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Human Alienation in Modern Society

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Abstract

Humans and human development is a crucial issue always interested by all researchers, especially in the philosophy of all times. Certainly, human development has not been developed as it had been in the past even has becoming alienated somehow. By reviewing some particular

philosophers and their opinions about human alienation, this paper gives some features of human alienation and its characteristics of each historical periods. This issue should be further researched, and be regarded as the most urgent theme in terms of both theory and practice.

Keywords: Human Development, Human Race, Human Alienation

Introduction

In the context of global integration, cultural acculturation, and social modernization in today's era, human beings are facing the problem of selectively evaluating and absorbing Western cultural values. Of course, as a predecessor civilization, Western civilization carries within it many common human values. Therefore, it should be willing to accept those values, but that is an acceptance based on Vietnamese culture. That is, those values need to be adapted to Vietnamese culture, not degraded and lead to the destruction of Vietnamese culture, which already has its own identity and appearance. But here, humans are being faced with an unpredictable danger: that Western culture and its values are superior to others; moreover, the trend of "Westernization". Meanwhile, Western culture itself also encounters its own problems. Therefore, to modernize for the goal of rich people, a strong country, and an equal, democratic, and civilized society, of course, one must be aware of the pitfalls that modern society in the West has created to avoid these limitations. This issue requires deep research on a philosophical level.

Method

By taking an overview of the basic views of famous philosophers of different historical times, on the one hand, we can look at the historicity of the decline of humanity and the historical features and epochal character of these ideas. On the other hand, make judgments and commentaries on various aspects of human degradation, thereby pointing out the fundamental determinants of human development and degradation today.

Findings and Discussion

The issue is that philosophy's sole humane goal has been and always will be to liberate people, to bring them freedom; in other words, to reveal the true nature of humanity's separation from one another and provide strategies for overcoming it. Every historical period has seen corruption in some capacity rule the populace. Karl Marx revealed how people are alienated from capitalism as a result of private ownership's hegemony. He also indicated how to end this alienation by establishing a communist state through socialist revolution and construction. Nowadays, spiritual alienation is the most common type of alienation in Western civilization. In other words, since human nature is determined by the highest value, people in contemporary Western culture are slaves spiritually. Analyzing this form of alienation and pointing out the way to overcome it has become the main topic of modern Western philosophy. Understanding the problem of spiritual alienation of modern Western people in the context of global cultural acculturation and globalization today, in order to avoid the "ruts" of Western civilization, when it is absorbed. Its positive achievements are becoming an important issue both theoretically and practically. With time, humans realize more and more clearly that the 21st century will become an important milestone in human history. This milestone marks the end of the era of "conquering nature" by humans. The civilization that humans have created is powerful, and the ability of humans to influence the biosphere is so profound that it threatens the ecology of Homo sapiens,

and therefore, the very existence of the species should be regarded as an object as one of the biosphere systems. The essence of the problem is that now, the relationship between humans and nature cannot be organized as before, cannot be based on the mindless use of natural resources, has no limits, and often harms nature. It is time for humanity to be fully aware of its dependence on the biosphere's ability to maintain stability and continue to build life according to the principle of coevolution. That is the main content of the changes that are starting to take place. All other issues are secondary.

It may be odd, but it can be said that humanity's opportunity to overcome that global crisis, first of all, depends not so much on the organizational and technological capabilities of human civilization but mainly on the spiritual and moral appearance of humans themselves. And it seems that everything depends on the level of human moral development—the level at which people are aware of the essence of that ecological imperative as an element of the general ethical system, or "categorical imperative", as Kant once said. If the field of ethics previously only covered relationships within the "human society" system, now it has been expanded to include "human society-nature" relationships. The commandment "Do not kill humans or animals" has directly transferred to these relationships, because when the context of formation is unfavorable, these relationships can lead to the destruction of humanity on Earth in the true sense of the word.

