M. Heidegger's Non-Metaphysical Humanism and Chingiz Aitmatov's Spiritual Humanism

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ABSTRACT
According to Heidegger, the way of thinking of modern European humanism is metaphysical. He strives to overcome metaphysics, and, accordingly, humanism based upon it. Humanism, in Heidegger's opinion, is supposed to originate from thinking man who is closer to being. It implies that, in "true" humanism, the focus is to be placed upon the historical essence of man with its source located in the truth of being instead of man as the matter in metaphysical humanism. The article includes an attempt to understand Heidegger's consideration regarding man and non-metaphysical humanism and also explores humanistic ideas by Chingiz Aitmatov (1928-2008), the prominent Kyrgyz writer. It mentions that both thinkers were developing secular foundations of humanism; however, Heidegger proceeds from the concept of Nothingness and the existential of fear, whereas Ch. Aitmatov applies the notions of love and spirituality.

Keywords: human being, non-metaphysical humanism, overcoming of metaphysics, existence, spirituality, mankurtism, love, spiritual humanism

I. INTRODUCTION

The issue of man is commonly known to be the central topic of philosophizing for virtually all the philosophers, and M. Heidegger is no exception. However, many historians of philosophy disagree with this statement believing that he pays too much attention to thinking about being, whereas man as such is in the background. Yet Heidegger does not regard being in an objectivist manner; he sees it as Dasein ("being there"), existentially. According to Heidegger, considering the truth of being implies simultaneously thinking of "humanitas of a humane man, homo humanus" [1]. Western man's metaphysical attitude, as Heidegger remarks, derived from the ancient and Christian worldview, leads to transcendent nihilism, forgetting real life interests, and "fading life instinct" (Nietzsche). He reveals leveling values of earthly being in the Western understanding of metaphysics. Accordingly, in Heidegger's opinion, the way of thinking of humanism is also "metaphysical" [2].

As we make these statements, we should keep in mind the historical context this reasoning was used in. Heidegger's brief "involvement" or "inclusion" in National Socialism made his brilliant "philosophical career" look suspicious; hence, Heidegger's reasoning about humanism after the war makes an alarming impression, to use the mildest term. In our opinion, discussions about man were actually conducted by Heidegger from the very start of his philosophical path. Letter on Humanism written by Heidegger in 1946 (and published in 1947) is not his essential work where he considers the issue of humanism. As Heidegger himself formulates it, the idea of Being and Time also contradicts the traditional (metaphysical) understanding of humanism.

Consequently, we must consider not only one of his works dedicated to humanism, but examine his entire philosophical path. Thought, according to Heidegger, goes against humanism because the latter fails to place the humanitas of man high enough. Letter on Humanism is Heidegger's reply to the letter by the French philosopher Jean Beaufret. In their turn, Beaufret's questions are inspired by J.-P. Sartre's considerations presented in his brochure titled Existentialism Is a Humanism and published in 1946. Another question is whether thoughts about man and being, i.e. Heidegger's "pure philosophy" served as the basis for his political philosophy, i.e. whether they could account for Heidegger's "involvement" and his "temptation of power". However, before we answer this question, we find it necessary to examine an equally interesting topic of Heidegger's "non-metaphysical humanism" without being limited to only one of his works.

II. METAPHYSICAL WAY OF THINKING OF HUMANISM

In our opinion, Heidegger's early philosophy is a sort of preparation for overcoming traditional metaphysics instead of its deconstruction, as many postmodernists see it. According to Heidegger, one cannot think within the framework of metaphysics. Thinking does not mean cognizing God by means of reason (scholiasts) or striving for the will to power (Nietzsche), engaging in objectification of nature (Descartes), affirming the truth of the world spirit (Hegel), developing transcendental philosophy (Kant and Husserl), or accepting humanism as the highest value (Sartre). To think, as Heidegger affirms, is to comprehend the truth of being in its initial form through the actual man in his present-day state, via the existence of Dasein. In Heidegger's opinion, understanding the essence of man and history depends on the change in the essence of truth. It means that man is determined via truth; if the comprehension of truth changes, the comprehension of man changes along with it.

Initially, truth was regarded by the early ancient philosophers as the non-latency (αλήθεια) of being. However, starting with Parmenides and Plato, truth started being considered the compliance of our knowledge with its object, and "correctness" became a decisive factor: "All Western European philosophy from Plato to Nietzsche thinks from the perspective of this definition of the essence of truth as 'correctness'" [3]. Heidegger intends to return to the original concept of truth. Unlike E. V. Falev, the Russian researcher examining Heidegger's works, who states that "philosophical thought shifts towards the strata of Eastern philosophy along with overcoming metaphysics as a European cultural tradition" [4], we believe that Heidegger overcomes metaphysics solely on the basis of Western European philosophy.

