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On the edge of degeneration and recovery: from disintegrated fragmentary conception to integrated knowledge

*Let things being done for you be done.
Do for yourself things you have to do yourself*

Nazir Al-Kazwini

Now and again modern world has becoming narrower to anyone who feels an aspiration for spiritual growth, for revealing one's true self and establishing oneself as a unique individuality. This is especially true about those who since the very birth have been plunged into Judo-Christian paradigm of existence. Due to an overwhelming process of globalization though most of cultures and peoples of the world have become the hostages of Judo-Christian world outlook and values. Hence, the world of a person is inevitably being reduced to a transformation into a civilized consumer-oriented creature. Moreover, modern consumerism is marked by obvious promiscuity, lack of aesthetic taste and critical thinking. And above all, this consuming style as a means of existence of a modern person is absolutely incoherent with an integrated perception of the entity, that of a person or any other existence, since one can consume only things that have already been „faked” or „digested”.

As a consequence, a peculiar characteristic of the modern paradigm of existence of a social creature has been diffusion and atomicity of relevant knowledge, or in other words, perception or impression about a person per se. Knowledge about a man is de-concentrated nowadays in many spheres and directions of a cognitive activity of Homo Sapiens. Consequently, our everyday life is a disintegrated mixture of scientific and philosophic ideas, religious and ideological principles, and mystic and esoteric views concentrated upon the problem of man as a whole. Moreover, the results of such an activity are contradictive or even absurd at times.

As a result, this tendency, hence, does not favour an effective solution of the urgent problems of today, but breeds the new or aggravates the known ones. No wonder then, a routine life has become a kind of „bog” of never-ending troubles, disappointment and pain with fragile spots of petty cases of happiness and deceptive achievements. That's why every unique moment of one's existence is priceless since it is a true manifestation of real life's „breathing”, the voice from the depth of entity, warmth of paternal home. Alas, these very moments gradu-

ally wither and lose their intensity due to one's consumerism-crippled existence. The cause of the latter is definitely the very person, and he is to blame. The bitter truth is there is no greater enemy but the one within ourselves. Though, the truth is as well there is no greater friend but the one within too. Everything depends on the impression about oneself a person keeps actual and the way one treats the world around. The latter, to a great extent, depends on one's understanding of the eternal questions one is to reflect on: „what is person?“, „what is each and every one of us?“, and „what is the hierarchy of one's abilities and disabilities one is gifted or suffer from since birth?“

The realization of oneself and the life itself is formed of course under the influence, press and care of society and culture. In particular, modern person is staked at the energetic and informative monsters of Judo-Christian paradigm. Though the acquaintance with the world and oneself, luckily, is not limited to the imposed opinion from the outside. The most decisive role here belongs to private feelings and impressions which, when combined, form the basis of any individual experience. At least it is true about those complete and spiritually powerful personalities able to resist permanent negligence and reduction to a social slave or „figurine“.

When we consider about acquiring multi-faceted experience by a person we stress that one has to act the least: to be in constant action, movement and show activity. In the long run even the wise say „that things you do not acquire thanks to your work, you do not have“ [Grinevych 2005: 73]. Besides, as an ideal, one has to fill in every moment of one's existence with sense – only then one is a person paraphrasing the idea of R. Kipling's famous poem „If“. Projecting it into the reality it means that one has to learn to concentrate upon the very activity and not on the expected or gained result. In other words, to learn to get pleasure in the process as opposed to the one of an anticipation of a desired result.

Cognition of course, especially self-cognition, is not exhausted in variety of „vita activa“ [Arendt 1999]. And yet, activity has been if not the most simple, but definitely the most natural and accessible means of cognition. To some extent it is limited but it reveals ways to the truth and stimulates the search. Though in order to get effective outcome of the process of cognition based on one's abilities and skills one has to stick to some conditions. In particular, one has to keep in mind that „moving in the wrong direction with highest effect possible is even worse than remaining motionless“ [Murakami 2003: 653]. Hence, on the road of cognition one has to realize what forces lead oneself into a particular activity, what one hopes for and counts for. Besides, a crucial point for any researcher is to make an adequate idea upon the subject of one's cognition. Otherwise, the process of discovering of the unknown is reduced to a banal seeking for a black cat in a black room with an open door (a feature of many current theoreticians and truth-groundbreakers).

