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© ALEXEY I. PAVLOVSKY

*Tyumen State University  
tiranosawr@yandex.ru*

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**SUBJECT AND OBJECT WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK  
OF PHENOMENOLISTIC APPROACH: BEING OF AN AXIOLOGICAL  
SUBJECT IN THE SYSTEM OF SYMBOLIC FORMS\***

*SUMMARY. Phenomenalism radically rejects the idea of thing-in-itself cognition, practicing only perception of notions and ideas, within which it is possible to distinguish the form and content. The form precedes the content; its simplest foundations (Kant's a priori forms) are inherent, however, on the basis of these simplest foundations symbolic forms are built, which define meanings in of ideas. Symbolic forms are not inherent, they are determined by culture. Each presentation symbol has perceptual and affective meanings. The system of perceptive meanings represents an object, whereas the system of affective meanings is a subject. The symbol, taken with its affective meaning, represents a value, hence the subject, consisting of such symbols, may be called "axiological". An axiological subject gives the initial human vitality a certain direction, decomposing notions according to the principle of the figure and background, establishing the goals of activity, accordingly. Three levels of the axiological subject structure may be distinguished, namely: values — specific characteristics, constructing the presentation; particular values, identified in this presentation; values-concepts, rationally defined in the course of understanding the subject's experience.*

*KEY WORDS. Axiological subject, symbol affective meanings, symbolic forms, phenomenological ontology, values.*

Phenomenalistic ontology is based on two initial fundamentals.

1. All what exists in whatever form is being. In this sense being includes not only objects and objective phenomena of our life, but also the content of each concrete individual consciousness.

2. A thing-in-itself is incognizable; therefore, we can speak of objective reality beyond our perception only apophatically, which means that the only possible subject matter of ontology is the reality of our representation, where we can distinguish two inseparably associated aspects: form and matter.

It is impossible to separate the form of representation from the matter, since perceptual data (perceptions) are extremely various and require ordering (association of ideas pronounced by D. Hume). Firstly, it is because we link not only homogeneous

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perceptions, but also heterogeneous ones, which we think to be received by different channels. Secondly, study of our perception proves that in its framework the general precedes the particular, i.e. we do not build the integral on perceptive data, and we perceive the perceptive data on the basis of the already caught integral.

R. Arnheim, developing the theory of Gestalt psychology, brings convincing examples of how in visual perception a seen picture depends on associated circumstances preceding to the watching [1; 56-75]. In particular, he notes that a human being tries to perceive the seen with the help of simple organisation of the seen, but if it is the case, then the organisation is introduced into the seen in the process of watching.

In perception of a text a syllable has a priority of a phoneme (F. de Saussure) [2; 65]; a word has a priority of a letter. In this regard we can think of a curious fact extensively quoted on the web: "Accordmg to a rscheearch at an Elingsh uinervtisy, it doesn't mnttaer in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht frist and lsat ltteer is at the rghit pclae. The rset can be a toatl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae we do not raed ervey lteter by itself but the wrod as a wlohe" [3] (it is curious to note that it is more difficult to read this text for the second time).

Besides, in the process of reading we automatically select the right meaning of every word, while the words by themselves are of multiple meanings, it means that we do not read sentences word by word, but we build it into an already grasped context, which was convincingly demonstrated by E. Cassirer [4; 113] and A.J. Greimas [5; 65-76] (by the notion of contextual semes).

That is why we cannot but agree with E. Cassirer's statement: "Perception is given to us as an undifferentiated unity, as an integral experience, which is certainly somehow differentiated; this partition, however, does not contain any isolated sensuous elements" [4; 31]. The elements are differentiated by a subject who brings a structure into an undifferentiated unity and shapes it. But if it is true, then the structure should have been somehow present in the subject before perception appeared.

The fundamental principle of cognition possibility was studied by I. Kant, who claimed it to be the system of inherent forms existing a priori [6; 48-49]; these forms present inborn human abilities which differentiate the integrity of perception. The inborn character of some of them can be proved by the fact that such abilities are typical not only of human beings, but also of higher animals who, in particular, are able to differentiate perception in space and time, to distinguish quantity and the fact of presence or absence of an object (although they are unable to express it in a symbolic form).

E. Cassirer carried out a detailed study of behaviour of people with certain mental illnesses appeared as a consequence of partial perturbation of functioning of Kant's a priori forms, followed by a certain damage of their vital activity, which can also serve as an illustration of the quoted fact [4; 161-210].

