SOCIAL MACHINE AND ALIENATION IN THE CONTEXT OF ONTOLOGY OF NATURE AND ONTOLOGY OF SOCIAL REALITY

Pokrovskiy Anatoly
Ph.D, Associate Professor of Philosophy Department
Kharkiv National University of Radio Electronics, Ukraine

The incompleteness of the instinctive foundations of human existence forms the basic feature of a specifically human form of existence, on which special emphasis was placed even in the works of the classics of philosophical anthropology (M. Scheler, H. Plessner, A. Gelen). The obvious conclusion from such a statement is that a person does not have a constituted, objective generic nature and is forced to overcome this incompleteness, which determines the main dynamics of his existence. Such a reading of the problem of man as an insufficient being leads to the phenomenon of fundamental artificiality, self-referentiality of man and his collectivity (N. Luhmann).

The basic critical unformedness of a person is compensated by arbitrary forms of culture. In general, it is obvious that human existence is impossible without an ideological foundation on which a stable picture of reality is built, which systematically organizes all private representations and self-descriptions, goal-setting and evaluation, conditions and methods for organizing practice. The cultural construct replenishes the ontic locality to the contextual intelligibility of a fragment of a holistic representation of reality.

It is obvious that the ontological foundation of the worldview necessarily contains specific delimiters that fix the difference between, for example, living and non-living, existing (real) and potential (possible). However, in ontic reality they are not presented in the same way as in philosophical ontology: not in the form of analytical theoretical constructions, but in implicit default of the routines of everyday life, in the stereotypes of cultural tradition, which are not generated by the strictness of rational analysis, but by the self-organization of complex multi-generational social synergies [1].

Already at the earliest stages of human development, the tasks of adapting to the conditions of the environment of existence, which are relevant for all living beings, are supplemented by a purely human complex of tasks for integrating an individual into a collective. This is the reason for the presence in the ontological foundation of the worldview of a stable distinction of the ontic otherness of natural and social realities – the first and second nature. Features of the natural (first) and social (second) realities are necessarily manifested not only in the strategies used to
adapt to them (in particular cases, these strategies may coincide), but primarily in
general models that represent them in the mental plane of the social subject. First
of all, ideas about the essence, main features and qualities, the laws of construction
and functioning of natural and socio-cultural realities are important. Any worldview
system fixes this division in one way or another.

The routinization of adaptation strategies and their consolidation in cultural
forms have led to an increasing autonomy of man from the surrounding natural
world. A person closed himself in a socio-cultural space – a fundamentally new reality
that arose as a product of his own collective activity. At this stage (the stage of
prehistory), the collective forms of existence were not yet subject to intellectual
comprehension, and could only be directly assimilated in direct practice, which gave
rise to the social machine.

The resulting complex set of mutually nested relationships and processes
formed – already in the early stages of the human development – specifically human
problems, the understanding of which is the primary essence of any reflective
thought. The primary objectivity of natural reality was supplemented by the
secondary objectivity of the social machine, which determines any social action, but is
not fixed directly, but only in the form of “social facts” (E. Durkheim). Human thinking
must reflect in accessible forms this plan of human existence, the significance of
which increased with the complication of both cultural forms of activity and the
thinking involved in them.

The specificity of the second nature as not given, but necessary, led to the
formation of an appropriate ontology, not reducible to the ontology of nature.
Hidden properties and relations fixed in this ontology in the form of the deepest
defaults, specific to social reality, but not directly expressible until the end of the 19th
century [2], led to the formation and development of appropriate algorithms of
thinking and perception, which provided the possibility of representing the
unimaginable, dealing with it, and communicating about it.

The formation of feedbacks between the basic "evidentities" of the ontology of
social reality and stable forms of their representation led to the appearance of the
first developed worldview, which is traditionally described as mythological. And
already within its framework, the specific problem of the relationship between the
ontology of nature and the ontology of social reality can be easily identified, the
boundary between which can shift. The primary ontology of social reality inevitably
had to become a description in an accessible form of the spiritual existence of a
person and the hidden mechanisms of the work of the social machine, the object of
which was the person himself.

It was the ontology of social reality that became the primary ontology for a
person, since interaction with natural reality was increasingly mediated by the social
machine. As a result, a general scheme of understanding natural reality emerged
based on the intuitions of social ontology as initially more complex and acting as a
field of direct human involvement. The key mechanism was the transfer to local
fragments of natural reality of the properties of objects of social reality. However,
this gave the possibility for the reverse process, when reversely the social reality
could be interpreted through the ontology of the natural environment. But a
mandatory condition for such a reverse transfer is the alienation of the primary forms
of social involvement of individual, when the coercion of social reality begins to be understood by analogy with the coercion of the reality of the natural environment.

This leads to the final formation of the social machine as a totality. If initially social ontology set interpretations of natural phenomena, then over time the process acquires a two-way character: natural objects are endowed with a symbolic meaning or transferred to the socio-cultural space and become the subject of ethical concern, and the phenomena of socio-cultural reality are objectified in the process of symbolic reification by alienation from their own socio-cultural nature. These reified forms of sociality form a specific apparatus for ensuring existence (K. Jaspers). At the same time, the current cultural and anthropological thought as a whole does not seem capable of conducting a comprehensive examination of the possible trajectories of the development of these trends [3].

The alienation of social forms from their social essence (functions) is of fundamental importance for the entire process of development of a sociocultural system, as it has led to the deformation of the ontology of social reality and the reverse transfer of the properties and qualities of the localities of the natural world to purely social phenomena and processes. Alienation acts here as a key factor in the fundamental process of understanding sociocultural reality, in which the essence of social being is replaced by abstract forms of its presentation.

References: