

MASTER THESIS

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The factor of ontological and anthropological borders in identification and self-identification processes

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Table of contents

Table of contents	i
Introduction	1
1.0 Chapter 1 Identification (understanding) of things existent by human and the role of the border principle	4
1.1 The issue of identification in daily activity: case study of the ‘imaginary bear.’	4
1.2 The issue of recording entity (issue of participatory observation)-1	8
1.3 The issue of recording entity (issue of participatory observation)-2	10
1.4 Border ‘essence’-‘thisness’	12
1.5 A possibility to overcome the borders of ‘thoughts-senses’ and ‘thisness-whatness’ ...	14
1.6 Summary	22
2.0 Chapter 2 Self-identification as an issue of meaning: the existential and socio-historical aspect	24
2.1 Meaning as a foundation of self-identification	24
2.2 The meaning in a horizon of a social-historical past: history as appropriation of the past and retention of events	29
2.3 The issue of explanation and understanding in history as an issue of a meaningful relation between the past and the present	34
2.4 Philosophical-historical understanding as anthropological self-identification	38
2.5 Postmodernist critique of the philosophy of history and a possibility of a response: the case of M. Foucault critical ideas	41
2.6 Summary	43
3.0 Chapter 3 Conclusion	45
References	48
Appendix 1	52

Introduction

It is impossible to understand any text without understanding of a certain context. What is the context for this particular text? The context of the ‘borderology’ project comes closest. The ‘Borderology’ project is not a classical institutionalised scientific discipline, nor is it a classical study (academic) subject. In my view, there are two major ways to understand it: 1) to refer to the meaning assigned to it by its coordinators (project leaders), Jan Selmer and Viggo Rossvær and 2) to refer to one’s own experience of ‘entry’ into and ‘presence’ in the project, because, as Viggo Rossvær himself noted, each student has their own understanding of borderology (Rossvær 2016).

On the one hand, V. Rossær standpoint in understanding ‘borderology’ is characterised by an emphasis on the socio-political area judging by his programme courses and articles. At the same time, the definition of ‘borderology’ given by Viggo Rossvær is a broader one. V. Rossær initially presents the more obvious definition of ‘borderology’ both from the standpoint of the matrix of academic disciplines and in the opinion of most students. The discipline is therefore defined initially as 1) a section of political philosophy and 2) a specific type of anthropological knowledge. Yet by the end of the article, the author arrives at a definition of borderology as a *Critical System of Knowledge* and, consequently a critical study method. In my view, language does play a part in understanding of this definition (Rossvær 2016). The point is that, in the Russian language, the notion of ‘critical’ generally refers to finding flaws and weaknesses. In Viggo’s understanding, the term is more likely related to the Kantian tradition and mostly means clarification, analysis, and review. Thus, within the Russian philosophical terminology, the notion of ‘critical’ is more about the notion of ‘reflective.’ Thus, the ‘borderology’ programme should primarily mean a ‘reflective’ way of thinking or study eventually producing certain ‘reflective’ knowledge.

Jan Selmer has a similar understanding of the meaning and notion of the project as well. J. Selmer relies on his understanding of the ‘borderology’ project as part of the ‘practical knowledge’ project implemented in the University of Nordland. Particular attention should be paid to the idea of the often scholastic nature of the traditional academic system of professional education (e.g. in economics). On the contrary, practical knowledge as part of

philosophical knowledge is aimed at development of *critical* (as has been said, in the Russian tradition, *'reflective'* is more accurate) *thinking*. The project goal is not to retrain Bachelor Degree specialists and get work experience in a certain area of academic career in philosophy but to use the skills in professional activities and life. Provisions of the Soviet psychological theory of activity form an important methodological foundation for J. Selmer (2015, pp. 215). I especially noted Jan's observation during a session discussion about repeated scholastic traits (in the derogatory meaning of 'scholastic') in conventional Bachelor's education. We therefore mean development of a certain methodology of thinking and reflection.

One's own experience in understanding of borderology is particularly connected with interpretation of borderology as a system or principle of thinking. Apart from critical-reflective (Rossvær 2016) and psychological (Selmer 2015) aspects, the aspect of content is also important. We speak about understanding of the border as a universal anthropological and ontological (being) phenomenon. This particular Master's thesis deals with application of the term 'border' to clarify the issue of identification and self-identification. It is typical to differentiate between the outward identification, interpreted as understanding of things, events, and situations, and self-identification interpreted as definition of oneself. On the contrary, the **methodological position** of sameness of procedures for outward definition (identification) of things existent and self-definition (self-identification) is crucial for the author of the Master's thesis. The connection of these procedures is thought of on the basis of the 'border' concept. We primarily mean the understanding of the human nature as the borderline. In relation to identification as understanding of things, events, and situations, we mainly speak about the separation of a human being from the world, which is determined by the human role as a participatory observer. The anthropological standpoint determines a possibility of borderline interaction between the modes of trust and distrust, acceptance and rejection. Self-identification is understood in the thesis along two lines: first, as self-definition in particular social and historical events, secondly, in the context of the issue of cultural-historical and universal anthropological project.

The study of this aspect is based on an important theoretical idea of interpretation of the concept by early M. M. Bakhtin: 'place in being.' The 'place in being' is primarily interpreted as a place in being-with-others and a place in being-in-time. The danger of not understanding one's social and historical place is connected with alienation from one of the temporal dimension of being as a human: the past. History is viewed as a form of

appropriation of the past and a crucial factor of self-identification aimed at crossing the 'present-past' time border. Philosophy is understood as: first, a way of crossing one more temporal border: 'present-future', secondly, as a way of crossing regional socio-historical borders. Philosophical-historical projects are therefore understood as projects of anthropological self-identification of humankind as a whole.

Interpretation of alienation and appropriation as universal existential anthropological factors is a general methodological tool in the study. Alienation and appropriation are not subject categories or heuristic metaphors but existentials.

The goal of the master's thesis is to analyse the factor of ontological and anthropological borders in processes of identification and self-identification.

The stated goal means reaching two main **objectives**:

1. Analysis of the factor of borders in identification of things existent;
2. Analysis of ways to cross temporal borders in human self-identification on socio-historical and anthropological levels.

Important methodological and theoretical ideas for the Master's thesis are the project of 'philosophy of the act' by M. M. Bakhtin, ontological and phenomenological ideas of M. Heidegger, logotherapy of V. Frankl, borderology studies by J. Selmer and V. Rossvær, and existential anthropological ideas of A. M. Sergeev.

Some points of the paper were tested during the Kant-Bakhtin seminars.

1.0 Chapter 1 Identification (understanding) of things existent by human and the role of the border principle

1.1 The issue of identification in daily activity: case study of the ‘imaginary bear.’

My first essay (in the first year of study) was about the issue of authenticity in everyday thinking. The reflection was based on an anecdote about an “imaginary bear”. I will tell the anecdote in short and then present the main lines of my reflection, i.e. reflect on a reflection.

In 2010, I took part in archaeological activities on the Russian-Norwegian border by the Paz River. The excavation took place in the area of the burnt-down Boris and Gleb Church. In the 16th century, there was the Pazretsky Pogost (Raz River rural community) founded by Saint Trifon¹ in order to spread the Orthodox faith among the indigenous Skolt Sami (Norwegian: *skoltesamer*, *skolter*) and other Sami group. In 1565, St. Trifon started construction of a single-dome wooden church with a bell tower. It was consecrated on 24 June by priest Ilarion. The church was an important step in St. Trifon’s missionary activities. In 1944, the wooden church was burnt to the ground during the war (Petsamo-Kirkenes Offensive). In summer 2010, our archaeological expedition (led by Mark Shakhnovich, a renowned archaeologist from Petrozavodsk), by invitation of Father Daniil, the superior of the Saint Trifon Monastery, carried out archaeological activities in the area of the burnt-down

¹Saint Trifon of Pechenga (secular name: Mitrofan) was a son of a priest from the town of Torzhok, Novgorod Land. He was born in June 1495. According to one version, he killed his lover in a fit of rage and then went to the North, to the Kola Peninsula, in repentance. In 1532, he founded a Holy Trinity monastery by the mouth of the Mana River and took monastic vows under the name of Trifon. Trifon of Pechenga died on 15 December 1583, aged 88. Shortly before his death, Saint Trifon predicted to his brethren a death by a sword and a destruction of the convent. Six years later, a Swedish-Finnish unit destroyed the monastery. The brethren met their death kneeling in prayer. There was a cave near the Pazretsky Pogost where, as the legend goes, hid from Sami *noids* (shamans, sorcerers) resisting Christianisation, the cave to become a holy place for Sami.

church. Due to the nature of the restricted border area², we would cross the Norwegian border twice a day using the dam bridge to go to the work site and back.

It actually began on the second or third day of the work, when we heard a sound resembling a roar of an animal. At first we could not guess what it was. “What’s that?”, we asked each other. “It’s a bear,” one of us said. Under those circumstances, it was scary and shocking information for us. We had heard about a bear probably living there because someone had told us about a bear scaring an old lady pilgrim in the spring. For several days we were on our guard and worried but at the same time began doubting that it was a bear’s roar. Our doubts were based on the fact that we couldn’t see any signs of the bear’s presence: dung, scratch marks on trees, or paw prints.

At the same time, the very ‘concept’ of a probable bear influenced our assessment and understanding of reality. For instance, when we saw fallen trees along the road we thought it had probably been done by a bear. The trees had actually been fallen either by wind or reindeer that roamed around freely there. The situation was finally clarified several days later when it turned out that we had mistakenly taken the noise (roar) of four-wheelers for a bear’s roar. It is important that the expedition leader had heard a bear’s roar “live” while the rest had a culturally-determined experience since they had heard a bear’s roar in feature films and science TV shows. Interestingly, the anecdote was not forgotten and the participants very often mention it when they meet both in expeditions and in the city.

I can specify a few lines of my reflection on the anecdote in the essay *Writing subjectivity* we worked on during the first study year. The first one was the issue of ‘preliminary knowledge.’ It means that we heard, i.e. *someone* told us that “the old lady had been attacked by a bear in the autumn.” That means we already had the knowledge of the hypothetical bear. This aspect of the issue was analysed in the essay went along a reflection on the opposition of the ‘preliminary situational knowledge’ and the a priori knowledge (Kant referred to) and an analysis of everyday situations. Thus, the a priori assumption that any change has its cause made us look for the cause of the sound. At the same time, the previously heard story about the bear and the pilgrim contributed to our interpretation of the

²The area around the churches is the only Russian territory on the left bank of the Paz, that is why we could only use a dam bridge, half of it Norwegian.

sound as a bear's roar. The preliminary knowledge is therefore something that defines our understanding of everyday situations and, consequently, our actions. For example, a person hears the doorbell ringing and goes to open the door. Let's assume a friend of his called him telling he would drop in. Who he will see on opening the door, the person he is waiting for or a person he is not waiting for? Both are possible, but his actions are determined by the preliminary understanding of the situation (the expected friend's visit in this case).

In that essay, I did not refer to ideas of H.-G. Gadamer and M. Heidegger related to the vindication of the notion of pre-judgement (*Vor-urteil*). Consequently, one of the underlying directions of analysis in that essay was to compare the post-positivist methodology of scientific knowledge, more applicable to natural science, and the everyday thinking whereas our thinking in specific practical situation is closer to humanitarian methodology because it is aimed at understanding and interpretation.

