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EXISTENTIAL HUMANISM AS HUMAN CREATIVENESS

50 Introduction

How does existential philosophy perceive humanism? What is humanity for Sartre and Heidegger? How does that interrelate with philosophical poetics, which was started by Aristotle's recognition by experiencing catharsis? If the above-mentioned existentialists are the critics of metaphysics, how do classical and existential conceptions of humanism agree? In order to deal with these questions I will first present Sartre's and Heidegger's polemics on the question of humanism and then I will go on to expand each of their views in a wider context of their ontology. Eventually I will try to find links between the both philosophers' human being projects and philosophical poetics creative directedness. Philosophical poetics, which is unfolding in the tension of metaphysic and existential thinking, will provide the issue of humanism with a wider historical basis. The parallel of poetic creation and humanity will also expand philosophical poetics, which is not only a contemplation of the poetic grasp.

Humanism of Sartre and Heidegger

According to Sartre, humanism treats a human as a free person, which is each time constituting himself with his choice. Here lie his creative powers (to create

morality) and a terrible responsibility. Sartre says that existential philosophy is atheistic not due to its proving that God doesn't exist. This would be a parallel way to the speculative studies of God: the speculations of both atheism and theism ignore the free choice of a human. Existentialism proposes "if God existed, it would make no difference" (Sartre 1959: 95), that is, a human would still constitute himself with his free choice. He is condemned to freedom not only because he makes existential decisions alone, but also because his being unfolds like a project, which is directing freely. In this sense even the past is evaluated according to the human's creative aims, which are yet not fulfilled. However, the being always unfolds in the human world, in the common space of my and the Other's presence. While participating in the human project, this coexistence provides openness as well as wholeness. Differently from Plato's vertical direction to the divine idea, while participating in it, here only horizontal human way is recognized. This is the basis of metaphysic criticism of Sartre and Heidegger. Does that mean that there is no space left for God in the human's project? Let's study Heidegger's humanistic conception before answering this question.

Heidegger also describes human being (*Dasein*) by coexistence. In his letter *On humanism* he says that *homo humanus* means being's entity (*Seiende im Ganzen*), which includes an unanimous sensual perception of nature, history and world. Whose place is world? What unites the human and his world? What allows treating world as belonging to the human? In the world human's being unfolds in the world in an ecstatic project, which includes the past, a moment of the present and the future. Confrontation with the being occurs in the world that is also a place of the Other's participation in our project of being. Therefore *Dasein* means a worldly coexistence. This is the openness of being, *ex-sistentia* like an exit from own private world while creating a project of being. Thus the human's world is opened for the participants of the project of being. Therefore existence is ethical. *Ēthos* denotes a place of coexistence's expression — an open place where a human lives, a clearing (*Lichtung*) of being. This is a stopping (*Aufenthalt*) place where a human is enlightened by the openness (*Offenheit*) of being. According to Heidegger, this *ex-sistentia* is the essence of a human: the truth of his being in the world exposes only to an open coexistence. Differently from classical truth (adequacy of the thought and reality), here existential truth emerges like an ecstatic event, which unifies the past and the future by a creative moment of understanding. This is a generous moment: it provides understanding unit and opens being. We will see later that it is also

a tragic recognition of self's being towards death. It bridges existential thinking with Aristotle's poetics where individual being is recognized in the presence of tragic art as well as purified ethically (by means of catharsis). This individual understanding unifies Aristotle's critics of the Platonic idea and Heidegger's antimetaphysical attitude. Their poetic aspects allow their comparison: an individual purification in the presence of a tragedy and an event of poetic ecstasy. According to Heidegger, when thinking, *ex-sistentia* dwells in the house of being.

What is the house of being? Where do we recognize our being? What supposes common coexistence as a place for the expression of ethics? Heidegger claims that it is language which is the house of being. Language put together to unanimous pronunciation (*Sage*) of the human's being by thinking. Heidegger figuratively states that thinking invisibly ploughs language by means of pronunciation. Unification by pronunciation is a way of human world's understanding which, by opening to existence, leads the way home, to everyday (ethic) environment. Thus the event of the language unifies the world for a human coexistence. Any event destroys the present order; however, together it opens the human view for the new whole, which includes the project of the future and the evaluation of the past. It is events of moments out-stand (*ex-stasis*) which forces to go to an open field of human being; this field is ploughed by pronunciation. This event is creative, because it opens for new perception; moreover, it is of poetic pronunciation. This is why Heidegger says the question of humanism to be available for metaphysics. Metaphysics is a static view that operates by frozen conceptions. Therefore it opposes the hostile world of the object, which has to be conquered by the subject.

