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DECLINE IN THE TRUTH AND KNOWLEDGE CONTENT OF MODERN CULTURE

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Abstract

The authors of the article are concerned about absurd situations in world politics, when officials with dubious education appear at the head of civilised countries, and the policy itself is increasingly deprived not only of scientific validity, but also of common sense. To substantiate it, a working hypothesis is put forward about a sinusoidal character of the dominance of opposite tendencies of the development of a range of the human spirit. The authors achieve a desired goal put in the title of the paper: to justify a loss of a truth and knowledge content of culture as its modern tendency. Relying on the works of famous philosophers and psychologists, on a theoretical substantiation of their own observations, using statistical data, encyclopaedically known facts of the era of information society, conclusions are drawn: cognition and culture contain radical changes, resulting in a single trend of irrationalisation of the modern stage of cultural evolution.

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1. Introduction

In recent years, mankind is increasingly fixated, and many people complain to the intelligentsia, reproaching it for a decline in the prestige of education and science, its former efficiency in revealing regularities of reality. The matter has reached absurd situations in world politics, when officials (ministers, advisers) with dubious education appear at the head of seemingly civilized countries, and the policy itself is increasingly deprived not only of scientific validity, but also of common sense. In this article, the authors will try to partially explain this trend.

2. Problem Statement

The task of the article is to substantiate a sinusoidality of the formulated process and to justify a descending stage in the modern culture of the last century. Of course, our hypothesis is based on the spiritual situation of European life, which is, although quite long in time, limited in geography. An extrapolation of an empirical basis of this hypothesis requires study and additional research into the history of the human spirit. But if we take into account only European culture and science and go only by it, then we can assume that this tendency is universal and eternal for the human spirit (Giza, 2024; Mambetova et al., 2024; Mascareno & Chavez, 2024).

3. Research Questions

There are two main questions in the article. The first question is a trend of a downward stage of culture determined by peculiarities of modern science and modern cognition in general. The second is other circumstances in modern culture that support the fact of a gradual loss of the truth and knowledge content of culture (Collet-Sabé, 2023; Manakbayeva, 2023; Sheveleva, 2024). By combining answers to both questions, we are going to achieve a desired goal stated in the title of the paper: to substantiate a loss of the truth and knowledge content of culture as its modern tendency.

4. Purpose of the Study

It is necessary to suppose that a range of human spirit is getting wider and wider as its various abilities become stronger and wider. But this process is not graphically a parabola, when growth and development occur in both directions simultaneously. But it is rather an uneven process, when opposite tendencies dominate in different epochs. This process appears to us in a form of a sinusoid, when, in the ancient world we observe rationalisation of the spirit and in the Middle Ages there is a reverse process – its irrationalisation. However, an epoch of a decline in the activity of reasoning and a dominance of religion and mysticism in spiritual life was replaced by the flowering of the culture of the New Age and the Enlightenment, when science determines a social progress of mankind.

5. Research Methods

The authors resort not only to a theoretical substantiation of their own observations, but also refer to classical works of thinkers of New and Modern times. The work uses statistical data and encyclopaedically known facts of the information society era. As philosophy and science testify, irrationalisation has been gaining a new breath since the end of the 19th century. A system of modern culture, as it was emphasised by Z. Freud, contains a number of anti-cultural components. Due to them,

An infinite number of cultural people, who would recoil from a fact of murder, do not refuse to satisfy their greed, aggressiveness, their sexual desires, do not miss a chance to harm others by lying, deceit, slander, if only it passes for them with impunity. (Freud, 1930, p. 12)

Cognitive culture has stopped massively targeting people to search for truth and a realisation of justice; it agrees to accept a culture of deceit and lies. It resigned itself to the presence of areas of world understanding under the control of intuition, feeling, instinct, revelation, and faith; moreover, it stimulates them. The world increasingly appeared as chaos, inaccessible to reason. The spiritual life of human existence became dominated by self-destructive will.

Moreover, as G. Marcuse's famous book "One-Dimensional Man" shows, the power of cognition is aimed not at forming an adequate view of the world, but at zombifying society and manipulating the individual. Modern society has become a neo-totalitarian system where the media hypnotises individual consciousness with false needs. Marcuse noted that as the industrial civilisation developed, a main type of a person of the "sick" industrial society became a "one-dimensional man" who is an unfree, intimidated consumer, functioning according to externally imposed standards of thinking and behaviour. "One-dimensional man", formed by scientific and technological progress, loses a critical attitude to society and thus consciously and unconsciously restrains and prevents necessary social changes going beyond the existing social order of life. A natural basis of this life is solidarity, which is intended to ensure a transition from the prevailing "anonymous rationality" to principles of joy and pleasure. Marcuse's judgements in the context of our article are interesting for his negative attitude to rationalist human cognitive culture. Together with other prominent philosophers of the twentieth century, he notes a turn from a tendency of increasing rationalism in the world spirit, which reached its peak in the twentieth century, to its unconscious beginning, to its historical folly, to the loss of interest in true cognition.