But these inherent a priori forms, providing a possibility of experience as such, are insufficient for existence of the specifically human cognizant experience. These forms provide perception of only available givenness of experience, but not cognition of its sense lying "beyond" this immediate givenness.

This sense-bearing side of reality exists in our understanding by means of the totality of symbolic forms, which are built-up in the process of development of an

individual human being over Kant's a priori forms, and they also predetermine the intensity of conceptualization. Kant's a priori forms are included into the general symbolic system of human perceptions and acquire specific features of demonstration, or, in other words, the very fact of differentiation of perceptions in space is inherent, but the totality of symbolic forms sets concrete specificity of manifestation of this fact (we can recall the concept of O. Spengler on different perception of space and time in different cultures) [7; 188-196].

Symbolic forms are not inherent, but at the same time they are not inferred directly from the content of experience; the source of their generation is the related human experience perceived by means of imitation. What is meant here is an act of copying of task-oriented events created by the will of other people. Such copying directly relates to the experience of reproduction of internal conditions of one or another task-oriented event with decoding of the sense-bearing structure. As a result, the inner world of a human being accumulates sense-bearing fragments of reality which are united due to the ability of a human being to self-organise his/her inner world. I. Kant called this ability "the unity of apperception" [6; 100]. How does this union take place?

It was mentioned above that "grasping" of the whole precedes delineation of separate elements of it, i.e. the whole is not presented as the totality of elements, but as the totality of parameters organising these elements. We shall call such parameters the specific features of perception. In case of visual perception, the specific features are certain axes or figures, which put the elements in order, playing a practical role in this case (it was mentioned above that they were selected to put the elements in order in the simplest way). Talking of a sense-bearing level of reality ("beyond" the immediate givenness), the specific features of it are some principal settings which define basic sense relations of elements, forming the sense measurements of reality.

Any sense-bearing event (and purposefulness always implies sense availability (though this sense is not always perceived)) manifesting itself in a certain logic of behaviour, reproduces this logic in the inner world of the imitating person. And as far as any perception is based on "grasping" specific features, the similarity of these specific features of different imitated samples of behaviour allows uniting them with the inner world of a human being. It is the unity of these samples which in the course of time provides a human being with a comprehensive worldview. The given level of representation of the worldview is integral with its conceptual level to such a great extent that it starts influencing the immediate perception itself, setting its framework.

It is connected with another important circumstance: every element of perception is not only of perceptive meaning (acting as a symbol with this value), but also of affective meaning, bearing a certain relation of the subject to this element. This was noted by E. Cassirer ("[...] objective perceptions and contemplations here cannot be separated from subjective feelings and affects... Originally classes of names are also the classes of values and the classes of things..." [8; 281]), by E. Husserl ("[...] I find the things provided with both properties of things and axiological properties [...] Such axiological and practical characteristics constitutively belong to "existential objects" as such [...]"] [9; 91-92] and K. Koffka ("[...] primitive phenomena are not separated into

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perceived (perceptive) and felt (affective) elements [...] Primitive world is characterised by affective features, which can be considered here as “objective” ones” [10; 467].

Thus, the integral perception implies two systems of values: perceptive and affective. The perceptive system presents the object of perception, and the affective — its subject.

This requirement is depends on one significant circumstance, since a presentation includes all that can be cognised and the subject itself should somehow exist inside the perception and it should be phenomenally and ontologically presented, but it can be presented inside one’s perception only by means of its specific features. But what are the specific features of perception? These are not perceptive values, though they are different with different people, after all the integrity of external experience is perceived as repeated and organised. Besides, it is repeated by different subjects; but if it is true, then its specific features are explained by the influence on organisation of the perceptive content of the form and on the affective content.

The form, undoubtedly, may be specific, but its specificity is limited to the necessity of communication between individuals, since people may understand each other only to such an extent to which they can interact according to the same rules; and it is possible only on condition that their experience is similarly organized. That is why the major subjective specific character is set exactly by the affective content. In addition, we can affirm that the very system of affective values is the source of our will.

Certainly “behind” our will we can seek some universal activity, which ontologically provides the very existence of our will (something like H. Bergson’s “*élan vital*”). The problem is that it will not be our will, it will be impersonal, and it will become “our” when it acquires commitment to some goals. But the commitment for goals is determined by affective differentiation of reality and distinguishing of what generates positive emotions and what generates negative emotions.

