



## The Social Consequences of the “Death of the Transcendent”

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**ABSTRACT** The topic of this study is to confirm illusiveness of the thesis of the transcendent superfluity for society. The transcendental world of the absolutes is an area of patrimonial timeless compatibility, semantic, and axiological unity and forms metaphysical foundation of society. Repressiveness would not be caused by the nature of the transcendent, but it is caused by a violation of subordination between value and normative in society. The rejection of the value principles established in the foundation of the transcendental sphere of absolutes leads to the dominance of the normative (prohibitive) side of the social functioning and consequently to the perception of its repressiveness. Reduction of the metaphysical basis of society results in the society according to the laws of physics, without civilized prefixes – in the mode of “society without social”. Conservation of the society in elemental existential forms would result in unburdening the transcendental world.

### INTRODUCTION

In general, autonomy of man is treated as a way of liberating man from social repressiveness. However, in terms of autonomy, one can also regard this event as the “death of the transcendent” (“death of God”) (Von Der Luft 1984; Nietzsche and Common 1950; McCullough 2018). Then, the transcendent began to be defined by man as the same sphere of violence that subordinates man but also does not allow him to argue a free metaphysical beginning. For example, Scheler (1994) interpreted “death of God” as “a postulatory atheism of seriousness and responsibility” (Scheler 1994). Indeed, it can also be considered as a launch pad for moral non-deterministic relations between free identities.

Based on the researchers, man has won over the right to be a sovereign beginning himself from the transcendent. Saykina (2014) in her works mentions the flaws of human metaphysics, entrenched in School of the Beginning “with the principle of implicit priority of the Beginning in relation to all things that exist and hierarchical contact with reality” (Deleuze and Guattari 1977) and implemented contrary to the principles of School of Being; that is, compatibility, eventivity, and ontological responsibility (Saykina 2014).

Clearly, autonomy from the transcendent did not only have any effect on the encouragement of moral responsibility of a person, but it did throw him back into the dimension of arbitrariness. And if the transcendent launched the good

and collected the beingness, then man launches the evil as the beginning and divides the beingness and social compatibility. At the same time, freedom from the transcendent power is illusory: man felt himself unsupported and desolate (Suslov 2017).

Of course, hankering for infinite autonomy is inherent in the person who has come off the transcendent, saint and timeless, and meanings and values. The researchers believe that personal autonomy from the transcendent is a generating and catalyzing factor of autonomy from the social entity. However, this relationship has practically not been fixed and properly not investigated.

Man is an extremely contradictory creature. He aspires to autonomy, but does not know how to dispose of it, and what value of this autonomy for the development of essential powers and forms of compatibility with others is. At the same time, he does not understand that he himself can represent a repressive structure. It is not coincidental that Foucault (1991) wrote that fascism – in all of us, “pursues our minds and our everyday behavior, - fascism, which makes us love power, desire exactly what dominates us, and exploits us” (Poulantzas 2019).

Once God is no longer recognized as the ground and the enforcer of morality, the character and force of morality undergoes a significant change, a point made by Anscombe (2011) in her observation that without God the significance of morality is changed, as the word criminal would be changed if there were no criminal law and crim-

inal courts. There is no longer in principle a God's-eye perspective from which one can envisage setting moral pluralism aside. In addition, it becomes impossible to show that morality should always trump concerns of prudence, concerns for one's own non-moral interests and the interests of those to whom one is close (Eckstein 2019).

### Objectives

The aim of this essay is to reflect on the implications of the thought of the death of transcendent. It has to do with the a-teleological interpretation of Being and the world as a result of the collapse of the transcendent realm which heretofore had given a meaning to life.

### METHODOLOGY

The realization of this research objective was facilitated using the heuristic capabilities of the critically-reflexive approach and axiological analysis of the transcendent. Critically reflexive practice embraces subjective understandings of reality as a basis for thinking more critically about the impact of our assumptions, values, and actions on others (Cunliffe 2004). Axiology is a branch of philosophy that studies judgements about the value (Saunders et al. 2012). Specifically, axiology is engaged with assessment of the role of researcher's own value on all stages of the research process (Li 2016).

Axiology primarily refers to the 'aims' of the research. This branch of the research philosophy attempts to clarify if you are trying to explain or predict the world, or are you only seeking to understand it (Lee and lings 2008). In simple terms, axiology focuses on what do you value in your research. This is important because your values affect how you conduct your research and what do you value in your research findings. In fact, the hermeneutic approach and historical reconstruction contributed to the identification of social transformations due to the "death of the transcendent".