What is the purpose of the hermeneutic project of H.-G. Gadamer? According to Gadamer, an interpretation (of understanding) is always based on a certain historical tradition, i.e. certain cultural and historical prejudice (Gadamer 1988). We speak about a broad and positive meaning of the concept 'prejudice,' understood as a preliminary condition of understanding. According to Gadamer, it is the initial knowledge that outlines the meaning of the facts to be understood. However, the researcher should not blindly follow the first outline of the meaning but constantly clarify, deepen, and change it. Readiness to dismiss false assumptions if they contradict the facts is an important condition of adequate understanding. Is this hermeneutic project a universal tool of understanding the border between true and false in everyday situations? Gadamer himself was known to suggest understanding the world as a hermeneutic universe (1988). On the other hand, the German philosopher mostly viewed texts as facts, and his hermeneutics therefore had a philological and historical-philological focus. In my view, despite applicability of the 'text' metaphor to every object, everyday situations and narrowly-defined texts (texts as texts or even texts as cultural-historical traditions) are different classes (types) of facts. Two attributes can be specified here as crucial differences: the degree of practical participation (involvement) of the understanding person and the time limits. First, a specific variant of understanding of a practical situation determines a specific variant of actions in it and, secondly, decisions are usually made in a limited time frame. Both differences are sufficiently clearly shown in the "imaginary bear" anecdote.

Also important is the actual possibility to take the methodological standpoint in relation to everyday life Gadamer wrote about in regard of text interpretation. We speak about the readiness to constant immersion into the text, i.e. changing the variant of understanding, casting aside our false ideas for that purpose. On the one hand, this standpoint is attractive and sensible for usual cases of understanding and consistent with the critical direction (see Introduction) of the ‘borderology’ project. In the first essay (*Writing subjectivity*), I cited many literary examples of following false pre-assumptions. Thus Othello, believing the words of Iago, interprets Cassino having the handkerchief as proof of Desdemona’s infidelity. A person may be equally blinded by their *idée fixe* like, for instance, many characters in the series of novels by G. Martim *A Song of Ice and Fire*. On the other hand, constant criticism is not a solution either because it produces two problems: 1) prevents acting in limited time and 2) may develop into paranoia. The first problem is connected with the fact that decisions must be taken “on the spot”, without waiting for a final elimination of all doubts. In the second case, constant criticism and distrust obviously contradicts the ontological necessity of a certain level of trust in the world. The position of the understanding (interpreting) person in everyday situations can be therefore defined as essentially borderline. We speak about the fact that the optimal position of an active human being is essentially on the border between doubt, criticism, and acceptance. This position requires an ontological and philosophical-anthropological explanation that will follow below.

1.2 The issue of recording entity (issue of participatory observation)-1

The main ontological attitude of humans towards the world is one of identifying understanding. The identity is an identification of things in being with themselves. This identification is hidden unless noticed, and it is the human as a certain type of a thing existent (thinking creature) who acts as a recording entity. Identification as discovery of the hidden is neither a simple 'subjective' construction of reality nor its 'objective' reflection. The meaning of the recording entity was expressed well by M. M. Bakhtin in mental images of the 'witness' and the 'judge' leading things existent from oblivion and silence. The role and position of a human being as a participatory observer was expressed in the early (unfinished) Bakhtin's studies published posthumously under the title *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*. 'Philosophy of the act' is a project of a new 'first philosophy' aimed at solving the problem of disjunction between the objectified world of culture and the specific individual singularity of life and consciousness. Overcoming the disjunction is possible by attribution, to human thought, a characteristic of participation (Bakhtin 2003, pp. 12-15, 42-48). Participation of an individual is determined by its involvement in co-being of being based on its unique place in it. Without contradicting the 'spirit' of the philosophical project of early Bakhtin, we can speak not only about a particular individual (existential) level of participation but also the anthropological level. We speak about the universality of characteristics of responsibility and participation that determine a genuine way of human existence in the world.

The idea of involvement of an observing human in the world finds its backing in modern theoretical physics, i.e. in a science that is seemingly supposed to give a subject knowledge about the objectively existing world. We speak about the anthropic principle which is related to the issue of coincidence between a number of physical constants and relations between them: the mass of some elementary particles, number of spacetime dimensions, constant gravity, etc. The constant values and relations between them coincide in such a way so that they make complex life possible. A minor deviation in at least one of those constants from its present value would make it impossible. There are two accepted variants of the anthropic principle. The 'weak variants' provide fairly trivial statements that the observable Universe is a part of the Universe where the existence of an observer is possible.

The 'strong variants' state that the Universe must be like this (or designed like this) to make the existence of an observer possible (Linde 2001). The role of a participant observer is also essential in such a field of theoretical physics as quantum cosmology. According to some theoretical physicists, solving a number of quantum cosmology paradoxes requires involving an observer. It is not just about the fact that the experimenter should be understood as part of the experimental system as "a real person in the real world" (Sartre 1994, p. 38). More "radical" theories of A. D. Linde and J. Wheeler speak about the essential **participation** of our mind in the very existence of the Universe. According to the Wheeler's concept ('it from bit'), any physical entities are information and theory by nature in the end, and the world cannot be just a gigantic functioning within constant independent physical laws (Wheeler 1990).

A human being can therefore be defined in accordance to the position of a participatory observer, i.e. an indentifying entity. Full involvement of a human as an entity actively transforming the nature and creating an artificial environment (culture) is only possible in parameters of an existential response to a world discovery event. Identification is a fundamental link between a human being and the world enabling all other types of relation, be it use and assessment, description and explanation, transformation and conservation, etc. The existential of participation means coordination of two notions: involvement in being and being as a part.

1.3 The issue of recording entity (issue of participatory observation)-2

Defining anything through thought and language is impossible without sensory perception, but an act of identification done exclusively with perception is not possible either. The impossibility of purely sensory identification was already understood in the ancient Greek mythology. A standout example is the Cadmean cycle of myths about the ‘story’ of King Oedipus. The Oedipus myth is primarily known from the tragedy *Oedipus the King* by Sophocles (1998). The final epiphany of his own action – the murder of the father and marrying the mother – shocks him so much that he pokes out his eyes that let him see an attractive woman but did not let him see his mother. It should be noted that Tiresias who reveals the horrible truth to Oedipus is blind but, compared with the sighted character, can truly see, i.e. understand. The knowledge that this particular woman is his mother can only be valid for those who can understand **what a mother is**, something that cannot be exclusively done only by perception. Oedipus sees his mother but defines her incorrectly, i.e. incorrectly focuses his eyesight, unaided by the word.

It is not just about the fact that the character lacks a notional framework. Speech acts do not express a thought that was before them but produce a thought simultaneously, i.e. they are, according to M. K. Mamardashvili, *opera-operans*, works producing works (Mamardashvili 1998, pp. 59-71). Discovery and remembering are done with a word becoming a basis determining identification. This human ability means that it is possible to break away from the immediate reality. The ability to be in a certain ‘clearance’, distance from reality is therefore an ontological constant of identification. Consequently, identification only happens due to immediate disjunction of the behaviourist stimulus-response link determining the complex life. The alienation of a human being from the immediate reality opens up a possibility to form **own** understanding, **own** position, and **own** attitude.

Apart from the phenomenological position of M. K. Mamardashvili, we can only rely here on the ontological approach to language of M. Heidegger and the *Imiaslavie* tradition in the Russia religious philosophy. Heidegger was known to focus on mutual belonging of Logos and Being, Word (Saying) and Thing (Heidegger 1993). The onomatological concept

of P. A. Florensky (who represented Russian *Imiaslavie*) echoes this aspect by stating that any name is “meaningful and real knowledge of the world appearing in the world” (2009, p. 313). According to Florensky, a connection between the ‘name’ and the ‘essence’ can be found by means of etymological analysis of root meanings in Indo-European and Semitic languages and in the “living speech” (written at least) in both language groups (2009, pp. 304-320). Instinctive scenarios and sensory perception are biological properties of complex life make identification possible but do not form its determining foundation. A human as a participant of being is different from animals primarily by the ability to define and detect ‘that’, ‘that very thing’. Clarification of the essential distinction of the human being as the only living thing constructing **one’s own** attitude towards the world and, consequently, its definition in relation to itself see at Bibikhin (2011, pp. 138-141).

The meaning of this position can be fully expressed as follows: **what is** ‘acquires’ its ‘**is**’ and ‘**what**’ only in the context of an utterance. We should not be afraid of falling into a trap of extremely subjectivist, if not solipsist, interpretation of this thought. We do not mean specific speech practices but the very fact of implementation of what can be said. Probably the first western experience in explanation of the universal connection between Word and Thing was expressed by Heraclitus in his idea of perpetual Logos – λόγου τοῦδ’ ἔόντος (ἀεὶ) (Heraclitus F. 1, number of fragment according to S. N. Muraviyov) – with everything happening in accordance with it (Logos) albeit hidden from the people. The mental image of Logos has been staying firmly in philosophy since then while we can specify three main modes of its development: first, it is the analytical line where Logos transforms into the logical and logic, i.e. special discipline regulating consistency of expression, secondly, it is the tradition of symbolic interpretation, and thirdly, there are attempts to embody Logos in different forms. The intention to focus on what had been initially grasped in early Greek though was most comprehensively realised by M. Heidegger in his concept of λόγος-proportionate nature of our (Western) thinking (Heidegger 2010, pp. 158-162.).

1.4 Border ‘essence’-‘thisness’

Identification always means not only definition of the ‘essence’ which is a limitation of ‘that very thing’ but also capturing specificity and uniqueness. The essence that makes ‘something’ a definite ‘what’ can be marked as ‘whatness’, while oneness and uniqueness of a particular “what’ as its ‘thisness’. The question “what is it?” expresses a typical reaction of meeting something obscure and unknown.

Differences like ‘thisness’ and ‘whatness’, individual and collective, object and notion, concrete and regional are a crucial foundation of any identification. This logical structure has been in development since the very beginning of the classical western philosophical tradition. For instance, in the category matrix of Aristotle, the first and second essences must be differentiated first. The platonic opposition of a non-material ‘eidos’ and a sensorily perceived thing clearly expressed in the famous ‘cave myth’ is also based on this distinction while it is not important whether we understand ‘eidos-ideas’ (ἰδέα, εἶδος) as general hypostatised notions, i.e. individual-collective names with characteristics of being or view them as a sort of ineradicable and invisible form of perception, i.e. peculiar prismatic images that, while hidden, ensure identification of specific things. The differentiation structure anyway depends on the practical experience of everyday identification, since “in fact, the words ‘separate thing’ and ‘substance’ mean nothing other than the word ‘this’ (Condillac 1982, p. 352). In this sense, we can say that things are given to us in participatory observation in their difference and separation but we grasp them in their essence.

It is true that a human being cannot see or hear or smell Nothing, but a human being can hear and smell something, i.e. something grasped but not defined. Identification as definition is not just rational analytical interpretation of experienced data transforming indefinite ‘something’ into definite ‘what’. The differentiation between rational understanding and sensory perception is based on an analytical metaphysical approach that means general distinction between the sensory and supersensory. A sufficiently clear distinction of this dates as far back as to Aristotle. According to him, we can confirm presence of simple (separate) entities due to our sensory (this is probably the way to interpret “proof by touch”) and

speaking ability (*Metaphysics* IX 10, 1051 b 15-25). Complex entities (i.e. individual-collective definitions) are available due to mental ability unrelated to knowledge (*Second Analytics* I 3, 72 b 15-25; *Ibid.* II 19, 100 b 10-15). In this sense, even the simultaneity of operations in the definition of ‘this very thing’ as ‘that’ does not cancel their duality.

The border of ‘thisness’ – ‘whatness’ correlates with the border of ‘thoughts’ – ‘senses’. The idea of separation of thinking and senses springs from the New European philosophy. The new European tradition underlying the positivist science viewed the sensory ability primarily as a ‘raw provider’ of verifiable experience to be transformed by reason into knowledge (See Bacon 1977). A logical conclusion of that methodological position was the idea of one more border proposed by F. Bacon: presence of two types of soul (consciousness): feeling and reasonable (divinely inspired).