However, there were not only socio-political and economic factors that led to a turn towards irrationalisation of culture. Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Jaspers and other prominent philosophers of the epoch gave a view of the nature of thinking that is drastically different from a traditionally rationalistic one. Kierkegaard, "developing the irrationalist doctrine, does not leave a sphere of thinking, but it is in it ... that he tries to justify irrationalism", which "can be called intellectual" (Mudraghey, 1985, p. 62). Confirming Kierkegaard's idea, we note that in the twentieth century, a trend of irrationalism, which tries to replace a reason with instincts in favour of such phenomena as life, will, unconsciousness, feeling, experience, faith, intuition... has also become widespread. An extreme manifestation of this tendency is represented by the "existential psychoanalysis" widespread in the West at that time, which, drawing from

the ideas of Freud, Sartre, Heidegger, believed that "an ability to deceive oneself lies at the heart of adaptation and socialisation. Socially shared hallucinations are what is called reality. Madness permeates even the most intimate spheres of people's lives" (Rutkevich, 2023, p. 35).

At the end of the XIX and in the XX century, there was a qualitative turn in science: its non-classical stage appears and signs of post non-classical knowledge are already visible. As social cognition acquires methodological independence from classical natural science and develops its specific epistemological apparatus, both spheres of science begin to converge. At the same time, a vector of influence changes: a reverse impact of peculiarities of sociohumanitarian on natural science cognition can be traced. Revolutionary changes in a methodology of epistemology, its synergetisation and sociologisation, reliance on ethics, aesthetics, culturology, etc. qualitatively change the modern cognitive culture, its subjectivisation and mass. But the most important consequence of the turn of science towards non-classics and post non-classics is its contribution to irrationalisation of culture.

Irrationalisation of modern cognitive culture with all these actual and potential tendencies of spiritual life and culture of the then already globalising society occurs on the part of the strictest science once philosophically and methodologically grounded (M. I. Bilalov et al., 2020). The scientific-methodological part of the cognitive culture, which usually sets a tone for the whole content of the latter. And at the same time, it acts as a model for the whole culture, gradually appears qualitatively different in terms of a rationalistic rigour and thought level of the non-classical system. And at the same time, paradoxically, in perspective, this part allows a cognitive subject in the process of research to mobilise all the intensions of the human spirit. Modern scientific and philosophical methodology allows constructing results of science-making as a compilation of intuitively obvious, directly observed and highly abstract intersubjective cognitive images. Having in mind an unlimited application of the subject's cognitive abilities in science, one sometimes mentions about different subjective levels of cognitive culture (M. Bilalov, 2023).

The growing importance of computer technology also contributes to irrationalisation of a methodological apparatus of science. A formation of technocratic thinking destroys a harmony between the rational and the sensual to the detriment of the rational. An increasing role of intellectual technologies on the basis of the computer processing of information is associated with a growing need not only for theoretical knowledge, but because of its lack for everyday knowledge, and even gnoseologically questionable knowledge. "The central dimension of the new form of knowledge production is a connection of non-scientific knowledge" (Gorokhov, 2007, p. 31).

It has become known that already at the very initial stages of cognition, including scientific cognition, "in the origins of heuristics, so necessary for the discovery of the new, there is less rational than extra-rational, irrational and irrational. Rationalism has never found an adequate explanation for the act of creativity" (Leshkevich, 2001, p. 22). "Unconscious" of science, manifested in the subjectivity and partiality of scientists, their emotional attitude to the studied world and to each other is a source of scientific creativity, a basis of vitality and productivity of science (Yurevich, 2005). In this regard, some Russian philosophers use a term "flexible" rationality to characterise logical cognition in combination with pre-logical and anthropological prerequisites; in this case, rationality is not identified "with the laws

and rules of logic", but unfolds a mental essence of an active cognitive subject in its inseparability of the irrational and the rational (Masalova, 2009).

