

**COMPREHENSION OF THE FORMATION
OF THE WORLD IN DIFFERENT
PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACHES**

Collective monograph

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Reviewers:

*Prof. nadzw., dr hab. **Stanisław Kunikowski**, Rektor of Cuiavian University in Wloclawek (Republic of Poland);*

*Prof. dr hab. **Joanna Marszałek-Kawa**, Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu / Nicolaus Copernicus University (Republic of Poland).*

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FROM PRACTICAL REASON TO PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY: IMPLICATION OF THE PRESENCE OF CIVIL STATUS

Karas A. F.

INTRODUCTION

At the turn of the millennium, under the influence of the information revolution, there was a tendency towards integration based on scientific and technological innovations and the formation of a civic ground in the organization of socio-political life. When I refer to the “civil ground”, I mean the legal and social of the citizenship status, generally accepted in the modern world, with few exceptions. However, differences in human development rates and forms of social organization across cultures and states remain striking. An even more contradictory picture can be seen in the aspect of historical retrospective.

The tragic experience of the formation of Soviet socialism, communist and national-socialist totalitarianisms, despotic-theocratic and terrorist regimes leaves no doubt that they arose under the influence of the ideological and mental-symbolic features of the socio-cultural environment. The claim of a theoretical and theological metaphysical construction is the project “Russian World”, whose imperial doctrinal and military attacks have cruelly and tragically fallen on Ukrainian society, posing a threat to world peace. At the same time, there is experience of socio-civilizational development of the western type. This development is closely in line with the emergence of a civil society whose ideas relate to the theoretical and practical reason of European philosophy.

We are dealing with a civilizational reality, the social imagination of which and its police (city-state) prototype originated in ancient Antiquity; they were revived in modern-day philosophy and transformed into socio-political reality in the twentieth century, overcoming imperial, oppressive, and authoritarian regimes in the Western world. Considering the regulatory role of civil society, which it has already played in political history, one wonders about its function of evolutionary self-control in the unrestricted growth of power and aggression.

The relevance of issues of war and peace, hostility and understanding becomes even more pronounced in the light of the dynamic development of neuroscience, whose representatives reject the reality of “free will” and even undermine the phenomenon of freedom in general and tend to interpret almost all social events through biological and chemical factors. Even if “we are our brains”¹, not everything in our lives is conditioned by the action of genetics, chemistry and hormones. Biological reductionism, most prevalent in the US public environment due to its seeming simplicity of explaining complex things, is also lost firm way in interpreting the origins of the striking difference between cultures and the zigzags of historical development. However, we cannot ignore the latest research into the evolutionary and biological motives of human behavior offered from the height of modern “pure reason.” Probably the most important of these are the overcoming of the Cartesian dualistic paradigm of contrasting of “mind and emotional body”, on the one hand, and the convincing establishment of bridges between the mind of man and animal, on the other. In the deep and fascinating book by D. Swaab, it is grounded that “the moral consciousness of man developed from the social instincts necessary for the survival of the group” and the core of moral behavior “has a long evolutionary history”².

The problem, however, is that even if compassion, trust, and mutual assistance are evolutionary in nature and inherent in all people and cultures, they manifest themselves very differently within certain socio-cultural groups. In relation to others, strangers, our compassionate people can be absorbed by the emotions of hostility, enmity and cruelty that arise not only because of feelings of fear of the unknown. Emotional reactions can have a hormonal origin that is fixed by habits and even entrenched genetically as, for example, R. Sapolsky believes: there is a person’s tendency to receive emotional satisfaction through the domination and humiliation of another, but within the group it can be under taboo.

¹ Свааб Дік. Ми – це наш мозок. Харків, 2017. 496 с. (Swaab Dick. Wir sind unser Gehirn: Wie wir denken, leiden, und lieben / Dick Swaab. München: Droemer Verlag, 2011. 512 s.)

² Ibid., p. 300-301. The notion of moral consciousness here is adequate to the Kantian notion of ‘practical reason.’

The purpose of this text is: (a) to trace the key points characterizing the conceptual peculiarities in the interpretation of the nature of reason in Modern European philosophy in relation to its practical impact on the unfolding of the civilization process; b) to highlight the peculiarities of the interaction of the citizenship idea and practical reason in the aspect of the formation of appropriate discursive-ethical and legal actuality, which becomes immanent for civil society and the civilization process that is congruent with it.

The guiding thesis I will follow is that the mind changes (evolves) with changes in culture and social reality; its practical impact on social arrangement occurs through communicative and discursive mediations of scientific and fictional narratives and semiotic contexts (matrices) that condition the construction of a certain emotional granularity. Unfortunately, it has not always been suitable for peaceful international cooperation. Semiotic mediation manifests itself on at least two levels: (a) verbal-theoretical and discursive-narrative, and (b) at a representative sign-symbolic (non-verbal) level through artistic creation. The first concerns the generation of ideas and meanings in the context of abstract thinking (“pure reason”), the second – the fertilization of their senses and emotional-sensory understanding and perception. This gives ground, to reconstruct I. Kant’s ideas on the distinction between theoretical and practical reasons in terms of the possibilities of their convergence and interdependence in the coordinates of two interrelated processes: the formation of communicative reality of (international) civil status and the formation of practical philosophy like the ethical guidance.

1. Theoretical mind and contextuality of practical reason

Do we have enough reason to believe that the modern socio-political and civilizational systems, as a dynamic historical process, are marked by the influence of different minds and related cultures? The above considerations prompted I. Kant to distinguish the theoretical mind from the practical reason regarding their unequal impact on socio-cultural reality.

