

The Nature of Creativity: Freedom and Moral Responsibility of Man in Creative Activity

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Abstract: The article is an attempt to solve two interrelated tasks. The first is related to understanding the nature of creative activity. There are different answers in the literature on this point. That's why the analysis of the main paradigms or models of the creative process prevailing in the history of philosophy and in the history of world culture was being carried out. The attention was drawn to the source of the creative process in connection with the three basic elements of the psyche: “subconsciousness”, “consciousness” and “superconsciousness”. The second most important issue is the relationship between artistic freedom and moral responsibility in human activity, considered on the basis of ancient mythology and the Holy Scriptures. This appeal to the mentioned sources is connected with the fact that archetypes of thinking and behavior, in their pure form, that became the basis of Western European culture, were recorded and described in these documents. Turning to the primary sources, including philosophical classics, is useful because it allows us to see the problem in a clear, and not obscured by “historical circumstances”, form. The “original sin” split up the holistic nature of man and led to the autonomy and even the opposition between the creative abilities of man and the moral obligations to the self and others. It was concluded that free limitless creativity makes the preconditions for the destruction of culture and degradation of man. Methodologically, the article uses analysis and synthesis, comparison, generalization, turn from abstract to concrete, the historical method, the method of system analysis and, finally, the dialectical approach.

Keywords: creativity, integration, culture, materialization, morality, ethics, paradigm

INTRODUCTION

Today the problem of relations of creative freedom with moral responsibility is of particular relevance in philosophy in connection

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with the rapid separation of all forms of human activity. Unlimited freedom of creativity in art, in scientific research (the provocative exhibitions, films, performances, the discovery of nuclear energy, genetic engineering, cloning and so on) destroys a habitual way of life and traditional Christian values of Western culture, leads to tragic consequences in personal and social life, primarily the decrease in the level of social security, the disintegration of society, loss of moral values and personal meaning of life. Therefore, it is important all over again to try to understand the nature and the boundaries of creativity. In this article, these issues will be considered in the context of world cultural history and the history of philosophy.

Creativity has always been regarded as the very essence of culture. But what is the nature of creative activity? It is a complex issue. At the beginning we give an abstract primary definition of creativity which, according to P. P. Gaidenko (1983, 670), is “something qualitatively new, never being before”. Carl R. Hausman says similarly, analyzing the criteria of creativity: “The outcome of an act, which is considered creative, then, must seem to be new or novel” (in Krausz and Dutton and Bardsley (Eds.) 2009, 5). The fact that the discovery or the creation of new cultural values, transforming the life of the individual and society, is a mystery that scientists, philosophers, poets and musicians recognize. So the famous American composer, performer and conductor A. Copland said in this connection that the creation of something new from nonexistent is the main feature of creative thinking. For him, the writer of the music acts as the magician, who, in his inmost heart, gets an idea and creates a new work of art: “In the field of music it seems to me important that we keep open what William James calls the ‘irrational doorways...through which...the wildness and pang of life’ may be glimpsed” (Copland 1952, 69).

The emergence of the creation of something new from nonexistent is the real mystery, which is impossible to understand, to explain to others, and to express logically in the concepts. However, in the history of culture there always were people trying to understand this difficult issue. Understanding the outcome of their work can be summarized in four basic paradigms of the creative process, in which, firstly, the source of creative inspiration, secondly, the peculiarities of this creative activity realization, thirdly, the place and role in this process of man, their consciousness are indicated. Through the comparative analysis and comparison of these models it would be possible to understand and ensure more accurately the completeness of

the study. When considering the paradigms of creativity, we will, like Dante, move from the bottom up, from the subconsciousness to consciousness and superconsciousness.

FIRST PARADIGM: THE SOURCE OF CREATIVITY IN THE SUBCONSCIOUS

A first approach to understanding creativity is attempts to understand it in connection with the unconscious forces of the psyche. It has evolved mainly within the framework of psychoanalysis of Z. Freud and his numerous disciples and followers. Psychoanalysis has deep roots in the minds of a certain part of the Western intelligentsia. Already during the Maestro' lifetime T. Mann, S. Zweig, R. Rolland, T. Dreiser and many other cultural figures of Europe and America were admirers of his ideas and talent. The conception of Z. Freud led to the emergence of expressionism and surrealism.