The issue of distinction between the specific human ability to feel (*sensus*) and the simple sensory ability (*perceptia*) common to all things existent, as proposed by F. Bacon (Bacon 1977. p. 273-276.), did not change the conceptual position as such. It should be noted that *perceptia*, as opposed to *sensus*, had a very broad interpretation by the English philosopher and included not just sensory ability of animals but also physiological processes (for instance, growth and digestion), interaction of living beings, and even physical interaction of inanimate things.

The idea of full dependence of mental capacities on sensory perception, typical of sensualist concepts, therefore belongs with the New European ‘mainstream’, since sensuality itself is also viewed as just a provider of data. That is why a sensory analysis experience presented in a famous thought experiment of a feeling statue by the French sensualist Condillac (1982, pp. 190-399.), although suggests a certain reduction of rational and willpower ability to sensations, still remains within the New European approach.

1.5 A possibility to overcome the borders of 'thoughts-senses' and 'thisness-whatness'

In an experience of understanding a possibility to cross the 'ontological borders' below, three aspects can be specified: 1) visual experience cannot be the exclusive provider of data; 2) the synthetic understanding of thinking and senses shown in late works of M. Heidegger; 3) a revision of the ontological status of categories of relation and connection.

The specific role of eyesight which is not **exclusively** limited to the physiological role of the main information provider was clearly understood in the Renaissance philosophical tradition. Leonardo da Vinci viewed the eyesight as a basis for a truly human mode of existence. Panegyrics of the Italian humanist do not focus just on the capturing ability of the eye but the 'skill of seeing' – *saper vedere* (Leonardo da Vinci 2010, pp. 7-36.). A skill always means learning while the 'skill of seeing' should not be understood just as technical skills of analytical seeing that an artist needs. We mean an existential capability of discovering meanings and beauty in what we see and therefore contemplation through peculiar prisms of **form** and **beauty**. It is this vision that makes the eyes be the 'windows of the soul' and does not let the body turn into its 'prison' (Ibid., pp. 13-14).

The interpretation of space as an external feeling as an apriority form (Kant 1994, pp. 64-70.) organising our perception also means domination of the visual perception. The apriori nature of space can be understood through an experience of a peculiar phenomenological reduction resulting from 'casting' all empirical properties off a material thing. A necessity of taking a place in the space can be non-excluded. We should point out in response that the attribute of expanse ('taking a place') that seems to be an a priori fact for any body means a reduction of an **already seen** image ('eidos'). A typical 'assembly of reality' stems from results of identifying procedures based on visual perception (Sergeyev 2011, pp. 13-14). That is why we normally speak about the content of what has been seen (Ibid., p. 9), not heard or smelt.

Thinking as directed identification can be understood as suggested in late works by Heidegger as special hearing or seeing not limited to sensory perception alone. Heidegger

focused on the fact that the usage of the verbs ‘see’ and ‘hear’ for thinking and intuition is not just a metaphor (Heidegger 2000, pp. 90-91). To think is to see and hear in a special way whereas this interpretation of thinking is not reduced to the ability of hearing and seeing into the root meanings of words and intonation of words in phrases typical of the ‘German master.’ The special way of thinking, according to Heidegger, manifests itself, in particular, in the capability of the New European thought to understand the world as a picture (Heidegger 1986, pp. 102-103). The special way of hearing manifests itself in seemingly sensory perception like **in our** (not our ear’s!) ability to perceive Bach fugues as music and in the ability of Beethoven to hear without having the auditory sense (Heidegger 2000, p. 90). Thinking can be defined as a human-specific supersensory ability. The supersensory should not be understood in the classical meaning suggesting a sharp border between the reason and senses but in a special way: as an overlapping ability to feel and think.

This understanding of thinking as special ‘hearing that views’ may be characterised as eido-phono-centric (optical-audio-centric). The importance of hearing comparable with vision is defined both by primary voice and distinctiveness of an utterance and by the fact that teaching a human a certain identification system is classically done using speech. Phonos, like eidos, turns out to be connected primarily with logos. That is why the link between logos and phonos specified by J. Derrida necessarily requires eidos. It should be noted that Derrida himself defines logocentrism or logo-phono-centrism as a finite or at least limited structure typical of the Western philosophy, starting from Plato, and the western thinking as a whole (Derrida 2000, pp. 120-124). This line of thinking is related to his general critique of West European thought structures the French philosopher tried to define as the formula: onto-theo-teleo-phallo-phono-logocentrism. In our interpretation, the terms ‘logocentrism’ and ‘eido-phono-logocentrism’ are understood as constituent anthropological characteristics of identification, not as historically transient structures as in works by Derrida.

Acknowledging the importance of logos (meaning), phonos (voice), and eidos (type) as constituent foundations of metal-linguistic grasping of things existent, we should note that the role of specific human (i.e. supersensory) abilities contained in touch, smell, taste, and pain in identification of things and in self-identification remains hidden from us. The language usage provides us with examples of phrases in the sense of thinking and cognition connected with taste and touch. A relation to thought can be defined in categories of taste, and a relation to secret, confusing, elusive knowledge can be expressed in terms of touch and feel.

The smaller significance of the sense of smell is not just related to the limitation of this sense in humans but also with the gradual diminishing and blocking of its role. The civilisation weakens the functional importance of smell by placing it into a special environment of odour and expanding practices of perfume-induced smell. It should be noted that there is a special link between the sense of smell and intuition in Russian manifested in the usage of the verb *chuyat* ' in the meaning of prediction or foreseeing. An example may be: "I smell (*chuyu*) it with my gut (liver) what kind of person he is." Also noteworthy is the presence, in modern Russian, of a substantivised slang form denoting this ability: *chuika*. We also should note the existence (reflectively or not), in various religious practices, of at least partial identification of 'objects' of the invisible world by smell. For example, incenses are a significant part of sacraments and services in the Christian tradition (Florensky 1996. pp. 199-215; Florensky 2004) while the smell of sulphur signifies 'guests from Hell.'

Identification in the parameters of any thinking-linguistic field is not limited to 'grasping' of the concrete and definite. The parameter of relatedness is no less important. The category of '**related**' or '**relation**' was introduced by Aristotle. He made the first attempt of its **analytical** consideration, although the importance of 'relatedness' in a deeper sense had been understood much earlier. In the ancient Chinese philosophy, the ontological meaning of connection was most fully expressed in the famous philosophical treatise *Tao Te Ching*. Realising the limits in referring to the Taoist tradition without involving the language of the original, one can note a clear connection of dualist pairs in all variants of translation. For instance, it is said that knowledge of what is good means knowledge of what is evil, and knowledge of the beautiful means knowledge of the ugly (*Tao Te Chin* §2, here and elsewhere the author refers to the translation in Russian by A. E. Lukianov). We need to note that it is not a simple binary opposition of antagonist principles. The thought-image poetic form opens up cause-and-effect, dimensional, teleological, and other types of connections. It is an understanding of those mutual connections that suggests following the leading world order principle: 'Tao' (*Tao Te Chin* §13). The main cause of and condition for suffering is the body, while using some things is only possible because there is a connection inside them between completeness and emptiness, between being and nothingness. For example, using a vessel, a thing made by forming clay, i.e. a material clearly related to being due to its physicality, is only possible because of the emptiness (or nothingness) inside it (*Tao Te Chin* § 11).

A comprehension of the universal nature of relatedness appeared not only in the ancient Asian tradition. No less important in this area are studies in early Greek philosophy, in particular, meditations of Heraclitus. According to the Ephesus philosopher, Logos (God as Mind) manifests itself (unfolds) in the parameters of connection between opposite bases: day (ἡμέρη) and night (εὐφρόνη), winter (χειμῶν) and summer (θέρως), war (πόλεμος) and peace (εἰρήνη), abundance (κόρος) and privation (λιμός) (Heraclitus F 67, number of fragment according to S. N. Muraviyov). Understanding of the role of connection is often hindered by focusing on the role of the ontological basis expressed in thought images of war, enmity, and discord (Πόλεμος, Πόλεμον, ἔριν). It should be noted that the ancient Greek thinker also mentions the dual ontological principle: a certain unifying basis related to accord, peace, and love which, if prevails, leads the world to destruction (inflammation). .

The world (κόσμου, κόσμος) according to Heraclitus is not based on a special synthetic, binding force. On the contrary, it is only possible in the parameters of opposition of things **identified**. Disjunction and antagonism should be understood as a specific type of connection underlying other possible relations. That is why **πόλεμος** and **ἔριν** specified by the ancient Greek thinker as the ultimate bases of the world order should not be understood as an antithesis to the principle of relatedness. The complexity of this thought was probably known to Heraclitus himself, that is why he, complaining about people failing to understand the connectedness of the separated, had to resort to the famous thought images of a ‘bow’ and a ‘lyre’ (Heraclitus F 51, number of fragment according to S. N. Muraviyov), i.e. specific things visually illustrating the unity of the separating. The world in the Heraclitus’ ontology is therefore defined by borders of opposite bases and its destruction by removal of these borders. The connection is achieved by the presence of borders, not their destruction.

The universal nature of connection grasped in both ancient Chinese and ancient Greek philosophy shows a deeper understanding of the related than the analytical interpretation by Aristotle. The analytics of categories means a strict distinction between the essence and the relation. Relatedness is determined as **what cannot exist without the other by its very nature** (Aristotle. *Categories* 7 b 15-16, 8 a 34-35). Aristotle, viewing the category of the related, defines its essentially different modes. The difference is not defined as a term but very clear from the examples and explanations. First, one can speak about relations circumstantially involving first entities. For instance a log existing independently as a log, being simultaneously a property, inevitably involves the owner (Ibid. 8 a 23-25). Secondly,

we can speak about parts of the whole they are related to as defining entities. In this case, expressions without tautologies are impossible and, therefore, speaking about a wing we mean “a winged thing winged with a wing” (Ibid. 7 a 1-8). Thirdly, we can mean relations of degree and comparison: double – half, higher – lower, better – worse, etc. The criterion of differentiating between the essence and the relation suggested by Aristotle is a concrete certainty of knowledge: **which the related thing is related to**. For instance, a ‘better-worse’ judgement is only possible when we have concrete knowledge about the related (Ibid. 8 a 36 – 8 b). Thus in a strict sense, there are only relations of degree and measure for Aristotle. Entities, although they may be in certain relation to something else, cannot be defined by it in their existence. The category logic of Aristotle means an essential autonomy of individual things. Causal interdependence of things existent is not rejected but the focus is on the possibility of perception and understanding of separate entities as autonomously existing things. What is crucial is the human ability to heed, grasp the fact of existence of things.

With that in mind, the fact that Aristotle sets his own method based on analysis of the essence of a thing and the dialectical art viewing opposites “without touching upon the essence” is important (Metaphysics XIII 4, 1078 b 25). The postulated advantage of the logical-analytical method over other ways to get knowledge is based on the general ontological position. It means that the very present autonomy of a thing in its being is viewed as a primary fact compared with any relation. The superiority of the existing over relation is also underlined in the context of critique of the ‘ideas’ theory. The critical emphasis of Aristotle is in this case directed against Pythagoreans, the Megarian school, Plato and his ‘literal’. Three possible positions are specified within the rejected approach: first, ‘countable numbers’ may be suggested as ideal principles, secondly, *eidoi*-ideas and numbers may be understood as independent classes (independent types) of ideal principles, thirdly, numbers and *eidoi* may be viewed as ideal principles of a class (type) (Ibid. XIII 1, 1076 a 10-20).

