

On the relation between bourgeois consciousness and humanism

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Abstract: This article is concerned with the relation of humanism and bourgeois consciousness. The issue is addressed by the author from the perspective of the interpretation of humanism through the prism of bourgeois consciousness development logic. It is revealed that these value systems are closely interrelated within their common European culture. It is concluded that under the single-tier secular organization of the world the relationship of these value systems excludes the presence of a fundamental contradiction between them.

[Smirnov R.K. **On the relation between bourgeois consciousness and humanism.** *Life Sci J* 2014;11(6s):405-408] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>. 84

Keywords: bourgeois consciousness, economy human, humanism, religion, secular.

The issue of the relationship of bourgeois consciousness and humanity is not new, though becoming increasingly important in the light of globalization. It is multidimensional by its nature, and therefore cannot be fully developed within a just one small article. In this connection we will consider the problem only generally without going into specific details.

In the literature, humanism and bourgeois consciousness are often regarded as two independent value concepts, which come in a variety of relationships with each other, but at the same time have no common denominator [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]. Without denying the importance of the results obtained in the framework of this approach, the same issue can be considered from a different perspective, i.e. from a position of mutual interpretation of given value systems through each other. Such an approach in consideration of the issue is possible, if we start from the cultural and historical context in which bourgeois consciousness and humanism emerged. Indeed taking into account this context allows, first, consideration of the value systems within the dynamics inherent in nature, rather than static analysis. Second, it makes possible to consider the possibility of an imminent mutual intersection and interpretation of value systems within their common cultural matrix. Hence, our approach is no less important, and perhaps, even more important than the first one, in terms of its heuristic potential in the cross-lighting of the issue on bourgeois consciousness and humanism. Therefore, we consider concerned issue right from this point of view.

Thus, the aim of our work is to consider humanism through the prism of logic development of bourgeois consciousness by means of solving the following problems: to give a brief description to value concepts of bourgeois consciousness and humanism; to outline the stages in the culture development, defining the interaction logic of these

value systems; to considered in each of them the relationship between humanism and bourgeois consciousness.

We begin with a brief overview of the "bourgeois consciousness" and "humanism" concepts. Note right away, that to date the literature lacks clear definition of these concepts, while their nature is subject to debate [6, 7, 8, 9]. Therefore we, being limited by the scope of the work and the theme, will not focus our attention on a detailed analysis of these categories, highlighting the features that in our opinion are the most important to characterize their content.

Bourgeois consciousness and the terms, having similar meaning (economic consciousness, mentality, bourgeois spirit, and economic human) that further will be regarded as interchangeable terms, are characterized by the following combination of features: greed for profit, subordination of all life aspects of this aspiration, as well as rigorous calculation, accounting and consistency. The latter principle qualitatively distinguishes the West European bourgeois spirit from other kinds of profit-maximizing behavior. The emergence of "economic human" as the bearer of bourgeois consciousness, one can count since the Renaissance or the late medieval period. Now we turn to humanism.

Humanism, as convincingly shows A.A. Kudishina in her monograph "Humanism as a Phenomenon of Nouveau Culture", is a complex, multi-aspect, socio-cultural concept, deprived " ... own self-developed philosophy" [9]. At the same time, despite the abundance of approaches and layers inherent to humanity problem, it is possible to allocate a common property, which virtually is not questioned by any researcher studying humanism. It consists in the fact that humanity is inseparably associated with a human, his image and the model in the history of human thought. That is, the problem of

humanity, which is a system of philosophical worldview, is considered whenever we talk about a human. Based on the above, we can draw the following conclusions:

- "Economic human" is the concept of values generated and organically existing only within Western culture.

- Humanism is diffusive by its nature and, therefore, exists straightforward within a human culture (in the form of an articulated perspective) or manifests itself latently.

- The humanism will exist as long as there is a human and the culture generated by him; it interacts in variety of ways with various value concepts within it.

Consequently, the economic human and humanism are most closely associated with each other within the Western culture, which for them is most common.

To examine the nature of this relationship, we select the following stages in the logic of European culture (taking as a criterion of their selection the most general difference between the two notions about the being and human's place): antique, religious, secular and post-secular stages arising now a days. We focus our emphases on the religious and the secular stages, as the most important for understanding the relationship of bourgeois consciousness and humanity, while touching briefly on the latter post-secular period.