The transformation of socio-political reality in the New Age has manifested itself in an axiological sense: a) the formation of ideas of uniqueness of a person, vocation, recognition of dignity and right for individual freedom; b) defining the regulatory function of “pure reason” through the power of knowledge, which is multiplied thanks to the

development of natural science; c) substantiation of the essence of the practical reason, which is carried out in the commonality and ethics of the open public sphere and the egalitarian sociality of civil society. When feudal relations of subjection still prevailed, the civil condition emerges as an intention of practical reason and concerns such a desirable and proper future in which one will be comforted by individual freedom and creative expression. It is a vision of sociality, the leading values of which are the ethical guidelines for justice, equality, freedom, solidarity, trust, prosperity and a peaceful and happy life.

Ever since antiquity in the history of philosophy, we have observed a certain sequence of thoughts that among the many voices that is heard around, we discover the voice of the very mind that speaks to humanity by saying: “it is best to live in peace” (T. Hobbs). And with the passage of time, this voice will be increasingly convincing. The phenomenology of civil society formation refers to the reality that emerged, developed and reached maturity under the influence of a certain type of mental (conscious and emotional) human activity and the corresponding discursive and ethical practice of social cooperation and solidarity. Its key ideas, or generalized characters, are the recognition of individual freedom, the rule of law, and reverence for life (A. Schweitzer). In fact, all major philosophical theories of modern times justify the need for civil society as a condition of liberation from feudal subordination, political despotism and state paternalism for the exercise of individual (private) freedom through forms of self-government and representative democracy.

Although the idea of civil condition and status originated in the Ancient Greece and received rational-theoretical substantiation in the writings of Aristotle, its discursive-ethical and rational-practical embodiment relates to the modernization of traditional relations and the development of the European civilization process. Thus, we establish the inevitable link between the social and political arrangement of human life and the corresponding types of theoretical mind and practical reason and the formation of modern discursive and ethical practices in which social arrangement at least gains legitimacy or, conversely, loses it under the influence of other ideas and other types discursive-symbolic schemes of the mind.

If science, or knowledge of nature, plays an applied role in human life, equipping us with knowledge of the environment and the nature of

man, then the purpose of “transcendental” application of “pure reason”, we can agree with I. Kant’s thought, are the search for the meaning of human life (from “what can I know?” to “what can I hope for?”). According to Kant, this is the task of the so-called a “pure mind” which is engulfed by speculation around the ideas of freedom, immortality, and God. However, abstract ideas acquire their substantive content in the realm of practical reason. The mind of man, not the structure of the world or reality, becomes for I. Kant a fulcrum in the search for the answer to the question “what is man?”. “32. The mind is created not to isolate oneself, but to place itself in the community. It also prevents all selfish principles of judgment...”³, emphasized I. Kant. The justification of the world and social order should be sought in the person himself. The mistakes that accompany a person relate to their intellectual resources.

According to I. Kant, everything that is done under the influence of feelings, empiricism and causality cannot relate to freedom and free action, free will or free choice. Free practical action (free from external circumstances), is conditioned by reason and emerges as a phenomenon of “free will”. Kantian “arbitrium liberum” is free from direct empirical determinism and direct gross sensibility or affection. However, it is not free from the mind, which, in its transcendental pursuit of freedom and immortality, ascribes to the will relevant rules and norms, under the influence of which the mind becomes practical, has a moral character, and is under the weight of a self-imposed categorical imperative, or obligation. The key feature of the practical mind, in contrast to the “pure”, is its willpower to the future as it ought. The basic law of “pure practical reason” concerns the deliberate ability to do good. “Act so that the maxim of thy will can always at the same time hold good as a principal of universal legislation”⁴.

I. Kant describes the spirit of the Enlightenment as “the ability of man to use his own mind” for the sake of personal and public good. To be free from the state of “self-imposed immaturity”, “only freedom is

³ Кант І. Рефлексії до критики чистого розуму / Пер. з нім. І. Бурковського. К.: Юніверс, 2004. С. 11.

⁴ Kant Immanuel. The Critique of Pure Reason. The Critique of Practical Reason. The Critique of Judgement. William Benton, publisher. Chicago, London, Toronto. Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. USA. 1952. P. 302.

needed – freedom for the open use of one’s mind and all its components ...”⁵. According to Kant, the Enlightenment mind relates to civil society and its free and public use must be realized in the creation of a “world civil society”⁶.

Interestingly, G. W. Hegel believed that “will is a special way of thinking: thinking that transforms itself into being”, thus linking the “spirit of freedom” in its historical progress with knowledge, will, reason and practical life.⁷ Hegel sought to give the mind a supra-individual character, interpreting it as an impersonal absolute force, through which social life is filled with a steadily growing spirit, causing historical progress. A measure of progress is a measure of freeing a person and increasing his freedom by embodying an absolute mind. Mind and nature should unite in a single historical progression. According to Hegel, the main practical task of philosophy is to manage the mind that determines the direction of the historical process in harmony with freedom. A necessary stage in the realization of the Absolute Reason in the system of social organization is civil society as an intermediate stage to the rational completion of the state. Hegel emphasizes that the formation of civil society “belongs to the modern world ...” and, most importantly, its task is to eradicate poverty, and “this is mainly what drives and torments it”⁸. The highest stage of the realization of the Absolute Reason in a special folk form is the national state: “The state in itself and for itself acts as a moral whole, the exercise of freedom, and *the absolute purpose of the mind is that freedom really be* (this is my emphasis – A. K.)”⁹. “The rational purpose of human,” he writes, “is to live in the state, and if the state does not yet exist, then the requirement of reason is to create it”¹⁰.