Opening the unconscious in the structure of the human psyche, Freud began to consider culture as the process of sublimation by which he understood the transformation of "libido" or sexual energy from the physical area to the sphere of social life. Sublimation is a symbolic realization of the unconscious. Therefore, creativity is, according to Freud, always an inadequate way to satisfy natural sexual desires. Fantasies play a huge role in this process that, in Freud' opinion, are the opportunity "to regain once experienced pleasure" (Freud 1930, 16).

By Freud, dreams help us to decipher the psychology of the creative process. Forbidden desires, feelings of love and hate, criminal tendencies are dreams' encrypted; in short, everything that is in the unconscious, and in ordinary circumstances is rejected and rigidly controlled by man. The liberation of the psyche takes place in dreams, and its forbidden content comes to consciousness in the form of symbols and images of dreams. In this case, "Oedipus complex" plays an important role in the creative work. It, in psychoanalysis, means the sexual attraction to the parent of the opposite sex and the associated sense of rivalry towards the parent of the same sex.

A striking example of the application of the "Oedipus complex" to analyzing the personality of the artist may serve as an attempt of Freud to explain the phenomenon of genius of Leonardo da Vinci. Freud's analysis of the formation of this genius leads to the idea that life and work of such a great man filled with genuine artistic quest and humanism, in fact, is only the result of erotic deviations of his psyche

(Freud 1912, 116). The desire to see mental disability in the nature of the artist leads to distorted understanding of the personality of Leonardo da Vinci and the creative process in general. So, here creativity is considered as a spontaneous game of subconscious and unconscious forces that independently of the will of a person create certain works of art, affect the minds of scientists and philosophers.

Let us, once again, pay attention to some fundamental points. The source of creativity in this paradigm is the subconscious, irrational in nature. But in this case the creative act becomes absolutely uncontrollable, for creativity is understood as a game of unconscious forces. If a person interferes in the process of the emergence of a new one, the creative act ends immediately. This inevitably leads to a moral ambivalence of the results of creativity.

SECOND PARADIGM: THE SOURCE OF CREATIVITY IN CONSCIOUSNESS

The other school of thought, which can be roughly described as “personality concept of creativity”, believe in the creative potential of an individual and their consciousness independent of any higher power. They are trying to find common objective regularities in the creative process. Thus, G. S. Altshuller dreams “about the new technology of creativity where the thinking process is not chaotic but organized and clearly managed” (Altshuller 1979, 3). He considers that “principles of management thinking in the solution of inventive tasks... can be transferred to the organization of creative thinking in any field of human activity” (Ibid., 4). These attempts to improve psychological and pedagogical technologies in supporting the formation of innovative and creative potential of the individual in the University continue today (Mikhailova 2018, 11-20).

On the one hand, it is visible to the naked eye, even if we do not refer to the religious-mystical determinants that the mechanisms of creativity are mystery with a sealed secret, the nature of which is virtually impossible to study. On the other hand, there is a real pedagogical process of training composers, artists and scientists. Many outstanding artists and great scientists remember their teachers that shaped their creativity with affection. It turns out that you can try to find scientific information or some objective mechanisms, which though do not open the very secret of creation, but, at least, provide the most favorable conditions for its implementation (see Arbona 2016, 31-38; Craft 2005; DeFelipe 2011).

The first set of questions is, in some measure, outlined in the literature (Altshuller 1979; Bolshakov 2008; Bono 1993; Sternberg 2006). In their studies, the authors are trying to consider the nature of creativity as a result of the activity of an autonomous person. It is associated with attempts of analysis, decomposition into its component parts and subsequent theoretical synthesis, the categorical comprehension and description of the creative process. Analysis of the literature allows us to distinguish four stages of this process. Everything begins with the accumulation and acquisition of life experience and understanding of being as a whole and man's place in it. The second stage is associated with advancing and formulating the main idea of the future work that will become its core. The third step is the development of design, preparation of the detailed work plan which in the fourth phase materializes in the work of art, scientific or philosophical theories.

The second set of questions is usually associated with the realization of dialectics of material-technical and spiritual-creative components of human activity. In conjunction with the spiritual task, the artist, the scientist, and the engineer have to solve material-technical problems. The idea gives meaning and the matter gives this meaning “flesh and blood”. It is necessary to take into account both sides in their dialectical unity. Not only the idea itself is important, but also its materialization. Its life incarnation is the most important moment of creative activity in culture. Otherwise, everything remains at the level of a barren imagination or empty dreams.

