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Freedom as a Key Value of the Volunteer Movement

Purpose of the article is to find out the main content and ways of embodying freedom as a value of the volunteer movement in the context of analyzing the social motivation of human behavior in general. Theoretical basis. The theoretical basis of the research is the philosophical and anthropological understanding of freedom as a person's creative overcoming of obstacles to establish his or her eccentric essence. Such a vision is embedded, in particular, in Karl Jaspers' philosophy of existence, Helmuth Plessner's philosophy of positioning in the world, and Paul Ricœur's philosophy of rational choice of life path. Originality. The importance of freedom as a value, as well as other social values, is revealed and specified through the analysis of the values of the volunteer movement. In the desire of people engaged in volunteer work to achieve freedom through other values, the content of freedom as a basis for self-reproduction of the individual, community and society is revealed. Conclusions. Representatives of various humanities and social sciences have distinct research interests in analyzing the values inherent in volunteers. As members of a certain society and certain communities in this society, volunteers do not act outside the economy, politics and other spheres of public life, but reveal their freedom through creative and non-standard solutions to economic, political, and other problems. At the same time, research psychologists focus attention on the personal selfrealization of a person, theorists and practitioners of social work study volunteers' desire to gain recognition from peers and other small social groups, and representatives of sociology, political science and other social sciences focus their attention on such socially significant values of volunteering as patriotism, solidarity, etc. The task of social philosophy is to justify the desire to contribute to the public good, which is common to all volunteers. Representatives of philosophical anthropology look for the best social intentions inherent in a person as a member of society in volunteering. Analysis of the values of volunteering as a motivator of human behavior provides knowledge of socially significant values inherent in every member of society to a greater or lesser extent.

Keywords: human freedom; volunteers; volunteer movement; value of freedom; socially significant values; values of self-reproduction

Introduction

The fundamental unlimitedness of human freedom, which is an essential and existential feature of man, was substantiated by Karl Jaspers (1956), one of the classics of German philosophy of the 20th century. At the same time, Helmuth Plessner (1975), a classic of German philosophical anthropology, specified that such an essence is realized due to the eccentricity of a person's positioning in the world. However, such a positioning specific to a person is not just eccentric, but the result of a person's reasonable choice of his or her life path among the many possible options that people see for themselves (Ricoeur, 1966). This already suggests that human freedom is not actually unlimited, but requires certain efforts from a person to overcome the actual limitations of his or her freedom. Actually, then freedom itself appears not as an abstract arbitrariness of behavior, but as a concrete liberation from certain defined limitations. A striking example of such efforts to liberate a person for the sake of self-realization and achievement of higher values in adverse circumstances is the activity of volunteers.

In order to study the importance of the value of freedom for the volunteer movement, it is necessary to analyze it philosophically – first of all, to find out what other values determine the behavior of volunteers, as well as what is the hierarchical relationship of all the main values of the volunteer movement. After all, volunteering is not a whim of people with free time, but is a conscious choice that often takes on organized forms:

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Volunteering is not just an expression of individual engagement and a spontaneous result of community life; it is often consciously organized and managed and it can be made an object of policymaking. This mixture of voluntariness and organization in the establishment of prosocial behavior makes volunteering a very interesting phenomenon. (Dekker & Halman, 2003, p. 1)

And, as in any organization, even an informal one, the volunteer movement has not only one core value, but a set of interrelated values. And while freedom is certainly the core value that gives the volunteer movement its very name, other values also perform important functions in volunteering that cannot be reduced to a mere means of ensuring this freedom.

Volunteering is a social phenomenon that has already received a special philosophical assessment (Drapushko & Iliuk, 2023; Horinov & Drapushko, 2022), yet its anthropological foundations still remain insufficiently studied. The topic of values is precisely at the intersection of social philosophy and anthropology, so both should be involved in determining the methodology of this study.

The basic *methodology* of this work will be the pragmatic version of liberalism (Iliuk, 2022). In addition, the methods of generalization and conceptualization will be used in the secondary analytical evaluation of the results of field research in the area of various humanities and social sciences.

Purpose

The purpose of the article is to find out the main content and ways of embodying freedom as a value of the volunteer movement in the context of analyzing the social motivation of human behavior in general.

Statement of basic materials

Typology of volunteering values according to research interest

The priority role of values in volunteering has long been identified by researchers. For example, in their joint paper, Dutch researchers – political scientist Paul Dekker and sociologist Loek Halman – argue that external social factors are often considered as secondary to the intrinsic motivation of volunteers:

Most studies seeking to explain volunteering find only weak correlations with socio-demographic characteristics such as age, income, education and social class, and thus volunteering cannot be explained in toto from

such attributes. Thus, it seems likely that explanations will be found in other individual features, such as values. (Dekker & Halman, 2003, p. 6)

And yet, the values also turn out to be very different – the values themselves reflect social influences: after all, there are values of different orientations – both for oneself, one's own self-affirmation, and for one's group, support for one's social environment, or generally humanistic, so to speak, "for the best against the worst".