I will try to summarise my understanding of the Aristotle’s critical approach. The Aristotle’s critique of the said ‘idealistic’ positions, in our view, goes along three main lines. First, it focuses on the impossibility to create a clear and consistent model of ‘belonging’ of ideas with things (See Metaphysics. I 9, 991 a 20-25). Secondly, it shows various logical and gnosiological challenges we inevitably face when we recognise the autonomous existence of *eidoi* or numbers-per-se (Metaphysics I 9; XIII 4-8). Thirdly, it demonstrates that acknowledgement of the primacy of numbers or ideas means acknowledgement of the

primacy of relation over the essence which Aristotle considers to be obviously impossible. In the context of our study, the third component of the critique is the most significant. As an example we can cite the idea that, if numbers can define things around us at all, they can only as “numeral relations but not pure entities” (Metaphysics I 9, 991 a 15-20). That is why ‘what’ (for instance, matter) is expressed with a certain numeral relation will be ontologically more primary than the relation itself. Presence of anything other than entities in *eidoi* is essentially unacceptable for Aristotle. According to him, the statement about the presence of ideas in anything that can be said is an inevitable result of the teaching of ideas (Ibid. XIII 4, 1079 a 15). The logical-analytical breakdown of categories attempted by Aristotle explains the possibility of sustainable relation and situation connection of things but fails to recognise the ontological nature of relatedness (relation).

This logical-metaphysical project laid a methodological foundation for further analytical development of thought. The New European metaphysics can be understood, in a sense, as a certain variation of the topic. In the New European philosophy, autonomy and substantiality were connected not with separate things but with separate universal characteristics like dimension or heaviness. Despite conceptual differences with the Aristotle’s metaphysical project, the common ground is the essential onto-logical position of the absolute primacy of an autonomous entity over relation. It should be noted that the very possibility of this development of thought is constituted by the human ability of **alienation**. Attempting a reflective clarification, dividing experience of the world into subjectively assessed qualities and independent entities means an ability of dissociation from directly received knowledge. This ability is a specific distinguishing feature of human identification. Going back to our interpretation of the Oedipus myth, we should note that it is the organisation of own perception in the word, that was the determining condition for alienation from sensory-instinctive perception. The initial ability of a human being to alienation determines the position of a participatory observer.

The ability unfolds to the maximum extent in the framework of metaphysical constructs. A human being therefore not just discovers the “**the big mystery that things exist**” but also uncovers a **great doubt** about **what** they are **or** at least a doubt **that they are the way they are**. Such specific form of identification of things as modern natural science is also founded on the ability of alienation. Science not just expands the view of the world or discovers present objects (as such) hidden from us in our ‘concerned’ perception of the world,

it actually **does not accept** things the way they seem in the parameters of the ‘natural assumption. For instance, the physics of elementary particles clearly challenges the ‘natural’ view of things around people as materially integral objects. The high level of material and technological involvement in the world of the modern humanity is based on both the anthropological ability of alienation from the world and its philosophical-metaphysical explanations, primarily in the ancient and New European philosophy. The high levels of alienation from the position of a ‘natural assumption’ available in metaphysics and current scientific expertise are actually nothing but a result of transformation and loss the ‘natural naïveté.’

Humans, due to their initial involved alienation towards the world, can relatively easily ‘shift’ between the states of trust and distrust as opposed to the relative credulity of animals that, more or less often, fall into traps set by humans. In this sense, hunting or fishing as one the first methods of active interaction with wild animals actually remind of a peculiar game. People relatively easily make use of animal “weaknesses and vulnerabilities as, for example, a magician could exploit naïve expectation and weaknesses of the audience” (Bibikhin 2011, p. 137). Inventing and using traps could not be possible without people realising (probably, without an initial reflection on this) the possibility of failed identification, i.e. possible discrepancy between appearance and reality. Apart from that, it is also required to understand the essential ‘naïveté’ of animals that can easily ‘swallow the bait.’ This ability is ontologically based on the anthropological trait of alienation from the world. Yet this alienation also uncovers the world for the people. The total relatedness of things existent can be explained not only ontically, with reference to the world, but also anthropologically.

Speaking about the language dimension of this anthropological connection, we should note that the onto-logical distinction of ‘essence – relation’ can only ‘work’ on the basis of the idea of a possibility of an autonomous singular utterance. This situation is impossible in practice. Utterances are only made in an environment of integral language phenomena, most notably, a Dialogue (Bakhtin) and language games (Wittgenstein). A language game sets its own criteria of true or false utterances. Both statement of accuracy and justified doubts about accuracy are therefore only possible provided that there is **trust** for a certain language game. Everything that is stated as already existing has a certain relation to and within a language game, i.e. it is simultaneously both essence and relation.

It is only possible to understand the phenomenon of a language game if one understands the definiteness of things. Identification is a concrete experience of **appropriation** of the world by synthetic sensory-intellectual definition. Out of examples of incompatibility of language games, Wittgenstein himself notably cites a case of a question from a blind person to us (the sighted) about reliability of our knowledge that “it is our hand” (Wittgenstein 1994). Appropriation happens depending on a certain position, a definite “place in being”. Yet we cannot speak about total incompatibility of language games, because one language game can claim adequacy of identification while another cannot. For instance, calling Desdemona an adulterer, Othello is in an inadequate language game for the particular situation while Desdemona trying to convince him of her innocence is in the adequate one. In more complex and less obvious cases, we can probably speak about relative degrees of adequacy.

The founding of the language game by our **initially common participation** is well-explained by a universal but, simultaneously, uniquely **one’s own** infancy - speech-less-ness that, according to V.V. Bibikhin, separated an infant from both animals and humans (Bibikhin 2011, pp. 138-139). Speechlessness does not mean non-participation, on the contrary, this experience paves the way to a unique experience of participatory definition of the world in the forms of acceptance and rejection. In the identification-expressing link of ‘that what is’, ‘that’ is understood in a logical-semantic context as an indication at a specifying, individualising basis. However, ‘that’ can also be understood as the fundamental anthropological disposition: participatory observation. **Participation** primarily manifests itself through **acceptance** (**‘that’**) or **rejection** (**‘not that’**) of things existent. The very logical-semantic possibility of examining variants, as in ‘not that’, ‘not that’, and ‘not that’ is determined by this very ontological position of a human being.

1.6 Summary

The universality of the Dialogue principle opens up a possibility of mutual shift and intermixture of participatory positions. These possibilities are available to us due to the fact that distrust and trust as ways of human relation to the world are equivalent. Therefore, as a response to the Wittgenstein's example of the incompatibility of language games of a savage and a representative of the modern civilisation (Wittgenstein 1994, pp. 353-354), we should note that the incompatibility lies in the human dimension of participatory observation. In practice, it can manifest itself in shifting positions by means of 'turning savage' for the civilised and 'civilising' the savage (the ultimate shift). Therefore, a human as participant in being can shift from one language game to another. This shift can be caused by both trying to achieve what is one's own and what should be and external control. In any case, the borders between language games should not be viewed as something solid and impenetrable. Another way to cross the borders between language games is mutual recognition in a dialogue. It means that participants of one language game can acknowledge better adequacy of certain aspects of experience in another language game, and participants of the other one can acknowledge better adequacy of other aspects of the first one. In practice, this should mean not just a will to mutual concessions but rather openness for mutual understanding. If this possibility is implemented in the long term, mutual enrichment of language games as well as creation of a certain meta-game becomes possible.

To summarise, we can focus on the following statements. Identification as an antropic phenomenon unfolds depending on the position of a participant where the position expresses a specific 'place' of co-being of a human being. Here we should include the anthropological and cultural-historical and individual level of understanding of the phenomenon of the human being. The thought-and-language nature of identification as an antropic phenomenon does not mean that identification is a purely mental act of 'processing' of sensory experience. There is mutual belonging of sensory and non-sensory abilities determining the eido-phono-logocentric nature of identification. Human participation in the World primarily manifesting itself in understanding identification is a unique anthropological ability of **appropriation** of the world. It is connected with the other ability: **alienation** from a direct relation to it. Human

understanding is therefore a borderline experience in its essence. We mean a borderline position between structures of trust and distrust, acceptance and rejection, alienation and appropriation.

2.0 Chapter 2 Self-identification as an issue of meaning: the existential and socio-historical aspect

2.1 Meaning as a foundation of self-identification

We spoke above about identification and understanding directed outside of existence. Such identification aims at an understanding that helps people act adequately. Inadequate understanding leads to wrong actions. For instance, it can result in people taking the roar of four-wheelers for that of a bear, strangle faithful wives, take enemies for friends, etc., i.e. doing something that is called pointless actions. However, human actions and life itself as a certain integral action is not exclusively determined by understanding of life situations where the actions take place. No less important is the inner guidance of a human being when understanding unfolds as self-identification. Self-identification is understood as an existential link with certain aspects of one's own being rather than a manifestation of consciousness, the being of a human to be understood not as that of an unconnected individual (subject, consciousness, personality) but as being-among-others and being-in-the-world.

What is the main inner guidance of a human being? The answer to this question is determined by the methodological position the author of the Master's theses adheres to, namely, a branch of existential psychology named **logotherapy** of V. Frankl (2000). According to V. Frankl, the main human trait is will or pursuit of meaning. It will not be a big distortion of the thought by the Austrian psychotherapist and philosopher, if we also speak about an attraction to meaning, a need in meaning, and even longing for meaning. In terms of practical knowledge, the Frankl's concept, in our view, stands on three main 'pillars': 1) his personal experience of presence, observation, and therapy in a concentration camp as an inmate; 2) experience in psychotherapy and psychological counselling; 3) surveys and questionnaires in student groups and lecture audiences (See Frankl 2000). Some data was

presented in the essay *The issue of finding (retaining) senses (meanings) of life (in life) in the present-day era* (See Appendix 1), of the second year of the borderology programme.

It should be noted that Frankl gave mostly general figures in his studies without recording such important indicators as a precise time and place of a survey, number of respondents, and breakdown by gender and age. The ‘location-specific’ aspect is also not to be ignored: the worldview of young people in the USA and Western Europe in 1960s–1980s may be significantly different from that of young people of Murmansk in 2010s.

In September–October 2013, 529 respondents were surveyed: senior school and university students of Murmansk. The survey used available sampling distributed by type of the educational institution and gender: 52% of those surveyed were school students, 48% university students, with a roughly equal gender ratio (44% male, 56% female) (See Appendix 1).

The fact that the data generally coincides with those provided by Frankl for 70–80% of respondents for whom the issue of the meaning of life was relevant is essentially important. This is particularly true for answers to questions 1, 6, and 7 (the numeration is in accordance with the questionnaire).

1. Thoughts of the issue of meaning of life

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
Yes	400	75.6%	76.0%
Not present	68	12.9%	12.9%
I find it difficult to answer	58	11.0%	11.0%
Subtotal	526	99.4%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

6. Statement 3: “I consider that, in my life, there has to be something that would give it a sense”

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
I agree	406	76.7%	77.9%
I partially agree	93	17.6%	17.9%

I don't agree	22	4.2%	4.2%
Subtotal	521	98.5%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

7. Statement: "I consider that, in my life, there is something that would give it a sense"

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
I agree	422	79.8%	81.0%
I partially agree	75	14.2%	14.4%
I don't agree	23	4.3%	4.4%
Subtotal	520	98.5%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

It is known that some life meanings can transform into death meanings in certain extreme situations. Since "something to love for" may turn into "something to die for", responses to questions 2 and 3 are also significant.

2. Is there anything in human life that is possible to die for?

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
Yes	280	52.9%	53.5%
Not present	95	18.0%	18.2%
I find it difficult to answer	145	27.4%	27.7%
Subtotal	523	98.9%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

3. Is there anything in my life that is possible to die for?

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
Yes	238	45.0%	45.7%
Not present	128	24.2%	24.6%
I find it difficult to answer	154	29.1%	29.6%
Subtotal	521	98.5%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

The responses also confirm the philosophical-psychological idea of V. Frankl about the ‘existential vacuum’ as a crucial issue of modern worldview. The existential vacuum should be understood as a feeling that life is pointless and a longing for a meaning. There was an almost total concurrence with the figure provided by the Austrian psychotherapist: about 60% of young people having this problem.

9. Statement: “From time to time, I feel that my life makes no sense”

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
I agree	140	26.5%	26.7%
I partially agree	169	31.9%	32.2%
I don't agree	213	40.3%	40.6%
Subtotal	522	98.7%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

At the same time, the data show that most young people find it especially hard to formulate their position on what a meaning should be. It is perfectly clear from the answers to question 8.