The above has become the focus of NIMOiseev's research, which is considered an interesting experiment to outline the philosophy of the history of the biosphere^[8]. NIMOiseev placed his faith in humanity and he hoped that humanity would be able to avoid disaster. According to him, "to gain a deeper understanding of the future of humanity, it is necessary to move from issues of ecology and politics to issues of evolution in the inner world of humans. This is the key to unlocking the most important thing: preserving the Homo sapiens species on the planet^[9]". "That is really so, because people are having to answer a difficult problem: in terms of morality, what is a person at the beginning of the 21st century? Human beings have the ability to perceive oppression. To what extent is the global crisis and the urgency of the ecological imperative? This task, in turn, requires clarifying the specific ethical context as the most important aspect of modern human existence. In other words, it is also necessary to identify the factors that prevent people from being humans, or, more precisely, preventing people from perfecting themselves as humans, as well as preventing people from evaluating their abilities to overcome those factors.

To solve these problems, it is necessary to develop an appropriate method. Due to the study of the contemporary world and man as a complex spiritual-social entity existing in organic unity, people should be aware of the integral "spiritual-spiritual" complex culture of civilization". However, humans cannot perceive this unified complex by applying the methodology of classical science—the methodology that reduces the process of perceiving and transforming the world to the impact on the world from within on the subject's side by strictly contrasting the object with the subject. The method humans need is one that assumes, first, that there is an interplay between object and subject and, second, that the subject is a mental entity. With these assumptions, it is possible to consider human social

nature as an artifact of humans themselves. The knowledge gained about humans through the analysis of objectified mental experience data is a necessary addition to the classical sciences. These data, in essence, reflect another aspect of human existence—an aspect that humans cannot achieve by purely rational thinking, but to ignore it would defeat the purpose itself, the content of history—the spiritualization of sociality.

People living in any era have a tendency to exaggerate the meaning of that era. In fact, they develop that tendency unintentionally, not intentionally. Humans also develop that tendency when they conceive of modern times as the result of the entire process of human historical development. Of course, at that time, humans did not view modern times through the eyes of future generations, because humans often considered that view to be accurate.

However, besides the factors already known in human history. There are still factors that force us to distinguish the era that replaced the Middle Ages in Europe and received the name "modern" or Industrial Age, that is, the period that is coming to an end in our eyes. The problem is that this is the first era whose decisive characteristics are the liberation of people from the once dominant religious worldview, the abandonment of theocentrism to move to anthropocentrism, and its inevitable result, the secularization of society. The social crisis began to manifest clearly in this era, and it was the crisis of a human-centered lifestyle (atheism in this sense). This crisis, in turn, determined the moral landscape of modern man.

Since the mid-twentieth century, people have begun to talk about the beginning of the Post-Industrial era. Terms such as "age of scientific and technological revolution" or "information society" have appeared. But, in general, the opposite-postmodern-assessments still prevail. This proves that the content of modern times has not been studied in a more or less satisfactory way; that modernity with all its innovations remains the logical continuation of early Modern history. In fact, many areas of modern social life are parting ways with the past to varying degrees. For example, if the changing economic, political and social fields have more or less shown the emergence of a new quality, the non-religious conception of the world is still demonstrating a deep level of crisis of the Early Modern period. How did this crisis manifest?

It is said that the crisis of the early modern period first appeared at the end of the Renaissance. The French philosopher B. Pascal (1623–1662) gave a warning about the dangers of over-exalting people. Later, the German philosopher I. Kant (1724–1804) pointed the spearhead of his criticism against the self-doubt of reason. In the 19th century, the Danish philosopher S. Kierkegaard (1813–1855) spoke out against the impersonal logic of Hegel's doctrine. And the Russian writer and philosopher M. Dostoevsky (1821–1882) proposed ideas about the contradictions of human nature and about the mysterious depths of personality. This idea of his is considered deeply hostile to the secular conception of man that characterized the early modern period. And K. Marx introduced the idea of human alienation from its social nature, according to which humans stand in opposition to the hostile force—the results of their own labor activities (capital). The German philosopher F. Nietzsche (1844–1901) spoke contemptuously about the spiritual "meanness" of modern people and called for overcoming this situation. At the

beginning of the twentieth century, post-industrial society was comprehensively criticized. Regarding this criticism, humans can mention the criticism of great philosophers, such as Ortega y Gasset, Nietzsche, Spengler, etc.

For example, Ortega y Gasset pointed out the tendency to barbarize society as a result of the process of "mass uprising" and as a result of the domination of society by mass people^[1].

Gvardini draws a contrast between the results of modern man's activities and their truly humane purposes. According to him, human civilization (namely power) has "rebelled" against humans and led to "non-culture"^[14].

