

The Concept of the Heart in Erich Fromm's Existential Philosophy

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Abstract

Introduction: In the existential philosophy of Erich Fromm, the human soul's tendency to creativity and destruction, the desire for domination or submission in people, the content of love and hatred for life, the impact of mental problems in societies on the increase in violence, and their social significance are analyzed.

Materials & Methods: This article uses a philosophical-anthropological approach to analyse Erich Fromm's socio-cultural concept of freedom. The study compares the scientific opinions of both domestic and international researchers using the approaches of logical analysis and relative historicism. Scholars like K. Miyamoto, N. Anjum, M. Guner, and H. Atsiz, as well as Uzbek researchers like G.M. Ruzmatova, V. Alimasov, and Q. Rozmatzoda, were specifically examined. Fromm's theories about the soul and human consciousness were continuously exposed using philosophical-anthropological standards.

Results: Erich Fromm examines the psychological underpinnings of human masochistic and sadistic tendencies in this work. According to Fromm, the core conflict in humans is that, despite having animalistic instincts, they are also capable of self-awareness and future planning. Masochistic or sadistic tendencies result from the desire to avoid spiritual weakness and loneliness; the former entails demeaning oneself and attempting to submit to others, while the latter entails feeling powerful solely through controlling and dominating others. These inclinations lead to the loss of individuality, the renunciation of freedom, and unbridled dominance in society. Fromm also uses the ideas of necrophilia (a propensity for death) and biophilia (the love of life) to examine the contradictions that exist within humanity. Necrophilia is a manifestation of a fear of change and a desire for destruction, whereas biophilia is necessary for constructive growth.

Conclusions: Erich Fromm compares Freud's instincts of life and death to the tendencies of necrophilia and biophilia. He stresses that the threat of nuclear war could have disastrous effects on humanity and draws attention to the social causes of necrophilia. Such a war cannot be justified for normal reasons.

Keywords: Creativity; Subversion; Desire For Dominance; Tendency, Soul, Social Dependence, Alienation.

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Introduction

In the philosophical anthropology of Erich Fromm, along with the study of the foundations that form human nature and character, the desires of the soul, the human tendency to goodness and evil, the manifestation and forming factors of masochism, sadism and necrophilia are analyzed.

The thinker reveals the desire for domination or the tendency to submission in people through the tendencies of sadism and masochism, and the love and hatred of life through the tendencies of necrophilia and biophilia. A separate consideration of these categories helps to understand the human soul and show its social significance. We also aimed to present a Frommian analysis of these concepts within the framework of our research.

Materials & Methods

The concept of freedom in Erich Fromm's socio-cultural concept has been studied by many scholars. For example, K. Miyamoto in 1987 through his research entitled "Erich Fromm's Theory of Alienation", and N. Anjum in 2004 defended his doctoral dissertation on the topic "The Question of Man and Society in the Philosophy of Erich Fromm". Among the Turkish scholars, M. Guner studies the thinker's moral philosophy, and H. Atsiz studies his humanistic religious views from the perspective of the moral criteria of today's society.

Although no special scientific research has been conducted in Uzbekistan on the concept of the soul in the philosophical anthropology of Erich Fromm, the views put forward in the scientific studies of G.M.Ruzmatova, V.Alimasov, and Q.Rozmatzoda help to form a general idea of his philosophical teachings [1;264]. Also, the life and work of the thinker is briefly covered in the article "The owner of the science of the soul" [2;177-179] by Rahmon Kochkor. In our country, the philosophy of Erich Fromm has been studied only in the direction of neo-Freudianism. However, it should be noted that to date, philosophical and anthropological research on the thinker's analysis of the human soul has not been fully and comprehensively disclosed. Among the scientists who have studied Erich Fromm's philosophy from the perspective of neo-Freudianism are V.I.Dobrenkoe, G.A.Titarenko, F.X.Sabirov. For example, researchers such as P.A.Agapov, I.A.Osipov, and I.V.Gorova have studied the philosophy of the thinker within the framework of philosophical anthropology.

