About the First Principles of Philosophical Anthropology

Nickolay Omelchenko
Department of Philosophy
Volgograd State University
2d Prodolnaya Street 30
400062 Volgograd Russia

Abstract

We need a metaphysics of respect for nature in order to establish the foundation for a humanistic philosophical anthropology. A metaphysics of respect for human beings will assist us in overcoming the human crisis. Genuine metaphysical respect for nature and for humans needs no supernatural substance. Matter is realized as \textit{causa sui} and can be also defined as \textit{Natura sapiens}. Humans are not the only intelligent life forms in the universe. Man is primordial a creative being: \textit{Homo creans}. The predestination of philosophical anthropology consists in clearing and co-creating the essence (logos) of human being.

Introduction

Telling about adventures of ideas, A.N. Whitehead (1937:3) noted correctly that "theories are built upon facts," but "the reports upon facts are shot through and through with theoretical interpretation." In his opinion, the concept of history does not exist without aesthetic predilections, beliefs in metaphysical principles, and cosmological generalizations. The concept "pure history" is a result of imagination; it is invented by historians. Historical explanation depends on "premises taken not obviously." Whitehead's idea can be applied to all cases. Any theoretical and practical activities of humans depend on such fundamental premises which are not naturally a subject of daily interest. Analysis of initial postulates is the matter of philosophy. Therefore, when people begin to reflect upon the foundations of their existence, they willy-nilly become philosophers. The need for periodical appraisal of fundamental principles is in particular connected with the level of efficiency for scientific investigations, and also with a demand for truth. Truth appeals to philosophy where it hopes to find itself.

At the beginning of this century, Max Scheler (1928) had been originating his interpretation of philosophical anthropology. Using phenomenological methodology, Scheler tried to develop a new theory of humanity based on the achievements of science as well as on religion. Shortly before the closing of this century, we are faced with a more diverse metaphysical and scientific understanding of humankind. It becomes mandatory that we revise the discussions about first principles of understanding, not only in the field of anthropology but also within philosophical anthropology. Some of these principles are examined in this paper. They include: (1) there is a necessity for a humanistic philosophical anthropology; (2) man is not alone in an endless universe; (3) humans are primordial creative beings: \textit{Homo sapiens}.
creations; (4) the predestination of philosophical anthropology consists in clearing and co-creating the essence (logos) of human being.

The Need for Metaphysics of Respect for Nature and Humans

The study of nature inevitably seals one's anticipation for understanding social phenomena: the psychology of power and emotions, society, history, politics, and morality. In the past, many scholars believed that nature represents a passive reality that requires an external active principle. In this view, nature itself was seen as not able to create its own evolution. Aristotle's idea about active form and passive matter represented such a dichotomy that continued to occupy science for a long time. Nowadays we are starting to understand the consequences of that view which deprives nature of its dynamic basis.

Vittorio Hosle (1992) noted in his Moscow lectures that the main illusion of modern metaphysics is "the weakening of the principle of being owing to the strengthening I." In his opinion, the philosophical disparagement of nature leads nature, Hosle calls on us to learn a "metaphysical respect for nature": "it is required [for science] to stop and to return the growing subjectivist transformation of nature" (Hosle 1992:170).

The concept of a passive nature gives rise to similar images about society and humans. From this view, for instance, it requires heroic personalities, talented managers, prominent intellectuals (all of which are endowed with the spirits of creation by someone) that can and must give people true values, grant them genuine happiness, make history and reconstruct inert life. Even George Berkeley's idealism can be seen in the context of passive matter: "If the world be granted to consist of matter tis [sic] the mind gives it beauty & proportion" (Berkeley 1948:14). The same principle of passive nature applies at the opposite end of the ideological spectrum, where, for example, La Mettrie examined man as a machine (L'Homme machine). Two centuries later, the scientific picture of the world had changed considerably. Even though nature is still perceived in parameters of matter, science can offer dynamic theories for a complex reality. Despite the sophistication of plain materialism, statements such as "I am not a computer" (Walter 1993) reflect both the protest against the modernist identification of man with a machine as well as the disagreement with methodology that conceives the relationship between mind and matter.