In the case of Heidegger, philosophy is possible only as overcoming metaphysics, in spite of the fact that Heidegger avoided calling himself a philosopher, considering that future thought was no longer philosophy, because it thought closer to the sources and proceeded from the profound oblivion of being. Heidegger's late philosophy, after the so-called "turn", can be regarded as metaphysics which has been overcome.

Heidegger intends to restore the ancient concept of man where he was defined as "τοζωονλογονὲχον: the matter ascending from itself that ascends in such a way that, in its ascent (φύσις), it has a word and has it for ascent" [5]. In other words, the essence of man is defined through φύσις understood as the "Living", but not in the sense of being "biological". Afterwards, "the Greek definition of the essence of man is soon reinterpreted in the Roman manner: ζωον transforms into animal, and λογος into ratio" [6]. Since then, man

begins to be thought of as an animal which has reason. The Greek concept does not reduce man to an animal, it thinks broader, as the "living" (φύσις) in general, "... man's essence cannot be reduced to animal organics... man's body is something fundamentally different from an animal organism" [7]. According to Heidegger, the very "animalitas which we attribute to man comparing him with the 'animal' is rooted in the essence of existence" that defines man in a certain way. In the metaphysical tradition, however, the being of man is omitted, it fades into obscurity.

The situation, as Heidegger supposes, is aggravated by the fact that, in classical philosophy, man understood as a "rational matter" is transformed into man seeking to have a will to power in Nietzsche's philosophy. In J.-P. Sartre's philosophy of existentialism, man turns into a "humanistic" man who creates himself as a project. By creating himself as a project, man can turn into a means for achieving the goal of this project. Although it may sound strange, there are elements of market thinking here, since man turns into a certain kind of project that has to be created to be subsequently used for some purpose. As I. Kant correctly demonstrates, man should be regarded as a goal, not as a means. Man is inexhaustible within himself, and he is not supposed to be created as a completed project until the end of his life. Prospective opportunities that have not become reality will always remain in man; man comprises more "human experience" than its external manifestations. "It starts seeming that now only his own self appears to man everywhere. Meanwhile, man actually no longer meets his own self, i.e. his essence", Heidegger continues [8].

According to Heidegger, in simple terms, man is not defined or determined by anything. Any definition of man misses his essence, driving him into the narrow framework of a rational definition, "Man is rather 'tossed' into the truth of being by being itself in order to preserve the truth of being while existing in this way, so that in the light of being, the matter could appear as the matter, as it is" [9]. In the philosophy of humanism, this essence is circumvented, as humanism thinks within the framework of a metaphysical project. "...man belongs to his essence only to the extent that he hears the demands of Being. Standing in the lumen of being is what I call the existence of man. This sort of being is inherent only in man…existence is where the essence of man stores the source of its definition" [10].

Yet, whereas Heidegger criticizes humanism, it does not mean that he preaches misanthropy or anti-humanism; on the contrary, he declares just the opposite, saying that "the highest humanistic definition of the human essence still fails to reach man's own dignity" [11]. In humanism, man is assessed as a supreme creature in comparison with all the others, "Humanism is a system of views that affirms 'man' as

the absolute (utmost) value of the world" [12]. While moving towards a certain value, even the supreme one, man starts being interpreted as someone who has a "price". Heidegger explains, "Characterizing something as a 'value' deprives the thing assessed in such a way of its dignity" [13]. A similar idea was expressed before by I. Kant who states that man has no value, instead, he has dignity. According to Heidegger, in humanism, man is objectified, but man is not limited to his thingness, "Something emerges in its being, it is not limited to thingness, especially when thingness is regarded as a value. When God is finally declared 'the highest value', this is a humiliation of the divine essence" [14]. Therefore, Heidegger seeks to regard man and humanism not in a metaphysical sense.