⁵ Кант І. Відповідь на запитання: що таке Просвітництво? // Мислителі німецького романтизму / Упор. Л. Рудницький. Івано-Франківськ: Лілея-НВ, 2003. С. 159.)

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Гегель Г. В. Ф. Основи філософії права або природне право і правознавство. К.: Юніверс, 2000. С. 25.

⁸ Гегель Г.В.Ф. Основи філософії права. С. 169.

⁹ Ibid., p. 216. In this Hegel's citation is also his answer to I. Kant's assertion that practical philosophy should aim at the “ultimate goal of the human mind.”

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 81.

In general, in the philosophy of Hegel, the mind is objectified in the natural and historical and social reality but retains the Cartesian “pure” essence in relation to the emotional life of the individual. For example, S. Kierkegaard did not share Hegel’s interpretation of reason, considering it to be bizarre. He contrasts with him “the fact of his own existence and the inner essence of radical will to identity”¹¹. It is a renunciation of the reduction of human nature to consciousness or an out-of-body mind, and a return to human body and sufferings.

We will better understand I. Kant’s philosophy, and his thinking about pure and practical reasons, if we take into account that he substantiated his system in close coordination with the problems of social life in terms of its improvement. Kant consistently considered the possibilities of “eternal peace” that he envisioned in constructing a “world-civil status”, and considered “the need to create war” as “the greatest obstacle to morality”¹². He believed that the wars and cruelty they engendered were “incompatible with the human rights inherent in each of us.” Kant expressed the hope that states in which the legal system and sovereignty are a matter of citizens, not subservient, would not be interested in waging war. The mind brings a *new meaning* (the idea of peace) to the real world of human enmity, convinced that war has no moral justification and fertilizes the will with the *senses* of humanism and understanding¹³.

Kant’s reasoning, though critical of the Cartesian depiction of reality, remained influenced by the dualistic narrative of the separation of body and soul. I. Kant tried to involve in the nature of practical reason (more precisely, understanding) the ability of empirical perception of object reality, but he removed subjective desires and inclinations for pleasure and emotional components, since they would interfere with the practical mind of the individual become a part of “human legislation.” The moral will, conditioned by reason, can only be autonomous, individual. It is obvious that I. Kant proceeded from the analysis of the real social situation, which connected people with superstition,

¹¹ Габермас Ю. Постметафізичне мислення. Пер. з нім. К.: Дух і літера, 2011. С. 37.

¹² Хабермас Ю. Расколотый Запад. Москва: Весь мир. 2008. С. 106.

¹³ Кант И. О мнимом праве на человеколюбие // Кант И. Сочинения в 8-ми томах. Москва, 1994. Т. 8, С. 260-262. Кант И. К вечному миру // Там же. Т. 7. С. 8.

prejudices and prepossessions, which had a cultural and emotional character.

Thus, the practical reason in I. Kant is of moral importance, determining will by the idea of freedom. The practical importance of freedom in the situation of decay feudal social relations concerned the formation of ideas of the Enlightenment, as the desire for liberation from vanity, prejudice and affective judgments. (This seems to be relevant to our time.) This practical social task, with its orientations for individual freedom and positive knowledge, implied a radical transformation of the social sensuality and emotional environment of the culture. The perspective was to transform the actual practical mind into an axiological mind, congruent with the ideas of freedom and a positive knowledge of the world.

Kantian philosophy was intellectually contributed to the social process of civil society formation, in which he envisioned the future of human history. The concept of practical reason, as an ethically defined discourse of freedom and autonomy, became a contextual response to the challenges of Modernity and clearly outlined its new worldviews, anthropologically oriented to the ideas of creative calling and authentic self-realization of man, recognition of his uniqueness and dignity. Kantian philosophy has led to the growth of the civic mind and the civic movement that crystallizes of such communicative-emotional relationships in society, which are intellectually fertilized and conditioned by the discursive-ethical practice of freedom-authenticity, as opposed to the traditional practice of paternalism as a kind of *privilege liberties*, obtain from the power-holders.

2. Practical reason, understanding and emotional life

Despite Kant's critical attitude to Cartesians, he was still in his intellectual context of removing emotional life and cultural influence on the mind, in order to free it from vanity and to purify it from irrational affects. Kant, having made the will of freedom the nucleus of practical reason, (for this Kant was appreciated by A. Schopenhauer), spontaneously attributed to him an emotional nature and went beyond Cartesians. It is, of course, about the feelings, emotions and experiences of an educated mind and intellectually developed thinking. For example, feelings of beauty and exaltation – which Kant acknowledged in the aesthetic realm – can only be conditionally differentiated from

theoretical thinking, because in fact, all of this can occur in the same head.

We come to an important turn made by Kant in the interpretation of freedom from empirical to axiological value. Further, we need to recall the role of “creative imagination,” which has special significance in Kant. “Imagination is not a blind game of sensual images but has a productive dimension which allows it to integrate diversity and achieve a certain unity. This explains the ability of the imagination for the “unity of apperception” – one of the central concepts of Kant’s philosophy”¹⁴.

Experience in designing political despots of the past and totalitarian regimes in the twentieth century forces to explore more thoroughly the interaction between mind, culture and social reality. Ever since the first cognitive revolution (70,000-30,000 years ago) took place and man conditioned his natural existence by language, fiction, narratives, legends and myths, the evolutionary process was consistently supplemented by a variety of semiotic verbal systems and slowly “freed” from its biology. This also applies to the genetic predisposition of human aggression and hostility.