Discussion

In his study of some of the issues that give rise to corruption and hatred, Erich Fromm raises the question of what a person really is. There is no complexity in the essence of a person and he is a product of society as a product of the social environment. The essence of a person is manifested not through a clear material basis, but in a state of existential contradiction. This contradiction is manifested as follows: first, although a person as an animal has instincts, he is not self-sufficient; second, he has the ability to think in order to achieve his goals; third, a person can have another feature that other beings do not have, namely, the ability to distinguish between his own identity, his past, and his future, which leads to death.

The human desire for domination, the desire to derive pleasure from the oppression and humiliation of others, is called sadism. The opposite of masochistic nature is sadism.

Results

After analyzing the sadistic and masochistic character, it would be appropriate to dwell on the concept of an authoritarian character. But before analyzing the authoritarian character, it is necessary to clarify the concepts of "authority" and "power". Erich Fromm, dividing power into internal and external power, emphasizes that internal power manifests itself as duty, conscience, and writes about conscience as follows. "Conscience rules more cruelly than external power, and moreover, the content of the dictates of conscience often does not completely correspond to the requirements of moral norms regarding human dignity" [4;141-142]. Conscience can surpass external power in its severity: after all, a person perceives the dictates of conscience as his own! How can he go against himself? To date, "conscience" has largely lost its weight. Every person is absolutely free if he does not violate the legitimate rights of other people. He cites the attitude towards power

and force as an important feature of authoritarian rule. In his opinion, power automatically generates love. Power attracts not because of the values behind it, but because it is power in itself. According to Erich Fromm, “the thirst for power is not connected with power, but with weakness. If power is to dominate someone, then power is to be able to make changes. If a person is strong, that is, able to realize his potential on the basis of the freedom and integrity of his personality, he does not need to dominate people and he does not strive for power” [4;138]. Therefore, we must teach people in our society to value power, not the possession of power. Because domination means weakness, and power means power.

The thinker divides the attitude towards authority into two: if people despair of the power of authority, they can fight against such authority, or if at the same time or later another system satisfies their masochistic desires with its greater power or greater promises, they can submit to it. The struggle of the authoritarian character against authority is essentially empty boasting. This is an attempt to overcome the feeling of powerlessness in himself, and he still submits, consciously or unconsciously. The philosopher calls the authoritarian character not revolutionary, but rebellious, and assesses the attitude of the authoritarian character to life as follows: “he loves the conditions that limit human freedom, he joyfully submits to fate. What “fate” will be depends on his social situation. But for the authoritarian character, there is an external authority and he always obeys it. Thus, the common feature of all authoritarian thinking is the belief that life is determined by forces outside man, outside his interests and desires. The only possibility of happiness is submission to these forces. Thus, according to Fromm's philosophy, the essence of any neurosis, like normal development, is the struggle for freedom and independence. For many normal people, this struggle is over: it ends in complete surrender; they have sacrificed their identity, they have adapted well and are considered normal people. The neurotic can be understood as someone who continues to resist complete submission, as someone who unsuccessfully tries to resolve the conflict between neurosis and the desire for freedom that cannot be overcome internally” [4;160-161]. The resistance to complete submission in the human soul causes the neurotic state in him.

There are tendencies that are a source of evil that lead to the destruction of human life, including necrophilia and narcissism. Erich Fromm, based on his research on these destructive tendencies, analyzes the diseases and conditions they cause. The feeling of destruction is manifested in two contradictory states based on the view and behavior towards life: necrophilia and biophilia. In the inner world of a biophile, love of life takes on a fundamental meaning. The worldview of such a person is completely opposed to mechanical, for him the main content is a functional organic worldview: that is, he sees everything in life as a generally interconnected unity, and not as an unrelated mechanical unit [17;59]. The study of the necrophiliac tendency of the thinker is based on the motto “O death!” uttered by the Spanish scientist Unamuno [16;34]. Through this motto, one can penetrate the essence of the necrophilic state in a person. It follows from the psychological and moral behavior of a person that there is not much difference between biophilia and necrophilia. A person is not completely biophilic or completely necrophilic [16;36]. Most people have both tendencies, that is, biophilia and necrophilia. What is important is not the clear presence or absence of one of the two tendencies in a person, but which one is more pronounced in human relationships.