III. HEIDEGGER'S NON-METAPHYSICAL HUMANISM

Heidegger had to stipulate more than once in what sense he used traditional metaphysical concepts. Gradually, to avoid confusion when using the concepts, he developed his own language of expressions without concepts, selecting the words from the natural language. From now on, in Heidegger's opinion, the entity of man cannot be comprehended in the conceptual language; therefore, he refers to poets instead of philosophers. To him, among the poets, it is Hölderlin who "regards the fate of a human being in a more distinctive way than is available to 'humanism'" [15]. To Heidegger, thinking and poetry are each other's neighbors, hence it is important to grasp the sound of being and stay closer to direct "thinking". As the conceptual language of metaphysics fails to grasp the immediate proximity to things, according to Heidegger, this method of cognition conceals the possibility of "violence" against the matter. Man must be aware of his factuality, present-day and current state, and turn to himself, his direct experience, and immediately live here and now. It means that each man's life must proceed in its own way and stay unique and unpredictable. A zigzag-like life, according to Heidegger, is a genuine life. He probably demonstrated it in his own life. Existential modes of being of man are expressed by means of his being "tossed into" this world. According to Heidegger, the essence of man is revealed through "care", "curiosity", "horror", "death", "fear", "call of being", and "mood".

The matter exists; we call the "matter" whatever exists; in this sense, man is also the matter. However, man, according to Heidegger, unlike other types of the matter, is not limited to being the matter; otherwise, man would not have been different from nature or animals and in this case, he would be on the same plane with other types of the matter. But above all, he is the understanding matter. Without that, even man would not be man to man – he would not be able to recognize another man's humanness, his existence. Yet understanding is inextricably connected with speech. Understanding and speech are what makes a human a man.

Satisfying merely man's biological needs is not enough for him; otherwise, he would be just an animal or nature – anything except man. To gain human existence, he needs a special being. This being cannot be found among the matter; it requires a different level, that of transcendence. Among the matter, only man has this type of existence, this is why Heidegger mentions a special way of existence of man. Getting a grasp on being gives man his meaning of existence; by getting a grasp on being, man "breaks away from" the shackles of the matter, through being, man gains the ability to recognize another matter, enter into an intentional relationship with it, including those of his own kind, and acquire materials for constructing the world. Being (Dasein) is revealed in a special state, in a state of horror, in a special mood, or in a special care [16]. But man, as Heidegger states, constantly escapes from it, and this is why he remains only among the matter and, in order to console himself from this escape, he "invents" various gods and ideas. Man's life becomes total equalization. This is what is called the "oblivion of being". This process characterizes the metaphysical tradition from the very start; therefore, it has to be overcome.

Thus, Heidegger's non-metaphysical humanism, firstly, implies that man is something more than he is defined in humanism. Secondly, the essence of man can only be revealed via his correlation with being. In this case, man is potentially not defined; his essence always remains a mystery. Thirdly, a special language is required to approach the truth of being, and poets are able to express it using a natural language.

IV. CHINGIZ AITMATOV'S SPIRITUAL HUMANISM

Chingiz Aitmatov (1928-2008), an outstanding Kyrgyz writer of the Soviet epoch of the late 20th century, considered that any form of humanism, whether religious or secular, should include its fundamental truths. First and foremost, this is acknowledging the dignity of man and virtuous and harmonious relations among people and man and society. It was important for Aitmatov that man must develop spiritually and morally: "if man develops spiritually, the meaning of his life transfers from the material sphere to the spiritual one" [17]. That does not mean that earthly material life is worthless: on the contrary, it s exactly a spiritually developed person who can harmonize these two worlds in himself. In his literary works, Ch. Aitmatov always wondered, "How can a man be human?" We would add, "What is man's humanity based upon?" The Kyrgyz writer replies that

"the meaning of man's existence is in self-improvement of his spirit – there is no higher purpose in the world" [18]. And "it is exactly spiritual cognition that true humanism, which is an essential characteristic of a spiritual phenomenon, grows from" [19].

