

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NATURE OF THE PROGRAMMING OF THE HUMAN PERSON

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Abstract

There is the condition of existence of the human person. It is the condition of being born into a society with already existing ways of doing things. He/she is brought up in this way by means of cultural socialization. The way of doing things provide orientation in living for the socialized. However, the way of doing things we call culture, was at a time invented by others as a solution to their problem of existence and merely transferred from one generation to the other. Cultural reviewing is proposed as the way for the culturally socialized that has lost his/her person in being socialized, to recapture the lost self and to live the self that is not an "other."

Keywords: Living, The human person, Programming, lost self, Cultural Reviewing and Reclaiming of self.

Introduction

It is true that all humans are born into a society with already existing ways of doing things. Humans are brought up in this way by the process of cultural socialization. This socialization comes with its own orientation towards life. Very often, humans continue through life with paths determined by this socialization and orientation. In rare situations, you get individuals who having been badly bruised by life in the socialization from the inherited way of living, have the opportunity of questioning the entire culture that brought them up. In the course of the questioning, the true nature of culture as an invented way by humans to live their lives satisfactorily and comfortably is discovered. This discovery is discovery of the truth about human conditions of existence and the place of culture which are vital for renewal of human communities for the purpose of living the satisfactory and comfortable life.

The Programming of the Human Person

To understand the nature of the programming of the human person, it is imperative to understand the nature of culture. Human existence is a task especially when one desires to have the good life. The good life is not somewhere that the human person goes to and acquire. It has to be worked for. Culture is the totality of the inventions of the human person to confront the challenging nature of his/her existence to have the decent life.

Culture conceived as the security that the human person brings into the insecurity of his/her existence has three¹ stages. They are the creators' stage, the complication stage and the simplification stage:

Creators' stage

This refers to that stage of the existence of the human person, when upon experiencing hurt in his/her existence decided to invent materially (devices) and immaterially (ideas) in order to overcome the hurt he/she feels in the environment and live a better form of existence. The special note at this point of the human person is the fact that the creators of culture coincidentally are also the ones living by the culture that is created.

Complication stage

The complication stage of culture is that stage of existence of the human person which involves the inheritance of already created culture. Because a culture has been created by preceding generations, it thus happens that succeeding generations do not have to create; they merely inherit, because no opportunity to feel the hurt that those in the creators' stage felt leading to invention of culture to confront their challenges. One very important characteristic of this point of the existence of the human person is that even before the sensing of the problem of existence, the human person already has solutions in the form of the inherited culture. So, they have to go on living with this culture in the form of routine even when they do not understand the problem that generated the culture in their hands. It is here we derive the name, complication of culture; they have not created the culture, they merely inherited it and have to live by it even if they do not know how it solves problems.

Simplification stage²

This is the stage of culture that the human person enters when he begins to feel the hurt in complication of culture. Upon feeling the complication of culture arising from the fact that he/she merely inherited it; does not know how it solves problems of existence but must go on living with it, the human person naturally aspires to simplification of culture. In simplification of culture, the human person basically wants to return to the

creators' stage of culture: wants to feel problems, and create culture based on his/her experience of hurt and insecurity of the environment and live by these same creations. In essence, the human person in the complicated stage of culture wants to be authentic to himself/herself by perceiving the problems of his/her existence/environment, inventing to confront these problems and also living by the dictates of the created culture that is meant to be a solution to the problem of his/her existence. One very obvious characteristic of this stage of culture and existence of the human person is the strong desire to strip himself/herself of all excesses and complications of culture and re-arrange a new culture on the strength of how it is able to demonstrate its ability to confront the problem of existence and ensure the good life that the human person understands.

Philosophizing on the Programming of the Human Person

Although, the three stages of culture/existence of the human person have been put close together as above, in real life, they are not so close. You could get several generations passing by, before a particular generation experiences the hurt that will lead to the simplification of culture, which is a return to creators' stage of culture and existence.

