию, – не находит путей к трансцендентному, являющемуся истинным Домом его бытия. Выводы. Человек должен отказаться от ложного самомнения о своем потенциальном всезнании и всемогуществе, перестать диктовать сущему свои правила, определить границы своей свободы и попытаться ясно понять свое место в объективной структуре бытия. Только в том случае, если произойдут кардинальные изменения в сфере смыслополагания, глобальная ситуация может измениться к лучшему. Решающей силой, способной подтолкнуть к положительным изменениям, может стать либо свободная воля людей, осознавших всю критичность ситуации, либо внешние природные и социальные обстоятельства, которые заставят людей

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кардинально перестроиться. Правильная расстановка приоритетов, глубокое осознание общечеловеческих целей и солидарность между людьми могли бы стать той ценностной основой, которая будет основанием обретения смысла и созидания более благоприятного будущего.

Ключевые слова: человек; смысл существования; бытие; познание; глобальные проблемы; трансцендентное

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