When we consider about self-cognition we stress that one has to be especially careful and reasonable because to a certain point one deals with personal thoughts no one can confirm or disprove. Only with time passing the life itself gives a clue about 'true' thoughts praising with satisfaction and optimism, or punishing with despair and sadness. Though feelings and impressions themselves are not the reason of some radical acts, risky in particular, alike suicide for instance. That's why there is no other threat by discovering oneself but psychic health. Still there is a high possibility of self-deceit and, consequently, being doomed to long-life hardships; in other words, the same colourless life of an ordinary person.

That's why when one is ready to walk along the road of a real cognition one has to consider that practice alone does not make manhood better as it is stated in Nazir Al-Kazwini's „Disintegrated Notes". Any person needs a contact with the truth to get helped. This type of truth is adapted to a life of an ordinary person and revealed in interacting with or about those who were able to walk through a certain part of the road themselves to understand the truth. These are highly spiritual, reasonable and determined people who carry an impetus of wisdom as an opposition to those who rush about with their wisdom. The above-mentioned condition of development and movement along the road toward the truth, when one needs somebody who assists the movement, has lots in common with a Chinese saying, attributed to Shaolin monks, that runs: there is no desire without restriction; there is no progress without assistance.

But people of the nowadays in most cases deal not with wisdom of those who conquered the unknown and realized oneself, but most often with interpretations of wisdom in better instances, and with various personal distortions of wisdom in worse ones. „Devouring" those priceless achievements of the unsurpassed geniuses, dispersed in science, philosophy religious dogmas, etc. one is undergone through a massive restrictive factor of spiritual growth in better cases, when in worse ones – negative impact that reinforces total degradation.

At the same time the existence of various autonomous spheres of cognition of human nature inevitably leads to an illusion of a relative self-sufficiency of human manifestations like physical body, emotional sphere, consciousness, and psyche. Such an illusion is far from being innocent since it prevents a search of efficient ways out of the problems man experiences every day functioning as an integral multi-functional indivisible system. Any attempts to solve the problem on an artificially localized level are vain since they neutralize only the symptoms but not the cause. The worse is the former are devastating because they automatically switch on destructive mechanisms fatal to either body, or consciousness, or spiritual sphere, or man as a whole.

Probably, the first step one has to take up to cure oneself is a deep understanding of an inner integrity. Sure thing, one has to be brave enough to make the first step when most around are suppressed by routine hardships. This is far

from being that easy since at a definite point one has to doubt non-reflective „truthness” of every thing one has considered to be an essence of one and all existence. Moreover, one has to overcome inertia of one’s thinking and fear of loneliness. The latter, in particular, pushes a person to ever look for confirmation of one’s private belonging to something bigger than oneself, to the above-individual, in order to have an illusionary possibility to shift one’s responsibility onto it.

In other words, to face oneself one has to realize one looks in the opposite direction, because one’s attention and thoughts are concentrated on the illusions of the world and the entity, whereas they should have been directed onto the very world and its manifestations. An impulse for such a turn could have become a methodic driving an individual to an idea about organic integrity and unity of one’s existence in unison with any other existence around. On this initiative way toward the above-mentioned position an individual has to overcome or at least weaken dominance of various stereotypes and false beliefs revealing their true essence, real nature and functional purpose in one’s life.

Currently, the most optimal conditions for stimulating of an individual toward spiritual revival and self-coming-into-being have been created in the establishments of higher education. Firstly, on one hand student’s perception and thinking is flexible since it isn’t ultimately overloaded by stereotypes and extra information. On the other, most of young people have not been totally dependent on the older generation dictatorship, especially the one of parents and tutors. Secondly, institutes and universities have always been places of the best and potentially elite strata of society. Thirdly, the very higher education establishments are aimed at carrying out a function of a powerful resonator and a guide of one’s cognition. That’s why we believe it is reasonable enough to introduce into the curricula an appropriate subject which main goal is reproduction of an integrated understanding of a person.

An integrated idea of re-considering of nature of man and its essence when viewed from the position of integrity of entity can be represented within the margins of the special course „The Ecology of Consciousness”. This manual „The Ecology of Consciousness” is aimed at facilitating such an understanding by means of work with personal ideas about oneself, the other, the world in general, and by extending informative and active bases. Therefore, this special course of lectures comprises not only a presentation of theoretical material based on a student’s experience, but also practical exercises – sharing experiences. That’s why the classes imply personal active involvement into mastering of the materials suggested.