Humanism cares about unit world that is revealed by an event of poetic pronunciation. Out-stand also allows to create human's world by projecting own coexistence. This is existential truth, which emerges not like an adequacy of thought and reality, differently from metaphysic. If the human's world is created together with his project of being and human being is recognized by poetic pronunciation, the truth denotes not the adequacy of the subject and the object but the participation in a creative event of out-stand. Here understanding is the creation of unanimous human's world for coexistence towards death. It is bilingual language (*Zwiesprache*) of thinking and poetic emotion, which provides a unit human's world as a horizon for the creative projection of his being. It will allow the latter Heidegger to search for the contact of thinking and poetry,

by interpreting poems of Rilke, Trakl or George, and, *vice versa*, poetically analyzing coexistence in the world. Thus Heidegger's analysis of human being leads him to the program of philosophical poetics. After having analyzed Sartre's project of free creative human we will see what kind of program it is. It will not only allow showing the humanistic views of existential thinkers, but also will help to define philosophical poetics, which is indistinguishable from the human project.

Sartre's project of freedom

According to Sartre, by splitting from the present situation, an individual project gives sense to my past. When projecting oneself for the purpose, a whole of connections occurs, this, by staying open for a new human sense, denotes the limits of freedom. Similarly in the case of Aristotle's poetic reality sketches, which are created freely, become the wire that unifies artistic and human's reality. For Sartre past, like artistic reality, is alive, and human being — not abstraction — is permanently being created in the direction of the unclosing freedom. Thus human reality is not a world of given things but the unity of actions, which emerges in the light of future aims. Therefore human reality is nothingness, because future does not exist yet. Also this is nothingness in other sense: future aims are permanently destroying our past by giving it always-new meaningful entirety. It is an individual action due to which completion (the past) and freely created human's being (the future) are assimilated.

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In his lecture *What is metaphysics?* Heidegger also speaks about nothingness which being an individual principle is available to science and logic. Nonetheless, a personal search for nothingness, which corresponds to creative searching, opens existence. Thus nothingness for Heidegger is knitted with being. For Sartre, when the choice is made in a moment, a whole of human's life emerges, which includes the past and the future. This is why in the new light of the collapse of the old project the moment renders integrated view. Similarly poetic pronunciation (metaphor) occurs: the disharmony of the words shatters the whole of our integral view of the world, while poetic recognition extends the existential whole by purifying. Here the poetic event unifies two different planes: recognizable pronunciation emerges as existential understanding. The corrosive directedness constitutes a new harmonious whole for the human course of action.

Similarly the harmony of the novel's fictional environment, characters and actions, which does not correspond to any reality and denies it, forces the writer to obey the order which he created himself. What is more, this order involves the reader who is taking part not only in the actions of the novel but also in the understanding of self's being as well as in the event of the view's extension. This is the moment of shock, because the participant of the understanding is forced to break former connections for the new harmony. The latter Heidegger (*On the Way to Language*) talks about the moment of tintinnabulation and nightfall by means of which the fellow-traveler's being towards death is measured. Thus it is a tragic — destructive — moment, which appears to be generous: it opens the understanding of a new human whole and by means of experienced event allows creating self's being, which is the coexistence in the world. Therefore it is also a return to home and always-new understanding of self's temporal existence. Nothingness is what helps to recognize self's human being as a worldly coexistence: Heidegger's metaphor "thinking ploughs language" is not corresponded by any reality. This is fiction or untruth according to metaphysic conception of truth. However, this pronouncing points out existential truth: language gets closer to our being which is always open for understanding as a worldly coexistence.

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Even if the understanding of being is evoked not by the figure of speech (metaphor), it becomes an event of expansion of human reality, i.e. follows the analogy of poetic perception. To Plato analogy (*ana ton logon*) expresses alignment with the divine idea, in other words, transcendence. Sartre and Heidegger speak about transcendence as well. How does existential transcendence differ from metaphysic? Poetic grasp defines human reality as an open project of life by covering both plans — the word and the event. For Sartre, being is freely chosen, not based. It is a creative projection, which supposes every time new human being. Poetic attitude (creativity in respect of human reality) emerges as the critics of metaphysic thinking: freely created human being is incompatible with static metaphysic categorical apparatus. We saw that Heidegger is also critical about metaphysics, to which the question of humanism is indifferent. For both of them metaphysics bans the way to individual (tragic) understanding of human being. The creative event of human being is incompatible with categorical apparatus. Aristotle's poetics of event can be also considered an antiplatonic principle: *mythos* is an individual (tragically purifying) principle, which is opposite to scholarly contemplation of universal divine ideas. Sartre's and Heidegger's antimetaphysic attitudes are related by the view of

the world as a creative human project. It emerges by moment's event that gives a new meaningful whole to a human understanding, which runs linguistically. For Sartre it is a free project of speech, which assembles words to meaningful unity. For Heidegger the project of being also means a poetic accumulation for the human understanding.