The mechanism of this differentiation can be demonstrated on the basis of a known principle of a figure and a background formulated by Gestalt psychology. As in human perception the general precedes the particular, the maximum general, a world-in-its-wholeness, precedes any particular perception; and since it can never be given in its wholeness in the framework of any particular perception, it is given indirectly by the totality of distinctive features of the world-in-its wholeness. These distinctive features predetermine sense-bearing space (a context), inside of which any particular perception is considered. The distinctive features also possess affective meanings. It is based, firstly, on the fact that they are also present in one’s perception, and everything present in one’s perception has an affective meaning; and secondly, on the fact that they exist in the most generalized form, which is present in any perception, and therefore, they may provide versatility of evaluation inside different perceptions.

Thus, any perception exists in a context set by distinctive features, and it is evaluated on the basis of its correspondence to their affective features. The world-in-its-wholeness acts as a universal background of one’s perception, and the perception itself, in the process of its entering into a context set by the distinctive features, divides into a background and figures, which are objects and sets of objects failed to be entered

into the context. At the same time, the background inside the presentation correlates with the universal background and has one common meaning with it, and the figures acquire positive or negative meanings contrasting with the background.

These positive and negative figures in the background of our perception lay emphasis on our will, directing it to change the perceived. Thus, the objectives are determined by the system of affective meanings; and as symbols taken with their affective meanings are called values, we can note that the objectives are determined by the system of values directing our life activity, i.e. generating human will. We consider this very system (a basic matrix, a basic programme of the will) as a subject, i.e. it refers to an axiological subject existing in the form of a system of values.

The axiological subject has a sophisticated internal structure. We can distinguish three main types of values being part of it. Basic values (general distinctive features of a presentation) refer to the first condition. They do not only set orderliness of the whole defining the place of each element in one's perception, but also set its affective meaning. Concrete values are situated on the second level of an axiological subject including objects and events directly assuming one or another affective meaning in situations, which demonstrates that the structure of this level is not solid, as contrasted with the basic level it is in permanent transformation under the influence of perceptive experience, i.e. under the impact of links occurring therein.

It is clear that in different situations different elements correlate differently, because each situation has its own internal logic. The value of water for a person gasping for a drink in a desert is completely different from the thirst of a townsman, because the objective logic of the situation of gasping for a drink makes water a requirement essential then and there, therefore, the value of one's life projects on the value of water. In the second case, there is no such a requirement and the value of water is low.

The first level of the axiological subject sets its consistency irrespective of a situation (the unity of a subject) while on the second level the subject adapts to ever-changing conditions of its existence; if we restrict ourselves to its consideration, it may seem that the subject is of unstable character and it reflects all the situations it faces.

Value concepts are on the third level. They appear as result of rational conceptualisation of the human self and rationalisation of the human axiological structure. The result of rationalisation is revealed through general notions and characteristics (of objects or relations of objects). Becoming part of representation, the concepts acquire affective meaning which may produce a reverse effect on concrete values.

The problem is that in the process of such rationalisation a human being bases, as a rule, not on solid values, but on concrete values which are contextual, therefore, this generalisation and abstraction makes axiological human experience average, taking into account the experience of most widespread situations, i.e. the most stereotypic experience. Therefore, rationalisation does not result in understanding of self, but in creation of false self-consciousness, on the basis of which a human being commits violence over his inner world in the future.

Besides, rationalisation of axiological experience is often effected not "from the inside", but "from the outside"; not by elaboration of proper concepts, but by adoption

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of concepts existing in the culture but not necessarily matching its inner world. It is especially true as there is a fundamental gap between the existing practice and understanding of the proper; and such a gap often occurs in conditions of rapid development of culture (described in detail by C. Kluckhohn [11; 54]), when the development of general cultural concepts is behind the development of practical experience.

The three-level model of axiological subject, appearing as the source of the targeted human will and basing on differentiation of the integral conception at separate figures in the background, may serve a methodological basis for investigation of a wide range of different problems connected with culture (symbolic environment created by “similar” axiological subjects), a phenomenon of communication (which is possible only to such an extent, to which axiological subjects and their subjective worlds “penetrate” into each other), a society (as far as any social institutions exist only to such an extent, to which their subjects “believe” in them), etc. In other words, it always deals with similarity and dissimilarity of subjective worlds of axiological subjects, which always reflect their internal structure.

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