SCTCMG 2019

International Scientific Conference «Social and Cultural Transformations in the Context of Modern Globalism»

TRANSFORMATION OF LIMITS OF FREEDOM: FROM PHILOSOPHICAL TO SOCIOPOLITICAL KNOWLEDGE

Irina Lavrukhina (a)*, Irina Glushko (b)
*Corresponding author

(a) Azov-Black Sea Engineering Institute of the Don State Agrarian University in Zernograd,
21, Lenin st., Zernograd, 347740, Rostov region, Russia, Lavruchina_i@inbox.ru, 89081722202
(b) Azov-Black Sea Engineering Institute of the Don State Agrarian University in Zernograd,
21, Lenin st., Zernograd, 347740, Rostov region, Russia , glu-ir@mail.ru, 89514979845

Abstract

The article analyzes the change in the understanding of the essence and limits of freedom, which is determined by specificity of the term "freedom" in philosophical and socio-political knowledge. In the ontological-transcendental approach, freedom is represented as an ontological reality; transcendental to other types of being, it turns into the Absolute. Freedom in the sphere of social relations is concretized in the concept of "social freedom". In sociological models, it is investigated as a mental attitude that determines people's behavior and personality type; "societal" levels of freedom, "freedom of action" and "freedom of choice" are explored. In the objectivist direction (E. Durkheim) the freedom of the individual is set "from above" by the societal level. Subjectivist sociology (M. Weber) considers the impact of individual freedom on societal. In political science, there is a concept of "regulated freedom". The implementation of the rights and freedoms of citizens, the degree of permission of individual freedom are carried out by political and state authorities and the existing political regime. "Regulated freedom" of the individual is achieved by non-violent methods of suggestion, persuasion, cooperation, authority, designed to harmonize the interests of the individual and the state and make the "limits of freedom" acceptable to the individual. Thus, from the philosophical to the socio-political knowledge, the narrowing of limits of freedom can be clearly observed: Freedom as the Absolute - social freedom as a mental attitude and a socially programmed opportunity to choose action options - regulated freedom, a non-violently accepted pattern of behavior.

© 2019 Published by Future Academy www.FutureAcademy.org.UK

Keywords: Freedom, limits, levels, transcendence, power, state.

1. Introduction

In modern socio-humanitarian knowledge, the category of freedom is one of the most actualized and dynamic. For the man himself, freedom has many specific incarnations. However, it is important to solve some general questions: where does freedom come from, how far is it limited by external conditions, is it the essential state of a person?

The philosophical theme of freedom includes the problems of free will, creativity, the limits of human freedom, the limits of permissibility, duty and responsibility. Over time, interpretations of freedom were filled with new socio-political content related to the interests and goals of a person and dependent on practical tasks. In this sense, it is advisable to consider freedom as an integrative category of social and humanitarian knowledge.

2. Problem Statement

The semantic diversity in interpretations of the concept of freedom was also determined by the presence of various historical-philosophical and socio-political approaches to its understanding. We are interested in the definition of the essence and, accordingly, the limits of freedom, which is dictated by the specifics of a particular branch of humanitarian knowledge.

3. Research Questions

Philosophical knowledge clearly shows a tendency to view freedom as a transcendence (Lavrukhina, 2009). Accordingly, it is possible to distinguish ontological and procedural transcendental approaches. The ontological-transcendental approach (Plotinus, 1992; Kierkegaard, 1993; Berdyaev, 1969) believes freedom as a kind of ontological reality, transcendental to other types of being. The procedural approach (Sartre, 2002; Camus, 1990) considers freedom as a characteristic of a particular state of human essence, as a process of transcending into this essence.

In the socio-political context, the concept of freedom appears in the Renaissance, when a person was proclaimed the highest social value, and personal freedom was understood as the inalienable right of an individual to express his spiritual essence.

In theoretical sociology, there is still no consensus about whether the phenomenon of freedom can be a subject of study, since freedom is a self-causal essence. Empirically, including using sociological models, it is allowed to study "societal" levels of freedom, such as "freedom of action" or "freedom of choice".

In political science, the problem of freedom is considered to be inextricably linked with political power and involves the analysis of the following relationships: freedom - civil society, freedom - the rule of law, freedom - the political regime and its ideology. This is how the concept of "regulated freedom" appears.

4. Purpose of the Study

The article aims to consider transformations in the understanding of the essence of freedom and to analyze the tendencies of narrowing the limits of freedom, which are determined by the specifics of various social and humanitarian disciplines.