If in the first half of the twentieth century scientists have held that all cultures are complete, harmonious and have an unchanging essence, today we emphasize that culture, as a set of certain values, beliefs and typical emotional experiences, is essential for the perception of social life as well as for the dominant norms and modes of behavior its members. Culture is a network of artificial reflexes, the basis of which are emotional norms of response, which are conditioned (mediated) by certain semiotic matrices of perception of reality. A popular modern historian, Yuval Noah Harari, believes that “culture is a network of artificial instincts” based on the imaginary constructs underlying the social order. Changing perceptions, beliefs and myths causes social perturbations and changes¹⁵.

¹⁴ More about this can be found in the text: Karas A. I. Kant on freedom and its contemporary reevaluation. *Diversity in Unity: Harmony in a Global Age* / edited by Hu Xirong. Washington. 2016. P. 119. 978-1-56518-307-0(pbk.) <http://www.crvp.org/publications/Series-III/III-30.pdf>

¹⁵ Харарі Ювал Ной. Людина розумна. Історія людства від минулого до майбутнього. Харків, Клуб сімейного дозвілля, 2018. С. 207. (Harari Y. Sapiens. A Brief History of Humankind / Yuval Harari. London: Harvill Secker, 2014. 444 p.)

Today, scientists believe that cultures are constantly changing towards more complex associations. However, this movement may not be conclusive in the positive sense of reducing aggression. The opposite examples are given above in this text. Does this mean that positive changes take place under the auspices of the mind and negative ones under the sign of stupidity? An affirmative answer will not be a big mistake. It is said that the “public mind” (consciousness) bears the stamp of a culture and its emotional features. The mind can be substantially different in theoretical forms and axiologically different in practical contexts. We observe a double interdependence: at the theoretical and rational levels of thinking the mind is conditioned by meaningful forms of discourses and narratives, which, by their ideas and meanings, influence the emotional and practical variant of understanding reality and individual group behavior. The connection between the theoretical and practical levels of mind relates to our human capacity for understanding as being related to the aesthetic perception of reality. Understanding takes longer than gaining knowledge, since it is based on cognitive processes, which over 90% relate to the unconscious state. The horizons of understanding are determined by the content of culture, in which the individual grows. The basis of culture consists of values, emotions, experiences, meanings, senses, features of verbal, non-verbal and symbolic communications, which form a single semiotic representative matrix ¹⁶.

In another aspect, it is about the relationship between mind and emotions that is mediated by sensory (feelings) semiotic matrices. This means that emotions are manifested as a certain type of culture, which arises under the influence of semantic variability and sensory selection, conditioned by theoretical reason, artistic conceptual thinking and public aesthetics of museums, theaters, monuments, toponymics of cities, streets and squares, etc. It seems that this may relate to the neural-synapsis plasticity of the brain, which is capable of constructively altering its structures (it seems to be only up to a

¹⁶ More about this: *Karas A. Knowledge, discourse and understanding in their relation to feelings and emotional granularity in: Karas, A. F. Civil Feelings as the Civilizational Capital. Modern Philosophy in the Context of Intercultural Communication: collective monograph. Lviv-Toruń: Liha-Pres. 2019. P. 90-100. <https://doi.org/10.36059/978-966-397-173-5/73-106>.*

certain age) and peculiarities regarding the needs of their application.

We cannot adequately understand the challenges of the twenty-first century globalization and feel reliably based on the Cartesian-enlightening notion of a “pure” or “immediate” mind. The mind needs emotions. Feelings and emotions that function through the symbolic structure of understanding are important in legitimizing public beliefs, and they are not a manifestation of “counter-revolutionary” irrationality, as commonly thought. For example, without a person’s capacity for empathy (compassion), whose nature has a genetic origin, the mind would not be able to become the voice of peace. The phenomenon of empathy is known to be localized in the brain by “mirror neurons”; several other discoveries in the field of neuroscience indicate that the human mind exists both through the brain and through the body. Accordingly, our contemporary concept, which encompasses all three Kantian levels of mind: theoretical, practical and aesthetic, is the concept of *understanding*. Its nature is that it involves primarily unconscious cognitive factors, which include the individual bodily emotional-sensory realm and the cultural-communicative space. Finally, there is a long tradition of philosophical hermeneutics, where the cultural and symbolic preconditions for understanding are grounded.

The nature of understanding has a communicative intersubjective basis. And our problems are that our emotions belong not only to us and not only to our individual body – they belong to the body of the community culture. Obviously, even our innate capacity for empathy does not save us from hostility and misunderstanding. Innate empathy does not automatically extend to all life situations. It depends, in my opinion, on the sign-symbolic mediation (matrix) and the “emotional saturation” of synaptic connections, the energy of which we share with others. Renowned neuroscientist Frans de Waal, in *The Age of Empathy*, cites the example of a smart and compassionate father of a family who treated his duties as a caretaker in a concentration camp with great responsibility and with great pleasure gracefully mocked and tortured the prisoners. The greatest problem today is excessive loyalty to one’s own nation, group, or religion. Humans are capable of deep disdain for anyone who looks different or thinks another way, even

between neighboring groups with almost identical DNA ...”¹⁷. It is not easy for a person to understand other people and trust them beyond the cultural narratives that are determined by their emotional experience. We find understanding and trust, relying primarily on the characters, discourses, and narratives chosen by the cognitive structure of the brain rather than simply by our “pure consciousness.”