The essence of „The Ecology of Consciousness” is a system of views upon integrity of a person and understanding of the ways of accomplishing of an individual identity. The starting point of The Ecology of Consciousness is an opin-

ion about a modern man who finds himself in a situation of distorted perception of oneself as a consequence of a vast restriction of cognitive possibilities and deforming of one's consciousness both within individual as well as collective frames.

Spiritual degradation of man, limiting or, otherwise, abolishing of one's creative prospects and abilities, go hand in hand with re-orientation of the majority onto solely personal manifestation of the entity, concentration on ego, self-restriction of one's perception of reality. Extracting oneself out of cosmos and nature and inserting into an artificial world of civilization has become possible thanks to an ontological fracture of integrity of the entity, its splitting into a subject and an object, their opposition. Plunging into a world of one's own sensations, total concentration on one's ego, that is enclosure from the other, has become real due to the second, ontic split – polarization of the world which found its reflection in establishing of dual elements: the good and the evil.

Hence, there is a huge shift in the structure of the Entity from organic integrity to identifying and enrooting of a variety of personal ersatz-entities or existences.

Overcoming of the ontic and ontological fractures or at least the highest possible neutralization of their negative consequences is connected with cleansing of an individual consciousness from energy-informative clusters, extending perception, and stimulation of the cognitive processes. A person who is set to accomplish integrity of the entity as well as to exclude a variety of mediators between him and the Entity has „to be a question for oneself first” (St. Augustine). Otherwise, in a painful attempt to realize something that lies beyond oneself, a person risks to reduce to a state of „sane” nonsense transforming the world into an illusion. That's why we define the subject of the Ecology of consciousness in a person as a manifestation of the Entity, integral and indivisible, who directs his cognitive activity and attention onto oneself.

The prominent purpose of this course is to create an atmosphere suitable for revealing of new emotions, hinting at an active search of oneself, and to help a reader to pattern one's behaviour under definite conditions. To be more precise we can use Mircea Eliade's ideas, slightly paraphrased, that run that this course is aimed at „helping those who seek for something that is worth seeing in this so-called life” [Eliade 2001: 57]. This set of lectures does not pretend to put all dots on i's becoming a guide-book manual for life. The basic principle that lies in the core of its content is an idea that „there is good and evil in everything: everything is interrelated and subdued to the world laws which were, are and, for the better or the worse, will remain incomprehensible by human in their fullness” [Grinevych 2005: 43]. But nothing can restrain a person to know the truth. The only exception is, probably, the very man armed with indifference and depression.

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Анотація

Основное внимание статьи сосредоточено на концептуализации идеи формирования целостного восприятия человека в рамках спецкурса „Экология сознания”. Современный человек как никогда раньше нуждается в очищении его сознания от накопившейся избыточной информации, представленной в виде огромного количества стереотипов и различных догм, и переоценке ценностей, а также в систематизации и оптимизации мировоззренческих установок и позиций. В противном случае ему угрожает бесповоротная деградация до уровня „социального болванчика” или „раба” собственных иллюзий.

Ключевые слова: сознание, экология, идентичность, иллюзия, стереотип, представление, знание.

Abstract

The main focus of the article is concentrated upon conceptualization of an idea of formation of an integrated perception of a person within the frame of a special course „The Ecology of Consciousness”. Modern man is in need of deleting of excessive information out of his consciousness, which is presented in forms of stereotypes and dogmas, and substituting it with systematized and optimized world outlook aims and principles. Otherwise man is threatened to reduce to unalterable degradation down to a level of a slave of personal illusions or a social „figurine”.

Key words: consciousness, ecology, identity, illusion, stereotype, idea, knowledge.

Na granicy degeneracji i poprawy: od zdezintegrowanych fragmentarycznych pojęć do wiedzy całościowej

Streszczenie

Główny kierunek rozważań w artykule skoncentrowany jest na konceptualizowaniu idei całościowego spostrzegania człowieka w ramach wyróżnionego przedmiotu studiów: „świadomość ekologiczna”. Współczesny człowiek potrzebuje usuwania nadmiernej informacji ze swojej świadomości, która była obecna w formie stereotypów oraz dogmatów i zamieniania jej na usystematyzowane i zoptymalizowane spostrzeganie całej złożoności świata. W przeciwnym razie człowiek jest zagrożony degradacją do poziomu niewolnika osobistych iluzji lub bycia „figurą socjalną”.

Słowa kluczowe: świadomość, ekologia, tożsamość, iluzja, stereotyp, pomysł, wiedza.