Finally, it requires understanding of the phenomenon of uniqueness and originality of the creative personality that should be fully developed and gifted by nature. The creative person must be a researcher and an expert of the phenomena of life or a maker of unique works of art or scientific discoveries, an author and a designer of the impact of his work on the minds and hearts of people. But only in the process of active and purposeful social activities these abilities can develop and rise to the level of talent.

The objective circumstances such as social environment, attitude of family and friends to a creative person play a major role in shaping the talent. Analysis of factors enhancing and developing the creative power of an artist, a scientist, a thinker allows us to make the correct conclusion: the formation of a peculiar personality of any creative person is based on his natural abilities, on specialized education in the process of hard creative work under the influence of active social life.

It is important to emphasize that within this paradigm man, their will, consciousness, life experience and natural talent are considered to be the main source of the creative process.

However, it is only true that a person can try to control the creative process, can try to develop, improve his creative abilities. But representatives of this concept cannot explain where the creative impulse comes from. The decomposition of the creative act into constituent elements, levels and stages, does not allow us to explain the most important thing: the inner nature of creativity. But it allows, to some extent, to create favorable conditions for its implementation.

THIRD PARADIGM: THE SOURCE OF CREATIVITY IS THE SUPERCONSCIOUSNESS

The third approach is the most ancient and widespread. This model of creative activity can be roughly described as religious-mystical, for the simple reason that supernatural reality and super-consciousness play the principal and decisive role, and the person is understood only as the translator of divine knowledge, of ideas and images into world culture.

Since antiquity to our time, numerous supporters of this approach understand creative activity as an exceptional and unique event of man's inner life that cannot be put "on stream" with the help of research and subsequent creation of an algorithm of creative activity to transmit it to everyone in the form of a recipe.

A unique feature of the human mind – creative thinking, exists or does not exist. If it is manifested, then only as a spiritual gift, or as a breakthrough of man to supernatural reality, to God, Who has the creative ability, by definition, that is, by His nature. Therefore, creativity may not be realized and expressed through scientific concepts, philosophical categories and theories. Only the process and results of the creative process can be registered, recorded, shown and described approximately correct, for example, in works of art.

It was well understood by Homer who created in the *Iliad* a wonderful artistic image of the god of fire and forge craft Hephaestus, who made "the shield of Achilles". Unlike other gods, with the power and cunning (Zeus), wisdom (Athena), foresight (Delphic Apollo), the lame Hephaestus had from birth a creative capacity for the invention that was part of his nature. None of the gods could compete with him on this matter. It was he who made different wonderful things for gods: for Zeus he created a wondrous scepter. By order of Zeus he made a beautiful woman Pandora from earth and water. For Helios – the

chariot, for himself – two girl-servants from gold, that helped cripple Hephaestus while he was walking. And finally, at the request of Thetis, Hephaestus “according to creative ideas” has forged the armor and “the shield for Achilles” of wonderful work, a masterpiece of skill and art (Gomer 1967, XVIII 582).

Philosophers of different times also tried to de-mystify the creative process. By Plato and Platonists, Kant and the German romantics the essence of creativity came to some “obsession” of man with a demon-guardian or genius, which was given to some soul as a gift of gods. Plato, through the mouth of Socrates conversing with the Ion, openly declares that “all good epic poets, not according to their abilities, compose beautiful poems, but only when they become inspired and obsessed” (Plato 1965, 535a). This thesis he extends to other poets who go out of their mind by the will of God, to let people know that not the poets themselves say such amazing things, “but God Himself speaks through them” (Ibid., 535v-d).

Similarly, in modernity, Kant was trying to understand and rationally define the essence of creativity in concepts. He notes that not man, but the genius or spirit given “to people at birth” protects them, guides them and creates the original rules for art. Moreover, Kant emphasizes that men of genius do not understand and do not know how they do the new canons and rules for art, but they do it unconsciously, spontaneously, like nature (Kant 1995, 180-185).

In its own way this idea was developed by Orthodox thinkers who understood creativity as the inspiration of the human spirit from divine grace. God is the Creator; He created our world from non-existence by an act of will. Man –who was “created as His image” and “likeness” (Holy Bible 1982, Gen. 1:26) - can create something new only based on the nature of God the Creator. Therefore, man creates true masterpieces of art, opens up new philosophical ideas only in a state of inspiration, insight, intuition, shifting reality of the Heavenly world into our earthly mortal world.