Berdyaev sees the "tragedy" of the entire modern age in the "rejection of Christianity." In modern times, according to him, the most worrying thing is the excessive belief in technology, which means unlimited power over nature and humans from anonymous, irrationally rationalized social forces. destroy human consciousness and thus destroy the purpose of human existence. He believes that the majority of Westerners were once polytheists, born into a culture steeped in Christian thinking. They reach the stage called "adulthood" and "independence", but in essence, they have lost their past but have not yet reached the present, which is a different culture. They have lost their Christian roots but have not yet lived a new lifestyle according to the gospel. Therefore, according to him, the most worrying thing is the complete domination of civilization over culture^[1].

Sorokin believes that the sentimental culture of the Industrial Age must inevitably perish because value relativism is transforming into nihilism^[10].

Fromm and Vycheslavsev note that, in post-Industrial society, people stand in opposition to a giant organizational system—the state and modern industry—which, while acting in its own interests, often becomes very strange to humans, even hostile to humans, and turns humans completely into objects—"objectifying" humans. According to Fromm, "man is possessed by insecurity and the desire to surrender all his freedom to dictators of all kinds; or people lose their freedom, turning themselves into the screws of a machine: Not a free person, but a well-nourished, well-dressed robot^[1].

Tillich observes that "the guarantees are provided by effective technical surveillance of nature, psychological surveillance of the individual, and monitoring of rapid economic development. organizational aspect of society, all such guarantees come at a high price: the man himself, for whom all these guarantees were created as means, becomes a supplementary means for those guarantees"^[12].

From these concepts, it is said that what characterizes a civilization that is "rebellious" against culture are the following social and spiritual consequences: when transformed into an element of the system, complex organizations, "mass people" find themselves powerless and alone. That kind of human tends towards simple and excessive solutions, towards violence and "idolatry", when its true values (humanity) are replaced by social phenomena such as state, ethnicity, technology, and even mythology (about races, lineages, etc.).

As something that is directly hostile to the spiritual origin of humans, "mass culture" has modeled the consciousness of mass people, their lifestyle, needs, and behavior.

According to Ortega y Gasset, the process of "excessive specialization" has taken place: workers are forced to become experts in a very narrow field. This trend inevitably

leads to limited levels of human intelligence and spirit development while increasing their dependence on complex organizations. This trend has increased even more in an era where the dominant power belongs to the invisible forces of production. The characteristic feature of modern science is an ever-increasing understanding of ever-smaller things. Since then, according to Sorokin, people often aim for empirical, anti-theoretical knowledge—the most vile positivism.

Scientific and technological progress brings unprecedented power to people who, in essence, are not yet morally mature. It is a danger to life on Earth (weapons of mass destruction, environmental pollution). The so-called information revolution leads to the point that "people find themselves becoming more and more humble, when they have to face not only a system of giant enterprises, but also a whole world of computers. Autonomous, thinks faster and is often more correct than humans"^[2].

Thus, it can be affirmed that the consequences of the technological revolution are extremely diverse. Technical power can open up enormous possibilities for spiritual development in the most diverse directions. However, technology itself not only does not automatically lead to progress in the cultural and spiritual-moral fields, but also becomes a factor that further complicates the spiritual landscape that is becoming increasingly complex much richer and more confusing than before. Blind belief in the omnipotent power of technology can make people lose human values, such as the ability to understand and empathize with loved ones, and the concept of good and evil. This can lead to the dehumanization of social and interpersonal relationships.

Overall assessment of the Industrial era, humans can easily see that modern society is giving rise to forces hostile to human personality itself. Therefore, today, in addition to the task of liberating people from external oppression, modern social practice also seriously raises the issue of people's inner freedom. The liberation of people from social oppression does not necessarily solve the problem of human inner freedom with its entire scope. After being liberated from the shackles of the oppressive regime, the "little man" expressed a growing desire for spiritual liberation. At that time, the dark sides of human nature began to be considered not necessarily from a cognitive perspective, but mainly from the perspective of the cleansing and purifying effect of that nature. Silence and concealment will breed aggression. On the contrary, bringing dark people into the light will likely eliminate inner tension. This reality is associated with the process of cultural deification.

