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HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE AND SOCIAL DESTRUCTIVENESS IN THE CONCEPT OF E. FROMM¹

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Summary. The article is devoted to consideration of E. Fromm's views on the problem of social destructiveness in a philosophical and historical context. The specificity of his approach lies in the consideration of this phenomenon, starting simultaneously from the psychoanalytic method and the anthropological view of the problem. The foundation of Fromm's humanistic psychoanalysis is the concept of social character as a set of socio-cultural attitudes and norms for imitation that exist in a particular society. It has been established that the problem of social destructiveness is based on the historical experience, first of all, of capitalism, but at the same time it can be used to comprehend both the past and the future. Social destructiveness can play an important role in the theoretical understanding of the entire history of mankind, acting as its universal characteristic.

Keywords: historical experience; social destructiveness; psychoanalytic method; necrofilia; malignant narcissism; incestuous symbiosis; social character; cultural perspective; «sane society».

The beginning of the XXI century is characterized by an exacerbation of political, economic, cultural contradictions in most existing societies. This fully applies to Russian society, which is trying to determine the ways out of the chronic socio-historical crisis. Destructive tendencies, which still exist, require not only emotional assessments and political actions, but also adequate theoretical and, above all, philosophical analysis. It's effectiveness is possible on the basis of developing the concept of social destructiveness. Comprehension of the history of the XX century generated the need for a special theoretical analysis of this phenomenon, which continues to play a serious role in the life of any society.

One of the main prerequisites for a successful understanding of destruction is the historical and philosophical appeal to the creative heritage of one of the prominent representatives of the Frankfurt School – Erich Fromm, who indicated the importance of considering the processes of social destructiveness. The acuteness and scale of his criticism of the Western civilization in all its manifestations still remains significant. Investigating the historical formation and modern state of mankind, he could discover hidden dissonances and contradictions between the outwardly successful life of society and the tragedy of human life. In the new historical conditions, Fromm's ideas of social destructiveness not on-

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ly retain their relevance, but must also be rethought in the context of the growth of destructive tendencies in the life of society.

Initially, the term “destruction” was introduced into the philosophical turn by M. Heidegger and was used in the context of the methodology of theoretical analysis. By destruction, Heidegger understood «the loosening of the ossified tradition and the detachment of the concealments built up by it to the original experience, in which the first and since then leading definitions of being were obtained» [4, p. 22]. Thus, destruction, along with reduction and construction, is a component of the phenomenological method of critical reassessment of previous philosophy. Heidegger emphasized the presence of a positive aspect in this approach: «Destruction, again, does not want to bury the past in negligence, it has a positive purpose; its negative function remains non-special and indirect» [ibid].

A similar understanding of destruction is developing today both in Western postmodern discourse (J. Derrida, Ph. Lacoue-Labarthe, J.-L. Nancy, S. Buck-Morss, S. Žižek) and by domestic philosophers (M. K. Ryklin, V. B. Okorokov). Destruction presents here as a stage in the methodological strategy of deconstruction and has positive aspects. A plenty of interpretations of the phenomenon was developed within the framework of the socio-cultural approach (P. Sloterdijk, E. Gellner, D. V. Ivanov, L. T. Artemenko, U. Beck, V. A. Kutyrev, A. A. Genis). At the same time, however, the nature of social destructiveness, its levels, properties and functions remains underexplored.

The origins of the concept of social destructiveness can be derived from the ontological generalizations of G.V.F. Hegel, F. Nietzsche's study of the anthropological foundations of the problem and the psychological aspects, analyzed in the work of S. Freud. The ideas of these thinkers became reference points in the development of the concept of social destruction within the framework of the Frankfurt School. The formation of the concept of social destruction takes place in the works of M. Horkheimer and T. Adorno, who laid in «Dialectics of Enlightenment» [5] the understanding of social destruction at the theoretical macro level as a self-destructive movement of civilization. This concept is concretized in the works of G. Marcuse at the second stage of the school's existence: politics becomes the main factor of destruction.

The version of social destructiveness, developed by E. Fromm, also refers to the second stage of the development of the school. Unlike Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse, Fromm was able to purposefully analyze the phenomenon of destructiveness, creating his own holistic interpretation of social destruction. The strengthening of the anthropological aspect is noticeably traced in his philosophy, on the one hand, and the consideration of destruction as a kind of form of human socialization, on the other. The specificity of Fromm's approach lies in the fact that he views society through the prism of the destructiveness of man as a genus being. Consideration of the studied problem to an anthropological aspect allowed Fromm to oppose destructiveness to such life positions as creativity and biophilia.

Therefore, unlike Marcuse, he assigns the main role in overcoming social destructiveness not to the political power, but to the creative and life-loving orientation of each individual person, who understands and bears responsibility for the quality of life of future generations. He even developed a project for a harmonious «sane society» based on psychoanalytic «social and individual» therapy [1]. The center of Fromm's humanistic psychoanalysis is the concept of social character as a complex of socio-cultural attitudes and norms that exist in a particular society. These attitudes and norms are not realized by individuals, as a rule, but they significantly determine their behavior in social life, in the choice of political strategies.

