

POLITICAL ONTOLOGY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN KNOWLEDGE: A NEW RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND STUDY CONCEPTS

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ABSTRACT

Ontology as a doctrine of being is an important layer of philosophical knowledge, logically preceding epistemology, ontology is studying the fundamental laws and laws of the existence of being and thinking. The first ontological studies relate to the period of the emergence of philosophical knowledge itself and are already found in the works of the ancient Greek philosophers of the Milesian and Elean schools. Developing in parallel with other branches of philosophical knowledge, ideas about the essence of ontology and, accordingly, the subject of its study, were transformed, undergoing many changes. We can confidently say that all that the ontological teachings that have taken shape over the past centuries can be divided into two large groups. The first group of studies includes works devoted to the study of the nature of being and the search for answers to the most fundamental questions, for example, why does something exist and not nothing? This is a group of so-called fundamental theoretical research. The second group must include work aimed at identifying various characteristics and patterns of development of the constituent elements of being space. Such studies include the study of the ontological nature of the economic, legal, cultural, etc. spaces. Such studies represent the most promising field of study, actively developing mainly within the framework of Western philosophy. Political ontology just refers to the second block of research and, in general terms, represents the sphere of study of individual characteristics of the political space. In the Russian academic environment, the study of political ontology is conducted mainly in a political science vein; today there are very few philosophical works devoted to determining the conceptual framework of political ontology, highlighting the various characteristics of this field and distinguishing related concepts. In connection with these circumstances, this article seems extremely relevant in conceptual and methodological terms.

Keywords: political ontology, ontology, ontology of political, political philosophy, philosophy, epistemology.

1.INTRODUCTION

From the moment of the conception of the world until the end of the 19th - beginning of the 20th centuries, a person was considered to be dependent on the world, being both an object and an element of being, a person was awarded the property of materiality, through the prism of which he was studied, he was often denied the characteristics of the subject and was not allowed possibilities of influence on the world. Thus, the world was presented as the “being of things” and man himself was considered as a existent thing, although it has excellent properties — a being of a different nature, but, nevertheless, it is material. There are several exceptions to the rule of such a philosophical analysis, which, nevertheless, conceptually took shape only at the turn of the 18th-19th centuries. The most striking example, perhaps, is the ontological representation of I. Kant, who, having proclaimed a person as a subject, realized the idea that, despite the fact that the world exists independently as a “thing in itself”, the world appears to a person in a different form through it awareness and cognitive processes, which means that “things for us” are already inseparable from human consciousness, and man himself appears to be an active subject of thought, will and creativity - the world around us in this context is revealed through the being of the person himself [8]. In Kant’s teachings, man, despite the mediation and participation in the discovery of only the world of “things for us” nevertheless appears to be a central active figure, and not a passive object.

The problem of being has become increasingly clear in the form of the problem of “human being”. The philosophy of S. Kierkegaard [9], chronologically dated to a later period - the middle of the XIX century, undoubtedly also is a clear evidence of the transformation of ideas about the place and role of man in the ontological connection “man-world”. The proclamation of the act of existence as a single, personal and directly comprehensible seems to be a reflection of the transition period in the process of changing the perception of the problem of being.

The “critical ontology” of N. Hartmann at the beginning of the 20th century finally marked the transition to a new perception of the problem. Hartmann described being in a hierarchy format of four qualitatively different strata, each of which correlates with different things of the world, as well as with animals and humans, while being interconnected and recognizing the subjectivity of each element of being [6]. The further development of philosophy in general, and ontology, in particular, only consolidated the prevailing view on the consideration of the problem of being. The existential trend, analytical philosophy, psychoanalysis, and even postmodernity, which updated the new methods and eclectic principles of cognition in the second half of the 20th century, developed in the context of recognizing the ontological principle of dividing a comprehensive, broad understanding of the world as a whole, into the study of its constituent elements - individual layers of being, as well as a focus on the reflection of a single act of existence - that is, the actualization of the problem of human existence.

The modern ontological turn is characterized by the isolation and close study of the so-called “local ontologies”, ontological elements localized in various areas of social reality, as well as in virtuality, which, at the moment, is an integral element of the being of man and the world as a whole [2]. Political ontology is an extremely important and extensive research plane, localized in the structure of philosophy, where it is interdependent with other elements of political philosophy - political anthropology, political praxiology, political history and many others.

2.METHODS

As the main methodological paradigm in the study, the basic principles of the neoclassical approach are used. Defining the conceptual framework of such a branch of knowledge as political ontology, setting the boundaries for the application of each term within the framework of this field, the authors are guided by the foundations of dialectical logic and the main criteria for the scientific validity of the propositions put forward.

During the study, the authors used methods of a general scientific nature, for example, a method of analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, a method of abstracting, modeling concepts, a historical method, etc. As special methods involved in the study of political ontology in the context of the development of social and humanitarian knowledge, a comparative method, a structural-functional method, a hermeneutic analysis of key terms and concepts, a methodology for ascending from abstract to concrete, etc. are used.

The use of private scientific socio-humanitarian methodology is due to the need for a mandatory epistemological connection between the study of political ontology in a philosophical vein and the data provided by applied social disciplines, such as sociology, political science and social theory.

The study of concepts related to the study of political ontology is carried out in accordance with classical methodological postulates based on criteria of formal logic, rationalistic attitudes of evidence and the need to identify cause-effect relationships between established facts.