There is ample historical evidence that an inadequate understanding of nature also leads to misinterpretations about humanity (there is a reverse dependence too): the humiliation of nature through scientific conquest also provides the occurrence of ideologies that humiliate mankind. Therefore, we must revise metaphysics towards a metaphysics of respect for nature, in order to establish the foundation for a humanistic philosophical anthropology.

A first indication for this philosofia prima is the absence of a transcendent absolute. Genuine metaphysical respect for nature and for humans needs no supernatural substance. Infinite nature itself is conceptualized as causa sui, as a capacity of the absolute with reference to infinity. When we use terms such as "absolute truth," "absolute time," or "absolute space," etc., their more appropriate interpretation signifies "infinite truth," "eternal time," or "endless space," etc. This shift in the understanding of "absolute" towards "infinity" will enable us to develop theories that liberate nature from the yoke of human humiliation. Let me explain the present idea.

The concept of Nature naturata expresses the co-dependency of reality with an external absolute—all modes of existence are created, i.e., any manifestation of humankind is created, and so is all suffering. Nature is seen as subordinate to the absolute; it is not free and so has not the sufficient ground to respect itself. If the absolute is conceptualized as being some transcendent Spirit in charge of creation, nature itself becomes a second-rate product, since Spirit will always excel nature. The concept of creation evolves in us a genuine metaphysical respect only for "something beyond." Of course, we could also force ourselves to esteem nature, but our respect for it will bear a strong resemblance to our condescending treatment of a defective reality. For instance, the rules of good conduct can demand a master's respect for his slave. However, notwithstanding that the master has to obey the artificial regulation, a slave will remain the master's slave.

Thus, subjectivism (its extreme version is presented by Berkeley) and spiritualist objectivism (as the concept of idealism by Hegel) provide for a chronic inferiority of nature, and hence for nature's primordial humiliation. Within the parameters of this paradigm, man gets easily accustomed to the disdainful, careless treatment of the environment. Ultimately, this habit leads to such grave consequences that human life itself comes under threat of extinction. Any plea for the necessity of respect for nature remain unheard since the philosophical tradition leading to the humiliation of nature gives rise to only an appearance and illusion of such esteem. However, the severity of the ecological crisis requires us to become free from such illusions. It is necessary to part from our fancies, since nature is about to lose its patience and bring to life Goddess Nemesis. The ecological crisis is nature's testament against the intellectual tradition of humiliated being.

Vittorio Hosle considers correctly that subjectivism undergrades the external universe and leads, in practice, to its destruction. Trying to find a way out, the philosopher is founding his own version of objective idealism supplemented with the theory of intersubjectivity. In Hosle's (1992:164) opinion, "only the absolute can serve as the basis of nature-mind unity." It is correct that objective idealism eases the tensions regarding the ecological crisis, but it does not remove the very problem of nature's humiliation. Methodologies that deprecate absolute, and hence it does not liberate nature from its created and suffering state.

Hosle does not doubt the mind's superiority to nature and claims that it is easy to prove with transcendental arguments: namely mind but not nature is able to raise the question of the very attitude of mind to nature. (Hosle 1992:164)

I propose two reasons to question the accuracy of his "easy proof." First, a mere capacity of human reason to raise philosophical questions does not signify any superiority to nature. Second, nature thinks itself by using human reason, and inquires about itself by contemplating upon subjects such as the problem of the mind's attitude towards nature. Nature gives rise to reasonable civilizations in order to confirm its being and to understand itself. Infinite nature is becoming that which
it is becoming. Therefore, its knowledge is rooted in the desire to know itself. Human intellect is one of many simultaneously presented cosmic reasons by means of which matter is knowing itself. In this context, matter can be defined as Natur sapiens. This idea expresses another thesis for a metaphysics of respect for nature.

