

ЗНАННЯ, ЦІННОСТІ ТА ЛЮДСЬКА ГІДНІСТЬ

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У статті піддається аналізу традиційна для філософії тема – співвідношення знання та цінностей. На основі такого розгляду у статті пропонується авторська версія не тільки трактування цінностей, а й їх новий поділ – на дігнітативні та валютаивні цінності. Основними методами дослідження у статті постали метод системно-структурного аналізу та компаративний; використувався також метод феноменологічного аналізу.

Ключові слова: знання, цінності, рефлексія, первинний життєвий досвід.

Victor Petrushenko

KNOWLEDGE, VALUES AND HUMAN DIGNITY

The article analyses traditional philosophical topic – the correlation between knowledge and values. Based on this review, not only the author's version of the interpretation of values is provided, but their new division into the “dignitive” and “valuative” values. The main methods of the research are system-structural and comparative ones. The method of phenomenological analysis is used as well.

Key words: knowledge, values, reflection, original experience.

Not so long ago, it seemed that discussions on the concept of values ceased, and now, it is time for their academically balanced and neutral descriptions. However, the real situation proves once again that the eternal problems usually do not leave us alone and if not always, then at least periodically, afflict and activate us. The advancement of value relationships and forms in all elements and aspects of human activity is particularly noticeable under the conditions that are often referred to as establishment of an information society. The powerful informational hurricane puts all of us not only in total landmark reality, but also in a totally valued world when the attack of values makes evident the fact that all landmark realities are based on significant values imaginations, giving them some ontological weight to these realities. In today's society, we can see quite noticeable and intrusive value totalisation of everything [2, p. 205]. It comes to oddities when the scientific discussions and debates proclaim thesis that it does not matter what and in which way, and to what extent something is grounded in scientific reports, but the main thing is mood, a position, i. e. value orientations and preferences of the author.

Of course, it makes no sense to uprise against this powerful flow: it will break anything on its way and wash it away. However, it makes sense to think at least over what position we occupy, even being inside of this process. **The objective of this article** is to conduct thorough analysis of the subtleties and complexities of relations between the two fundamental forms of man's relation to reality – values and knowledge. Among the aims of the article in the foreground is the analysis of the structure of both these forms in order to clarify general similarities and differences between them and outline a panorama of the possible relations. Quite important issue of our research is also clarification of the question about different kinds of value, since, according to relevant scientific literature, not everything which has significance for a person is a value [4, p. 25 – 34, 262 – 264]. For example, different types of human activity need good tools, but this can not be considered in the category of values. Clarity of writing letters of some text, contrast and layout of a screen messages, plane foot pate etc. – all of these are important, but none of the things appear to be values. A lot of examples of this kind can be given, but the important thing is that in scientific texts and studies we must not exercise the same degree of erosion of the concept of values when they, turned into a universality, will completely lose any sense.

The problem of relationship between values and knowledge is often based on the fact that knowledge is described as a mental entity that seeks objectivity, while values are outlined as something subjective as a whole or preferable. Yes, B.Rassel quite strongly argues, “... The question of value is completely outside knowledge. In other words, when we assert that this or that has value, we express their own emotions, and not a fact that is true regardless of our feelings” [10, p. 314]. Is there a reason for their separation in this way? – Of course, yes, but in itself, this kind of their outline still does not explain to what extent and on what basis this dilution appears to be reasonable and possible. Let us consider the issue in detail. Which the sphere

of reality includes both knowledge and values? Although there is a position whereby both of them can be attributed to the objective phenomena [7, p. 188], the following should be recognised: beyond the human consciousness, nothing can be considered as knowledge or value; thus, both of them refer to the phenomena of human intelligence, which have the status of subjective existence. But this status does not deprive the knowledge and values relation to the objective or even to include the objective in its structure [7, p. 193 – 194]. We know that mental and intellectual phenomena are simply impossible out of relation to some subject matter. This significant moment of their existence was fixed by scholars and gained recognition due to studies of it by F. Brentano. To indicate such fundamental feature of the phenomena of human psychics, he used the notion «intentionality» [3, p. 48 – 49].

Talking about knowledge, intentionality appears to be identical objectivity of knowledge, and this characteristic of knowledge is difficult to disagree with. What can we say about the values? According to any variant of our ideas about the value, they can not be self-contained and based solely on the subjective. In general terms, as stated, values are determined as a manifestation of something that is significant to humans [6, p. 343 – 344]. This «something» is present in values with the need. As it was already noted, we can speak of the presence of objective element in knowledge with even more reason; knowledge, according to the most wide-spread understanding, is a form of representation of the being for consciousness [8, p. 66 – 78]. So, by all means, knowledge has to contain an element that is determined by an object, not by a subject. As a result, it can be argued that both values and knowledge in their real existence or its ontological status represent a certain image created (formed) in mind («concept» in a Medieval discourse). In both cases, this image contains the objective content which is given to a person because of his relationship to all things (the objective or, more precisely, an object in the content of an image), and thus, what relates to constructive activity of consciousness (subjective).