Usually even from school we absorb the notion that the opposition of secular consciousness to pre-secular consciousness existed since the ancient times in the European (and not only European) culture. Analyzing the issue of the relationship between these concepts, A. Krylezhev in his work "Post-secular conceptualization of religion" comes to the opposite conclusion that pre-secular (religious) world did not know secular world as such. He writes: "It is absolutely clear that in the process of secularization there is a certain concept or a religion model. This is a principally new concept that did not exist and could not exist in pre-secular societies and cultures, where religion is not isolated, that is, not separated from other socio-cultural phenomena, though is diffusely associated with them, so that other phenomena necessarily have some religious determination. Penetration of religion into every pore of social and individual life in the context of pre-secular society hardly needs special justification since this is well known in history" [10, p.53]. We fully agree with his viewpoint and believe that the religious world did not need to force secular issues due to its inherent integrity. This integrity was determined by a two-tier structure of the world, consisting of the heavenly world and the earthly

world. It is the realization of immersiveness to sacred heavenly world relieved tension between the Heavenly City (New Jerusalem) and Earthly City, preserved the integrity of the person and provided reason for being. Hence, the religious world did not need the articulation of humanistic problematic; humanism existed latently, being woven into the religious life-sustaining activity of the medieval world.

Secular world of Nouveau that originated in the Renaissance, represented a single-tier world, concentrated on earthly existence, rather than heavenly life. All that was closely associated with the Middle Ages, is inherited image of holistic active personality, trying hard to transform the world, though not for the purpose of God, but in his own interests. It is important to note that without this secular world well known Nouveau would not be possible.

Restructuring of the two-tier structure of the world into a single-tier structure demanded changes in perceptions about the sacred. Thus, heavenly world and faith sacralization is replaced by sacralization of human reason and rationality, which generates a secular space existing in the material world. Henceforth, the mind begins to perform the same role that is played by religion in pre-secular world, penetrating all areas and aspects of society life. At the same time, the sacral mind does not prohibit religion, while gives them the opportunity to exist and develop, organically inserting them into a single-tier structure of the world. On this occasion A. Krylezhev notes: "By defining a particular sector for religion in a circle of individual and social life, the proponents of this model thus renounced from the secular absolutism as such. Even if this happend for reasons of concrete historical and pragmatic nature, the result turned like that. Contemporary (Nouveau) secular philosophy has not been thought sequentially and thoroughly. Religious specificity was not rejected, but, on the contrary, it was recognized and validated exactly within the secular concept of religion as something that has its separate, own "essence" that nothing can replace" [10, p.59]. We think that this has less to do with the crudity of secular philosophical thought, much on the contrary, with the sole ontological (deliberated in its nature), rather than pragmatic possibility of a very secular world. The point is that a human, as a creature yet inherently incomplete cannot be withdrawn on himself. Therefore, reliance on reason as opposed to religious faith does not claim definitive guidance in his life. On the contrary, rationality always involves tolerance to different viewpoints, but on condition that they do not run counter to the law, and are not intended to fill a single-tier secular field of culture by

themselves. Thus, the secular world of Nouveau is the structural and functional in nature, where the contraposition of its certain elements by other elements is an essential inherent ontological property. That is why humanism, as a philosophical system, is articulated to this era. Here a variety of humanistic models arises and exists in parallel; they oppose or complement each other.

"Economic human", whose habitat becomes single-tier secular world, appears at the junction of these two cultural landmarks in the Renaissance epoch, as in the religious and cultural matrix of medieval society there simply was no place for bourgeois. Ankersmit F. F. writes about this the following: "The regime, which was governing the life of the bourgeoisie and which was the source of all its joys and fears, was not known to the Bible and did not admit by it. Inflexibility of the church, or rather its inability to keep pace with the development of bourgeois capitalism and embed it anyway into the framework of the Christian faith, has become a symbol and an accurate measure of the ever-growing alienation between the Church and the bourgeoisie. In short, the bourgeoisie has always been a foreign body in the Christian conception of the world and human. Therefore, from the standpoint of the Christian West, we can rightfully say that the bourgeoisie has created itself: unlike aristocrats and the poor, bourgeois are really indebted only to themselves" [11, p. 93]. Content of this medium is a secular culture with inherent humanistic ideology and problematic, which replaces the religious attitude towards life. Thus, humanism and economic consciousness are not simply interrelated within the framework of their common European culture, but also have a close mutually interdependent relation with each other. Indeed, without the support on secular humanism "bourgeois spirit" can neither exist nor develop. However, converse statement is also true: to exist and develop the secular culture needs a carrier, focused on earthly existence, i.e. bourgeois in this case.