The study of the phenomenon of destructiveness is linked by E. Fromm with the study of the characteristics of the human character in the conditions of an industrial and post-industrial society. Questions of the life of the future society, its quality and prospects are considered by him on the basis of the application of the psychoanalytic method. The use of this method made it possible to examine in more details mechanisms and reasons of the destructiveness of the human character. At the same time, Fromm rethought the classical Freudian theses about the determination of destructiveness by human instinctual inclinations. He comes to a fundamentally new conclusion: society, the nature of a particular policy can contribute either to creativity or destructiveness. Fromm's socio-cultural approach is based on the study of modern technogenic society and its influence on the character of an individual.

Fromm's most basic assumption is that individual personality can only be understood through human history and cultural perspective. Having studied the features of the functioning and development of modern industrial society, Fromm comes to the conclusion that it was the quality of this society that led to the emergence of destructiveness in the character of a person, which, in turn, threatens to the destruction of the world as a whole. «I suppose, – he wrote, – that we can rightfully talk about a “mentally ill society” and specifically raise the question of what happens to a mentally healthy person in such a sick society» [2, p. 306]. Fromm's concern about the fate of the society of the future is explained by the fact that he understood the possibility of realizing a self-destructive trend in social dynamics, coming from the negative aspects of the previous historical development.

Destructiveness is the process of eliminating of the spiritual world of a person, leading to large-scale negative social consequences. Fromm considered the processes of suppression of human freedom by a complex of global socio-economic and political factors as the leading prerequisites for destructiveness. Socio-philosophical interpretation of destructiveness in Fromm's concept is based on the analysis of the main types of personality developmental disorders (necrofilia, malignant narcissism, incestuous symbiosis) [3, p. 13–108], although the very term “destructiveness”, he used to denote malignant aggression (humans can destroy or kill for reasons other than survival). The most important content of a violation of human development is alienation from the authentic

values of human existence, caused by the internalization of socio-cultural attitudes of possession, power-subordination, aggression, leading to a disturbance of the structural functioning of society (suppression of the spiritual sphere, totalitarianism, an increase in crime and the number of people with psychological diseases).

According to Fromm, destructive prerequisites and aspects of human socialization are implemented at three main levels: macrosocial (global sociocultural processes), microsocial (social situation of development) and individual (subjective factors of destructiveness). By destroying people and objects, people eliminate much of the outside world so they can restore their feeling of power and acquire a perverted sense of isolation. There are four main stages in the development of individual destructiveness: emotional, intellectual, behavioral and existential, when individual's being is completely destroyed: a person is immersed in his inner destructive being, he can no longer "be" different, cannot live differently. The sequence of the above stages has an aggravating character: at each new stage it becomes more difficult for an individual to realize the destructive processes that undermine his individual being, and it becomes more and more difficult to say "no" to malignant influence.

In his analysis, Fromm is based on the humanistic principle, which made it possible to correlate the historical and cultural movements of the past, present and future in the context of the development of human personality. Applying to the psychoanalysis method in the philosophical study of the society of the future made it possible to focus on the deep, essential changes in human society during the period of modernization. Having proved the relationship between human character and the quality of society, he came to the conclusion about the primacy of the interests of the soul, the individual-personal principle in relation to the interests of society. Fromm put the future of modern society in direct dependence on the extent to which this industrial and technical society is able to take care of the human soul, transforming it as a goal, but not a mean.

The interpretation of social destruction in the philosophy of E. Fromm acquires special significance both for European and domestic civilization. This phenomenon is considered in Fromm's works as universal, absolutely necessary for imparting dynamics to social development. Exploring the historical transformations of destruction, the philosopher denounces numerous manifestations of Western civilization. Therefore, a logical question arises: is this concept of a local nature or it can be considered as a universal characteristic of all human history? In our opinion, the presented problem fully takes into account the historical experience, first of all, of capitalism, outside of which this phenomenon has practically not been studied.

Nevertheless, everything said above indicates the integrity of Fromm's understanding of the phenomenon of destructiveness, which reveals the logic of the social evolution of Western civilization, and therefore the applying of this phenomenon for understanding both the past and the future is quite justified. The influence of his research on the development of theoretical understanding of

the history of mankind is undoubtedly and significantly; his ideas played an important role in the formation of a new stage in post-classical Western philosophy of history. The historical and philosophical reconstruction of Fromm's concept of social destructiveness allows us to identify the essential role of this phenomenon in social life. It opens up prospects for further study of its certain aspects, observed at the present time, and the development of social policy, that takes into account destructive phenomena in society. Thus, it becomes clear, that in the XXI century the concept of social destructiveness is still remains relevant.

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