. Statement: “I reflected on the meaning of life, but I couldn't formulate my answer”

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
I agree	108	20.4%	20.7%
I partially agree	232	43.9%	44.4%
I don't agree	180	34.0%	34.5%
Subtotal	520	98.5%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

We should pay attention to answers to question 4. A significant number of young people partially agreed that thinking about the meaning was a waste of time.

4. Statement: “I consider that thinking of the meaning of life is a waste of time (it is necessary to live simply and that’s it)”

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
I agree	50	9,5%	9,5%
I partially agree	271	51,2%	51,6%
I don't agree	204	38,6%	38,9%
Subtotal	525	99,2%	100,0%

Total	529	100,0%	
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At first it is difficult to reconcile it with the answers to questions 1, 6, and 7. Presumably, since 51% of respondents expressed not a full but a partial agreement, it rather reflects a challenge in a clear understanding and verbalisation of a meaning than admitting to pointlessness of its pursuit.

The empirical survey data therefore quite convincingly confirm the relevance of the methodological position of this Master's thesis.

2.2 The meaning in a horizon of a social-historical past: history as appropriation of the past and retention of events

Self-identification as a search for meaningful moment in one's own being is determined by a time horizon. In terms of practical knowledge, this thought can be exemplified by a group psychotherapy session that V. Frankl could hold in his barrack for his fellow inmates. In his speech, V. Frankl referred to the past meaning that could not be taken away, to possibility to find a meaning even in their current situation and in hope for the future (See Frankl 2000, pp. 175-178). The past here is not something that is not endowed by the full extent of being as something that has passed and therefore unreliable. On the contrary, it (the past) unfolds as something that **was** and therefore manifests itself in its uniqueness and inalienability for people.

It requires a certain effort to preserve the past from oblivion. If, on the personal level, it requires an existential effort, on the level of socio-cultural communities, concrete cultural practices become necessary. Practices of appropriation of the past inevitable require an effort because to remember is usually unnatural, and it is more natural to forget. Appropriation of the past expands the horizons of realisation of one's own place in being-among-others. Otherwise a certain deliberate self-isolation takes place. Appropriation is initially possible as emotional and meaningful retention.

Apart from oblivion, indifferent dismissal and total distrust are also types of alienation of the past. We mean that certain historical events may be both indifferently registered by consciousness and deliberately subjected to doubt and distrust. Indifference primarily means a lack of an emotional and value-based attitude, in which case a human does not relate to the past but perceives it as something alien. Sceptical distrust of certain historical events manifests itself in distrust of a certain picture of the past. Both an individual historian and a professional community as a whole and authority (anti-authority) elites may be considered to 'authors of the picture of history.' It can be exemplified by a Soviet image of a 'Doctor of Falsified Sciences.' In the film *The Matrix* analysed in an essay of the second year of study

(see Appendix 1), this idea of unreliability of the past is presented as an interpretation of historical eras as a product of software creating an artificial world order.

The initial pursuit of appropriation as preservation of a commonly significant past contributed to the introduction of special forms of sign and symbol references to it. It could be oral genealogies and lineages, visual art, epic lore, monumental memorials, funeral rituals, etc. The primaeval presence could be characterised both by usage of sign references and by an alternative practice of resisting alienation: retention of the very ‘remnant’ of the past in the present. It can be exemplified by the practice of vertical burials that mean at least potential partial exhumation of the buried and bringing offerings. Such practices extended the presence of the already-dead among the living. Such burial practices are notable for the Mesolithic tradition of European North (Stolyar 2001, pp. 178-191). Visual recording was an important preliterate way of appropriation and retention of the past which can be exemplified by the group of White Sea petroglyphs (Zalavruga district) depicting “fights between skiers and seafarers.” That group of petroglyphs, as interpreted by A. D. Stolyar, may be probable evidence of a clash between members of the indigenous culture of the White Sea with ‘migrants’ (Stolyar 2001).

The emergence of writing opened essentially new ways to refer to the past. An example of this may be an Egyptian chronicle carved on the so-called Palermo Stone. This historical account approximately dates back to the 25th century BC covering a time period of 600–700 years. A part from pharaoh dynasties, the chronicle mentions the most important events: building of fortress walls, temples, and courts, destruction of enemy lands, capturing booty and prisoners of war, unification of Upper and Lower Egypt, etc. Back in 3rd–2nd millennia BC, chronicles were already widespread in ancient states of the East. However, a qualitative leap in development of written forms of public knowledge was connected with the rise of historiography as a specific branch of cognition as well as a peculiar literary genre in Ancient Greece in the 5th century. A work by Herodotus of Halicarnassus is the first example of an independent, comprehensive, and detailed description of a concrete historical event: Greco-Persian wars. The work by the ‘father of history’ is essentially different for both ancient eastern chronicles and his Greek logograph predecessors: here, we see history for the first time, distinct from mythology, folklore, and geography. Historical cognition is presented in its classical form of an account of events to prevent their fall into oblivion (Herodotus. *History* I, 1). A critical reference to a source or account is formulated as a main method of

learning about the past: “My duty is to pass on everything they say but, of course, believing everything is not” (Herodotus. *History* VII, 152). History as a form of appropriation of the past was first recorded as critical collection of accounts and giving the whole picture of events. An event is the unit of meaning in a historical narrative, i.e. something that should remain as ‘it was’ and not “it passed.”

According to traditional views, historical events are related to short time frames (Braudel 1977, p. 118). In practice, however, each event can be divided into several sub-events and, in its turn, viewed as a sub-event in the framework of a different event. An event always has an emphasis, unfolding as a certain ‘bang’ or ‘breaking news.’ In the one hand, the emphasis can be understood as an emphasis of the event itself, i.e. something that make it stand out from a series of other events. The event is therefore always an event in a ‘chain’ of other events. On the other hand, any event is always an event-for, and it therefore obviously means that there is an emphasis put on it by the historian. There is therefore no difference between a micro-event and a macro-event and between an event and a cluster of events (Aron 2003, p. 160). Consequently, his history is always presented as an eventful history. Any attempts at separating other subject of a historical narrative inevitably remain, in a sense, a part of eventfulness. Historians, by a figurative expression of L. Febvr, are forever doomed to “forging chains” of events (1991, pp. 98-99).

Studying specific practical activities and worldview perception of reality in different historical eras supposedly means shifting the focus to the area of repeated, typical facts that are not ‘breaking news’: standard social action, norms, rituals, conditions that are often unrelated to each other directly. F. Braudel defined everyday practices as ‘thousands of actions being performed and ending as if by themselves, not driven by any decisions and, frankly speaking, almost without being registered by our consciousness’ (1993, p. 13). The final establishment of the independent ‘practices’ history happened only in the 20th century in works of the first generation of the Annales School. The turning point is thought to be connected with publishing of the work *Les Rois Thaumatourges* by M. Bloch, dedicated to a study of the mediaeval belief in healing power of monarchs (Le Goff 1998, p. 12.). There, particular rites and beliefs related to perception of the sacral nature of regal power and mediaeval medical ideas became the subject of study. However, even the ‘practices’ history still remains a specific forms of the events history. Those practices as such get into an area of a particular historical study due to their specific nature in relation to other things (i.e. other

practices) and, consequently, both due to their **eventfulness-in history** and due to their **eventfulness-fora historian**. Events-for a historian can become events-for a reader of history, that is why historical practices including multitudes of facts insignificant for their times become a sort of macro-events-for us.

The eventfulness-for does not mean there is no difference between history as a form of an appropriating emphasis on specific events and fiction as making them up. Apart from the visible part of the work of a historian: presenting a narrative for the past to be learned by listeners or readers, there is always an ‘invisible’ part: collection and critique. Sources as traces of the past should be understood and accepted (interpreted). Trust (and distrust) of interpretation and references always means trust of a certain language game. Nobody will check all references in everything they read. Therefore, a reference apart from a link to be checked always contains an element of belief. Such a check may become relevant in certain cases, for example, in a professional environment of historians themselves in case of a clear contradiction between the already appropriated and new. In this case, the entity to be checked should also be authoritative, i.e. trust-based as well. In this connection, we should note that any accounts are always accounts-for. For example, something that can be a unique document **for** a historian may be dismissed by others as something incomprehensible. Something an archaeologist may view as obvious material evidence can be just rubble or a pile of rubbish to others. In this case, we cannot say that the historian receives certain unconditionally ‘objective’ knowledge. Any language game is however an expression of a participatory position of a human being in the world, not just random structuring of reality.

We can therefore speak about its relative adequacy or inadequacy. In this connection, we should note that the development of methods of critical and comparative analysis of sources as well as the emergence of a number of specialised disciplines of history studies over the last two centuries has raised the level of **historical adequacy** of introduced accounts. The position of radical distrust of images of the historical past while retaining trust to other aspects of a language game always becomes essentially vulnerable in this sense.

Another alternative way of relating to eventful history (apart for history of everyday life and history of mentalities) is the ‘structural history’ (See Savelieva and Poletayev 1998, pp. 149-150). The appearance of ‘history of structures’ is connected with the works by F. Braudel, the leader of the second generation of the Annales School. According to Braudel,

events, environments, and structures are related to different temporal levels of the past. Events are represented by short periods of time; environments, or cycles, are represented by medium-term periods of time (50–100 years); structures are represented by long-term periods (*longue durée*) (Braudel 1977, pp. 118-119.). The very idea of a ‘historical structure’ is dual and views both long-term material practices and associated specific economic, social, political, and geographical systems. In our view, the very definition of historical structures and environments based on temporal organisation of the past opens up an opportunity to understand them as meso- and macro-events. We should note that the structure of temporal-spatial breakdown of history proposed by I. Wallerstein, a famous Braudel’s disciples, is also a way to construct a hierarchy of events rather than avoid the eventfulness. The classification of the American sociologist specifies the following: episodic geopolitical space-time, cyclic-ideological space-time, and structural space-time (Wallerstein 1998). That is why particular socio-historical structures (for instance, the Hapsburg world-empire) considered in the world-systems approach are nothing but macro-events. An interesting case of macro-event interpretation of the history of Kola North is presented in a study by P. V. Fyodorov. We should point out that the ‘historical cultural landscapes’ (See Fyodorov 2014) specified by the author should also be understood as regional macro-events.

2.3 The issue of explanation and understanding in history as an issue of a meaningful relation between the past and the present

Can we speak about building a meaningful link between the present and the past on the basis of such significant components of historical cognition as understanding and explanation of the past? Apart from preserving events, historians also aim at understanding and explanation of them. To answer this question, we need a certain investigation of gnosiological approaches to historiography.

As we know, in the 20th century two competing models of historical explanation were developed: causal (deductive-nomological) and rational-teleological. The model of ‘subsumptive’ causal explanation applied to the science of history was developed by C. Hempel. According to that model, almost any unique event can be subsumed under a universal law or hypothesis. The explanation structure includes *explanandum*, a description of the event to be explained, and *explanans*, the accompanying circumstances and incorporating laws. Such a structure is typical of both deductive-nomological explanations stating a necessity of a certain event in given conditions and inductive-probabilistic ones only suggesting a high probability of the event (Hempel 1998, p. 23-25.). As a rule, it is the inductive-probabilistic explanations that should be used in history (Ibid). According to Hempel, the absence of the very formulations of universal regularities in works by historians has two main causes: first, they (regularities) are quite often taken for granted; secondly, it is often impossible to formulate them precisely and clearly, let alone assess them qualitatively. In the second case, in Hempel’s view, we deal with an outline of an explanation rather than with a scientific explanation proper (Ibid).