Supposing that Cosmos is endless, we may assert that there is a countless number of worlds in the infinite. Similarly, civilizations are generally to be found at different levels of their development: some civilizations are at an early stage of their development, others are about to secede, while others have reached their highest proficiency. This alludes to the possibility that reason is an attribute of matter which constantly thinks itself. Nature cannot exist without mind, nor even lose it for a moment. In other words, as long as one living intellectual unit is present at any moment of the everlasting time stream, an endless universe thinks itself constantly by means of such units; but, of course, these units cannot be seen in earthly categories alone.

Now I would like to mention a common justification for the proposition, "reason is an attribute of nature." Let us assume the correctness of Berkeley's metaphysics. Namely, that the objective world exists for me because of my consciousness. In other words, an individual sees external reality by the light of reason. Without this light, a person will find himself in total gloom; he will be plunged into non-being. There is hope that other people will remain and will observe the natural and social life, but if we imagine that the whole of humankind is deprived of reason, then who will be able to certify the world's existence? Given the idealist tradition, there is no witness left. There is no object without subject, no event without witness. Hence, all being, all nature, is meaningful only in the context of earthly intellect. The lack of human reason is understood as the coming of great Nothing.

It requires a broader outlook to overcome such a logic. I suggest that we assume a plurality of worlds and a constant self-reflection of nature. From this point of view, if at some point in time humankind ceases to exist, Cosmos will cease to exist with reference to humans alone. However, as long as at least one thinking unit exists in the universe, nature cannot be reduced to nothing. Matter gives rise to new and reasonable civilizations in order not to die. Nature produces reflective structures again and again; it cannot exist without them. Nature argues and confirms its being with the birth of every new intellect in the universe. The presence of mind in the world proves the existence of matter. Homo sapiens is only one of the witnesses of material existence; man is one of many intelligent beings created by an endless Naturans. Therefore, humankind cannot be represented as the only intelligent manifestation of Cosmos. I believe that some day the anthropocentric picture of the world will be changed by a voluminous view; i.e., a view that allows us to identify intellect outside the parameter of organic matter.

The need for a metaphysics of respect for nature is clearly identifiable, in particular, by the occurrence of ecological destruction which threatens human life. The current ecological crisis is nature's protest against our careless treatment of it. Matter is suggesting that man respect it. A metaphysical respect for nature presupposes that the infinite material world is realized as an absolute, as causa sui. In this case, the existence of Cosmos needs no supernatural substance which gives birth to suffering beings. Besides, when matter is defined as Natur sapiens, reason is recognized as an inalienable property of space. This reason displays itself differently in the various points of an endless universe.

The philosophies of humiliated nature are continued in the doctrines of humiliated man. Speaking of irrational and religious conceptions, Albert Camus (1955:17) wrote, "The tradition of what may be called humiliated thought has never ceased to exist. If the nurturing of a metaphysics of respect for nature helps us to get out of the ecological crisis, the simultaneous development of a metaphysics of respect for man (humanistic philosophical anthropology), will assist us in overcoming the human crisis. If the paradigm "man is a master of nature" is outdated, it can be supposed that in due course the opposition of master and slave will also compromise itself in interpersonal relations. The idea of freedom through respect is a great idea of the twenty-first century. Apparently, the principle of reverence for any life as proposed by Albert Schweitzer must be expanded to a metaphysics of reverence for all beings: natural, social, and individual.

**Human as Homo sapiens**

Cosmos is an endless, creative being: it manifests itself through creation which is the norm of being, its rule, rather than its anomaly or exception. Cosmos renovates itself permanently. Nature could say of God's words about itself: "I am becoming that which I am becoming" (cf. Fromm 1956:69).

The human is a microcom, a child of Naturans; and so he is primordially not only a creature but also a creative being—Homo sapiens—whose creative work is none other than the continuation of space creation. Of course, the routinization of social life can block the creative qualities of a person; that is why the creation of mechanical realities is a most restraining enterprise.

