



INDIVIDUALISM OF THE PHENOMENON OF A STRONG PERSONALITY IN THE AGE OF THE RENAISSANCE

Tasheva Nafisa Zayniddinovna

Bukhara state medical institute, English chair

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ABSTRACT

This scientific article is aimed at analyzing, identifying and establishing the socio-cultural phenomenon of the individualism of a strong man in the era of the European Renaissance. The concept of "strong personality" in the above context reveals, first of all, the spiritual, moral and volitional qualities of a person to oppose himself to all the hardships and challenges of medieval society and the power of Europe, reflecting his personal experiences and reflections in works of art, poetry, drama and other forms of highly cultured self-expression.

Introduction

The characterization of Westerners as individualists becomes clearer when viewed as a reaction to medieval collectivism. In the Middle Ages, in the words of Burckhardt, a person "consciously identified himself as part of his tribe, people, party, family or corporation. realized himself" [1, p. 78]. Each person was aware of his place in the economic structure of the guild, the psychological structure of the family, the hierarchy of feudal relations, the moral and spiritual structure of the church. The channels for expressing emotions were social in nature. There were holidays for emotions that united people, and for expressing aggressive emotions, phenomena such as crusades arose. "All emotions were placed within the rigid framework of social norms," Huizinga wrote. 45].

However, according to Huizinga, from the 14th century to his 15th century, the hierarchical structures of churches and societies that once served as channels for the expression of emotions and experiences became tools for suppressing human vitality. . The final stages of the Middle Ages are marked by the desperate use of symbols, which are, so to speak, ends in themselves. They lack important content, they are divorced from reality. The last century of the Middle Ages was characterized by depression, melancholy, skepticism and great anxiety. This anxiety manifests itself as a fear of death and a general fear of demons and sorcerers[346]. . "It is enough to see the work of Boss and Grunwald," wrote Mannheim. This anxiety found symbolic expression in the all-pervading fear of demons. The individualism of the image of the Renaissance magnate was part of a



reaction to the degenerate collectivism of the late Middle Ages.

Materials and methods

A new recognition of the value of the individual and new ideas about the relationship between man and nature, which became the main motives of the Renaissance, are figuratively presented in the works of Giotto. Many scientists believe that the time period separating Giotto from his teacher, Cimabue, is precisely the beginning of a new historical era. Giotto lived during what is called the "first Italian Renaissance" that preceded the Renaissance[4]. In contrast to the symbolic, motionless images of a person in medieval painting that look directly at the viewer, Giotto has figures that are somewhat turned to the side and have independent movements. Painters of the Middle Ages express generalized, unearthly feelings related to certain types, Giotto begins to depict the emotions of specific people. On his canvases you can see the sorrow, joy, passion or surprise of ordinary people in ordinary life - a father kissing his daughter, or a mourning man at the grave of his friend. The writer, the artist, who takes pleasure in depicting simple feelings, includes animals in his paintings; the pleasure with which Giotto paints trees and stones anticipates the joy in front of simple forms, which is characteristic of the artists of subsequent centuries. Although Giotto partly remains faithful to medieval symbolism, at the same time, new features characteristic of the Renaissance appear in his painting - a new humanism and a new naturalism.

The name of Shakespeare is associated with the concept of "tragic humanism": awareness of the tragedy of the individual, forced to fight with society.

Almost always this struggle is doomed, but necessary and inevitable. Shakespeare fully shared the ideals of the Renaissance, but the central conflict of his plays was determined by the discrepancy between the Renaissance ideal of man and reality. Society is hostile to this ideal.

A critical attitude towards an imperfect society is connected with its attitude towards time, a powerful force, which, however, does not correspond to the principles of the world order, according to the figurative expression of the playwright: "Time has dislocated the joint." This dooms most of Shakespeare's characters to inevitable death, and even in comedies with a happy ending, the characters go through severe trials. Most of his heroes strive to comprehend not only themselves, but also their time, and the place of man in the world and eternity, and the confrontation between good and evil. Reflection, understanding by them of their destiny, fate, mistakes leads them to enlightenment and gaining true spiritual strength to overcome all social obstructions.

In the Middle Ages, a person was perceived as a particle of a social organism, but in the Renaissance, a person became an independent whole, and the social environment turned into a background against which an individual person stands out. Comparing Giotto with representatives of the Renaissance, the period of its full bloom, one can notice one significant difference: Giotto valued a simple person (in this you can notice the influence of St. Francis of Assisi), while in the Renaissance a strong personality began to be valued. It is to this feature in its historical development that we should pay special



attention, since it is the cultural basis for the anxiety of modern man.