As a starting point for this study, let us assume that different sciences have different visions of the key values of volunteering. In this case, different social sciences and humanities will see the freedom of volunteering differently, giving different meanings to the freedom of volunteering. Therefore, it can be assumed that psychology is dominated by a person-centered approach: the values of freedom will then be revealed in the freedom of self-realization, self-esteem and self-positioning in the world. In social psychology and social work, which is close to it in some respects, we can expect the dominance of the values of understanding, cooperation and mutual support, which characterize direct interpersonal interaction as the main subject of analysis. Also, at this level, one can expect the analysis of small groups of volunteers as like-minded people and members of informal groups. Finally, sociology and political science emphasize mass processes, and thus the freedom of volunteering will acquire institutional significance for these sciences. Here, too, we can expect results typical for the use of statistics and functional analysis, which would characterize the volunteer movement as one that is subject to formalization and which should be included as a component of the functioning of certain social systems, such as political or economic. It can also be assumed that social philosophy should approach the definition of freedom of volunteering from the standpoint of defining its essence, and on this basis – give a systematic definition of the value of freedom of the volunteer movement.

The general expected trend is to strengthen the direct relationship between commitment to the values of volunteering and the activity, scale and depth of involvement in volunteering activities:

Data from 534 volunteers of an international aid and development agency in the United Kingdom revealed a positive relationship between prosocial values and time spent volunteering. The results also show that volunteer engagement fully mediated the relationship between the value motive and time spent volunteering, and the strength of the mediated effect varied as a function of volunteers' commitment to beneficiaries. (Shantz, Saksida, & Alfes, 2014, p. 671)

Thus, we have two main objectives of this study, which determine its two main sections: the first, devoted to the analytical assessment and philosophical generalization of the meaning of freedom as a value of the volunteer movement in the special sciences; and the second, the philosophical section itself, which, on this basis, will make adjustments to the a priori approach to de-

termining the specifics of the assessment of freedom in various sciences and will point out the systemic links between these special approaches.

The meaning of freedom as a value of the volunteer movement in special sciences

Most studies on the topic of values in general and in the field of volunteering in particular are found in the psychological sciences. Here, values are interpreted mainly in a voluntaristic way, and an idea of the psychological understanding of the relationship between values is given by the so-called "Maslow's pyramid", in which the highest level is assigned to the value of self-realization (Boichenko, 2020, pp. 29-31; Maslow, 1954).

For example, British psychologists Amanda Shantz, Tina Saksida, and Kerstin Alfes (2014) prioritize compassion for the beneficiaries of volunteering, i.e. for those to whom volunteers provide assistance. Representatives of Ukrainian psychology advocate a similar position. Thus, D. S. Podolianchuk states:

For the most part, a noticeable and often decisive influence on the formation of students' value systems is exerted by the personal factor. Students are generally well-formed individuals with a fairly well-defined civic position, established views on life, and defined value orientations. In our opinion, students' inclination to volunteer largely depends on the level of their empathy... (transl. by O. I.) (Podolianchuk, 2019, p. 171)

Already at the level of the individual, the specificity of freedom in its embodiment in volunteering is manifested: although values are interpreted as one's own choice and the product of a person's volitional decision, this voluntarism, if somewhat self-centered, attracts the best manifestations of the person's ego – his or her self-satisfaction with the ability to empathize and feel compassion for others.

The pedagogical sciences, which are closer to social psychology and social work, show interest in small group values. For example, distinguishing between old and new types of motivation for volunteering in Central European countries, including Ukraine, Hungarian authors Veronika Bocsi, Hajnalka Fényes, and Valéria Markos (2017) note that such motivation is increasingly the desire for better socialization in small groups: "the motivations for volunteering among the young generation include belonging to a community, facing a challenge, professional development, spending leisure time in a useful way, and making new friends" (p. 120).

In a recent study by the same research team, which specifically examined whether the desire to advance one's professional career (i.e., selfish or social motives) was the reason for engaging in volunteering, they confirmed that altruistic aspirations remain in the first place: helping others (90 %), career-building (76-82 %), the inclusion of volunteering on the respondents' résumé (45 %) (Fényes, Markos, & Mohácsi, 2021, p. 14). However, even the motivation driven by the desire to improve one's professional career through volunteering was clearly higher only in those groups of respondents who chose professions close to social work as their specialty: "...career-building goals

are more likely to prevail among students engaged in helping professions, wherein volunteer work is to a large extent related to the field of study, as opposed to programs in business, economics, sciences, computer science, and engineering" (Fényes, Markos, & Mohácsi, 2021, p. 14).