Hermeneutics as a research practice, if it is to remain true to its philosophical origins, involves reappraisal and reinterpretation in relation to its cultural contexts. Among the threads of connection affecting hermeneutic practice are the exigencies of academic institutions and evolving cross-cultural perspectives (McCaffrey et al.

2012). Hermeneutics as the methodology of interpretation is concerned with problems that arise when dealing with meaningful human actions and the products of such actions, most importantly texts. As a methodological discipline, it offers a toolbox for efficiently treating problems of the interpretation of human actions, texts and other meaningful material. Hermeneutics looks back at a long tradition as the set of problems it addresses have been prevalent in human life, and have repeatedly and consistently called for consideration: interpretation is a ubiquitous activity, unfolding whenever humans aspire to grasp whatever interpretanda they deem significant. Due to its long history, it is only natural that both its problems, and the tools designed to help solve them, have shifted considerably over time, along with the discipline of hermeneutics itself (Stanghellini 2019).

The task of historical reconstruction involves crafting a causal etiology for a specific event or set of events. Historical reconstructions provide both a chronology and a history (Godfree et al. 2019).

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The transcendent world was a breeding ground of man's eternal meanings. But not only he performed the function of diverting attention from injustice of the structure of society by escaping from reality, which is a cure for the things in existence. The transcendent equalized people in opportunities so that the success of a meeting with him depended on the personal qualities, and not on a social status. In general, familiarization with the transcendent was carried out as if in opposite to socialization. Therefore, a transcending person is a kind of being superfluous for society. Then, what happens to the social with the "death of the transcendental"?

Nietzsche (1994) famously proclaimed the "death of God," but in so doing it was not God's death that was really notable- Nietzsche (1994) assumes that most reflective, modern readers realize that "the belief in the Christian god has become unbelievable"- but the implications of that belief becoming unbelievable, namely, "how much must collapse now that this faith has been undermined," in particular, "the whole of our European morality". What is the connection between the

death of God and the death of morality? The researchers argue that Nietzsche (1994) thinks the death of God will undermine the "moral egalitarianism" that is central to modern morality, in both its deontological and utilitarian forms. The researchers offer an account of how Nietzsche (1994) sees the connection, arguing that no one has yet offered a nontheistic defense of moral egalitarianism (I focus, in particular but not only, on Rawls). The researchers conclude with some skeptical consideration (Leiter 2019).

The vertical and the "sky of essences" (Mamardashvili) have left the world, and, therefore, distinction between beingness and all that exists, saint and profane, elevated and low ... The world and man have turned into a plane. The mechanics of man's sight has changed: only a horizontal line of sight is available to him. In fact, the "percept is also being rebuilt; that is, the immediate background knowledge – sociality – hits the eye.

Thus, man "saw" society as a strictly defined object without transcendental lenses. Then, elaboration of the independent theory of society during the period of the "death of God" is not accidental. This can be defined as a theoretical "consequence" of emptying the transcendent. In turn, the emergence of an independent science of society means that the person himself puts himself in a distant position in relation to society and does not recognize it as a single body with it.

The researchers have taken into consideration the opinion of Rosenstock-Huussy (2000), "Meanwhile ... after theology and after natural science, in a bewitched world and under a dehydrated sky, a science of society arises. It tries to conceive of the human race in the variability of its character, in isolation from God and nature. Since man can exist only as a creature to be capable of change, the science of society must ensure that all ordered forms of human existence remain transient or undergo revolutionary transformations" (Rosenstock-Huussy 2000).

Therefore, one can state the following on the subject of what has been said: 1. The social theory in the "post-transcendental" era was constituted, as a science of the things in existence, of empiricism. Therefore, society existed without a transcendental plan, 2. It has ceased to contain stable foundations. Therefore, social theory focuses on social dynamics, 3. It is positioned as a

practical discipline. Concern for the fragility and temporality of social forms falls on the shoulders of social institutions and self-consciousness (social theory).