The narrated event and poetic pronunciation are two paradigms of different plans, by means of which philosophical poetics is shaped. Thereby Sartre's and Heidegger's antimetaphysical attitudes interrelated by philosophical poetics, which is not only an interpretation (even though existential) of poetry. Sartre does not do this, differently from the latter Heidegger. True, he creates philosophical stories and novels himself. Philosophical poetics — the attitude to the world as a poetic book, which is read by a human — supposes human being like a loose sketch by means of which the whole of the human's world is created. When reading the book of world, poetic pronunciation emerges as an event of understanding that jumbles at a moment the unity of the generic view of the world, but immediately opens for a new perception of the living world. The reading of the book of world is tragic in another sense as well: we all create human being towards death, because death gives the end meaning to the whole of life. Therefore Heidegger treats death as an existential which gives meaning to the worldly being (*Dasein*), although death doesn't belong to us, in other words, it is transcendent. It is beyond in other sense as well: the reading of the book of world does not allow experiencing it. Although death is inexperiencible, it is recognized by poetic pronunciation. The event of individual recognition allows us to take part in the human reality, which emerges as ontological (projected being), ethic (purifying recognition) and poetic (readable book of the world) whole. We — brothers in fate — are taking part in this linguistic whole, where there is no difference between a poetic and real event. This is our tragic linguistic coexistence, which each of us project separately.

Existential transcendence

Sartre as well as Heidegger treats death as otherworldly because freedom does not face this limit. Transcendent death not only masses human reality but also constitutes worldly coexistence: we are participating in our existence leading towards death. It is not a metaphysical transcendence, which looks for the base of being, to point or prototype in otherworldly reality: Plato — in hierarchy

(*hypothesis*) of ideas, Aristotle — in Unmoved Mover. Both Sartre and Heidegger develop existential philosophy as a project of human world. It has been mentioned that Sartre's the divine beyond does not change the project human freedom. Heidegger states similarly: human being (*Dasein*) is not either for or against God because it spreads out in the world. Despite of that Sartre and Heidegger talk about transcendence. The former thinks that free existence stands on otherworldly aim, the latter assumes that coexistence is directed by death, the temporary beyond. In this sense human coexistence creatively pointed by the project is transcendental, always for-throwing in front. It matches Heidegger's out-stand to the world.

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Does the existential transcendence coincide with anti-metaphysical attitude? The world for Plato consists of ideas where divine aspirations hide (*parousia*). The creations, in turn, participate (*methexis*) in this project and seek to close with divine prototype. Any of our perceptions leads from the underside (things) towards the top (ideas), i.e. everything takes place *ana ton logon*, according to divine project of creation while participating in this reality and recognizing it. Thus, here the true reality is an idea; it is identified at the time of human understanding. Being otherworld it is considered as the limit of our understanding, which is never attainable because it is divine and eternal. This aim of harmony with eternal truth is also the criterion of universal generality in the science. Aristotle opposes material severalty and individual poetic identification to this point of view. Despite this, he is also interested in generality, the final goal and nature (*physis*) of things. Behind individuals who make up a dynamic world the Unmoved Mover hides. This is the basis of Aristotle metaphysics which parallels Plato's *hypothesis*. For Thomas Aquinas the final criterion of the truth is eternal law that also becomes a measure of human activity. Although divine truth is never in reach it is recognizable indirectly from the order of creation and is imitated. In all three cases human reality is secondary. It is truth that the limits of its spread are endless: having over-sensual base (idea) it is directed towards divine aims. However, this human activity when imitating even being creative also expresses vertical transcendence.

The transcendence of death for Heidegger is negative: it draws the final (otherworldly) limit of human activity in spite of giving the sense for the whole human life. It is a nonsense, which gives a sense. Similarly Sartre's project of freedom providing newer and newer meaning of personal past permanently negatives it. Moreover, in both cases this is horizontal transcendence: death or

freedom with the help of directedness towards the beyond creatively expands human being on this side. This human reality recognizable individually is the primary reality. The living world makes up a unit horizon, available for human understanding. Here the criterion of human truth is man's creative aspirations. Their shocking limits (death, freedom) allow emerging to a new human whole that is gathered by language to be recognized. Thus, it is a horizon of the coexistence in lingual world.