A similar pattern of historical explanation was developed by K. Popper. According to Popper, a particular event is a cause of another event that is a consequence of the first one in accordance with a certain universal law or a number of laws (Popper 1992, p. 302-303). These universal regularities are usually quite trivial and “absolutely incapable of bringing order to the subject of study” (Popper 1992, p. 305). A rationale for the deductive-nomological model is also presented in the analytical concept by A. Danto. General laws underlying an

explanation are understood by Danto as truisms almost automatically chosen by the historian (Danto 2002, p. 230-232). Consequently, since no new regularities are being discovered in history, history cannot call itself a science (Ibid., p. 230). Thus the deductive model of historical explanation mostly developed in the works by Hempel, Popper, and Danto is based on the idea of natural science methodology as the standard. Historical cognition is in this case a sort of sub-science. For our Master's thesis it is crucial that such an approach dismisses the existential dimension of social life and historical cognition. It means that past events are considered to be facts requiring an explanation, not meanings-events to be appropriated.

An essentially different, rational-teleological model was developed by W. Dray. According to the model, explanation of historical events primarily means finding the motives of the actors (Dray 1977, pp. 41-42). Such teleological explanation can be reduced to the following pattern: person 'A' acted on the basis of certain motives, considering the actions required to reach the goal. This model of explanation is more based on the specifics of historical cognition.

Developing this logical approach, we can specify two tendencies: 1) convergence of the logical pattern of historical explanation described above; 2) convergence of the rational-teleological model of historical explanation and the methodology of understanding in historical cognition.

In the framework of the first tendency, we can describe views of G. H. von Wright and P. Ricœur. Thereafter the statement of the essential 'incompatibility' of those models was challenged. G. H. von Wright attempted to combine them. According to the Finnish logician, different explanations are used by historians on a case-by-case basis. They can use causal, quasi-causal (Strictly speaking, such an explanation is neither teleological or causal) (Von Wright 1986, pp. 161-172), and teleological explanation. Finally, explanations of forced social actions form a separate type (Von Wright 1986, pp. 175-176). According to the Finnish logician, the main type of explanations in the historical science are teleological because purely causal explanations are quite rare and usually have a subordinate function, and quasi-causal ones mean a series of teleological explanations (Von Wright 1986, pp. 169-173). According to P. Ricœur, historical cognition contains both causal-nomological and teleological patterns, because on the one hand, series of facts can be subjected to causal

analysis to detect regularities; on the other hand, certain actions by the actors need to be explained by finding their rational motives (Ricoeur 2004, pp. 258-259).

The second tendency is more important to us. We should note that the idea of understanding as a special method of historical cognition that has nothing to do with the natural science explanation of facts was formulated in works by J. Droysen and W. Dilthey and was spread by representatives of the Neo-Hegelian (in mind such philosophers as R.G. Collingwood and B. Croce) and Neo-Kantian (in mind such philosophers as H. Rickert and W. Windelband) schools. The assumption of historical cognition as understanding concrete historical events connected with thoughts of the actor was a common ground for those thinkers. Consequently, a cause of a certain event was connected with thoughts of the person causing the event. The relevance of strategies of understanding in cognition of the past increases during explanation of actions which, although rational within their own 'rationality', are not rational for the scholar. In this case, seemingly irrational actions can be explained. Understanding thoughts of a particular actor makes the event explainable (Aron 2003, pp. 184-187). One should therefore focus on 'mind comprehensibility' of history rather than on a logical procedure of finding a cause.

The rational-teleological model of explanation requires a connection with understanding. Understanding always means a certain degree of personal involvement where the events are no longer alien to the person. Understanding is always individually variative and difficult to relate outwardly. It is crucial that the procedure of understanding in historical cognition is always performed from a particular historical event: an event of the historian in being with Others. We should note that this fact was also realised by J. Droysen, the author of the idea of historical cognition. According to the German philosopher, understanding in historical cognition is similar to understanding during a conversation with accounts acting as a "word addressed to us who are Here and Now" (Droysen 2004, p. 70).

The eventfulness of the past certain eventfulness is essentially impossible by itself, without any relation to anybody. The impossibility of an action for a person not limited by any time frame may serve as a good analogy. This impossibility is brilliantly illustrated by J.L. Borges in his story *The Immortal* (Borges 2014, pp. 3-31). The characters doomed to immortality some time later stopped doing anything at all due to the constant fluidity of consequences radically altering the nature and meaning of the actions. Historical events are

done by actors based on definite goals directed in the future and may only be understood from a particular historical standpoint of the understanding party. A change in the 'point of understanding' in the present means a change in the viewed events as well.

2.4 Philosophical-historical understanding as anthropological self-identification

Can a ‘point of understanding’ of the past connect it not only with the present but also with the future? Is it possible to cross the borders of meaning of the past, present, and future? In my view, the possibility of overcoming the borders unfolds in a certain philosophical-historical model. A philosophical reflection of history through concepts such as ‘aim’ ‘meanings’, ‘end’, and ‘laws’ expands the horizon of our understanding. First, our understanding of history expands because we think not just about ‘what was’ but also about ‘what is happening and will happen.’ Secondly, the point of understanding shifts from the here-and-now present to a moment of ‘meaning’ and ‘aim’ in the future. As a result, a certain anthropological project appears that makes it possible to have a certain variant of self-identification of the humankind, i.e. a meaningful relation of the humankind to itself.

For the first time, such a philosophical-historical project fully unfolds within Christian anthropology that discovered an understanding of the human being in the context of certain unique events: the creation, the fall, and the salvation. The scholastic Christian tradition could reproduce the ancient definition of a human being as a rational, live, and mortal creature (Abelard 1995, p. 90), but it was done primarily within the logical aspect with an implied addition of creation (*ens creatum*). Since the creation was meant for the specific human case, the attribution of an immortal soul was required as well. It clearly emphasized mortality as a determining constant. New horizons of understanding were non-reflectively present in the Christian worldview as such. Their reflective construction is done primarily in patristics, the Renaissance tradition, and in Christian philosophical-historical concepts. In this sense, we should note the clear meaningful parallelism (given the literal difference) of meditations of St. Basil the Great (of Caesarea) on the distinction, in a human being, of the Image as an initial essence and the Likeness as a possibility of **θέωσις (deification)** (See *Hexameron* X, 15-17) and ideas of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola about the absence of any definite image in a human being (Pico della Mirandola 2003, pp. 713-714). The ‘absence of an image’ should be understood as the absence of a sustainable essence, unlike in the rest of creation, and, therefore, an open way to deification for a human being. Thus the Christian worldview provides not just a ‘way of life’ and ‘destiny’ but a personal history as a way of fulfilment for

a human being. In this sense, the early Christian tradition was, in a way, existentialism before the existentialism. The philosophical-historical model of the past understood for the first time in its history (not as a collection of individual anecdotes) opened a possibility of not just personal but also anthropological fulfilment of a human being through co-being: the creation, the fall, the coming, and the judgement.

The possibility of Christian anthropology is based on the procedure of ‘connection-with’ because in this procedure of self-understanding it is required to **connect** oneself **with** God. It is obvious in this case that anthropology acquires a very specific mode because it means a connection with and a discovery (introduction) of another entity of participatory observation that infinitely exceeds a human being. Yet the very mechanisms that give self-identification a historical dimension are clearly shown in the Christian tradition for the first time. Reference (connection-with) as such is not a simple obsession with an idea. The obsession with an idea is a transformed, specific case of reference. Connection can be understood as appropriation. The thought image of **appropriation** means, in this case, the essence of connecting oneself (both personally and anthropologically) with a particular one’s own attribute. Self-appropriation is a certain experience of self-understanding and self-discovery. The discovered attribute becomes a peculiar place (point of view) of self-identification. Appropriation as an essential definition of a human being is not a representing construction; it rather manifests itself in a certain experience, be it thinking, belief, or mood. The philosophical-historical understanding is not a purely intellectual pattern. Any similar model of behaviour means a certain degree of existential enthusiasm, both anthropologically and personally. Seemingly different states like inspiration of a true Christian and enthusiasm of a romantic revolutionary are notable in this sense. The enthusiasm of individual self-identification in these cases is clearly connected with the message of anthropological models underlying a particular worldview.

Since individual being is impossible without presence (*Mitdasein*) of and with others, self-identification as reference-to is also possible on the socio-historical level. The cultural-historical reference-to can be exemplified by famous ‘trends’ such as the ‘Russian idea’, ‘white man’s burden’, and ‘the American dream.’ We should point out again that those references should not be understood as just ideological systems or unshakeable truths. They should be understood as results of a certain experience of **appropriation** of their own

attributes by particular regional communities. We can therefore only speak about a higher or lower degree of **historical adequacy** for each case.

Certainly, in each particular concept, historicity may be developed to a different extent. Therefore, presence or absence of a developed philosophical-historical pattern does not confirm that the anthropologic model is (non)historical. The historical nature of appropriation of essential characteristics means that they can be lost or alienated. On the other hand, self-equation as 'reference-to something' is impossible without 'difference-from something.' Consequently, the role and importance of alienation as an identification procedure may be understood in two aspects: first, as a hidden or evident procedure of self-determination, secondly as a condition for a possible loss, distortion of declared essential characteristics. Failure to use this category in a particular conceptual pattern only means that it is hidden and undeveloped but not redundant and false.

Non-classical anthropological self-identifications are necessarily connected with the parameter of relation as a reference to a certain historically acquired or lost attribute. It is the historical and not just temporal relation that becomes possible due to the eventful construction of time. A combination of social and anthropological perspective takes place, since history as realisation of the human phenomenon is inevitably a history of a human event (events of the humankind and events in the life of every person). The past and the future therefore cease to be alien for a human being. The unity of co-presence may be specified in parameters of self-awareness as we-identity. It is noteworthy that any we-identity always means the identity 'I-as-related'. In this case, we can speak about a different scope of identity: from the whole humankind to a separate family. Historical-memorial practices can be understood as certain procedures of community self-identification.

2.5 Postmodernist critique of the philosophy of history and a possibility of a response: the case of M. Foucault critical ideas

It is known that philosophical-historical concepts were subjected to a critique in the 20th century from such an influential phenomenon as postmodernist philosophy. Postmodernist authors present a highly sceptical, if not nihilist opinion of ontological philosophical-historical models. The postmodernist skepticism applies almost to the whole non-postmodernist conceptual mechanism of socio-humanitarian knowledge. A certain model of understanding history will, in this case, be viewed and shown to the reader through a transforming conceptual glass: as a product of the tropological tradition, meta-narrative, a result of the limited logocentric or Eurocentric worldview, power-knowledge, discursive practice, etc. It is no surprise that the concept of “sublime historical experience’ by F. Ankersmit, stating a possibility of positive cognition of history on the basis on historical experience, de-facto breaks away from postmodernism. The postmodernist critique is based on an incorrect reduction of an experience of philosophical contemplation of the past: either to language or textual phenomena or to ideological doctrines. Undoubtedly, meaningful models of history are collected in concrete texts and presented in language and related to with dominant worldview assumptions. Yet what is the reduction of understanding based on?

Probably, the most interesting and substantial critique of meaningful models of history was done by M. Foucault (See M. Foucault 1977, M. Foucault 1996, M. Foucault 1999). M. Foucault connects the emergence of universal evolutionary theories of societal progress with development of disciplinary technologies of power. The modern ‘evolutionary’ historicity has replaced the so-called ‘reminiscence history’, i.e. the history of chronicles, genealogies, feats, and reigns. According to the French philosopher, the shift was caused by the change of the authority regime. We should note here that, while the novelty of secularised theories of societal progress is indisputable in the conceptual-theoretical aspect, they were not something essentially new in their form, as Foucault believed. Those theoretical patterns were a rational-teleological alternative to the Christian theological model of history losing their popularity (due to a deep worldview shift). It was the way the anthropological model of self-identification was changing. Foucault, who wanted to detect a common matrix of humanitarian science and criminal law in technologies of authority and connected the

emergence of the first secular philosophical-historical concepts with the change in power, mixes, to a certain extent, different orders or levels of approaching the past. Even if we acknowledge the questionable Foucault's assumption of the unity of the matrix or the 'power-knowledge' structure where knowledge is produced either to serve or to resist the authority, the very equation of the philosophy of history to history as a form of cognition remains groundless. In fact, history as a practice of meaningful preservation of the past and the philosophy of history as an anthropological understanding are different level of interacting with the time horizon of being of people.