Thus, declaration of social theory as a science that studies the existent things led to the fact that stable (imperishable) transcendental values did not fit in it. Moreover, there was an explosion of transcendental values. The transcendent simply cannot exist. It has a purely social nature. To a certain extent, such is the case. Recall that Marxism revealed social, concrete historical nature of transcendental values and dependence of their content and functions on the type of prevailing social relations and ideology. Thus, God was considered as a certain social product, and Christianity was regarded as a religion adequate to the nature of capital.

Nietzsche (1994) also viewed the values considered to be transcendent from the perspective of a social theorist. In his work *On the Genealogy of Morality* (Nietzsche 1994), he indicated that the right to determine the content of the good was in the hands of "gentlemen", and their vested interests were initially laid in it, which contradicted the principle of selflessness of the good. Nietzsche (1994) argued that morality is a violent tool for influencing a person using "social strait jacket", in connection with which its metaphysical essence was completely denied. The transcendent was the source of resentment being anathema to him. Here, it is mentioned that Kondratiev (2011), comprehensively provided analysis method of the transcendental values by many authors in his work.

There is another attitude. For example, Berdyaev (1994) writes that the concepts of good and evil depend on society, but the good and the evil do not exist; in fact, this is the society that depends on them and on their ontology.

Therefore, values began to be considered as an instrument of social violence. Actually, transcendental values were used to contribute to the "departure" of a person from social repressions, now it is the axiological sphere that acquires the status of a source of repressiveness in relation to man, as a result of which the idea of emancipation from social emerges. However, this impression arises from our point of view because of the reduction of the entire diversity of the axiological sphere only to the normative (prohibitive) side,

which happened together with the “death of the transcendent” variety.

The researchers explain this in an indirect way. Therefore, refer to morality which in its ideal component adds up to the norms of moral behavior, on the one hand, and to the values and ideals that underlie these norms, on the other hand. From the earliest times, there has been a theoretical problem in ethics: which category, either good or duty, should be put forward as a fundamental category. At the same time, a pure ethics of duty intrinsically may turn out to be fragile due to the lack of an answer to the question: “why should this be done?” Thus, with the absolutization of norm and duty and negation of the value component of good, morality may appear in an unfavorable light as something that prohibits, but does not incline to good or as something that holds back a person, but not liberates him.

However, one may follow the letter of the law but be so far from true good, as it was charged with Pharisees and Scribes by Christ. The absence of a value component consists of a formal adherence to the standards and emasculation of an emotional component from the sphere of relations such as love for another person and recognition of inherent value. That in the name of which that did exist disappears. There is a shift in motivation; in fact, it becomes external, not internal, and where external motives are included in motivation, everything that is besides duty, we already stop dealing with morality *per se*.

In addition, the norm is usually verbalized in the form of a bound; that is, what should not be done. Most of the norms were formulated negatively: “thou shalt not kill”, “thou shalt not steal”, “thou shalt not commit adultery”. Therefore, the knowledge of good is illusory. Actually, we know more what should not be done; that is, we know evil. But not making malicious mischiefs does not mean pursuing good works. Good is not limited to fulfilling norms, it is free virtue (and not a limitation of actions). It is founded not only on “freedom from” (as it happens in the law, which prescribes more prohibitions), but also on “freedom for”. It is not coincidental that Solovyov called the negative wording of the “golden rule of morality” (through “not”) the “rule of justice”, and the positive one - the “rule of mercy”.

However, in the case of the ignorance of the transcendent in the social functioning, similar re-

ductions will occur. The social without the transcendent is similar to a Decalogue without Faith, Duty without Good, Justice without Mercy, and human reciprocity without Love...

Owing to the loss of the transcendent, the self-coercion and self-restraint mechanisms; that is, the growth points of metaphysics of a social subject – the person – ceased to work. However, as M. Heidegger wrote, supersensible reality was, “obligatory”, but its “obligingness” was not based on the leverage. In fact, disappearance of an axiological component of the transcendent leads to the totality of taboos and extrusive nature of the regulations. Hence, perception of social repressiveness is here.

It would seem that we should observe the flowering of institutional forms of the social, but the opposite is happening. In principle, any social institution has a certain set of norms. A value component of the transcendent has disappeared, and only the dangling norms without substantiation have remained. In addition, transcendental values were universal and timeless, as a result of which they added stability to the forms of the social. Without a transcendental level in the functioning of social institutions, subjectivity dominates the interpretation of standards and relativism, and social practice turns into a catastrophic avalanche of precedents ... Moreover, institutional forms fall ill with bureaucracy, corruption, nepotism, and so forth. Therefore, formal adherence to the norm and the law naturally leads to inhuman (anti-human) attitude towards man. The transcendent has been removed - and the value of man has disappeared, although man himself is not transcendent.