Therefore, we come to the conclusion that the practical reason is inherently an emotional reason, fertilized by certain leading ideas-meanings. And among them are ideas that are contextual to the Western European civilization process: individual freedom, the rule of law, self-expression, authenticity, citizenship and national sovereignty, etc. However, they do not automatically become attributes of awareness and practical reason and the corresponding volition to freedom. Obviously, there are other contextual variants of freedom that do not have a theoretical, discursive and emotional attraction to the *meanings* of civil society. And this variant of volition is also ethical in nature, but it can be devoid of the *sense* of calling, self-expression and recognition inherent to Western philosophical discourse. In their place, other meanings can be “attributed” discursively and symbolically opposite in semantic. That is why the opinion, suggested by G. Hegel, is correct, that there is not only charitable commonality ethics (or *sittlichkeit*) fertilized by legal guidelines and values of civic purpose. It is necessary to reckon with the custom, which is inherently “anti-ethical”, saturated with hostility: the value of peace here is not “an implication of the laws of individual freedom.” On the contrary, the idea of peace can be an implication of fear, and the desire to overcome it emotionally pushes the mind to accept submission and domination, exclusivity and passion for power and privilege. This is how a discursive-ethical practice develops, ideologically and emotionally opposite to the social image of citizenship.

This means that we humans are sometimes able to rely on speculative theories and concepts just because they are ours and we like them. The ancient Greeks attributed this feature of the human mind – arrogance – to the state of *hubris*, which must be avoided. An interesting example can be found in France in the 16th century, when, under the

¹⁷ Waal de Frans. *The Age of Empathy*. Nature’s Lessons for a Kinder Society. Three Rivers Press, New York, 2009, p. 203-204.

influence of the plague pandemic, the concept appeared that the water was the cause of the disease. This caused a massive rejection of water and the aristocrats stopped bathing for centuries¹⁸.

It is therefore important to take into account that: “Morality is a product of evolution but that does not mean that it is set in stone and totally unchangeable. The culture in which we live influences what we think is right and wrong. ... In a nutshell, we create our own definition of morality through our interactions the people around us. Ideas about what is and what is not moral are guided by our unique human reasoning and intelligence, and not just by our feelings or gut reactions. It is reason, and not emotion, that provides the push to widen the circle of empathy and concern for others beyond those related to us and our community”¹⁹.

Therefore, ethics of freedom does not come automatically, as H. Arendt said. Disaster comes automatically as soon as we are indifferent and retreat from the truth, neglecting authenticity, forgetting the Socratic “know yourself”. Freedom requires effort, creativity, work and struggle: intellectual, artistic, practical, political. As Kant believed, who wants to be free must have the courage to live his own mind! This means that without the courage to be practically and publicly reasonable is hardly possible.

Expansion of the horizon of perception and understanding is associated with a change in *emotional granularity*. “Science has proven everything we see, hear, feel, touch, smell, is, for the most part, products of modeling the world, not reactions to it. Simulation is a common mechanism of perception and understanding of language, empathy, memories, imagination, dreams, etc.”²⁰. People with high emotional granularity are able to delineate their feelings deeper and they are more flexible in regulating their emotional reactions. New words and concepts, as well as a new discourse play the key role in emotional “transformation”. Therefore, when we teach our children to differentiate

¹⁸ Vigarello Georges. Concepts of Cleanliness: Changing Attitudes in France since the Middle Ages, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

¹⁹ Decety J and Cowell J (2016) Our Brains are Wired for Morality: Evolution, Development, and Neuroscience. *Front. Young Minds.* 4:3. doi: 10.3389/frym.2016.00003; URL: <https://kids.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/frym.2016.00003>

²⁰ Фельдман Барретт Ліза. Як народжуються емоції. – Харків: Клуб сімейного дозвілля, 2018. – С. 59.

emotional experience through the appropriation of new concepts, we “create a new reality for them – social reality”²¹.

Lisa Feldman Barrett convinced that “we need the concept of emotion to experience or perceive the feeling that is associated with it. This is a tough requirement.”²² And “the concepts are not just a social outer layer on top of biology. They are a biological reality that is embedded in your brain by culture. *People living in cultures with more diverse concepts may be more adapted to reproduction.*”²³ This idea is completely in line with the semiotic approach to evolution and human development.

We attribute such signs-symbols to the nature of semiosis, considering it as immanent for civilization process. It is also worth agreeing with Feldman Barrett’s position that “the question of responsibility now sounds like this: are you responsible for your concepts?”²⁴ Therefore, our “freedom of choice” is also a choice between the key concepts by which we describe what we call reality²⁵.

3. The challenges of existential life and cynical mind

In the preceding paragraphs, we have outlined the peculiarities of the interdependence of two levels of thinking: theoretical and practical regarding their relation to the idea of freedom and its implementation in the social reality that implicates the values of civil society. The practical mind is manifested in its ethical orientation, it is conditioned (mediated) by scientific and humanitarian knowledge, discourses, narratives, artistic texts, everyday problems and acquires appropriate communicative-emotional content and public dissemination. Thus, the development of the theory of practical reason, on the one hand, is a reflexive response to the social challenges of modern times, and, on the other, – the philosophy of practical reason becomes a factor of mental-emotional and socio-legal constitution of the civil condition, which is associated with

²¹ Ibid., p. 291.

²² Фельдман Барретт Ліза. Як народжуються емоції. С. 227.

²³ Ibid., p. 233.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 246.

²⁵ The concept of semiosis can be found in the article: Deely John. Innenwelt and Umwelt. Visnyk of the Lviv University: Series philosophical science. Issue 21. Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, 2019. P. 3-17. URL: <https://doi.org/10.30970/vps.21.2019.1>

the idea of individual freedom. The interaction between theoretical, practical and aesthetic perception of reality is closely linked to the unfolding of the European civilization process and demonstrates a consistent tendency to shift philosophical reflection from its classical ontological issues to moral and ethical ones. This was convincingly argued by E. Levinas, whose thoughts, unfortunately, I will not be able to address in this short text. However, the general trend is obvious: without resorting to all the reasons, we have ground to believe that modern Western European philosophy has acquired, beyond all the variety of its directions and forms, a leading ethical or practical direction to the policy of recognition and care for others.