For example, N. Berdyaev more than once has described his own “creative laboratory”. He has always emphasized that the most significant thoughts and ideas came into his head as inspiration, “like a flash of lightning, like the rays of the inner light” (Berdyaev 1990, 207). For him, creativity is always associated with inspiration: “When I start writing, I sometimes feel such strong creative impulse that I feel dizzy. My thought runs so fast that I barely have time to write. I never correct the written text, and I print it in the same form as it has been

originally written” (Ibid.). For him, creativity is always a heroic breakthrough in the “transcendent nature of the world” (Berdyayev 1989, 269), and its expression in the acts of human thinking and activity, in forms of culture.

All people are born creative but everyone possesses this gift in various degrees. D. Andreev takes note of some people chosen by God for a special creative mission. These are rodomysls (rulers-thinkers with the spirit of wisdom, defenders of the clan, tribe, family, patrons of the tradition and law), prophets (mediators between the supernatural and human), apostles (messengers), and geniuses that convey the highest Truth, Law, Beauty and Light to the world (Andreev 1991, 175). In such cases, creativity becomes the privilege of a spiritual elite.

We may agree with this, but only in the sense that any creative process always requires high civil responsibility, strict personal discipline, and continuous devotion. Real poets, artists, scientists must work hard without missing a single day in order not to lose their skills. However, most people are not spiritually and morally ready for such work.

In ancient times this idea was well understood. The Roman writer Pliny the Elder in *Naturalis historia* says, for example, that the court painter Apelles of Alexander the Great had a rule to work every day to make at least one stroke of the paint-brush.

The winged phrase “no day without a line” (Lat. *Nulla dies sine linea*), became the ideal for every creative person. In other words, a true artist must create like God Who created the world. Once again, in the third paradigm, the source of creativity is superconsciousness, certain higher powers, the Lord God Himself, and man is seen as an instrument that transmits the higher will to the world of culture.

This paradigm mentions a supra-rational source of creativity, which, like in the framework of the first paradigm, cannot be controlled by man either. Nobody can force God to do anything. It turns out that freedom is an internal condition of creativity. The supreme, the supra-rational (and not the lowest irrational forces) is the guarantor of true creativity.

So, the three main models of the creative process were considered. Each model has both strengths and weaknesses that should be considered in further research. We propose to use an “integrative paradigm” of creativity.

THE FOURTH PARADIGM: THE INTEGRATIVE MODEL

We propose to integrate the considered models of creativity, taking the best from them.

The fourth model of creativity can be called “integrative” because it provides a synthesis of the previous points of view. The goal of true creativity is an expression of the Divine world in the form of higher cultural values. It is possible to agree with the opinion of B. P. Vysheslavtsev who wrote that true creativity always expresses transcendental values but does not create them (Vysheslavtsev 1995, 57). However, people should not transmit something like a machine, but to manifest like a conscious co-creator to God. Finally, a person must spiritually change his subconsciousness so that low instincts would not influence the true creativity (as Freud tried to explain).

It has been shown that the source of creativity is the supra-rational or irrational forces, between which conscious human activity is being realized. Therefore, the nature of true creativity is connected with freedom. But on the other hand, there cannot be absolute freedom in the social cosmos, in the world of intelligent beings, which obeys the laws of law and morality. At first glance, an insoluble conflict arises: on the one hand, creativity tends to unlimited freedom, and, on the other hand, it must be limited to morality, without which the social cosmos cannot exist. Creativity creates culture, but it also creates the prerequisites for its destruction, if nothing is limited. But here it is important to remember that ancient mythology and especially the Christian tradition insist that the source of morality is God. Therefore, creativity, emanating from the superconsciousness, rooted in God, cannot act as a destructive force. People should always remember the social responsibility of their creativity. It depends on a person whose side he takes.

THE MAIN CONFLICT: FREEDOM AND MORAL RESPONSIBILITY OF MAN IN CREATIVE ACTIVITIES OR “THE GIFT OF PROMETHEUS” AND “THE GIFT OF ZEUS”

Freedom leads to certain moral problems because it assumes that a creative person is always a free human-being and, therefore, can direct the creativity towards good or evil (Chelyshev 2016, 61-87). The origins and consequences of the problem were meticulously thought out in ancient culture of Athens as well as in the Bible (Jerusalem) spiritual traditions, which became the foundation of Western civilization. Let us look at the problem of creative freedom and moral

responsibility of man through the lens of ancient mythology and the Holy Scriptures.