According to M. Foucault, the very worldview-based, cultural-historical footing of philosophical-historical pattern is interpreted as a 'stigma' typical of any Universal History. That is why any historiosophical theory has a relative nature while claiming universality. Probably, the logic of the critique is connected here with a negative opinion of the 'here-and-now' standpoint as a basis of understanding. However, first, the understanding entity has no other starting point; secondly, speaking of the philosophical-anthropological understanding of history, we should speak about two points of understanding (points of view): understanding 'here-and-now' and 'goal-in-the-future.' Therefore, while different concepts are usually connected with the context of their era, they (concepts) may simultaneously acquire a non-temporal meaning. If the content may be viewed as anachronistic, the general methodological and worldview-based potential of the model remains. Like ideology, philosophy connects and typifies scattered worldview ideas. At the same time, philosophy, unlike ideological construct, has a reflective nature and unfolds on the basis of its own logical, methodological, and conceptual foundations which, in their turn, are based on a constitutive feature of human presence: the ability to understand. Understanding opens up a possibility of an existential, not a socially constructivist relation to one's own being with other people. In case of a particular philosophical-historical project, we speak about an existential link between an individual life and the historical journey of the humankind as a whole.

2.6 Summary

The universal scope of philosophical-historical anthropologies opens up the regional confinement of separate histories for the unity of a historical journey of the whole humankind. This poses a question about presence or absence of a place-in-being of the whole humankind. The relevance of this issue is confirmed by the very present-day state of affairs when concrete ontic structures of En-framing (*Ge-stell*) have already forced the world to be ‘tied together.’ We see cash flows, the unity of the global political scene, global movement of workforce, deliveries of goods and services, international terrorism, and a lot more. These particular phenomena emphasise, by their obvious presence, the question of an existential rationale for this unity. A justification for the humankind may be viewed here as realisation of a universal historical meaning.

A need in a meaning as an existential-anthropological phenomenon is constituted by the initial relation of the human being and the world: alienation. A meaning is impossible by itself as a given world. The only possible source of meaning is a “clearance” of **one’s own** attitude towards the world. In this case, the meaning cannot be found as something already present in the world but rather as something introduced in it. This situation is typical of any dimension of the world and therefore for any ‘regional ontology’, including philosophical-historical constructions.

Formation of the first ideas about a meaningful unity of the world history was connected with the establishment of the Christian religion. The Christian understanding of the world was the first to state the universality of humanity and the human kind created by God. The unity meant a common historical destiny from the creation to the judgement day. The meaning of human existence was thought as a possibility of Apocatastasis. The history was for the first time understood not just the past but in a broader sense as a development in time: in the present, past and future.

The historical cognition proper, unlike the philosophical-historical approach, is directed at describing of the past, with the future being out of the scope of study. As a result, it is impossible to embrace not a situational but existential unity of the humankind in the

framework of history as a form of cognition. The world history may be thought of as a united whole only from the standpoint of a unified meaningful perspective. We should note that worldview ideas of history by themselves are present in a scattered mode, without a logical and conceptual structure. It is concrete philosophical-historical projects where they are finally formulated and linked. In their turn, philosophical-historical concepts may only count on wide attention when they are based on meaningful worldview projects. The entity of meaning links the individual existence and historical fulfilment of the humankind to the maximum extent.

Life meanings should be understood as the essential **one's own**. It does not mean that a meaning as such is in individual existence. Participation as being as a part means an initial connection with others. A meaning is always related to reflection of particular parameters of a 'place in being' for the human. The attribution of being as being-among-others and being-towards-others presents an opportunity to link the life meaning with socio-historical communities. Philosophic-historical models, creating a meaningful past-present-future connection of the whole humanity, thereby present an opportunity of **connection** of individual life meanings **with** universal anthropological projects of meaning. Anthropologically, human identification in an unbreakable bond with fulfilment is a crucial thing. The existence of a separate individual, without losing the uniqueness and singularity, can therefore also be a moment of realisation of the human being as such (humankind), while the very idea of fulfilment may be expressed in essential different theoretical-conceptual ways. In any case, it is the meaning that is the focus that makes it possible to speak about an essential and generally valid unity of the world history in principle.

3.0 Chapter 3 Conclusion

To summarise, we need to develop several theoretical positions connected with the analysis of various aspects of the factor of borders and overcoming them in identification and self-identification:

1. Identification of things existent as understanding of various subjects, situations and events is based on the ontologically borderline position of a human being. We mean the border between trust and distrust, acceptance and rejection. Adequacy of understanding everyday situation is determined, inter alia, by the human non-shift to any of those sides. Otherwise, the person gets into a situation of either naïveté or paranoia. The borderline position determines the reasonable nature of being of a human between the alternative of no reason (as deficient reason) and insanity (as madness).

2. Identification as outwardly directed understanding is a synthetic thought-sense procedure. A correspondent philosophical ontology should disavow the metaphysical understanding of the ‘thoughts-senses’ border. Although in each particular experience we may lack either a sensory experience or an ability to interpret it rationally, the general adequacy of understanding is built only on connection of these two aspects. For example, in the epic story about the Trojan horse, Laocoön did not need an additional sensory experience to understand that something was not right: “*Quidquid id est, timeo Danaos et dona ferentes!*”(Lat.), while the additional sensory experience (the sound of rattling arms inside the horse) did not help the other Trojans.

3. In the ontological sense, we require revisiting of the meaning of the categories of ‘related’ and ‘relation’ in order to build ontology of an alternative metaphysical-analytical model of the world. Things existent should be primarily understood as related (relation) in two main meanings: 1) what is part of the world (i.e. ontically); 2) what is understood by a human being (i.e. anthropologically). Again, we speak about the situation when a person remains in the (ontologically) borderline situation, without becoming either insane or naïve, always remaining between both. The world as a hermeneutic universe can be therefore understood in relatedness by a human being alienated from it. The same alienation of the

world and separation of a human being from it opens a possibility for appropriation of the world. The primary mode of appropriation of the world is adequate understanding.

4. It is impossible to think and understand a thing as an autonomous unit, which can be exemplified by the impossibility of an autonomous utterance. It means that individual utterances always rely on a certain language game. At the same time, language games, contrary to the opinion of L. Wittgenstein, are potentially comparable due to their function of identification of things existent. That is why a human being can practically confirm adequacy or inadequacy of a particular language game. Crossing the borders of language game can only be connected with the principle of Dialogue. A condition for a Dialogue is openness to a different understanding (different identification of a fragment of the world) and readiness to shift one's own position.

5. One of the core factors of self-identification in being with other people is the factor of crossing temporal borders of human existence. History can be viewed from the existential standpoint as a way to cross the border between the present and the past. Of course, we do not mean a time machine moving people into the past. However, we mean shifting the past from the mode of oblivion or something that passed to the mode of something that was. Overcoming this temporal border give a meaning to one of the core thought images determining being of people: presence of roots (footing). However, historical cognition in its existential meaning 'works' only on the level of concrete cultural-historical projects (nations, cultures, regions, etc.) At the same time, the globalism of the modern world makes the issue of a possible global meaning relevant.

6. Philosophy of history should be viewed as a tool of universalisation. Philosophical-historical models of understanding a human being are also capable of crossing borders of local cultural-historical projects and meaningful overcoming of the temporal border between the past and the future. These possibilities are connected with attempt at establishing a certain universal anthropological meaning in the future, i.e. a certain goal (end) of history. There is therefore a possibility of not just a situational but also meaningful unity of the humankind. Of course, these meanings should be understood as opportunities because in reality people may not connect their personal and cultural-historical meanings with the universally anthropological one.

7. In the pedagogical aspect, the theoretical studies of this Master's thesis may be relevant for inclusion of two issues in borderology studies: 1) everyday thinking as a borderline action between naïveté (trust of the world) and insanity (paranoid doubt); 2) philosophy of history as a metaphysical methodology of crossing cultural-historical borders.

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Appendix 1



Title: "The issue of finding (retaining) senses (meanings) of life (in life) in the present-day era"

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Murmansk 2014

Part I. Report: «The issue of finding (retaining) senses (meanings) of life (in life) in the present-day era».

Background

The question about senses (meanings) of the human life or a purpose of life or a purpose in life is the most important one for human beings. Why is it? Because the human type of existence differs radically in comparison with the type of the existence of other entities. What do I mean in this sentence?

This difference was a subject for philosophical reflection for thinkers from the ancient time to the present day. In the 20th century, this specific idea was defined as a responsibility (J-P. Sartre, 2008), participation and act (M.M. Bakhtin, 2003), presence and *Dasein* (M. Heidegger, 2006), will to meaning (V. Frankl, 1990), etc. Human beings understand the event of their existence, and it means that humans can understand their own death; they are able to love, realise moral and ethical questions, have aesthetic feelings, etc. I think that such phenomena are where the human existence manifests itself. People, unlike material objects, biological entities (plants, animals, etc.), computers, and robots, need a specific dimension of their existence. The difference cannot be reduced just to the presence of consciousness or a higher level of intellect. It is really about the very nature of the human existence.

In our opinion, we should speak about senses (or meanings) in the human existence in general, but in a personal case, it may be one central sense (or meaning). We should also understand that a human could find a meaning of life or senses in life, but our point is that senses (meanings) are also a human way of existence. What does it mean? I will try to answer. There is a comic leaflet with a review of “news of the future” in English left in a classroom of the MSHU Faculty of Philology, Journalism, and Intercultural Communication. One piece was very funny; it was about sales being started of robots-husbands in 2144. In this room, I had regular seminars with students on the subject of aesthetics. One day, when the topic was partially suitable – romanticism, I asked my students whether an android could replace a human husband not as a sexual and social partner but as a romantic-spiritual partner. Their answer was that was impossible. I think it means that the students could understand that an android could only imitate the authentic level of the human life. To some of them, the very idea of the replacement seemed ludicrous and absurd. Those giving a rational argument

pointed at the fact that an android could only imitate a romantic behaviour and spiritual compassion. The main ideas I and the students used were a genuine attitude and an imitation, freedom and a programme (being programmed), a sense and a motive.

It is also crucial to differentiate between a motive (goal, task) and a sense (meaning). I think that we have good examples in the classical Russian literature in *Oblomov*, a novel by Goncharov. There are, of course, typically Russian problems in the novel: laziness, and the unsettlement of life, both personal and social. Yet, at the same time, there is a broader philosophical and anthropologic range of issues there. The central character of the novel, Oblomov, is a Russian *pomeshchik* (nobleman) who lives in Petersburg without engaging in any activity. Oblomov does not even want to take care of his own home and his own business. His friend, Stolz, (a Russified? German) is his total opposite: a very active and business-like person. Yet everything he does is purely pragmatic. Reading the novel, the reader realises that a reason preventing Oblomov from being active is that he cannot find any meaning in the activities freely available to him, i.e. made available by the society. It is also understandable that Stolz's activities are motivated but not sensed (or even totally devoid of meaning).