5. Research Methods

The methodological basis of the study consists of the concepts of "freedom", "freedom of choice", "transcendence", "mental attitudes", "power", as well as methods of historical-logical and essential reconstruction of models of freedom in historical-philosophical and socio-political aspects.

6. Findings

The definition of freedom as transcendence was first suggested by Plotinus when trying to grasp the essence of the One as the beginning of the world. Plotinus' (1992) One acts according to its nature only, its activity is determined by its essence, it from itself overflows and pours into the Intellect. Then the One appears as the first activity and absolute creativity, the One is pure freedom, because in it will and duty, freedom and necessity absolutely coincide. Kierkegaard (1993) and Berdyaev (1969) transfer consideration of freedom to the internal plan of human activity. According to Kierkegaard (1993), the emergence of freedom is preceded by a state of fear from nothing, which causes a person to transgress the boundary between ignorance and knowledge, between innocence and guilt, between nature and freedom. Freedom is "unleashed," realized in the acts of man's own choice, in the acts of creation of that which was not there before. The act of choice begins to acquire cosmic significance, since man in it completes an important part of the intelligible world, he creates eternity with God.

The first act of liberty also becomes the greatest crime, fraught with the possibility of all other crimes; the free man becomes absolutely metaphysically guilty. "A man, according to Kierkegaard, ... cannot establish the limits of his guilt and must answer (of course, not before an external court, but before a court of God) for all the evils of the world" (Gaidenko, 1997, p. 44).

Berdyaev (1969) characterizes freedom as the baseless basis of being, as the unconditional primary power to create, create something out of nothing, the potential possibility of novelty as such.

> *Somewhere, in incommensurably greater depth, there is Ungrund, groundlessness, to which ... not only the categories of good and evil are inapplicable, but the categories of being and non-being ... are not applicable ... this process is already a secondary process compared to this initial baseless, nothing non-expressible abyss, absolute, irrational, not comparable with any of our categories.* (Berdyaev, 1969, p. 73)

Transcendental philosophy regards freedom as a state of the transcendental subject. Kant's transcendental freedom is the orientation of the transcendental subject to the moral law. It makes practical freedom possible, which is expressed in the independence of will from sensual motives. The Kantian subject

of freedom turns out to be two-layered: as an intelligible being, man is the subject of a categorical imperative, as an empirical individual — oriented towards his own benefit.

The way out of this paradox is to place the bases of freedom within the practical subject itself, which Fichte did. Freedom has found its own nature. "Fichte's freedom is such an important characteristic of a human being that it should not be derived from something else but should be considered as the element that is identical to the essence of man" (Gaidenko, 1997, p. 29). Fichte's freedom arises in the act of self-consciousness as a special quality of a person's internal state. But the contradictory nature of the Subject itself paradoxically turns it over: in the first free act of "I" creates "Not-I", i.e. the world of objectivity, necessity and non-freedom.

Existentialism connected freedom with individual-final forms of human existence. Camus (1990) view freedom as an act and result of transcending. Freedom began to define the element of human existence. However, having ceased to be a kind of abstract universal principle, the freedom of existentialists is still not found in the empirical being of man, but is manifested in a special non-objectively being, his existence. The way of being freedom itself is anxiety, which constantly obliges the "I" to redo itself. Freedom makes a person alone. "I appear alone and in alarm before the sole and primary project that constitutes my being ... I must realize the meaning of the world and my essence; I make decisions alone" (Sartre, 2002, p 11). Freedom, represented by Sartre, turns into a painful necessity, rock; man condemned to freedom.

In such a world, a person experiences his being as absurd (Camus, 1990), he also sets up an understanding of human freedom: absurd freedom is interpreted as a revolt against everything, even against something that a human does not have power over. The problem of "freedom in general" for Camus does not exist. "I cannot understand what freedom given to me from above could be... The only freedom that is accessible to my knowledge is freedom of intellect and action. So, if the absurdity destroys the chances of eternal freedom, then it gives me freedom of action and even increases it" (Camus, 1990, p. 27).

When a person's freedom closes on him and becomes the basis of human values, then it becomes the freedom of loneliness, freedom undesirable, since he places the responsibility for the existence of man only on himself. Most prefer to "run away from freedom", and thus the culture forms the mechanisms of "freedom from freedom" (Fromm, 2006).

So, the problem of freedom becomes sociological.