Let us trace just a few of the substantive features that mark the tendency of the practical reason to turn into a practical philosophy of the twentieth century.

In the twentieth century in the study of the nature of the mind there is a significant paradigmatic shift from the philosophy of consciousness to the philosophy of language and semiotics. The rehabilitation of cultural prerequisites for thinking takes place in philosophical anthropology, hermeneutics, personalism, structuralism, communicative philosophy.

Heuristic interpretation of the mind was proposed by M. Heidegger, who considers the phenomenology of E. Husserl but presents an existential approach: the mind of the classical (metaphysical) philosophical paradigm is not provided for the study of truth. Mind cannot be reduced to the function of the spirit, taken in isolation from human and his daily existence. Existential life must be represented in existential thinking or reason that involves the “whole man” in the unity of body-soul-spirit with regard to feelings, anxiety, fear, suffering, care, needs, etc. Reason emerges as a philosophical project, as philosophy itself, which opens access to the understanding of a human “here-being”. A fundamental turn to the real life of a person in his bodily posture is made possible on the basis of an existential approach, an integral part of which is the recognition of the value of individual freedom unfolding in the face of death (Heidegger), nothing (Sartre) or absurdity (Camus). Such a turn rehabilitates not only a bodily life in front of reason and philosophy, but also a culture that must now be understood as inseparable from human nature and social organization. “From the time

of Kierkegaard, we know that individuality is revealed only by the traces of authentic life, which existentially constitute unity”²⁶.

M. Horkheimer’s Criticism of the Instrumental Mind refers to the possibility of the complementarity of the objective and subjective minds and expresses concern for the “decline of the individual” through the “perversion of the mind” or its dimness. It has happened “since the mind became an instrument of subjugation of human and extra human nature, that is, from ancient times, since then it has been neglected by its own intention – to discover the truth.” And further: “the mind can exercise its sanity only through reflection of the disease of the world ...”²⁷.

The existential-communicative turn in philosophy corresponds to significant changes in the sense and understanding of socio-civic status. This is a turn from the “impartial legitimacy” and the national will of the majority – to the interested approximation and oncoming to the affairs and experiences of people in their daily lives. It is about deepening the meaning of the concept of “recognition”. It now concerns the emotional aversion of humiliation and neglect of any person and prompts a new sense of injustice and exploitation. Although the concept of “recognition” has been on the agenda since the late Renaissance, “it has become one of the main concepts of our era since the 1990s.” Ch. Taylor puts this concept at the heart of a new “recognition policy”²⁸. It is revealing that dignity, honor, respect, credit, recognition, trust – cause social outrage if people feel that they are being abused and deceived. It is in these emotions the reason for the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity lies.

Such feelings and emotions are now a fact of experience and practical reason. We can believe that in modern civil society, the demand for “presence”, care and concern are the leading values of life²⁹.

²⁶ Габермас Ю. Єдність розуму в розмаїтті його голосів // Єрмоленко А. Комунікативна практична філософія. Підручник. Київ, Лібра, 1999. С. 281.

²⁷ Горкгаймер М. Критика інструментального розуму. Київ: ППС-2002, 2006. С. 150-151.

²⁸ Розанвалон П. Демократична легітимність: безсторонність, рефлексивність, наближеність. Пер. з французької. Київ: Києво-Могилянська академія, 2009. С. 211. (Rosanvallon P. La Légitimité démocratique : Impartialité, réflexivité, proximité, Le Seuil, 2008 ; Points Essais)

²⁹ Ibid., p. 223.

However, beyond the wealth of striking features of the development of European philosophy, the shadow remains on another distinctive tendency – nihilistic-cynical. This variant of the mind seems to be a phenomenon of the European civilization process: the peculiarities of the cynical mind with its nihilistic interpretation of reality have been thoroughly revealed by P. Sloterdijk (1983).

He states that nowadays, a mind that expresses dissatisfaction with culture has become fashionable, but that mind itself is beyond criticism. “The tension between what they want to criticize and what needs to be criticized has grown so much that our thinking becomes more dissatisfied than accurate. Because no mind has time to reach the level of problems.”³⁰ According to Sloterdijk, this leads to mental and cultural indifference and turns into a “cynical mind” disease. “The modern cynic is an integrated asocial,” rejoicing in his “hidden freedom from illusions,” “he even seems like his outright malicious view is not his own personal defect or immoral whim, for which he must be personally responsible”³¹. The anatomy of this mental dysfunction shows that it is based on the “false consciousness”, supported by the alternating connection of rationalism and cynicism and false sovereignty of the mind, which is constituted out of bodily terms and shuns the coordinates of pain and pleasure. The critique of the cynical mind is intended to reconnect the mind and courage, because this is the only way to grasp the “naked truth” of life and culture.

Nearly 40 years have passed since the release of Sloterdijk’s work, and we fully share his anxiety, the grounds for which have only intensified. In recent years, the information space has been consciously replenished by the previously hidden phenomenon of “fake news” and people are simply losing feelings not only of the practical mind, but also of the common sense. Cynics presently appear in a public milieu and come to political power as the populists. The cynical mind “sums up the” terrible experience “of all time and recognizes the importance of only the unpromising monotony of harsh facts.” It is a mind in which the

³⁰ Слотердајк П. Критика цинічного розуму. Пер. з нім. А. Богачова. Київ: Тандем, 2002. – С. 11.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

pursuit of freedom completely absorbs and destroys the projection of responsibility to the Other..³².