Thus, society needs a healthy balance between value and normative, or, in other words, “law and love”. At the same time, “the law in its prohibitive part is based on fear of punishment (therefore, it can formally reproduce not a concern for public order in a person, but egoism and, thereby, separating people), but the functioning of the social needs bonds that are created when it is turned on, speaking metaphorically, love (and the letter of the law is not important here)” (Saykina 2015).

Consequently, due to the killing of the transcendent, everything social is reduced ... and is done only in the form of existing connection of people, spontaneously built up or continuing to exist automatically, “well tracked”. The transcen-

dent allowed society to transcend to new forms through the metaphysics of man. Now, the social begins to live according to the laws of physics, spontaneous compatibility without civilized prefixes. An example would be a mass society, which is a natural state of humanity. It is the apotheosis in the reduction of the developed social forms to natural (elementary) connections. Mass as physics of the social does not know axiology. Thus, the lack of genuine communication and genuine transcendence of man compensate for crowding.

The phenomenon of "society without the social" arises with a mechanical way of people's relationship. In this case, the reduction of life would occur to the laws of survival, the same interchangeability of the individual, as in biological evolution. Such a society is characterized by the logic of the breakdown of social ties, a short-term mentality, "absorption of the public by the private", narcissism and the consumer approach, the crisis of the family and marriage, and other "diseases" of contemporary society that have been described by social thinkers more than once (Lasch 1980; Bauman 2001; Charles and Lipovetsky 2006; Baudrillard 2016). The social consequence of the above situation is that man is driven only by private, selfish interests and goals, he strives for private benefits, reducing to an ordinary consumer. Without a transcendental dimension, personal narrow-mindedness and an inability to existentially responsible thinking would develop, and therefore man demonstrates an internal, self-directed, and external repressiveness.

1. The autonomy of modern man can be represented in the form of two interconnected directions of liberation; that is, emancipation in relation to the transcendental world and emancipation in relation to the social world. Moreover, the first produces or catalyzes the second.

2. It was that time when the idea of "the death of God" was put forward, which is an independent theory of society that was being formed; it is natural that, being without a vertical and without an ontology, all social realities were reduced to the existent, and there was no room for acts of human transcendence in it. However, this theoretical consequence is also a reflection of the objective crisis of the classic institutional forms of society and the ways in which the modern person realizes metaphysical principle.

3. In the situation of the "death of the transcendent", the prevalence of normativity over the value component leads to the dominance of external coercive social tools and, therefore, it produces a perception of its repressiveness. As a result, a conflict arises between social institutions and personal attitudes of people having value character.

4. The generic dimension of the social is also lost, and society reproduces only a partial person and elementary social forms of existence. Destruction of the civilization foundations of the social leads to the functioning of society in physics mode, which leads to the phenomenon of "a society without the social". Without a transcendental stratum, the social is rapidly depleted, since the buildup of social tissue occurs owing to the subjectivity of a person, including acts of its transcending. Metaphysics returns the sky to the social, albeit anthropologically sized.

## CONCLUSION

The transcendental reality was a semantic and axiological reality, a transverse link of meanings and values, and in such a way that the absolute kept them in a certain unity, did not allow them to fall apart into an individual, relative, and subjective existence. The transcendent is the one in the name of which everything exists, in the name of which man acts, communicates, builds ties with others ..., and lives.

Importantly, the transcendent is frequently interpreted as ultimate Otherness in other contexts. Hence, there is the thought of its redundancy for society. However, the transcendent is other not at all in relation to man and society, it is a human and socially-sized reality.

Altogether, autonomy in relation to the transcendent has become a factor in abstracting man and society. Thus, once again, we encounter the question of the extent and expediency of human autonomy in its implementation of a metaphysical entity. The worst thing is that autonomy is not supported by ontological thinking and ontological responsibility.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Therefore, theoretical interest of the authors was aimed at identifying a number of theoretical

and practical transformations taking place in society as a result of the “death of the transcendent”. Of course, we are aware of the fact that we have determined only some general trends, and more of them from a certain angle - through the ratio of the value and the normative in the functioning of society, which raises the problem of the need to analyze other possible consequences of the devastation of the transcendent.

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