The "relationship" of theoretical sociology with the phenomenon of freedom has not yet been clarified. There is no consensus even about whether freedom can be the subject of scientific knowledge. Scientific knowledge is concerned with the investigation of causes, but self-causal objects or events lie beyond the reach of scientific knowledge. And freedom has access to it. Moreover, the "sociological model ... explores not the phenomenon of freedom, but the phenomenon of Non-Freedom, the reality of which is obvious and does not need the postulates ... And it is in this sense that the problem of freedom in sociology is solved not in terms of "yes" or "no", but in terms of "more-less", "better-worse", in terms of changing the "degree of non-freedom" (Shabanova, 2000, para. 10). An alternative position seems to be when one's own freedom is perceived by a person as a very specific category of cause to be considered. But then "... those researchers who want to introduce freedom into their sociological model simply postulate its reality ..." (Berger, 1996, p. 90).

And, nevertheless, the sociological understanding of freedom, in our opinion, firstly, finds its expression in the interpretation of freedom as one of the mental programs that determine the type of human behavior and the type of personality. These programs (reflexive and non-reflective) construct the most appropriate behavioral models and normative personality types in a given society. Thus, in Soviet society there existed a hybrid conservative-liberal model of a modal personality (Lubsky, 2015). This kind of person assumed the dichotomous model of "freedom-lack of freedom". And the dominant mental program of the "political person" of the Soviet times was: the desire to move the solution of all life problems into the state-political sphere; setting "to be like everyone else" and following external regulations and standards of conduct; authoritarianism, at the same time including a predisposition to subordination to "superior" and a tendency to suppress "inferior" (Glushko, 2016).

Secondly, the sociological understanding of freedom finds the basis for its interpretations in that it binds freedom to its levels — individual, group, and societal.

The problem of the relationship of levels of social reality is solved differently in different sociological traditions. The objectivist trend in sociology (Durkheim, 1990, p. 49) considers society as an objective structure. "... Society is not a simple sum of individuals, but a system formed by their association and representing sui generis reality (in its own way, lat.) Endowed with its own special properties" (Durkheim, 1990).

Then the freedom of individuals is set by the societal level "from top to bottom"; they are forced to passively adapt to the proposed societal freedom. For most of us, "the yoke of society doesn't wipe the neck too much, for in most cases we ourselves desire what society expects from us. We ourselves want to obey the rules that society dictates to us ..." (Berger, 1996, p. 82).

Subjectivist sociology represents society as the result of actions by a multitude of subjects with individual freedom of choice, and therefore the relationship between levels of freedom is viewed as two-sided: both "top-down" and the opposite effect of individual freedom on societal freedom. In this case, it is possible to take into account both "negative" freedom ("freedom from" restrictions and barriers, allowing individuals to maintain their independence) and "positive" freedom ("freedom for", allowing to some extent influence and control external circumstances) (Sztompka, 1996).

We agree with the opinion of specialists that sociological studies of the phenomenon of freedom within the framework of a subjectivist, existentialist model seem more promising (Shabanova, 2000).

The individual-social fullness of freedom in sociology is fixed in the concept of "social freedom". In this vein, there are three aspects of freedom: firstly, social freedom as a creative, initiative activity; secondly, social freedom as a "measure of freedom", which has its limits and limitations; thirdly, social freedom as a person's self-activity (Puchkov, 2001).

The multitudes of freedoms that are granted to an individual in modern post-industrial society are, in fact, a societal choice programmed by a social system. The system forms an understanding of freedom not as the right to be oneself, not as the right to make one's own individual decisions, but as "the right to the same life form as everyone" (Hoffman, 2015).

In the era of the formation of a market-entrepreneurial system, the public demand for economic and political freedom was formed. On the basis of the political philosophy of D. Locke, T. Hobbes, A. Smith, the political ideology of liberalism emerged, proclaiming citizens' rights and freedoms to be the highest

value. Liberalism posed the question of determining the permissible degree and nature of government intervention in the private life of an individual (that is, the problem of "freedom-non-freedom"), the need and possibility of regulating individual freedom. The emergence of numerous internal trends in liberalism indicates difficulties in solving these problems.

The value basis of the worldview of modern Western societies is the concept of human rights and freedoms, enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The basis of freedom, justice and universal peace proclaims the main social value, namely, the recognition of dignity and inalienable human rights. However, the Declaration is not legally binding. This, in fact, means that the embodiment of the rights and freedoms of citizens, the degree of permission of individual freedom are given at the mercy of political and state power and the existing political regime.

The means of hard social coercion and violence are excluded from the arsenal of the political power of the rule of law, and the sought-for "regulated freedom" of the individual is achieved by means of suggestion, persuasion, cooperation, interest, authority.