In a letter to R.J. Humm dated July 10, 1938, Herman Hesse remarks, "I believe in humans as some wonderful possibility that does not extinguish [schaffen] even in large filth." Indeed, humans are a "wonderful possibility," since we possess a creative principle which interacts constantly with surrounding elements. Since future results of this interaction are not predetermined, women and men contain always some mystery that is open for reason, cognition and self-knowledge. If human self-creating has no limits, the study of ourselves will be a boundless process. There are no final predictions about Homo sapiens, since human knowledge changes in relation to the creative transformations of human existence. Humans are becoming that which we are becoming.

There is a whole spiritual tradition which splits the human into two. Dualistic philosophies place humans into passivity and suffering, while activity and creation is given only to superhuman existence. This is the tradition of humiliated mankind (for example, as in Christianity or in Friedrich Nietzsche's conception). From this point of view, humans themselves do not present an objective value, since we are thought of being creatures, but we are not thought of as creators.

Indeed, if there is only a passive condition for humankind possible, then we would find ourselves forever confined as suffering beings that arouse only compassion. The questionable remedy that is offered for humankind is a transformation either into a God-human existence, or into an Obersinnlich as Nietzsche perceives it. In any case, humans must stop living with reference to old perceptions. This appears to be
The Predestination of Philosophical Anthropology

The concept of logos can help us for an analysis of this question. To my mind, "logos" gives us epistemological advantages for our understanding of human beings and for the advancement of philosophical anthropology.

The concept of logos has a rich history. Besides the ancient tradition also Russian religious philosophy elaborated on this idea (cf. Ern 1991). Hösle shares with platonism (including Hegelianism) the persuasion that the theory of intersubjectivity is doomed to a crash without the absolute in the capacity of its foundation; the attempts of doing without the absolute show clearly where the foundation as general Logos is absent, there only mutual hostility remains (Hösle 1992:156). In other words, the idea of a "general Logos," a logos as the absolute, maintains its attractiveness as before. Meanwhile this graceful concept may have, so they say, the more natural interpretation.

Matter (nature) consists of the infinite multitude of discrete objects with the diverse relations between them. These objects are perceivable through our senses while intersubjective relations are comprehensible by human intellect. The concepts of law and essence are connected with that relation. Let us assume that the laws form the "ideal aspect of nature" (Hösle 1992:166). But why is there a need to place this "ideal aspect" outside the limits of Cosmos? In metaphysics, we still prefer to separate the sensible from the intelligible spheres, and to isolate the latter from nature.

Cosmic logos can be defined as an aggregate of the steady world relations. In this sense, nature has logos as its own essence. Logos is a gist of being, its law, a tendency of its changes. Logos exists objectively, not before things and not after them, but together with them.

When Aristotle attempts to define the concept of soul, he states in De Anima (412 b11) that it is a substance with respect to its formula (definition); i.e., the

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objective possibilities. However, the weaker one's reason and practical creation is, the stronger becomes the fatalism and absurdity which is apparent in history.

Cosmos did not evolve humans for achieving some special goal. In this sense, Homo sapiens is not a munion of Cosmos, and we cannot gratify ourselves with such an illusion. Everything is far more prosaic. Any mother gives birth to her children for life, but not all of them find themselves lucky and prudent. Just like this planet of people is not the only abode of reason, the creative work of Cosmos has not started with Earth and will not end with it.

Why must we believe that humankind represents an optimistic program for progress? There are reasons to believe that nature by giving rise to humanity says: "Here one more creation of mine in the infinite. If you are able to survive—live and keep living the good life. If you are not able, you have only yourself to blame. You had a chance...." None can foresee the end of human evolution. Man has neither hell nor paradise before him. People themselves establish either hell or paradise for themselves. The changing collection of opportunities is ahead of humankind, our destiny is behind us.