Today, philosophy of science and epistemology identifies a postmodern approach of returning to an experience of various epistemological teachings in assessing cognition, which is fruitful for a number of reasons. By rejecting universal paradigms, "intellectual despotism", fundamentalism, etc., postmodernism promotes a synthesis of logical-methodological practices and practices of an existential-anthropological tradition in epistemology. In this case, as L. A. Mikeskina believes, a principle of trust in a subject, understood as a "holistic person cognising", is realised. "A special problem of unconscious and unconscious components of cognitive activity and personal tacit knowledge of a subject, a nature and ways of introducing which into a cognitive process require consideration and hermeneutic experience" (Mikeskina, 2002, p. 15). A scientific-cognitive situation, repeatedly described by L. Mikeskina, is understood by the authors of this article as a liberation from rationalism and scientism of the past centuries. It has become an obsessive tendency in the scientific community. Philosophers, philosophers of science, gnoseologists and epistemologists, in their overwhelming number recognise a dominance of irrationalisation in scientific and ordinary creativity with its inevitable consequences of the loss of the true content of science.

We will come back to this consequence; now let us look at this situation from another position. How is this consequence reinforced in a general cultural trend of the epoch? This situation in science and cognition later coincided with postmodern culture; its achievements are characterised by temporality, and meanings become superficial. The neglect of theoretical creativity, the blurring of a boundary among philosophy, literature, and science are declared, which undermines foundations of culture. As is known, Freud had earlier defined complex essential and functional contradictions of human culture as its oppression. He believed that a significant part of people, for whom oppression of culture is unbearable, try to get rid of it in various ways, including by detaching from reality, from its adequate reflection in their own consciousness, and withdrawing into an illusory cognitive culture. For them, truth not only lacks piety, but also value.

Another explanation of irrationalisation of culture is found in Erich Fromm, who sought to understand and explain why, at a certain point in time, psychic mechanisms are activated that ensure people's escape and escape from freedom. He seeks an answer in the ways of irrationalisation of cognitive culture. Freedom acquired by man has brought him independence and rationality of existence, but at the same time it has isolated him and awakened in him a sense of loneliness, powerlessness and anxiety, turning into a great burden. He seeks a solution in a rejection of rationality. People avoid the truth. Being positive in history, a process of individualisation of man and his growing freedom should be aimed at "the active participation of the individual in determining his own destiny and the life of society" (Fromm, 1990, p. 73), which modern rationalism is unable to help. It is clear that it is not so much about changing the essence of man as about rethinking the essence of man, his place in culture, his cognitive capabilities, the nature of cognition, the place of truth, opinion, knowledge in it.

It is appropriate to speak about irrationalisation of human activity in connection with the following. As is known, a difference in types of thinking is also connected with a functional asymmetry of the brain. The so-called left-hemispheric thinking is characterised by dissected, sequential, logical

thinking, which orders, structures, classifies, and identifies information. Right-hemispheric thinking operates with holistic images, a non-verbal representation of information. From the point of view of modern standards and stereotypes of cognitive culture, right-hemispheric thinking is usually characterised as illogical and irrational. As is known, an overwhelming majority of non-European peoples possess this thinking. Consequently, a tendency of irrationalisation of human activity on a global scale can be explained by a rapid predominant growth of the "right-hemispheric" population of the planet and its active role in human society. Let us add to this an increasingly active involvement of a female half of humanity with its feminine stereotype of thinking in history-making, science and education, in everything related to cognitive culture.

6. Findings

Our reasoning, reflections related to a justification of a reduction in the truth and knowledge content of culture as its modern tendency have reached the goal proceeding from two perspectives. Both cognition and culture contain radical changes, resulting in a single trend of irrationalisation of the modern stage of evolution of integral culture. It seems to us that the article has also reached an unplanned conclusion: the understanding of an essence of man by prominent philosophers of the twentieth century as irrational, oriented to the satisfaction of psychological needs. At the turn of centuries and millennia, it is strengthened by irrationalisation of human thinking and behaviour as a widespread trend of globalisation.

7. Conclusion

Paradoxical, sometimes indecent examples of incompetence in the political elite of some European countries, as well as of the United States and Canada, a decline in the intellectual level of the so-called socio-political intelligentsia have their objective reasons in the global trend of irrationalisation of culture. The same reason became relevant for an unfavourable state of affairs in Russian education, science, unreasonable and untenable reforms in the form of a large-scale implementation of a test system, transition to the Bologna system in secondary and higher education.

Irrationalisation of cognitive culture subjects the value of truth to new tests, the excess of which in the information society has levelled it to an ordinary result of cognition. But this temporal wave is eternally opposed to a vector of an absolute significance of truth for man.

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