It is evident that the worldview presupposed by traditional metaphysics and existential thinking is different. The transcendence of the former means dressing into eternal (scientific) truth, for the latter — giving a newer and newer sense in human's world; the real reality for the former is other world, the latter admits this world; the former is interested in differences (prototype and reflection, knowledge and opinion, reality and fiction), the latter — in understandable human unity. Here the questions occur: does the horizontal transcendence eliminate the divine being? Is there a place for God in human world? Does the existential mind care about the theology? Is it possible for God to be a positive project who shifts human activities? As we have seen existential philosophy merges with philosophical poetics. Is the problem of God available to philosophical poetics? Before answering these questions let us analyze Sartre's poetic works and interpretation of Heidegger poetry.

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Sartre's and Heidegger's poetics

In the story *The Wall* Sartre depicts a convict condemned towards death. His freedom has a clear visual limit — a wall. One night has left for the hero in the cold cell: in the predawn he would be taken out to the yard by the wall and shouted down. What project of being does occur in his head if he does not believe in afterlife? What is the possible coexistence if he hates enemies, his brother in arms annoys him and he does not feel any compassion for his young cellmate? Lacking the space for human freedom even the body of the hero becomes disobedient: in the middle of the winter in non-heating cell he is broken into a sweat, he hardly suppresses urine; he sees his own dead body. Looking at his brother in arms the hero eyes himself because he notices their assimilation. Thus, there is the wall instead of horizon for human creative direction and the individual from a unique person who the project of his future puts up as worldly being becomes a type whose body behaves in the way as of

other condemned. He cannot experience any poetical event because his world-view is limited by the wall cannot expand further. True, he often thinks back but his reminiscence are disordered and noncreative. They are just desultory snippets that do not integrate the life. It seems that the hero is not free: in the morning he will be shot by the wall which is already limiting his being's flight.

In what way can it be reconciled with Sartre's statement that a man is free even in the presence of death? True, in *The Wall* the hero can rescue himself if he betrays his brother in arms and in fate. Expecting the treason the tortures delays the capital sentence for a few hours. The hero gets chance to choose between death and betrayal. But he always prefers death and the tortures raise him only laugh. It takes into his head one more option: to laugh at his enemies he suggests them to look for him brother in arms in the cemetery. This idea not only provided light relief to his last minutes but also gave meaning to his life: before he had not understood why he should die instead of another person even if he is his brother in arms. Meanwhile the thought about the torturers sent to the cemetery before time did not give a chance to reappear the disjointed recollections, not only did it stop his uncontrolled body reactions but it helped to embody his choice in the presence of the wall. Thus, it gave a meaning to his life which, waiting for death, seemed nonsensical. Outwardly nothing has changed: the hero was counting the last his minutes. Despite that, this event of thought and word headed his life: personal past gained a new whole. It was a poetic event because the hero knew that his brother in arms was not in the cemetery. Thus, the hero's free poetical movement (fiction) forces to move the wall, which momentary lets to appear a space for free choice. This space is enough for the hero's creative direction and this is the hinge from which all his past is measured.

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Sartre shows how fiction when being just poetic idea changes human reality renders a new meaning to the hero's past. Moreover, at that moment through fiction the hero avoids death: he wins not the hour by when he'll be stood by the wall but his entire life which assumes a new entity even if it is an absurd which gives the meaning to this human reality. The fictional laugh here acquires the bigger truth than, let's say, the statement that there is cold in the cell: the condemned do not feel the cold, but poetical idea gives a new view. The author of the story presents the hero's fiction as the outer truth: the brother in arm incidentally decides to hide in the cemetery where the soldiers catch him. The sentence is postponed indefinitely, the wall enclosing the space for new creative

outlines moves very far. This “treason” becomes a challenge for the hero’s new life’s whole. Since the whole of his life was afforded by absurd (absurd struggle, sacrifice, death) nonsensical treason does not stop it. Here the question occurs: if poetic idea (fiction) becomes the rally principle of the hero’s life why could not it be God’s idea? Does the understanding of God that emerges creatively could not unite human reality? Does the Word poetics could not be a wire for humanism, i.e. the human whole? Before answering these questions let us analyze Heidegger’s poetics.

