

THE EXPERIENCE OF GROUND OF BEING AS ANTIDOTE FOR ANXIETY AND FEAR

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Introduction

The ontological question of the ground of being is one of the fundamental philosophical discourses; however, it has a practical and human foundation. What is the human being and what is its base? What supports, and protects us in life? What helps us to withstand our anxiety, objective danger, the variability of life, its finitude, disease, ageing, and death? In what cases do we come to meet our own being, and how do we experience it? In this report, I would like to present the Existential - analytic view on the concept of "Ground of being". Moreover, how this experience can help us to overcome anxiety and fear, when the familiar world with its stability, predictability, balance and poise dramatically goes into the past, external structures and institutions cease to be sufficiently resistant; when wars, social and political upheavals spread throughout the world, and the citizens of almost no country are spared from dramatic upheavals.

Philosophical dimension

So, what is the human being, and what is its ground? Does it have ground? In what cases and under what conditions does our being become perceptible to us? In what cases do we lose this feeling? How do we experience it? How can we deepen our experience of being?

The problem of Being - is primordial in philosophy and in practice. It has the highest, the limiting degree of generalization. It is the cornerstone of the worldview. It executes the function of the creation of meaning. It is a higher value and a measure of moral responsibility. It appears in front of a person in the context of questions on death, immortality, and ways of human self-realization. It can be realized, understood, and experienced by a person (is given for the sensation).

Among basic philosophical sciences on Being are: metaphysics studies the very primordial, beyond the senses, and non-physical fundamentals of Being, it searches the answers - "What is Being?" and "What is the first Being?": ontology considers species, levels, and manifestations of Being, it explores "How does Being manifest?"; epistemology is a theory of cognition - "How can we know Being?" (1,12)

From ancient times people tried to comprehend their being and to take a personal position about it. The most structural concepts of Being were developed by Pre-Socratics (Thales, Democritus, Heraclitus); afterwards, by Plato and Aristotle. The thinkers of ancient China and India also had original concepts of being. Being comprehended medieval philosophers, in particular, Thomas Aquinas; philosophers of the Renaissance and New Age (B. Pascal, B. Spinoza); German idealists (I. Kant, J. G. Fichte, F. Schelling, G. F. F. Hegel, L. Feuerbach); materialist philosophers (T. Hobbes, J. La Mettrie, D. Diderot, K. Marx, F. Engels, etc.), and philosophers of the XX (M. Hartmann, F. Brentano, B. Russell, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, Jeddah Krishnamurti, etc.).

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For example, in his book "What I believe" (1925), Bertrand Russell said: "I think when I die, I will rot, and nothing will remain of my "I". I am no longer young, and I love life. However, I would think it beneath my dignity to tremble with fear at the thought of death. Happiness does not cease to be happy because it is transient, and thoughts and love do not lose their value because of their transience (10).

The study of Being, its essence, and its characteristics are inseparable from an attempt to know its primary sources, pre-bases, causes, and origins. The Bible tries to describe it in such a way: «In the beginning, was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (3). Another ancient book "Dao De Jing" said: "The nameless is the beginning of Heaven and Earth; the mother of all things is nameable.... " (9).

The German term "Grund" is defined both as a "base" and as a "ground", that is, a reason (4). The Ground of being is that, on which life bases. Humanity seeks to grasp this last foundation or primary source within the limits of philosophical or scientific knowledge, theological-religious context, and others like that. However, thinkers know that "Any primary source in its proper sense is not provable" (2)

Personal dimension

Despite that, in a practical, purely human sense, we are more concerned with the fact of how Being manifests itself personally for us, as for a human being, and how it can become tangible for us. According to M. Heidegger, only a Being of human can be called Being in the higher sense of the word - an existence, and only through its existence, this "emotional-practical-understanding-own-life-here," a person can realize and fully experience its own life and find its meaning (5) Access to the experience of Being, each of us has personally. "Being is something most intimate, deepest in all things because it is a formal factor of everything that really exists" But being is innermost in each thing and most fundamentally inherent in all things since it is formal in respect of everything found in a thing" (11).

In the Existential analysis, the experience or feeling of being is primarily associated with the ontological basis - the very fact of our own existence. It becomes accessible through awareness, research, and conscious implementation of our own Being-here (Da-zain). The "Ground of Being" is an ontological fundamental experience, rooted in the very fact of our being in the world. It is, based on experience, assurance that "there always is something that supports and holds me", there is something more than I - the world, the laws of the world, the order, the cosmos, God (7).