Thus, our options are clear: either humans will become a responsible participant in evolution by taking part in the creation of an infinite Cosmos, or mankind will tend to annihilate itself. What we will choose depends on ourselves.
The predestination of philosophy consists in clearing and co-creating the logos of a being. Philosophy maintains the existence of the natural, social, individual being by investigating its essence and by taking part in creating through logos. The demise of philosophy is the extinction of reason; and the decline of human reason means the end of mankind. This planet of people will become blind without philosophy. Reason does underlie philosophy, but philosophy is something greater than, say, empirical sense data. Reason constitutes philosophy, and in its turn, earthly reason finds itself; it becomes itself thanks to reflection upon philosophical truths. The evolution of reason unfolds philosophy, and the development of philosophy enriches human intellect, makes it more keen, wise, and humane. In the philosophical work is self-knowledge of Cosmos.

When Heraclitus attempts to explain the nature of logos, he states (Sextus Empiricus, adv. math. VII, 132):

> Of the Logos which is as I describe it men always prove to be incomprehensible, both before they have heard it and when once they have heard it. (Kirk 1970:33)

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An analysis of the first principles of philosophical anthropology demonstrates clear results: the mere existence of an infinite material world needs no supernatural substance. Reason is an attribute of matter which is defined as Natura sapiens. Humans are the not only intelligent life forms in the universe. Humans are created and creators at the same time: Homo creans. A full understanding of this principle leads us necessarily to the acceptance of one’s responsibility towards creation. Clearing the parameters of human essence (logos), philosophical anthropology participates in this creation. Science will benefit in productivity if anthropology clarifies the need for a metaphysics of respect for humans.

### Conclusion

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### Notes

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### References

Of how gender and cultural identity are formed through ritual performance. To challenge this dominant discourse, Kratz concentrates her analytical focus on a trichotomy of "contextual re-creation, semiotic movement, and experiential and emotional engagement" (p. 39). Contextual re-creation involves the ritual process, somewhat reminiscent of Bourdieu's habitus. This horizon is moved forward through time (its semiotic movement), inscribing a social matrix on participants—in living memory of the group, life has gone through a profound transformation. Once hunter/gatherers of the forest, they now lead more settled lives, tilling small gardens and participating in Okiek children into adults; specifically, how Okiek girls are made into women through the "female excision," and herein lies the problematic aspect of her book.

Although peripherally—in the wider political economy of Kenya. For Kratz, contextualizing women's initiation into this wider historical and social framework is crucial to an understanding of how gender, economy, power, and authority are conceived of emotionally as children (p. 83). This is not to say, of course, that women are completely powerless in Okiek society, accepting their status unquestioningly. As Kratz notes, girls are jural minors, constrained by limited access to and control of material and social resources. The "signs" of Okiek initiation are not merely symbolic referents but performed through time (its semiotic movement), inscribing a social matrix on participants in various modes of presentation, what Kratz terms "interactive intensification" (p. 41). The "signs" of Okiek initiation are not merely symbolic referents but performed in various modes of presentation, what Kratz terms "interactive intensification" (p. 41). The "signs" of Okiek initiation are not merely symbolic referents but performed through time (its semiotic movement), inscribing a social matrix on participants in various modes of presentation, what Kratz terms "interactive intensification" (p. 41).

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Therefore, Kratz's account of Okiek initiation is rich and complex, "a densely woven brocade of cultural meaning" (p. 161). She seeks to understand how people in fact do what they say they are doing. What she uncovers is a narrow, though densely textured, set of messages, meanings made effective through repetition in various modes of presentation, what Kratz terms "interactive intensification" (p. 41). The "signs" of Okiek initiation are not merely symbolic referents but performed through time (its semiotic movement), inscribing a social matrix on participants in various modes of presentation, what Kratz terms "interactive intensification" (p. 41).

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The rhetorical flourishes of men's encouragement speeches, the singing of initiation songs, processions from village to forest and vice versa, the excision operation itself, all put into puzzling, given that it is girls who undergo the process.) In Okiek society, women are treated as jural minors, constrained by limited access to and control of material and social resources. The "signs" of Okiek initiation are not merely symbolic referents but performed through time (its semiotic movement), inscribing a social matrix on participants in various modes of presentation, what Kratz terms "interactive intensification" (p. 41).

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