The radical changes that took place during the Renaissance in almost all spheres of life - economic, intellectual, geographical, political - are well known and do not need explanation. All these changes are causally related to the belief in the power of free and autonomous individuals. On the one hand, these fundamental changes themselves were based on new ideas about a person, but on the other hand, social changes are taking place, as a result of which the emphasis is shifting to manifestations of strength, initiative and courage. knowledge and entrepreneurship. Social mobility frees a person from the forces of the medieval "caste" family system. Thanks to their strength and courage, anyone can become a great person, no matter where they come from. The wealth that emerged from the development of capitalism following the expansion of trade created new opportunities for the enterprising and was a reward for those who were willing to take risks. The prestige of teaching and learning grew, and it was a sign of intellectual freedom and curiosity. The wandering student, whose whole world is the university, symbolizes the connection between the new desire to learn and freedom of movement. But at the same time, knowledge is valued as a means of gaining power. Lorenzo Ghiberti, a Renaissance artist, said: "Only one who has studied everything in the world can fearlessly downplay the vicissitudes of fate" [5, p. one two three].

The political instability of the Renaissance taught the people to use force and power as they saw fit, when the tyrant who ruled the city was soon replaced by

another tyrant. Each person had to fend for himself alone. A competent and courageous person can occupy a high position in society.

"Under these conditions, the free play of ambition acquired an unusually strong impetus. Thanks to his abilities, a simple monk could become a pope and the last soldier, the Duke of Milan. Arrogance, decisiveness and disrespectful violation of the moral code were the main means of achieving success" [7, p. 259].

Regarding the violence that accompanied individualism at that time, Burchard said: his right with the help of his own strength "[8.c.351].

Results and discussion

Speaking about the results of this study, it would be worth noting that the Renaissance is by no means characterized by a belief in the value of the individual in itself. Rather, as we have already mentioned, a strong personality was valued. It was tacitly assumed that the strong could exploit and manipulate the weak without feeling remorse or pity. It is important to remember that the Renaissance, which gave rise to the principles that many people of our time unconsciously assimilated, was not a movement of the masses, it set the tone for a handful of strong and gifted individuals.

The idea of virtue in the Renaissance generally included courage and other qualities necessary for success. "Actions began to be judged on the basis of success; a person who could help friends, intimidate enemies, and pave the way to success by any means was considered a hero. What Machiavelli called the word "virtu" retains only those of the Roman "virtues" (virtus) that have to do with the courage, cunning and personal skill of a person who achieves



his goal, whatever it may be. We can see how closely linked individualism and competitiveness are. Ideas about success as the triumph of a strong man striving to occupy an important place in society, with society itself being rather a stage for his battle, all this established an inextricable link between success and competition. Society rewarded a person who achieved self-realization due to his superiority over other people.

Belief in the power of a free man was a completely conscious attitude during the Renaissance. Leon Alberti, one of these outstanding people who excelled others in everything from gymnastics to mathematics, formulated, as it were, the slogan of such a strong personality: "A person is capable of doing anything if he wants to" [353]. But the spirit of the Renaissance was especially accurately expressed by Pico della Mirandola, who wrote twelve books, where he proved that man is the master of his own destiny. In his famous Oration on the Dignity of Man, he depicts God addressing Adam with these words:

"We have not determined for you a permanent place of residence and have not commanded you to wear any particular guise ... Not bound by tight fetters, only by your free will, to the power of which I betray you, you must determine your nature yourself. I placed you in the middle of this world, so that from here it would be more convenient for you to look around the whole world. You were not created either heavenly or earthly, neither mortal nor immortal, so that you yourself could become your own free creator and sculptor and give yourself the form you want. You have been given the power to descend lower and become like the grossest

creatures. You have been given the power to reach for the higher, to strive for the Divine - with the help of your mind.

Such an idea of the power of man and his freedom to move in any chosen direction is, in the words of Symonds, "a revelation of the spirit of the times" [9, p. 154]. There are no limits to the possibilities of a person, if only he, as Michelangelo said, is able to "believe in himself." The conscious ideal of that time was *l'uomo universale*, the many-sided man who had fully realized his abilities.

But does such a "wonderful new world" have its negative side? Clinical experience tells us that such self-confidence must be balanced by something opposite. It can be seen that at a less conscious level, under the optimism and self-confidence in people of the Renaissance, despair and a new sense of anxiety live. These hidden feelings, which come to the surface only towards the end of the Renaissance, are easy to see in Michelangelo. On a conscious level, Michelangelo celebrates individualism and is willing to accept the loneliness that it entails. "I don't have any friend and I don't need friends," he writes. "The one who follows others will never be ahead, and the one who cannot rely on his own abilities will not benefit from the works of other people" [9, p 419]. This is nothing like Auden's words:

... for the Ego is but a dream,

Until someone called him by his first name.