It is believed that the political organization of society, which guarantees the rights and freedoms of the individual, is democracy. However, the fact that in the modern world democratic regimes are widespread in a relatively small number of states speaks of the difficulties of implementing democracy in practice.

The modern model of "polyarchic democracy" proposes building a system of political governance based on open competition between various political groups for power. In fact, this means that the limits and the measure of freedom in society are determined by the distribution of power between different centers of influence (state, trade unions, business, etc.) in order to effectively control the political elite.

What remains? It remains Freedom as the Absolute, developed by philosophical means, and in many respects unrealizable in social and political practice. As he wrote in the XIX century, G.T. Bockle, "... people can never be free unless they are brought up for freedom. And this is not an upbringing that can be acquired in schools or borrowed from books, but one that is the result of self-discipline, self-esteem and self-government" (as cited in Bolshakov, 2013, para. 7).

7. Conclusion

Thus, within the framework of the philosophical ontological-transcendental approach, freedom is the transcendental basis of any being. Such freedom is impossible to understand, you need to be in it. Freedom owns man, not vice versa. Human freedom, defining nothing, is transformed into Luciferian freedom, identical to pure arbitrariness. In the procedural-transcendental approach, freedom is again deprived of its foundations and appears as the primacy that determines the element of human existence. It characterizes the inner plan of human activity and the inner possibilities that exist in the process of self-realization as "the self". A person is simply initially free, and freedom is an opportunity (sometimes a necessity, like that of Sartre) to choose himself. Such freedom is no longer desirable, since it leaves man alone with the world.

The sociological approach interprets freedom as a mental program that determines people's behavior and personality type, and thereby sets the limits of freedom. Consideration of multi-level freedom (individual, group and societal) reveals the mechanisms of "imposing freedoms".

Understanding the essence of political power, which manifests itself in relations of domination and subordination between the subject and the object of power, which, in principle, means a certain "lack of freedom", led to the formation of the concept of "regulated freedom" in political science. It does not depend directly on the individual and is achieved by external political means: persuasion, suggestion, cooperation, authority. The latter are designed to harmonize the interests of the individual and the state and make the "limits of freedom" acceptable to the individual.

The narrowing of the limits of freedom seems to be proven: Freedom as the Absolute - social freedom as a mental installation and the opportunity to choose action options programmed by the social system - regulated freedom as a pattern of behavior accepted by a person non-violently.

References

Berdyaev, N. (1969). *The meaning of the story. The experience of the philosophy of human destiny*. Paris: YMGA-PRESS.

Berger, P. L. (1996). *Invitation to Sociology: A Humanistic Perspective*. Moscow: Aspect Press.

Bolshakov, V. V. (2013). *Putin forever. Who needs it and what will it lead to?* Retrieved from: https: ///www.litmir.me/br/? B = 229244

Camus, A. (1990). *Rebellious man. Philosophy. Politics*. Moscow: Politizdat.

Durkheim, E. (1990). *On the division of social labor. Method of sociology*. Moscow: Science.

Fromm, E. (2006). *Escape from freedom. Man for himself*. Moscow, ACT: ACT MOSCOW.

Gaidenko, P. P. (1997). *Breakthrough to transcendental: New ontology of the twentieth century*. Moscow: Republic.

Glushko, I. V. (2016). *Trust and mistrust as social practices of Russian society: a methodology of transdisciplinary research and social reality* (Doctoral Dissertation). Rostov-on-Don.

Hoffman, M. (2015). Freedom of the individual or the freedom of the individual. *Question mark, 1*, 69–76.

Kierkegaard, S. (1993). *Fear and awe.* Moscow: Republic.

Lavrukhina, I. M. (2009). *The idea of transcendental (conceptual versions in culture)*(Doctoral Dissertation). Rostov-on-Don.

Lubsky, R. A. (2015). *Russian statehood as a social reality: a multidimensional research methodology, types, development specifics* (Doctoral Dissertation). Rostov-on-Don.

Plotinus (1992). About good or one. *Logos, 3*, 213–227.

Puchkov, O. A. (2001). *Legal anthropology and the development of the science of state and law (theoretical foundations): author* (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from: https://www.twirpx.com/file/694405/ Author's abstracts

Sartre, J. P. (2002). *Being and Nothing.* Moscow: TERRA-Book Club; Republic.

Shabanova, M. (2000). *Sociology of freedom: a transforming society*. Retrieved from: http://polbu.ru/shabanova_freedom/

Sztompka, P. (1996). *Sociology of social change*. Moscow: Aspect Press.