A human person, in the real human condition, is born into a society that is not of his/her choosing and with an already existing way of living. The human person by means of cultural socialization is formed according to this already existing ways of doing things. It is this Ortega talks about when he says,

As soon as we find ourselves living, we find ourselves not only among things but also among men, not only on earth, but also in society. And those men, that society into which we have fallen by the process of being alive, already has its own interpretation of life, its repertory of ideas, of ruling convictions about the universe. So that what we can call the thought of our time" enters to form part of our Surroundings; it envelops us, it penetrates into us, it carries us.... Without realizing it, we find ourselves installed in that network of already-made solutions for the problems of our lives.³

Gasset continuing expresses that the human person who merely inherits an already made culture, solutions to the problem of his/her existence, as it were, finds himself/herself cut-off from his/her environment, as in a screen between himself/herself and his/her environment; He/she losses the feeling of the real problem of his/her existence as an already made solution, in form of the inherited culture is available to him/her even before the experiencing of those problems. Gasset describing this pitiable state holds,

in short, the culture, which in its origin, in its own moment of genuineness was simple, becomes complicated. This complicating of the inherited culture thickens the screen between each man's self and the things that surrounds him. Bit by bit his life becomes less his own and more the collective life. His individual, effective and always primitive "I" is replaced by the "I" which is "people," by the conventional, complicated, cultivated "I." The so-called culture which are already made of pure topics and phrases." ⁴

In the final analysis, the human person who did not create solutions to his or her problem of existence but merely inherited them by way of inherited culture ends up living on top of a stratum of culture which came to him/her from the outside, indeed, Gasset, says, the human person lives "on a system of alien opinions come to him from other personalities, from what is in the air, in the "period," in the "spirit of the times," in short, from a collective, conventional, irresponsible "I" which does not know why it thinks what it thinks, nor why it wants what it wants." ⁵

From the above, it is crystal clear how the human person can be socialized by the inherited culture to the extent that his/her life becomes falsified by the very fact that the life he/she is living is not his/her own, but an other's life, the life of the irresponsible "I" over countless generations that perpetuated the inherited culture and put it into the human person of today, dislodging the real "I" in the person of today who should be in contact with his/her environment, not via the screen of inherited idea/culture, that separates him/her from being in flesh, in authentic self, without any intermediary with his/her environment, in order to create real solutions of his/hers, in response to his/her cosmic environment and following his/her desire to live satisfied and comfortable.

Therefore, to the question: "Can the human person be programmed?" The answer from the aforementioned is in the affirmative. There is a sort of programming associated with the human condition of existence. What should make this programming a thing of concern to the human person, especially to the discipline of philosophy, is the capacity of this programming to falsify the life of the human person, that is, in which case the life is no longer the life of the individual but another person's own. This is a precarious situation that a human being can be in as it robs that life of authenticity, and by that the loss of the possibility of the satisfactory and comfortable existence.

Towards Reclaiming the Falsified Life in Human Programming

Living the life of an "other" and not your own life should be a thing of concern to every right thinking person. This simply means abandoning your own life and going ahead to start living somebody's own. Automatically, an inauthentic life results. The person exists

alright; he/she however lives his/her life in a fashion that has been determined by another human being.

Yes, it is possible to live a life that is determined by the one who is living it. This can be achieved by withdrawing into one's self, subjecting the inherited culture, that is, the way of living life in one's environment to a review based on the evidences that we can provide for this culture as adequately able to sustain us in the good life. From this review of the inherited culture, the elements from the inherited culture that are able to demonstrate capacity to sustain the human person in the desired decent/good life becomes the ideas/culture to carry into the future as our own invented culture, reclaiming our true lives determined by us. It is this issue that Ortega discusses thus,

I must come to an agreement with myself in order to see which one of them it is that convinces me, which one is my real opinion. An opinion which I have formed for myself in this manner and which I base on my own evidence is truly mine⁶

For Gasset therefore, it is the life that is based on evidence that one can provide from his/her environment for his convictions that is recommended. Referring further to this evidential provision for our ideas for living, he says,

It is this metanoia- to be converted or, as I prefer to say to go back to yourself, withdraw within yourself, seek your true self- that I would urge on men today particularly on the young. (There are too many probabilities that the generation now reading me may let themselves be led violently astray as were the earlier generations of this and other countries, by the empty wind of form of extremism, that is to say, by something which is substantially false).⁷

Conclusion

The programming of the human person is a reality through socialization⁸ when a person is born into a society. This has the consequence of one losing himself/herself to another person - existing not as your own person but as programmed by another person. The good news is that this falsified self could be reclaimed by living by the culture that we can provide evidence for as adequate for our desired good life. In essence, this new culture is premised on our own evidence for its justification and not the evidences of others.

The other side of the idea of reclaiming the self here is that, as the self is reclaimed based on culture that the human person can provide evidence for, it means that the person who has reclaimed his/her self will be committed to the culture that he/she has invented. Commitment to culture here is commitment to development⁹ as culture is invented on the

ground of good life for the human person. Therefore the reclaimed self also means development that will sustain the human person in the good life.

Endnotes

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4. Gasset, y Ortega, Op. Cit.p. 98-99
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