The model of the cynical mind, pretty common in modern civilization, underlies *nihilistic discursive-ethical practice* and relevant social environments that are indifferent to anything but its own pleasure. This sort of mind is subversive in its essence as regards the values of civil society and of civil rights themselves. The cynical mind, though appreciating personal freedom, still more appreciates the arrogant, bragging, and pleasure derived from the domination and humiliation of another. M. Sloterdijk believes that one of the reasons for the cynical outburst is “the compromise of the objective mind, in which one see a trick that serves the ruling system.”³³ However, we should not neglect that among the representatives of the “ruling system” cynic is no exception.

At the same time, the very concept of practice is not straightforward. “Practice, which has always been regarded as a legitimate child of the ratio, is indeed the central myth of the present. Therefore, the urgent need to demythologize the practice requires a radical correction of the self-understanding of Practical Philosophy. It must understand how much it has come under the power of the myth of activity ...”³⁴. What matters is not so much the action itself as the motives that led to it, and not to the other.

That is why we observe different practices whose meaningful orientation is determined not only rationally but also emotionally. Therefore, we return to the problem of the semiotic mediation of reality and reason. We also add the problem of *emotional mediation* of mind and activity.

In the second half of the twentieth century, philosophical approaches were formed, in which the nature of culture, reason, ethics, social reality and human were significantly re-awareness. The unifying link between them is the recognition of the signs and symbolic *actuality* (or matrix) that exists virtually; it does not boil down to any of these “entities” but performs the function of mediating them. An understanding is illuminated in terms of its communicative and practical

³² Ibid., p. 529.

³³ Ibid., p. 524

³⁴ Ibid., p. 522.

nature, the key points of which are the capacity for rational reasoning based on ethical criteria.

The argumentative discussion involves interpersonal interaction and postulates the recognition of the dignity and freedom of the Other, which implies respect and shared responsibility. The communicative reconstruction of the practical reason becomes not only ethically oriented, but also internally linked to the generation of universal civic discourse and the constitution of the social civic process. (The problems of communicative reconstruction of the practical reason and the relationship between it, universal civic discourse and the institutions of democracy are discussed in detail in Anatoliy Yermolenko's scrupulous work.)³⁵ Accordingly, the communicative practical reason is responsible for social reality through its discursive influence on epistemic and ethical normativity. Thus, the discursive-ethical practice of freedom-authenticity becomes consistent with the reality of civil society and its democratic political organization.

4. Evolution as semiosis: empathic preconditions for morality

With new brain research, renewed views on ethics are emerging, in which they approach aesthetics. The basis of this rapprochement is the assertion that perception and appreciation are an integrated, simultaneous process in the brain, in which "moral emotion" is involved. So, the question now is, how are moral emotions formed? The traditional answer is to refer to evolution. However, today we can say that moral emotions are formed in the process of semiosis and depend on the sign-symbolic features of a culture. This shift of emphasis leads to a re-awareness of the concept of evolution, and most importantly, we are re-aware of its essence.

Evolution is not just a struggle for survival and competition. "It is also a collaboration within groups". Jonathan Haidt, American social psychologist, note: "Like bees, humans have long lived or died based on their ability to divide labor, help each other and stand together in the face of common threats. Many of our moral emotions and intuitions reflect that history. We don't just care about our individual rights, or even the rights of other individuals. We also care about loyalty, respect,

³⁵ Єрмоленко А. Комунікативна практична філософія. Підручник. Київ, Лібра, 1999. С. 156-194.

traditions, religions. We are all the descendants of successful cooperators”³⁶.

The emergence of an emotional approach to morality is a landmark change. It challenges all traditions. Based on the complex research in neuroscience and cognitive sciences over the last 20 years, there are grounds for a fundamentally new interpretation of the civilization process through the prism of the empathic evolution of mankind and the way in which it influences our development and obviously has a decisive influence on the fate of man as a species. Realizing that we are a fundamentally compassionate species is extremely important for social development. A new understanding of the “idea of man” in the context of semiosis opens the door to a radical rethinking of fundamental models of humanitarian, economic and social thinking in the aspect of the renewal ideas of Practical Philosophy.

To be a human being means to be a semiotic-communicative being whose nature is not forever permanent. Hence the urgency of the problem of identity and authenticity. A person can acquire his identity and maturity only if he/she become open to positive change in the context of specific life situation. A person can come to his authenticity if he/she are consciously ready for good changes, will want them and know what they are. So, from the “nature of man” philosophy comes to the “idea of human”. This means, first, that there is no “fundamental”, unchanging nature of human, and secondly, there is no biological nature devoid of cultural, social and communicative influence. Because of this, we speak of evolution as a process of semiosis.

Obviously, the idea of freedom remains the leading one for practical reason today. However, its value is significantly shifted and updated. I would like to emphasize that this is not because I. Kant was inaccurate. On the contrary, his theoretical thinking about the essence of practical reason answered the challenges of the time and contributed to a significant renewal of the social process towards increasing the degree of individual freedom and constructing a legal civil public space. Today we live in a new reality and we face new challenges. We also know much more about society and people. Accordingly, we *are rethinking*

³⁶ Brooks David. The End of Philosophy // The New York Times, Published: April 6, 2009. URL: http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/07/opinion/07Brooks.html?_r=1&

not only the nature of human, but also the importance of the leading ideas, motives of behavior and the nature of practical reason to ensure the prosperity of human in the new environmental and international conditions.