In the context of this research, values and knowledge are similar. However, they differ in the role played by titled components in the images of consciousness, and in what forms they are represented in the images. In knowledge, conscious reflection of the content which is presented in the image plays an important role. The purpose of this reflection is a conscious detection of subjective and objective elements of knowledge and careful assessment of their relationship and breeding so that there are no false mixings [5, p. 222]. Another situation outlined before us when we consider the image which appears to be a value is an act of consciousness that is necessary for the constitution of the image. Never noticed, it merges with contents given in the image, resulting in a content perceived as indivisible not only with consciousness, but also with the person that is in certain relation with the subject. More precisely, in this case, we can speak not only about a person, but about personality: value as a certain intellectual image is inseparable from the personality and destiny of the human life. Merging of subjective relationship with a subjective relation in the image that appears to be a value, results in conversion of a subject into the one which is proportionate to man. Therefore, we can say that true values for humans are those without which life seems to be impossible.

The difference between knowledge judgments and evaluative judgments is, in particular, the following: the knowledge judgment has mainly stating or hypothetical character, thus, in manifestations of subjective attitude to the subject, knowledge is neutral or cautious. In evaluative judgments have verbs with certain modules that reflect the due or the desirable from the standpoint of the subject. For example, a scientific statement of fact can state joining certain military units in the territory, while value judgments may give the same fact in the versions of «liberation», «capture», «restoration of historical justice» and others.

However, in scientific knowledge there are situations when a lack of critical reflection, some scientist takes cognitive formation as the very reality; in this case, some knowledge that pretends to be scientific can become a bearer of value, inseparable from personal settings of scientist, and he/she would even know about it. In modern research literature justifiably differentiated values and norms: norms describe some optimum of anything, while the values are related to the desired and even the only acceptable due [4, p. 262 – 264]. Norms should be followed to conduct a process in the right parameters and the desired result, while some value in its real sense can never be realized, performing for the individual the role of a strategic life guide. For example, for most people, justice is certainly a value, but the same majority believes that justice is absent or even impossible in real life.

Speaking about the content of the values, I believe the distinction between dignitive values (values of dignity – from the Latin. Dignitas – dignity, nobility) and valuative values (values that have significant importance in life – from the Latin. Valere – cost) to be possible and justifiable. Thus, it is clear that health, efficiency, certain professional achievement and social status are human values, but, on the contrary, honour, honesty, moral imperatives, the earliest life concepts, and benefits, are, of course, the phenomenon of another kind. Real life circumstances and needs sustenance generate a series of value orientations of people, regardless of the extent to which people understand and fulfil them. These include not only the above-mentioned, and also, for instance, social stability, fair trial, efficient legal system of society, ensuring favourable conditions for establishment and normal development of future new members of society, etc. But

everything that is in the mind of a person and is related to his dignity, in some sense refers to the status of the person: all this should be attributed to dignitive values. For example, pride, self-respect, sincerity, kindness, establishment of firm boundaries for ourselves that we would never be able to break in relations to other people, women, children, the elderly; honesty, directness, etc. – all these, of course, belongs to the existential values, that is to dignitive values. Some of the following benefits of ethical and aesthetic sphere belong also to dignitive field values: the distinction between dignity and shame, shame and responsibility, organic acceptance of some aesthetic forms, etc. Anything that provides a person with a sense of well-being, comfort or convenience of life has to be understood and accepted as valuative values. For example, a house (home, household), a circle of close people, a certain level of material well-being, comfort and amenities of life, professional success relate to valuative values. And they, despite their importance and significance, are quite radically different from dignitive values, because people can maintain their dignity even in the absence of these conditions. Conversely, it is not rare when a person has all or most of these values and, maybe, even more than that, but his/her personal dignity will prevail. Such a case may be very problematic. In a nutshell, these kinds of values are not mutually substitutable.