3.RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The modern ontological turn is characterized by the isolation and close study of the so-called “local ontologies”, ontological elements localized in various areas of social reality, as well as in virtuality, which, at the moment, is an integral element of human being and the world as a whole. Political ontology is an extremely important and extensive research plane, localized in the structure of philosophy, where it is interdependent with other elements of political philosophy - political anthropology, political praxiology, political history and many others.

Conceptually distinguishing a political ontology and designating its research area in the context of political philosophy is an extremely difficult task, the difficulty of which lies in the problem of identifying the boundaries of the subject of study. Approaching the study of political ontology from the perspective of modern principles of studying the problem of being, guided by the guidelines proclaimed as “ontological turns” of the 20th and 21st centuries, we recognize the activity of subjects of political reality in the study of “political being” and the influence on the political reality of all actors of the political process, under which it is necessary to understand, first of all, social groups, nations, communities, the state and more. Thus, we cannot ignore the practical processes themselves, as well as the activities of political institutions and other entities, which, in turn, creates the danger of the political problem being dissolved in applied research in political science and political sociology. However, the study of the field of political ontology and specifically its object - political being, without relying on real-life manifestations of the political, namely, acts, trends and processes observed in the

modern political sphere, also seems to be unreliable and devoid of any prognostic, epistemological and axiological benefits.

Recognizing the possibility of political ontology as an independent field of knowledge within the framework of an extensive field of philosophical research, we should more clearly outline the boundaries of such knowledge, the subject of study of political ontology, as well as the range of possible research questions.

Political ontology in the most general sense studies the problems of the world of the political, various forms of its expression and significant characteristics, in addition, the aim of research in line with the political ontology is to identify patterns in the development of power relations, the interaction of various political actors in society in a multifaceted political reality. The status of political ontology as an independent research field is often questioned, and despite the fact that today the academic community for the most part recognizes political ontology as an autonomous sphere, giving it the status of one of the basic disciplines for studying the socio-political space in on the whole, discussions on the speculative nature of political and ontological studies are still ongoing. Doubts are caused by a political ontological analysis, which, to one degree or another, is based on empirical data and deals with factual, "volatile" material, which can significantly distort the result. However, the political ontology is recognized as a system-forming role in the study of political space, and its formation as a paradigmatic basis for the study of any political and social phenomena and processes is considered as a subject area [7, p. 106]. The backbone function of political ontology distinguishes discipline from other research areas of political philosophy - political anthropology, political axiology, political praxiology and others [1, p. 49].

A number of foreign researchers correlate the identification of the field of political ontology with the allocation of a separate group of works devoted to the study of the central political institution - the state, connecting exclusively with it the issues of the emergence and development of the political. From this perspective, the state as an institutional setting represents the ontological basis of the political, the source of power, authority and political intuition, implying that the absence of the state invariably leads to the destruction of the political. This block of research includes the work of K. Hay devoted to the study of the phenomenon of power and political ontology, in which he considers the state as a necessary and necessary "analytical abstraction" [3, p. 78]. Hays notes that the state does not really exist, a holistic perception of such a complex institution in all its manifestations and aggregate elements is impossible, and therefore we can only judge the state, its activities and functions as an analytical abstraction, evaluated and perceived by our consciousness. At the same time, such an "abstraction state" is represented as a generalization of the political effect, which, in turn, is generated by the actions of political actors who act as if the state is really existing.

The idea of "state-abstraction" is not alien to the models of political ontology of the director of the French national center for scientific research, the former president of the Finnish association of political science - Nilo Kaupi. The author proposed two ontological models - exclusive and inclusive [5, p.20].

The scientist explains the need to choose an ontological model when analyzing a political one with the following theses: firstly, ontology immediately precedes epistemology, which means that the construction of a study depends on the choice of ontological model, even if it is purely empirical, and secondly, the political ontology assumes a critical level of political theories and ideas underlying this or that analysis. In addition, Kaupi notes that political ontology is able to form an understanding of not just

political knowledge, but information in the context of the idea of “power-knowledge” M. Foucault [10, p. 193]. A priori, it is assumed that a political researcher cannot be free from ideology and, moreover, often it is researchers themselves who generate the body of information that they are studying, and therefore, scientists need to understand the consequences of their conclusions and political discourses.

4. SUMMARY

Based on the analysis of the presented ontological theories and concepts, having studied a number of works of modern researchers devoted to determining the place-position of political ontology in the structure of philosophical knowledge, we can identify the methodological principles and boundaries of the dissertation research. Guided by the ideas of a new “ontological turn” that has occurred in the structure of philosophical knowledge, it seems possible for us to divide the universal layer of being - the concept of the world - into separate components, the focus of which is on the localized parts of reality, as well as the reflection of a single act of existence. Political ontology is one of the local areas in the structure of a broader layer of knowledge - political philosophy. In the most general view, the subject of study of political ontology as an academic discipline is political being in all its manifestations. However, narrowing the boundaries of research, we can say that the subject of political ontology must be considered the foundation of the political, the form of reproduction and perception of the political, as well as the patterns in the development of power relations between various subjects of political reality.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, based on the analysis of theoretical models of political ontology, the main characteristics of the political space and the interaction of various political actors, we can talk about the highest heuristic potential, the so-called inclusive model of political ontology. Political reality, based on the ontological principles of constructing this model, is symbolic-physical, combining metaphysical and “human” dimensions. The idea of “state-abstraction” fits into the framework of this approach, which combines the symbolic, non-material part, and at the same time, assumes a real, material manifestation, and also invariably requires the actions of real actors - individuals, social groups, nations and so on. In addition, the symbolic beginning of the political world today is vividly expressed in the trend of political virtualization and the emergence of new forms of expression, such as “electronic democracy”, “information war” and others.

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