Within the concept of Existential Analysis, this ultimate basis is called the "Ground of Being" - although it can be cognitively understood and interpreted, its greatest value appears in the emotional and sensory experience, that is accessible to the person. M. Heidegger said: "We cannot cover the Ground of Being, we cannot understand it - we can only build relationships with it again and again as if groping it from the outside, as if the root absorbs nutrients from the soil, and go from depth to high, - into the lumen of being (5).

The Ground of Being reveals in the experience of our existence, through the fact that borders on the banality: "I am here, I exist". This is the beginning of the whole truth; everything else is possible for me only because of the fact of my being (7). The Ground of Being - the feeling that I am inseparable from being, I am part of it, rooted in it, it supports me, it is something that permeates everything. Many of us have such experiences during our life, in childhood, for example, in other peaks, borderline or unexpected situations. Or when our world and life had changed dramatically.

Psychotherapeutic dimension

As a psychological experience, this means being arranged in our own life in any case: we can accept and withstand it. This feeling is shaped by the knowledge gained in specific situations of life (situational experience of being). From the experience of this presence of the last foundation comes our "Yes" for the world, and for life here, for its conditions, - inner consent to "be in this world" and to what is given. As a result, something that can be accepted - can be accepted, and something difficult to accept - can be withstood (6).

Under what conditions the Ground of Being is becoming noticeable for us? When we are deeply in touch with ourselves. Because our "Essential self" is rooted in this Ground and inseparable from it. In cases of conscious circulation and experience of the fact of our own being here, through peak experiences, prayer, meditation, gratitude; contemplation of nature, beauty, majesty, etc.

When do we lose this feeling? Being here is so self-evident that sometimes we do not pay attention to this fact. Then access to it becomes lost. It goes not about "cogito ergo sum", but rather about "sentio ergo sum". Though thinking can lead to Being, in the existential sense – the most important is "I feel, therefore, I exist" or "I feel that I exist". It is lost when our sensitivity, and emotions are abnormal or in a spasm; we are under stress, too busy with our thoughts, plans, and concerns. If we live a life, in which there is no order.

How do we experience the loss of this feeling? Without this contact with the "ground of being", life is filled with fear. Any deviation from the usual path, at least suffering becomes a threat, and joy is doubtful. There is no structure in life, and we have nothing to rely on. Everything is chaotic and undirected. Experiencing trauma destroys the initial life trust and fundamental life trust.

Fundamental trust according to Alfred Leangle has three bases - myself, the people around me and the world system. At the heart of Fundamental trust is the feeling (experience) that "there is always something" that is available and gives foundation; even if all the structures collapse, I am still in a certain order. In the metaphorical sense, it is the trust that being here has a Foundation that exceeds my being that is why this world, and my existence can be supported. We can name it an experience of pre-faith, but it is worth considering this experience within the anthropological, generally human context (8).

Thinking can make this experience very intense if in reflection you ask yourself the question: "How can it be that I am?". It is strange, it is hard to understand; it takes us beyond understanding to direct experience. The mind's capacity in this matter may be limited because this rootedness of our being was before our cognitive growth, so our sensitivity can lead us deeper.

When we are questioning ourselves: "We live, we are here - but do we feel it? Do we feel it with our bodies? In this world? Do we feel are supported in it? Are we here, present? In this room, in our family, with our friends? Are we living at this moment? Or we are mentally absent. Have we ever wondered about the fact that we are here? Here, in this world? Moreover, it is at this time, not in the past century, not in the future. Have we ever been surprised by noticing how it happened that we are here? Do we feel protected inside ourselves; can we be kind to ourselves? Can we accept our feelings, fears, joys, pains? Or do we have to fight, hide something from ourselves, devalue it, and reject it?

These simple questions lead us to the deepest realms of the human psyche, where man is ontologically rooted. It is worth finding out what resonance they cause in you: resistance, surprise, shock, irony, stuffiness, liberation, joy. So that it does not arise in us, A. Leangle advises us to take

these attitudes seriously and pay attention to them. To give them space to experience and feel. Above self-understanding, they can pave the way for us to experience the "Ground of Being".

I would like to conclude this report with a Korean proverb: "A big tree must have strong roots." And I wish all of us to take deep roots in our existence. In the context of accelerating the exponent of life, this may be more than relevant for many people.

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