According to Heidegger, humanism can only be true when "man's humaneness resulting from staying close to being" is considered [20]. Being is always a secret, it does not reveal itself, and it is man's task to reveal this secret every time with the help of thought. Aitmatov also supposes that "the world can only be embraced by thought, only by the word expressing it" [21], and this is what makes man a human being. When man ceases to think independently, he does not exist authentically; that means that he has forgotten his humanness. But it is difficult for man to live a true life each time, i.e. to be guided by conscience. Ch. Aitmatov writes, "It is hardest for man to be human day after day" [22]. Man is his own task and challenge, and this makes man's life meaningful and eventful. "This is the beauty of reasonable being – climbing the endless steps to the radiant perfection of the spirit higher and higher from day to day" [23]. According to Aitmatov, if this process is reversed, man will be degrading in the spiritual sense and finally, he will inevitably fall into "mankurtism". The word "mankurt" can be found in the great Kyrgyz epos titled Manas, and it was Aitmatov who reintroduced it in the modern literary use. A mankurt is a person who "lacks the understanding of his own self", "... to sum up, a mankurt is not aware of himself as a human being" [24]. According to Aitmatov, it is precisely a certain society and its historical past that makes a human being a person. In other words, man is a socio-historical creature, "Loss of historical and moral memory, cultural and historical nihilism, intentional manipulation of people's consciousness, ideological excommunication of nations from their historical past, their cultural and spiritual heritage, language, kinship and, as a result, profound immorality and lack of spirituality are what is called 'mankurtism'"[25]. Aitmatov saw spiritual humanism as a way out of this state, "in our complex world fraught with atomic war, ultimately only humanism has self-affirmation of mankind" [26].

If staying spiritual and moral is a global task and a general guideline for man, it is supposed to be simultaneously expressed in his every single action. It means that man is guided by a certain absolute moral ideal which is unchanging and substantial, but this general issue is simultaneously manifested in a separate time segment. It may seem to man that this ideal is unattainable, this is why each segment of life demands viable ideas and motives, and such motives have to be updated for the better every time. It depends on comprehending "limit situations", as K. Jaspers defines them. The crisis of motives takes place when they no longer guide man. At this moment, man begins to be

"non-existent", retract into passivity, and new initiatives seem to be pointless. According to Aitmatov, in such cases, it is love that can transform a boring, mundane, and ordered world. Aitmatov asserts that love "is the meaning of life, this is the fullness of humaneness; without it, life is empty and meaningless, without love, there is neither spiritual creativity, nor poetry or music" [27]. Thus, love helps man renew himself, gives will to the new issues, and contributes to "designing" a renewed life within, reaffirming the virtuous beginning. Basically all of Aitmatov's works are constructed on the foundation of love, and he could masterfully describe it: it is no accident that Louis Aragon who translated the novel Jamila into French in his preface to it refers to it as to "the most beautiful love story in the world" [28]. According to Aitmatov, true humanism is the one that contributes to spiritual and moral development of man, and the culture man lives in plays an important role in it. Therefore, the dialogue of cultures is crucial for their mutual spiritual enrichment, since through this dialogue, "accumulation of cultural values and the experience of cognition take place" [29].

The spiritual practices of developed cultures are meant exactly for this purpose, "In culture, mechanisms for maintaining spiritual knowledge were created as philosophy, religion, art, etc., but they guarantee nothing. They are necessary, yet they are not sufficient" [30]. Therefore, the true essence of this internal renewal and development is that man himself could be renewed from within, "The light of the fire of the soul, the consciousness, the mind, and the heart of man are the true hearth of the spiritual. Therefore, spiritual ignition can occur only in the depths of the human heart, this is where the source of the water of life must open, a certain sense, human existence must reach their manifestation" [31].

V. CONCLUSION

Therefore, firstly, Heidegger's non-metaphysical humanism implies that man is "dependent" on the truth of being. However, according to Heidegger, this does not belittle man, on the contrary, it only increases his dignity. The truth of being understood as non-latency leaves man's entity uncertain: man is destined to constantly search for himself in order to discover himself again and again.

Secondly, Heidegger interprets humanism as a project of the metaphysical tradition which has to be overcome. In our opinion, non-metaphysical humanism is not another version of humanism, be it religious or secular. Heidegger's non-metaphysical humanism is a concept where anthropocentrism is overcome, and man is not the only value, measure, and judge of nature. At the same time, we do not slip into pantheism or fashionable present-day trends such as ecologism. In

this case, non-metaphysical humanism can be regarded in a broader way than the philosophy of humanism and ecologism does.

Therefore, Heidegger's thought, in our opinion, can help overcome nihilism and develop a concept of true humanism, regardless of all the vicissitudes of the philosopher's personal fate.

Thirdly, according to Aitmatov, the motives that contribute to man's spiritual and moral development have to serve as the basis of any humanism. For Aitmatov, such a motive is man's ability to think independently, but without breaking away from his nation and its cultural and historical heritage.

Finally, we can conclude that such different thinkers as the German philosopher and the Kyrgyz writer were developing secular foundations of humanism; however, in Heidegger's opinion, they are based on the concept of being as Nothingness and the existential of fear, whereas Chingiz Aitmatov seeks them in the concept of love and spirituality.

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