Most clearly, the difference between the two types of mentioned values is manifested in their different relation to knowledge. Concerning valuative values, knowledge is their important addition and even their component: almost all cultures have a list of what it would be desirable for a person to have or what he should try to achieve in life. Orientation in such values at the level of knowledge is a must, because the one who deviates from them for some reason becomes an outcast, an outsider. There is no wonder that the Greeks practiced next wisdom: arriving in some countries (policy), find out about its customs and try to follow them. Many existing educational systems are oriented to describe the usage of knowledge (information) as some range of components, corrected with proper human behaviour in the social relations that can not be done without a dose of propaganda, instilling common values, generally valuative. Knowledge about the circle of mandatory and shared values that are accepted in the society (culture) is an organic part of the process of socialisation and inculturation [11, p. 910 – 915]. Quite often, the importance, necessity, including the one for a certain individual, social valuative value can be proved and supported with arguments in a proper way. Concerning dignitive values, the role of knowledge is more modest here: at the level of knowledge, a person can be well aware what is honesty and integrity and, nevertheless, do not have them in his/her mind as something that is impossible to live without. The same can be said about other features which constitute human dignity. Here, something that hermeneutics (after phenomenology) calls the primary life experience is significantly more important than knowledge [9, p. 129 – 134], and this kind of experience can not undergo straightforward and cognitively transparent transformations into a sum of knowledge. In modern philosophy, conditions of the acquisition of such experience include «presence» and «participation»: here, a huge, even crucial significance lays in person's dialogues with the world – first at imprinting level, primary (though not purely instinctual) reactions to reality in its various manifestations, reactions to such reactions themselves, meeting with archetypes, some initial Eidos of culture, etc. The concept of presence is perfectly explained by V. Bibihin in a series of lectures under the title «The World»: presence is not the same as availability; we can be physically located in a certain social space, but actually be out of it [1, p. 297 – 298]. The presence provides an internal acceptance of a situation and some measure of participation, that is with some part of it to integrate, identify oneself. In the world of children's consciousness actually what exists in some forms is actually present, not just what is happening around. Therefore, the initial experience of the personality is like the crumbs, particle to particle with everything the soul integrates, or, if you like – the self. Arising from the initial experience of the individual, dignitive values begin to play the role of prediction of situations and events in which personality is manifested. More precisely, we must say that dignitive values largely determine what event will be appropriate for this person or what will happen to this person. For example, fair and pedantic person can easily be drawn into some trouble, knowing in advance that he/she was and is fair.

In my opinion, dignitive values should be classified as not a cognitive phenomena, but as an ontological one since they show us topos and status of personality. But knowledge, however, is related to dignitive values: being a general intellectual exchanger (Aristotle), knowledge is able to delineate the boundaries or manifestations of something that is opposed to or even is beyond. Knowledge indicates signs, images and limits of dignitive values, telling us, after all, that these value simply exist, as well as how they exist and manifest themselves. In this case, particularly evident knowledge manifests itself as a form of representation for the existence for consciousness: for consciousness, only what has the form of knowledge exists, at least in the form of ascertaining «It is». At the same time, it is rather obvious that dignitive values can not be reduced not only to valuative ones, but also to cognitive structures and equivalents. They represent something atomically, i.e. complete and, in a certain sense, predetermined since it is well known that neither logical argument, nor pedagogical guidelines do not generate any idea of human dignity, pride and honour. It can not be said that all this has no influence over a human, but the choice in these matters of certain advantages, equating results of this choice to life destiny, to the very content of life – all these is

rooted not in logic, not in education itself, but in life existential topos of personality. This implies a very important conclusion: dignitive values are the islands of freedom that can not be reduced neither to any social technologies, nor to political or ideological ideas. Moreover, we can say that they represent areas of absolute freedom, which can not affect either physically or intellectually. That is why every totalitarian regime, every ideological pressure is so eager to take control over what is going on in the minds of its subjects, hiding this desire from itself and, at the same time, more earnestly desiring to do so through intuitive understanding of the impossibility to do it. Human dignity is Primordial obstacle to any ranking, regulation, social training, pressure and violence.

However, nowadays, i.e. in terms of unprecedented erosion of more or less traditional foundations of life and radical subjectivization and relativity of knowledge, multiculturalism, globalization and information saturation of social communications, topos of a person and its value orientation are exposed to destructive attacks by these factors. If in the 19th century dissociation of personality was considered a mental disease, in our time polyphonic personality is rather the norm than the pathology. Previously, there were more or less approved by society thoughts about norms that correspond to the status of a person or contradict it, – in our time, the lack of any definitive opinions and judgments about it is generally considered. Under these conditions, as rightly pointed out by some representatives of postmodernism, a person easily turns into an object of social and ideological manipulations. On the way towards such adverse effects, as it was already noted, only a serious attitude to dignitive values can become a barrier, and provide support for a person. Though we all understand that human dignity is not determined by the amount of income earned, position in the social hierarchy, career growth, etc., the given list of person characteristics in modern society often turns too to be an indicator of social significance and importance of a person. Only one thing can save us from this: dignity connected with existential and personal human initial principle.

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