Necrophilia, as a love of death, has an ontological and socio-philosophical essence. In the psyche of such a person, one can see a conflict of two worldviews, and he himself does not know how this conflict began and exists. A necrophiliac thinks that he lives in the world of death and lives in the world of life. According to Fromm, this can be seen as a key to understanding many life situations. However, how can such a person understand the truth, through what mechanism can he understand the contradiction between these two ideas? He considers it correct to see necrophilia as a love of death; at the same time, as a desire to turn all living things into dead, as a passion for destruction; and as a love for everything mechanical. In addition, he believes that necrophilia is a passion for the violent destruction of life. It follows that the necrophiliac sees the world as a mechanical environment, and people as things. Necrophilia is formed not only in certain people, but also widely in today's world of mass depersonalization. It is an integral part of industrial culture, because “spontaneity” has become the basis of this culture. Therefore, the harm caused by technology to kill a person is many times greater than the benefits it brings to human life. Necrophilia is a result of the evolution of reason

and civilization originated, is the fruit of technical madness. According to the scientist, the necrophiliac equates technology and mechanics with God. In this area, Fromm agrees with the opinion of Western thinkers J. Ellul and L. Memford about the negative impact of current technical development on man. As a result, man begins to lose his natural roots. He plunges into the world of objects, breaks nature into pieces and found a passion for destruction in himself. In essence, necrophilia is the love of the dead, while biophilia means the love of life, the living. Although the concept of necrophilia is mainly evaluated as abject, the motto “Long live death!”, quoted by the philosopher Unamuno, can be understood as a hatred of life, not abjectness.

The necrophiliac lives in the past and completely forgets about the future. His inner world is also unnatural, and he tries to protect the essence of his feelings and memories. He becomes a person who is distant from everyone and is attached to laws and systems. The values formed in him are the exact opposite of those created by people living a normal life. When analyzing this tendency, it is necessary to consider its specific characteristics. “The characteristics of necrophilia include the desire to kill, perversion, violence, sadism” [16;42]. If one of the above is manifested in more forms in one person, another characteristic will be manifested more in another person.

The opposite of necrophilia is biophilia, which means love of life. This tendency manifests itself in a person's biological state, emotions, thinking and social relationships. We can see the desire to love life in all living things around us. The attempt to survive, the fight against death are the most primitive manifestations of biophilia. Biophilia manifests itself more through the desire for creativity. “Every person who loves life looks with interest at the development and progress of everything throughout his life. While preserving what he has acquired, he tries to add and create new ones. He wants to relate to a person not with a destructive attitude, as if he were looking at an inanimate object, but with a rational attitude of love” [16;45]. Therefore, it is necessary to encourage the desire to live and live with the hope of love.

Biophilia ethics also has its own positive and negative aspects. According to it, everything that serves life is good, and everything that serves death is bad. Goodness is respect for life, development, and open acceptance of novelty. Everything that suffocates, limits, or kills life is evil. A person who loves life does not hate himself, does not live in a state of regret and guilt. The most effective way to strengthen the desire to live in children is to surround them with people who love life. “As a baby grows up, warm and sincere relationships with others, a sense of freedom, freedom from threats, a guide who teaches the art of living, and a truly interesting way of life are factors that strengthen the love of life” [16;50]. Factors that are the opposite of the above are the basis for the development of necrophilia.

Conclusions

Erich Fromm's analysis of the tendencies of biophilia and necrophilia shows that there are similarities and differences with Freud's life and death instincts. The thinker touches on the social conditions that have shaped necrophilia and raises the question of why humanity has come to the brink of nuclear war. In his opinion, there have been many wars in history, but reasons such as defense against aggression, economic deprivation, the desire for freedom, the desire for glory, the hope of a prosperous life cannot be sufficient for a nuclear war. A nuclear war threatens the extinction of humanity in a matter of minutes.

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