In the biblical paradigm it is well known that the Earth's human history began with the "original sin" of Adam and Eve, with splitting their holistic nature into two parts, so creative abilities were separated from morality. The continuation of this tragedy was the story of Cain the killer and his descendants, who embarked on the path of ambivalent creativity. The story of the first murder is considered as the first conflict between creativity and ethics (Pozina 2015). Death became the logical continuation of this process of human nature fragmentation.

The ancient myth describes the creation and destiny of man in a slightly more different way than the Bible. The ancient culture explained in detail this handicap (the division of nature into its constituent parts) in the myth of copper people generation created by gods. It says about the original division of human nature into two parts, which come into an irreconcilable conflict. In this conflict there are all the inner causes of the tragedy of human existence. We are talking about the dialectical contradiction between creativity, moral law and the voice of conscience. The myth mentions that people obtained the mind and creativity (craftsmanship of Hephaestus) from the Titan Prometheus who stole fire (a symbol of intelligence and creativity) from Olympus. Apollodorus writes: "Prometheus mixed earth with water, cast people and gave fire to them secretly from Zeus hiding it in a hollow stalk of the cane" (Apollodorus 1993, I VII 1). This led to technological advances that allowed people to settle down comfortably on the Earth. But because the instincts of the people were unrestrained, they died in internecine wars. To teach people harmonious social life (Plato 1968, 322 b), Zeus gave the moral law and conscience to them. However, the people rejected morality and conscience. Why? The fact is that the creative process is so fascinating that can never be fully satisfied becoming "insatiable" need for limitless self-expression, whatever the cost. This automatically leads to violation of all moral rules which are designed to limit people. Ancient culture appeals to getting measure in a human nature. Therefore, evil was understood as immensity, and good as moderation. This maxim was already clearly expressed by Hesiod in *Works and Days*: "keep the measure in all things and do them in due time" (Hesiod 2001, strophe 694).

As was pointed out by Plato, "the gifts of Prometheus", who made man intelligent and creative human-being, were to liken them to gods,

and allow them to adapt to the autonomous existence on the Earth, and "the gifts of Zeus" were to develop shame and conscience, the qualities necessary for peaceful social coexistence. It is not only scientific and technological progress that makes man alive, but also clear conscience, good relationships with people and faith in God (Plato 1968, 322 e). However, the reconciliation of the creative power and morality, mentioned by Plato, did not happen. The initial unbalance of human nature provoked people into the wrong choice of self-affirmation. People became proud of their creative gifts, the mind power and began to assert themselves by loving war and strife. As the Scripture says, "men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil" (Holy Bible 1982, John 3:19). In the ancient world it has already become the reason for a series of world cataclysms, in particular, the global Flood, the First world war between Asia and Europe (the so-called "Trojan war"); and not to mention two World wars in the twentieth century, which claimed tens of millions of lives. Let's say again, the antique mythology as well as the Bible clearly connects this tragedy with the total depravity of humanity, embarked on the path of creativity unlimited by morals: "Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the Earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually..." (Holy Bible 1982, Gen. 6: 5). In other words, creative people devoid of moral constraints became true "masters of evil". And culture, designed to create and transform man, changed into anti-culture distorting human nature and destroying the world.

CONCLUSION

We can draw a conclusion: there are four basic models of understanding creativity that complement each other. True creativity involves three moments: firstly, creativity is always creating a new one; secondly, creativity is always connected with subordination and symphony in the human psyche (subconsciousness, consciousness and superconsciousness); and, thirdly, it is connected with moral restrictions and limits governing the goals, tasks and forms of implementation of the creative process. If these points are not met, then there is a bias in favor of "creativity without borders" in which a person acts inconsistently, tending either towards good or evil. As the ancient poet Sophocles writes: "skillful in the creative work inclines / either towards good or evil" (Sophocles 1954, I, 370-373).

According to the ancient Greek tragedian, such throwing from side to side makes each person internally vulnerable, and not only hinders the harmonious development of culture, but quickly destroys it and leads man to tragedy. The inner contradiction of human nature (understood in classical mythology as a conflict between artistic freedom and moral responsibility), taken in its extremely intense form, acquires a symbolic value for the humanity at all times. Throughout history, the attitude to creativity has changed, it was considered from different points of view in scientific, psychological and philosophical studies. It must be stressed that the main thing: creativity is very important for the spiritual transformation of man and creation of the world, not for its destruction. In modern civilization evil takes a special significance due to two circumstances, namely, globality and irreversibility. Therefore, “the gift of Prometheus” and “the gift of Zeus” should dialectically complement each other.

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