Ukrainian researchers in the field of pedagogy and social work take a similar position even in earlier studies. For example, Alla P. Anishchenko (2012) considers the participation of volunteers in palliative care as an important part of their socialization. At the same time, Ukrainian research psychologist Eduard Balashov (2012) finds a certain dimension of student volunteering that makes it professionally attractive not only for students of humanitarian profile: participation in international volunteer projects. Thus, through volunteering in international projects, students not only socialize more successfully in small groups, but also socialize together with their foreign peers, which adds an additional pragmatic dimension and additional attractiveness to volunteering. This motivation has been especially successful in organizing volunteer activities as an integral part of Ukraine's defense against Russia's armed aggression after February 24, 2022: it is through international channels that most of the humanitarian and military aid to Ukraine in this war is being provided, and volunteers are taking on the organization of the delivery and distribution of a significant part of this aid in Ukraine.

In the social and political sciences, there is a clear understanding that the choice to volunteer is determined by both personal pro-social characteristics of a person (helpful, active and generous) and favorable circumstances of the social environment (Dekker & Halman, 2003, p. 3). In another scale of motivation, the same factors are defined as egoistic and altruistic, i.e., those that orient a person to act for his or her own satisfaction or for the needs of the community. In their study, Dekker and Halman note that not only values determine the choice of the type of volunteer activity, but also the social institutions and social structure existing in a particular society create certain prerequisites and certain requests for a certain type of volunteer activity, and thus form the values of volunteering:

Depending on economic circumstances and traditions of state care and associational life, needs and opportunities to volunteer and the kind of work to be done differ, and thus relevant values will also be different. People with different values and norms will feel attracted to different organizations and activities... (Dekker & Halman, 2003, p. 7)

These researchers speak, in particular, of the great importance of such values as the spirit of solidarity and engagement (Dekker & Halman, 2003, pp. 7-8). However, freedom reveals itself not only in such broad categories, but also in very specific institutional and organizational manifestations, which are also recorded, studied and developed, first of all, by representatives of social sciences – sociology, political science, economics.

Specifically, Ukrainian researchers of the volunteer movement draw attention to its importance in the development of civil society in general in a given country. For example, Ukrainian sociologist Oksana Pankova and her co-authors see volunteering as "a manifestation of the activation of social resources of civil society" (Pankova, Kasperovych, & Ishchenko, 2016). The practical, theoretical and methodological contribution of advanced religious organizations to the

development of the volunteer movement cannot be dismissed. An example is the work of the Greek Catholic organization Caritas Ukraine (Bondarenko & Vdovtsov, 2021).

Philosophical understanding of the importance of the volunteer movement values

From a philosophical point of view, the key values of a person are those embodiments of freedom that trigger the processes of self-reproduction – of the individual, community, and society. However, if such self-reproduction of one of these levels occurs autonomously from other levels, or even at their expense, i.e. by means of their oppression, then such freedom will not have great prospects. After all, suppression of other levels of implementation of freedom will mean, if not their restriction (at least), then in the worst case their gradual destruction (at most). An important role in assessing the values of volunteering is played by an ethical analysis of the virtues inherent in volunteers (Shaw & Dolan, 2022).

We can take such a value as "courage" that is common to many volunteers and show its self-centered and communicative variants. Obviously, a "daredevil" can hardly benefit the community or society, and even himself or herself, it is only a desire to look as a "swashbuckler" for his or her own pleasure, first and foremost. Whereas "bravery" already implies following certain positive values recognized in the community or society, for the sake of which conscious and organized courage is needed, which is what bravery is. Finally, if courage appears as a manifestation of patriotism in extremely risky circumstances (for example, in an enemy-occupied territory) or as a manifestation of higher humanistic values in conditions of class, ethnic, gender, or other intolerance, then such courage begins to weigh already at the social level and acts as a component of the reproduction of social systems.

Of course, courage is far from the only value that can be seen as a manifestation of personal freedom. The values of empathy, helping others, career development, gaining recognition in small groups, solidarity, and loyalty were mentioned earlier. The hierarchical subordination of these values is different for different volunteers and in different social situations. However, there is no doubt that there is a clear relationship between these values and a clear strategic focus on the public good – not abstract, but quite concretely accepted by volunteers. Volunteering is never an attempt to realize utopian ideas, although there is a lot of idealism and romance in the work of volunteers.