We also have a new understanding of the idea and essence of freedom: “One can’t really be free in a world where everyone mistrusts each other. In such a world, freedom is immediately reduced to a negative, the ability to close oneself off from others.... The very basis of freedom, then, is trust and openness among people. Freedom is never solitary affair, as the rationalist contend...but a deeply communal experience. We are only really free when we come to trust one another and allow ourselves to be open Trust, in turn, opens up the possibility of extending *empathetic* consciousness into new more intimate domains”³⁷. Thus, a person is free to the extent that he or she is educated and formed in a society with a defined context of empathic capacity.

New ecological and civilizational circumstances and new post-modern challenges that have arisen before the human mind prompt us to rethink the very nature of the reason and ideas related to its creativity. This concerns the rethinking of the value of individualism, the urgency of which was generated by the need to modernize feudal relations and to generate civil legal and ethical reality. According to the contemporary challenges before practical philosophy we could talk about a nascent post-individualist idea of human emerging in terms of evolutionary semiosis and has the justification in the neurosciences: humans are dispensed towards empathy, fairness, compassion, justice, solidarity, kindness and trust.

CONCLUSIONS

The civilization process and the development of civil society coincides with the re-awareness of the nature of reason and the nature of human. It refers to the philosophical and scientific shift of views from the “extraterrestrial mind” to the “embodied mind”, formed around the idea of human uniqueness and the need for its existential self-realization

³⁷ Rifkin Jeremy. The Empathic Civilization. The Race to Global Consciousness in a World in Crisis. Penguin Group. USA, 2009, p. 158.

through recognition of freedom and responsibility. An ethical idea is the heart of the unfolding of civil or civilization process, which are conditioned by practical reason. The space of the civil life is a complex communicative-ethical and legal set of ideas, views, emotions, norms, experiences and values that arise in the mind of a certain society under the sign of free expression of the individual in combination with self-governing of common life that take control over a political power. The simplest definition of civil society is a process of exercising freedom in a constantly changing social, intellectual and international context.

Human development is a continuous intellectual competition with the reality presented in the mind in terms of awareness and correction of all those mistakes and misconceptions that a person has encountered in his mind, but attributes them to the reality. This competition involves the generation of new concepts, signs, meanings, senses and ideas through which we transform the understanding of reality together with the communicative subjective-emotional transformation of ourselves. Just as two brain hemispheres are involved in the intellectual process of understanding, scientific knowledge of nature and human-artistic emotional thinking interact at the level of neural-synapses activity.

The fateful role (“providential”) in the process of civil or civilizational semiosis is played by genetically conditioned mirror neurons, as an innate factor of empathy. As for civil society, it emerges as a brake factor for the uncontrolled growth of the power and authority of exceptional groups of people over the rest of individuals. The practical mind is conditioned by the evolutionary need to individualize life through its autonomous self-determination, which manifests a social measure of trust and responsible freedom for a person who thinks of himself as belonging to the “broadest ideal communicative society.”

The ethical-legal essence of practical reason deprives our thinking from its speculative metaphysical yoke and leads to the formation of a communicative practical philosophy that, according to J. Habermas, intensifies “the unity of mind in the plurality of its voices.” An important essential feature of modern practical philosophy is the recognition of the interaction of the mind with the physical, emotions and sign-symbolic representation of reality.

The social environment that determines the possibility of constructing civic emotions is the educational and academic communities that emerge under the influence of the development of

science (natural science). The root cause of the emergence of the academic environment and, more broadly, of modern information and civil society is the creative need for the continued growth of positive knowledge. Interest in knowledge is not reduced to purely utilitarian needs. It has an existential basis in life, which lies in the needs for creative individual and social development. Knowledge, as an anthropic evolutionary factor, is a prerequisite for individual and group development and support for life as such.

The leading intellectual and emotional orientations of the current civil society are the desire for mutual understanding among people regarding the elimination of violence and aspiration for solidarity in support of creative and just life and the legal organization of international cooperation. At the level of international relations, the civil status, as the desirable reality of every national society, is constituted in the consensus unity of the practical mind. Thus, modern practical philosophy necessitates the integrated deployment of a unified civilization process for all societies and cultures based on international law and the ethics of trust and solidarity concerning consensus on the intolerance of violence.

SUMMARY

Thus, Kantian practical reason in modern practical philosophy emerges as embodied, emotionally responsible, ethically equipped for social cooperation and empathy through scientific knowledge; it is congruent and contextual with the unfolding of the civilization process in a “world-civil plan” and with the generation of international law as a basis for cooperation in the global world. Practical philosophy operates by the such notion of reason, which identifies itself with the preconditions for mutual understanding in the process of joint activity.

We conclude that the practical reason is inherently an emotional reason, fertilized by certain leading ideas-meanings. Among them are ideas and values that are contextual to the Western European civilization process: individual freedom, trust, the rule of law, self-expression, authenticity, recognition, citizenship and national sovereignty, etc.

Contemporary practical philosophy is aimed at substantially changing the “semiotic matrix” in order to ensure empathic emotional granularity and free humanitarian-narrative public space from unrighteousness, intolerance, hostility and abuse of power or strength. This is achieved primarily through educational institutions, media and

cultural environments that are designed to foster creative development, self-expression, care, and recognition of the individual. Otherwise, there will continue to be people who will kill, maim, mock the others with a quiet conscience, and they will do so under the influence of words, texts, narratives and even music (not to mention sophisticated propaganda) of those who know how to have fun and pleasure from the humiliation of the Other.

Indeed, war will continue until we make peace in our own heads and in our hearts. But in political confrontation and military conflict, this is equally true for the two parties. If one side lifts its hands upwards, it will not be the freedom, but the captivity.

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Information about the author:

Karas A. F.,
PhD, Professor of Philosophy,
Chairperson of Philosophy Department,
Ivan Franko National University of Lviv
1, Universytetska str., Lviv, 79000, Ukraine