Heidegger did write neither stories nor novels. Instead he existentially interpreted Rilke’s, Trakl’s, Hölderlin’s poetry. In what way does it associate with the question of humanism? Does this interpretation expand philosophical poetics’ human horizon far enough to get place for God in it? In the book *On the Way to Language* Heidegger claims that thinking and poetry are parallel which intersect in the infinity. In response to this attitude Gadamer equates the horizon to the principle of understanding: we understand when the views (which have to be very open) of participants’ of understanding converge. According to Heidegger thinking and poetry come into contact in a common substance (*Element*) — pronunciation (*Sage*) which is mobile as movement. Here Heidegger invokes a metaphor of trench: thinking ploughs the field of being. This is an event of poetical pronunciation: the mortality are stopped as the speakers and gathered for their essence. Thus, pronunciation is called the tie, which ties the events.

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We have seen that for Sartre with freedom (open direction) emerges the principle (fiction) that unifies all the life. The language for Heidegger is a way by which a wayfarer comes back home and at the moment of bell ringing and night experiences his tragic being towards death. This is a tragic moment, which destroys the solidity of a day. Put together, it is also generous because it provides a new living world’s view: the human whole is gathered by the tragic pronunciation event. This poetic event gathers as well as encloses setting free for a new human world that becomes a place for meeting and coexistence. This is a meeting field not only because the poetic language in it allows recognizing brothers in fate but also because pronunciation happens while meeting my and Other’s views which converge into an endless horizon. In this sense we participate in poetic event, which emerges as existential and hermeneutical project. The recognizable pronunciation movement in a moment gathers for our worldly coexistence that involves the past and the future. Temporal being of oneself also means a way home: we are approaching not only to our end but more

importantly to understanding about our life entity, which is given by the limit of being towards death. Thus the way is always horizontal. Here it implies a temporal connection, which by means of future project shows the past whole. Contrary to the way the method is vertical, it does not forecast a place for the interflowing of views, it is rather a unilateral view intrusion, which discredits one side and emasculates the other. Here the verticals of scientific aspirations and speculative theology converge both of which belong to Plato's idea. Instead of true (scientific, theological) method Heidegger for thinking suggests creative detour that despite being longer is generous in understanding of the coexistence of the world way, which curves in the place recognizable by the pronunciation. Thus, it is claimed that to pronounce poetic means generously present the world. Though poetic world (a lie, according to Plato) is the second imitation of the world recognizable as existential event but it opens human world for our understanding. The infinity of the way expresses the openness of my views whereas the show of Other lets to emerge a new entity for my life. Together, this is infinite direction towards the meaning of my past, which is rendered by an open view towards the future.

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It was mentioned that all this is involved by the recognition moment of an ecstatic poetical word leading deathwards while snowing and ringing bells. Ecstatic here expresses not only a new meaning for the past's direction in the future light but also out-stands, openness for the way's infinity. This allows Heidegger to talk about poet's love to immortality as to divine destiny. The way, showing infinity, gathers earth, heaven, man and God for human world's whole. As poetic fiction being nothing gets human world closer, in the same way poetical way with direction towards God constitutes a unit heaven's and earth's, human's and God's world's quaternary. This is a united coexistence with Other of a shape of another man or God which emerges when recognizing it via poetical pronunciation. Human world is being under the sun, the unity of heaven and earth, which appears in infinite horizon. Horizontal way, which joins heaven with earth, becomes human world's wire only then when it is a poetical detour by which pronunciation's recognition guides. Although Heidegger in his letter *On humanism* claims that existential philosophy speaks against or for a divine being but in his philosophical poetics appear some place for infinity's dimension. Furthermore, the project to infinity here becomes a unifying wire of human world, the condition to understand a human being. This is man's future that encloses by poetical word and becomes a rally connection unifying earth, heaven, man and God.

Hence humanism for Sartre is embodied by the project of free man that allows giving a creative sense to man's position in the world. Man is responsible for the world because it is his living environment to which he uncloses via poetical event. This lingual living world's and one's place in it understanding presupposes existence like worldly coexistence. For Heidegger poetical event also plays a very important role that in ecstatic moment expands human being. The world becomes the place of human being from his birth until death. With a help of poetical pronunciation it emerges as whole of coexistence where with project of the future the past is getting a sense in a creative way. It is out-stand, horizontal transcendence again and again producing its human whole. Thus, philosophical poetics is a creative horizontal view, which with a help of poetical event lets us recognize human coexistence in the world. Philosophical poetics presupposes lingual human whole's understanding in a poetical out-stand. Thus, it gives an opportunity to complement the existential thought with the motive of transcendent openness without prejudice to horizontal organization of living world. In turn, existential thinking expands philosophical poetics that is not just analyzing of forms of poetical human creativity. Now it implies a meaning of contemplation of creative human coexistence in the world.

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