If these value systems are so interconnected, than how a contradiction between humanism and bourgeois consciousness appeared, which is now an obvious fact? To answer this question, we must consider the nature of this controversy, and to do that we turn to the logic of the economic human development in the Nouveau era.

Direction of his development can be defined as the movement from human-centered concept to business-centered concept [9, 12]. One of the mechanisms of this movement was the transition from the dialogic atmosphere of early Nouveau to the monologue atmosphere of the late Nouveau.

On the first stage, the business has not yet subdued the individual, so the bourgeois spirit experiences the need of freely acting human model, a secular in its nature and focused on earthly existence. Only by relying on such a model it could be possible to transform the medieval feudal order into the market-capitalist state of life. That is why the dialogue has become an effective tool for self-healing and development of bourgeois consciousness. That's how this is illustrated by K. Lesh: "Contrast hit both foreign and local observers. For Michel Chevalier, in many respects the most discerning of all foreign visitors, this was a crucial moment of the whole democratic experiment.

In America, "the great discoveries in science and technology" were "put on the nationwide view and made available to all". The head of the French peasant, according to Chevalier, was packed with "biblical parables" and "tough superstitions", whereas the American farmer was "confided" into the "conquest of the human mind" ... " [13].

So far as more people were involved into business and with increasing of competition the society proceeds to the business-centered stage of development. Here, the "economic human" overmasters a person and no longer needs person's open freedom in relation to the business needs; the dialogue is gradually replaced by a monologue of economic domination that today is quite obvious. At the same time, this monologue does not eliminate the pluralism of viewpoints that is ontologically inherent to Nouveau, though only restricts and subordinates it to market logic.

Summarizing the above, we can conclude that the economic consciousness at all stages of its development maintained close relationship with the organizational principles of the secular space, one of which is humanism. After all, without humanism the secular world would not be possible and, therefore, would not be possible the existence of very "economic human".

Hence, a contradiction occurring today between humanism and bourgeois consciousness is not essential, and therefore poses no threat to the existence of the latter (as well as for the previous). That is, thanks to substantial blurring of the humanistic concept, its various models are contrasted (not excluding the possibility of complementing each other), both to economic consciousness and to each other.

This means that such a character of opposing is absolutely safe for economic human and may even be encouraged (in the form of funding) by him, because, firstly, the humanistic models that criticize the capitalism, can be contrasted to the interpretations of humanism, based on exchange market relation

towards the human. Second, this kind of discussion matches the rule of structural and functional organization of the single-tier world.

Today, the emergence of post-secular stage in the development of European culture does not imply in the foreseeable future, in any case, return to pre-secular (two-tier) world organization. Thus, Brian Turner in his work "Religion in post-secular society" argues persuasively that the revival of interest in religion does not mean abandoning the rule of earthly human existence, secular in its nature.

He writes: "The process of global transformation of Nouveau religions into commodity allows a completely different look at the secularization. If religion is a system of beliefs and practices based on the ineffable nature of religious communication, Nouveau liberal societies democratized religion and turned it into expressible system, which is fully compatible with the Nouveau world. This "impressibility" can be sold now as a commodity and as a service in religious markets" [14, p.38]. Therefore, we can assert that our findings (about the absence of qualitative contradiction between humanism and bourgeois consciousness within their common secular origin) is also typical for the post-secular culture development stage, which involves just devalue of rationality of Nouveau, though not its desacralization.

Moreover, we dare to suggest that very occurrence of post-secularity in European culture is an organic continuation of the development of bourgeois consciousness at the present stage of history, which has discovered a new source of profit and further subordination of earthly power of a human [15,16].

Thus, finishing the article, we can conclude that the only way to combat a total subordination of all parties of being to the logic of the market is a change of the secular principle of world organization. Indeed, an appeal to humanity as a value system, to the concept (existing in a variety of its models) can only, at best, slow down; though not change the focus on the enslavement and destruction of human personality through development of the bourgeois spirit.

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4/20/2014

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