This observation needs to be clarified. With questions such as "what is modern man?", "what awaits him?", first of all it is necessary to admit that answering such questions is not simple. The difficulty here is not only because predicting the future is always difficult, but also because the reasonableness of these questions themselves always leads to doubt. According to Chaadaev, when a philosopher says the noun "man", he does not always understand what he means^[1]. Chaadaev's skepticism is worth pondering. Of course, if we think that humans belong entirely to the social world, then it is possible to limit their fate absolutely to this sociality itself. At that time, according to F.Fukuyama, it was even possible to talk about "the end of history"^[3].

From the point of view of philosophical anthropology, such notions are very superficial. In fact, after more than two

centuries of searching for the anshumansr to the question "what is man? Western philosophical thought, despite its positivist limitations, has always maintained the viewpoint believes that humans cannot be reduced solely to the social world. If it is seen that the purpose of human life is only the desire for social liberation, then the idea of certain historical origins will become meaningless. Human fate should not be understood only as a fate of a social nature (it itself needs to be studied more deeply). It is impossible to imagine what the future of humanity will be like without taking into account the fate of man as a spiritual entity, a personality. What is the purpose and prospect of existing in modern society as a human spiritual entity?

To answer this question, it is firstly need to be concerned with choosing a solution so that this problem cannot be argued in a completely rational way. According to Berdyaev, this is the ultimate job of choice, which requires freedom^[7]. The popular choice here is one rooted in Kant's anthropological perspective-a perspective largely based on the Christian concept of man. It is the concept that humans simultaneously belong to two worlds-the natural world and the supernatural world. Mamardashvili calls this supernatural world "the invisible country", "the invisible mysterious homeland of any conscious entity". According to him, because people have consciousness, they all have a second homeland and, as spiritual entities, as human beings, they are citizens of that second homeland^[1]. The supernatural nature of man is expressed in his spirit, first of all in his religious consciousness which, in turn, is revealed through the inherent moral rules of man. At that time, all mental efforts appear to be the most important component of mental activity. Therefore, an important philosophical problem is raised here-the problem of justifying rationalism has been overlooked. However, it needs to consider those spiritual efforts as a necessary condition for cultural life, as the objectification of human life. With this view, Mamardashvili believes that "consciousness" (or religious consciousness) is something that cannot be reduced to rational activity; it is that which denotes the indivisible realm, encompassing all manifestations of man as an entity belonging to two worlds. That, performing conscious acts means performing efforts that have a unified intellectual-moral nature. Thus, it can be said that the term "consciousness" was used by Mamardashvili in the sense of "spirit". For him, without effort, there is no human being as a personality; Becoming human also means becoming a moral entity, living by constant effort of consciousness (spirit). It is in that sense that Mamardashvili said that culture is only the possibility of higher culture.

Here, it is a need to understand the moral code - the basic category of Kant's ethics-in the sense that in addition to conscience and intellect, it must also encourage goodness, or the direct and positive impact of the self. The good comes to us and resides in us^[15]. The idea of man's innate ability to distinguish between good and evil, of the need to create good for people to become human, is an idea that comes from the Christian concept of the individual as an independent subject with self-worth, capable of accessing the divine through its free will. Therefore, the true path for every human being can only be the path of tireless effort, creating oneself as an entity similar to God.

Conclusion

The degree to which people are aware of the need to make such efforts, to perfect morality as well as the corresponding moral standards that they are obliged to comply with, - that is what proves the level of development human spirit. Then, at each specific moment, depending on their level of effort, people become significantly different. One person puts in less effort, another puts in more effort, but this is not a matter of democracy, because democracy requires equality of starting conditions. Democracy does not mean equal division or equality. One cannot equally divide what one does not have. People must find what they need by their own efforts. Moreover, in that sense, everyone has their own life at some point. Practice shows that one can only talk about a high level of spiritual development for nafodó individuals, while the majority are unevenly distributed between the two spiritual boundaries of civilization and barbarism. The idea of a "spiritual elite" is just an abstraction conducive to speculative inferences. The division of people into elites and masses is only relative. The core of the problem is each human being's self-awareness of freedom as his or her supreme spiritual value, realizing it and taking responsibility for it based on the true human values that humanity holds type has accumulated throughout its long history of existence and development. This is also the purpose that the author of this article wants to pose as a problem for readers to ponder and find a way to liberate modern people from the temptations and trivial aspirations that always lurk in every person.

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