Dutch researchers of the phenomenon of volunteering set out to destroy myths about it, both those that seek to create an image of "pure" volunteering and those that give various "hybrid" definitions of volunteering. In particular, they draw attention to the fact that volunteering, despite its declared autonomy, is still influenced and has an impact, particularly in the field of politics and economics: "...political and market interests are not external to the realm of volunteering but play a constitutive role in its creation" (Shachar, Essen, & Hustinx, 2019, p. 258). A striking example of the fact that such influences are not only inevitable, but also allow people to show their best traits and demonstrate their best values in volunteering is the research of Ukrainian philosophers Olesia Pankiv, Oksana Onyshchuk, and Oleksandra Stebelska (2023) on volunteering in war, when collectivist and social values clearly come to the fore instead of self-realization values: "The main motives include the protection of state sovereignty and helping Others" (p. 178). Also, other emergencies in public life, such as a pandemic, necessitate non-standard and spontaneous responses from citizens (Blikhar & Hren, 2021).

Another interesting observation of these authors is that volunteering is not the only way for people to freely realize themselves in public life:

...instead of seeking to be included in the realm of "volunteering", those who are not part of this realm may wish to depict their experiences in alternative manners, and potentially bring to the fore different ways of mutual support and participation in public life that can be promoted and expanded. (Shachar, Essen, & Hustinx, 2019, p. 258)

Indeed, a person may not be recognized as a volunteer, but in fact perform volunteer work, sometimes even in a rather unexpected capacity, such as an intellectual (Kubalskyi, 2023). This suggests that the values of volunteering have an impact beyond volunteering itself – on those members of society who are not identified as volunteers, who may be sporadically involved in volunteering, or who may show volunteer qualities outside the activities of volunteer organizations or even outside the volunteer movement.

Originality

Volunteering changes and concretizes the meaning of freedom as a value, and thus gives new meaning to the values that are already present in society. Freedom is realized not as a pure value in itself, but through the desire of people engaged in volunteer work to achieve other values, in which they consciously see the embodiment of their freedom. Another important and characteristic sign that other values appear as the embodiment of human freedom is that the self-reproduction of the individual, community and society acts as their main purpose.

Conclusions

When studying the phenomenon of volunteering, representatives of various humanities and social sciences focus on different values inherent in volunteers. All of these values, however, act as a disclosure and concretization of the realization of volunteers' freedom as members of a certain society and certain communities within that society. For example, personal self-realization (emphasized by psychology), the desire to be recognized by peers and other small social groups (studied and developed by social work), as well as patriotism and other civic virtues and values (studied by sociology, political science and other social sciences) appear as key values of volunteerism. However, only social philosophy sees this as a common desire for all volunteers to contribute to the public good, and philosophical anthropology points out that volunteering reveals the best social intentions inherent in all members of society, and accordingly, the values of volunteering act as a motivator of behavior not only for volunteers themselves, but are also inherent in all other members of society to a greater or lesser extent.

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Свобода як ключова цінність волонтерського руху

Мета. У статті передбачено з'ясувати основний зміст та шляхи втілення свободи як цінності волонтерського руху в контексті аналізу соціальної мотивації поведінки людини загалом. Теоретичний базис. Дослідження грунтується на філософсько-антропологічному розуміння свободи як творчого подолання людиною перешкод для встановлення своєї ексцентричної сутності. Таке бачення закладене, зокрема, у філософії екзистенції Карла Ясперса, філософії позиціонування у світі Гельмута Плеснера та філософії розумного вибору життєвого шляху Поля Рікера. Наукова новизна. Значущість свободи як цінності, а також інших суспільних цінностей розкрито й конкретизовано через аналіз цінностей волонтерського руху. У прагненні людей, які займаються волонтерською роботою, досягнути свободи через інші цінності розкривається змістове наповнення свободи як підстави для самовідтворення особистості, спільноти і суспільства. Висновки. Представники різних гуманітарних та соціальних наук мають відмінні дослідницькі інтереси в аналізі пінностей, притаманних волонтерам. Як члени певного суспільства і певних спільнот у цьому суспільстві, волонтери діють не поза економікою, політикою та іншими сферами суспільного життя, а розкривають свою свободу через творче й нестандартне вирішення економічних, політичних тощо проблем. При цьому дослідники-психологи зосереджують увагу на особистій самореалізації людини, теоретики і практики соціальної роботи досліджують прагнення волонтерів здобути визнання серед однолітків та в інших малих соціальних групах, а представники соціології, політології та інших соціальних наук концентрують увагу на таких суспільно значущих цінностях волонтерства, як патріотичність, солідарність тощо. Завданням соціальної філософії ϵ обгрунтувати прагнення сприяти суспільному благу, яке ϵ спільним для всіх волонтерів. Представники філософської антропології шукають у волонтерській діяльності кращі соціальні інтенції, властиві людині як члену суспільства. Аналіз цінностей волонтерства як мотиватора поведінки людини дає знання соціально значущих цінностей, властивих більшою чи меншою мірою кожному

Ключові слова: свобода людини; волонтери; волонтерський рух; цінність свободи; соціально значущі цінності; цінності самовідтворення

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