But in Michelangelo's painting, one can see tension, conflict, which are a counterbalance to the excessive individualism of that time. In his frescoes in the Sistine Chapel, there is a sense of unrest and excitement. Michelangelo's human figures, according to Symonds,



"breathe with a strange and terrible unease". Renaissance writers and artists sought to recapture the spirit of classical Greece, but, as Symonds notes, there is a huge difference between Phidias' "balanced calm" and Michelangelo's excitement[6, p. 356].

Almost all the people depicted by Michelangelo at first glance seem strong and triumphant, but if you look closely, they have wide eyes, which is a sign of anxiety. We expect to see fright in his fresco "The Condemned, Horrified at Their Fall," but what is surprising is that a similar frightened expression, although not so pronounced, is also characteristic of other human figures painted on the walls of the Sistine Chapel. One might think that the artist wants to demonstrate that this internal tension is inherent not only in his time, but also in himself as a son of his era: in Michelangelo's self-portrait, the eyes are again greatly dilated, which is a typical sign of wariness. One can find the same latent emerging anxiety behind conscious ideals in many Renaissance artists (take, for example, the harmonious people depicted by Raphael). But it was Michelangelo, who lived a long life, outgrew the youthful dreams of the Renaissance and saw the high point of the development of a new era. Thanks to his genius and depth of perception, he expressed his time better than his predecessors. The hidden tendencies of that era also found their clear expression in his work. The human figures of Michelangelo can be considered a symbol of both the conscious ideals and the "undercurrent" of the Renaissance; they look like strong winners, well-rounded people - and at the same time tense, excited and anxious.

It is important to note that hidden tension and despair is present in the work of those people who have achieved success in competition with other people. Therefore, their anxiety cannot be seen as a manifestation of frustration on the way to success. Rather, I believe it has to do with two direct consequences of extreme individualism: psychological isolation and the loss of collective values.

These two features of the extreme individualism of the Renaissance are described by Fromm: "It seems that the new freedom brought with it two things: it increased the feeling of its power and at the same time increased the feeling of loneliness, doubt, skepticism, as a result of which anxiety was born." One of the symptoms of hidden psychological tendencies was, in the words of Burchard, "a painful thirst for fame." Sometimes the thirst for fame reached the point that a person committed a murder in front of the public or some other anti-social act that outraged public opinion, in the hope that posterity would not forget his name[358]. This testifies to the loneliness and inferiority of relationships between people and the strongest need to find recognition from others, at least through aggressive action against them. Will a good or bad memory remain of a person - such a question was not the most important. This reflects one characteristic of individualism, which can also be found in the economic life of our time: aggression directed at others is a way to win their recognition. Sometimes a lonely child behaves in this way, who commits an antisocial act in order to receive care and recognition - at least in a perverted form.

There is no need to describe in detail the positive aspects of individualism that



appeared during the Renaissance, in particular, those new opportunities for human self-realization that it opened up, since they became the conscious and unconscious foundations on which modern culture is built. Less obvious are the negative aspects of individualism, and they are of direct relevance to the subject of this book. The negative aspects include the following features: (1) the inextricable link between individualism and competition, (2) the strength of an individual is in the first place, opposed to collective values, (3) personal success in competition is gradually becoming an unconditional value, (4) the psychological consequences of such changes that could be observed during the Renaissance and which affected people in a more severe form in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Such psychological consequences include alienation of a person from other people and anxiety.

Conclusion

Speaking of the anxiety caused by the emergence of individualism in the Renaissance, I called it "nascent" because at that time there was no obvious conscious anxiety. During the Renaissance, one could only meet anxiety in the form of a symptom. We could see from the example of W. Shakespeare that he consciously accepted his loneliness, but not anxiety. In this respect there is a huge difference between the lonely man of the fifteenth or sixteenth century and the man of the nineteenth or twentieth centuries who, like Kierkegaard, is aware of the anxiety caused by alienation from other people. In the Renaissance, a wide field of activity was opened before a person, so loneliness and the anxiety associated with it remained, as it were, an undisclosed topic. A person of that time, if he experienced disappointment

in some area, could always switch his attention to a new field of activity. This indicates that that time was the beginning, and not the end of a new historical period. The name of Shakespeare is associated with the concept of "tragic humanism": awareness of the tragedy of the individual, forced to fight with society. Almost always this struggle is doomed, but necessary and inevitable. Shakespeare fully shared the ideals of the Renaissance, but the central conflict of his plays was determined by the discrepancy between the Renaissance ideal of man and reality. Society is hostile to this ideal.

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Thus, during the Renaissance, Western culture was faced with a difficult task: which way should the development of interpersonal relationships (psychological, economic, ethical, etc.) go, how to combine interpersonal values with the values of individual self-realization, which is the true manifestation of strength personality? The



resolution of this issue could free the members of society from the consequences

of extreme individualism: from feelings of alienation and attendant anxiety.

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