What is the difference between a motive and a sense? In my view, senses cross the border of the pragmatic, functional approach to life that is only aimed at an external result. I can refer to earlier philosophical constructs of M. M. Bakhtin (M.M. Bakhtin, 2003). I mean the Bakhtin project of "a philosophy of the act" or "a new *prima philosophia*". The text of *Toward a Philosophy of the Act* was written in the 1920s, yet unfinished. The philosophy of the act, according to Bakhtin, is what may tie separated worlds together: the world of objectified culture and cognition and the world of individual life, which may break the barrier between theory and practice. The philosophy of the act is a beginning of the *prima philosophia*. The project did not get a complete and comprehensive implementation and is only available as an unfinished summary of the work. The act manifests a degree of participatory involvement of a human in the being. It means various modes of human activity: acts of cognition, aesthetic contemplation, ethical or political actions, etc. Thoughts, feelings, utterances, and actions fit in the definition of an act, yet all of them may not. The crucial aspect of it is that it does not mean only external motives or goals of any kind. According to young Bakhtin, an act is not just external aims and motives but related to a personally meaningful sense. Following Bakhtin, we can think of a motive as an external call for action, the sense being a personally valuable attitude towards the activity and its tone of emotion and

will. The increasing reduction of the act to its external motives is, according to Bakhtin, a manifestation of its crisis.

In our view, the anthropological shift was well summarised by M. Heidegger in his idea of *Gestell* (M. Heidegger, 1991). Translated into Russian by V. V. Bibikhin, *Gestell* turns into *po-stav*, and both in Russian and in German, the idea is revealed by the root *stellen* (Ger.) – *stavit'* (Rus.). *Gestell* (*Po-stav*) is not just a specific prism of ideas and values through which a human views the world. The term means the essence of the present-day technocratic civilisation. Any thing “naturally” perceived as a distinct artefact of the present-day culture is really a relatedness. The most appropriate concept for products of the present-day culture is the standing reserve or *der Bestand* that can only exist due to the event of setting it in order (*bestellen*). In the present-day age, virtually every material artefact is a consequence of the complicated functioning system of extracting resources, production, storage, distribution, transport, advertising, selling, and consumption, with almost every natural event being considered a potential or existing resource to be included into the system. The technocratic might of the present-day civilisation (*po-stav*) is primarily based on framing of natural energies. Using natural energies, however, not only provides for ubiquitous delivery of goods, services, machinery, raw materials, and workforce, but also itself needs this delivery. This need cannot be satisfied without “framing” of knowledge and information and, therefore, without “installing” values-related directions and motives, i.e. without forming the human identity in a certain way.

What has been done?

Philosophical reading and meditation

I recall reading philosophical texts correlated the issue of senses (meanings) human life; they were written by the thinkers I mentioned in the background section. I reread an earlier article of mine relating to the said issues (V. Voronov, 2011), asking a few more questions. Rereading M. Bahtin’s articles helped me realise this new question, and now my ideas have changed. I used to understand the meanings of life within the context of the universal purpose of history, i.e. teleologically. The purpose of history in its virtually every understanding is related to its finale, “end”, “aim”. “An end” of history does not necessarily mean its literal eschatological end. For instance, a Communist society according to K. Marx

(K. Marx, 2000) or a global victory of liberal democracy according to F. Fukuyama (F. Fukuyama, 2010) may also be interpreted as goals of history. They mean not the end historic events as such but achieving a historic goal of human development. After that, only an essentially different history (with an essentially different purpose) or nothing but events are possible. The sense of history is therefore tied to its end. I used to relate the teleological nature of individual meanings of life with two aspects: first, a separate human being can understand their destiny as a part of the human historic development. In this case, they can realise themselves as participants of the universal direction of history and therefore be part of the universal teleological meaning of history. The degree of relation to the meaning is, in this case, in the degree of how much the human being feels the involvement of their life in history. Secondly, various social and cultural practices also organise the daily individual life of a human via implemented goals and meanings. For example, a family means having children; a job means work results, etc.

The ideas of “a philosophy of the act” by M. Bakhtin helped me look at the issue of life meanings from another standpoint. A sense may also be understood by **one’s own** unique **attitude** towards the practices of one’s own existence. It is the sense that makes an act become (in the notion of Bakhtin) the specific mode of the human existence that differs from activities by animals and by automated machines. Here, the interesting thing is the philosophical constructs of One’s Own by A. M. Sergeyev (Sergeyev, 2013). The phenomenon of One’s Own may be primarily specified by the ability of having an “own” (non-determined, internal) attitude.

Thus, reading philosophy and meditation made me ask new questions and view new aspects of the issue. But then I wrote that asking questions is only part of the truth. “Questions asked” it is more correct. Only a part of our thought is controlled by our will. The Russian language and Martin Heidegger’s ideas give us a hint. In English we should say: “I think”. In Russian, we can say similarly “I think” (*ya dumayu* In Russian). The emphasis is here on “I” that thinks, i.e. the centre of mental activity. Here, the language practice dictates the new European understanding of “I” as the subject (substance). One should recall the famous saying by René Descartes: *ego cogito*. One may also point out the concept of the act by Bakhtin. Therefore, a very important thing is being revealed related to the essay of the first year: “writing subjectivity”. Yet both in writing and in speaking, we can say otherwise. We can say: it occurs to me (*Mne dumayetsya / Dumayetsya mne* in Russian). The sense of the

expressions is not that someone is thinking of me but in the fact that **thoughts come to me**. It is the way that happens itself – M. Heidegger called it thinking of a Being (thinking about a Being). But, in my view, this type of thinking may not only be related to the typically Heideggerian radical ontological standpoint. Reflection on crucial phenomena of the human existence more often should be not in the I-think mode (*ya dumayu* in Russian) but in the it-occurs-to-me mode (*mne dumayetsya* in Russian). I therefore view my task in the philosophical part of the essay of the second year in not just analysing various concepts and comparing them to my point of view but also in setting myself to meditation, i.e. for new thoughts coming to me.

Qualitative analysis

Hermeneutic interpretation of *the Matrix*

Any work of art may be viewed as a text, a certain relativity of such a view to be taken into account, which is especially true for certain forms of art. For instance, the term *text* does not convey the objectivity and impression of a picture. This is less true for films and it can be proven by the very existence of film scripts. Yet, on the other hand, a film, as much as a theatrical drama, is primarily action, not a story. In this case, how may it possibly be textually interpreted in the essay as a text? Yet discussing, reviewing, and critique of films are general practices. I therefore also refer in the essay to interpretation of a film as a specific text. “The text is the author's death”. “The text is living his life”. This means that you can find meanings that are not seen in the text by the author. We often encounter similarity of this phenomenon in everyday practice. Saying something, especially when composing a written text, we can face the interpretations that we did not expect, at least consciously. We could say that we did not put such a meaning, but it may not be useless. M. Mamardashvili noted this feature in poetic texts when the poet does not understand what they could write. Perhaps, it is specific of many literary texts, not just poetic ones.

This means that the text can be interpreted without a fundamental connection with the viewpoint of the author.

The Matrix was selected for various reasons.

This is a relevant, well-known, popular, pretentious, and pompous film of our time. *The Matrix* is a 1999 American-Australian science fiction action film written and directed by the Wachowskis (based on a story by Christopher Miller), starring Keanu Reeves, Laurence Fishburne, Carrie-Anne Moss, Hugo Weaving, and Joe Pantoliano. It depicts a dystopian future in which reality as perceived by most humans is actually a simulated reality called “the Matrix”, created by sentient machines to subdue the human population, while their bodies' heat and electrical activity are used as an energy source. Thomas Anderson is a computer programmer (who maintains a double life as “Neo”, the hacker) learns this truth and is drawn into a rebellion against the machines, which involves other people who have been freed from the “dream world”.

The Matrix was first released in the United States on 31 March 1999, grossed over 460 million USD worldwide and won four Academy Awards as well as other accolades including BAFTA Awards and Saturn Awards.

This film is not the latest news. This means that the film has settled. The “text” has been tested by time (though small). One may find existential ideas in the film, but it is not the first one for us to watch. First, we think about epistemology and the problem of reality. But then we have to remember the literary text. We have to remember the metaphor. Often, a metaphor is the main feature of an artistic text. And we can understand the meaning of the image of a quasi-reality of the present and the meaning of the image of the true reality of the future: the fields with people-batteries. A more obvious metaphoric interpretation of the film has a social and philosophical nature. The film may be understood as a revolutionary call for fighting the existing social system. However, *the Matrix* metaphors may also be interpreted existentially and anthropologically. In the essay, I follow this particular path, interpreting the content of the film in the context of acquiring life meanings in the present-day civilisation.

Quantitative data

Quantitative poll does not give a full picture. But we can ask questions to many people. What if I'm the only person who is excited by the issue of sense? Or a small amount of people (which can be investigated by qualitative methods)? May be goals, objectives, and values sufficient for many people?

A poll was conducted to test these issues.

I managed to make a quantitative study of the attitudes of students to the problem of life's meaning. My study was part of a more General sociological research aimed at analyzing the relationship between individual life meaning, social meaning, and historical memory. Was formulated program of research, working hypotheses and generated questionnaires (dual form).

In September, a sociological survey was conducted. Conducted a survey of students, Murmansk (pupils of 10-11 classes and students of the universities and colleges in the city). In the course of questioning was used dual form. Used the group method of distributing the questionnaires. The first part of the questionnaire was aimed, first, at relationship of respondent to the problem of the meaning of life, and secondly, at the individual's life goals, the value of the individual and the plans of the respondent. The second part of the questionnaire was focused on the study of the value of the historical past of the country and the region, as well as assessment of specific knowledge about the past.

529 people were interviewed. They were school and college students (15–25 years old). The male-female and the school-college proportion was observed.

What I saw

Philosophical mediation

Ideas for the project served as a future thesis.

Qualitative analysis

I can define some important points of the film for interpretation.

The most important scene (I wrote about it above) is a scene when Morpheus shows Neo two short videos. First, it shows a picture of that world which Neo is used to seeing, secondly, a real picture of the world. In the first case, we see a typical picture of a modern technocratic civilisation of an American megalopolis: skyscrapers, crowds of people, and lots

of cars. In the second case, it is a shocking image of the world of machines (robots) that use people (grow up them on special fields) as sources of energy. We have to understand that the first image is only an illusion, and the second one shows a true situation. But we have to understand it metaphorically; a person in the modern civilisation has become a battery – a power source for the existence of the System.

How is it possible? It is, in a situation of a total control.

We already saw the value of control in other moments of the film.

“Why there is a Matrix?” Neo asks.

“Control!” Morpheus answers.

What does control mean? First of all, it is a control of internal aspirations of a person. It is a situation when meanings are replaced with motives and values. The Matrix can be interpreted as a *Ge-stell* implemented (M. Heidegger's term). *Ge-stell* becomes the means of understanding the world as sets of objects. A human subject can make any operations with objects. *Ge-stell* becomes an ontological basis of the modern technocratic civilisation. *Ge-stell* opens (gives) huge opportunities of use of natural objects. But everything comes at a price. The very person becomes an object.

The person as an object is exposed to a deep pre-formation. Values, motives, and purposes are delivered (“en-framed”) to it. How is it possible to find a way out? How to find meanings? We can see four conditions of the purpose in the film: 1. understanding of the problem; 2. courage; 3. self-awareness; 4. overcoming.

1. Neo feels that it is something wrong with the world. He begins living a double life and is a cyber-criminal;

2. As Neo chooses the pill that will allow him to see the truth;

3. “Know thyself” is an antique rule which we see in Pythia’s (Oracle) house.

4. During the whole film, Neo overcomes ever increasing problems.

Quantitative data

The survey data were distributed.

1. Thoughts of the issue of meaning of life

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
Yes	400	75.6%	76.0%
Not present	68	12.9%	12.9%
I find it difficult to answer	58	11.0%	11.0%
Subtotal	526	99.4%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

2. Is there anything in human life that is possible to die for?

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
Yes	280	52.9%	53.5%
Not present	95	18.0%	18.2%
I find it difficult to answer	145	27.4%	27.7%
Subtotal	523	98.9%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

3. Is there anything in my life that is possible to die for?

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
Yes	238	45.0%	45.7%
Not present	128	24.2%	24.6%
I find it difficult to answer	154	29.1%	29.6%
Subtotal	521	98.5%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

4. Statement 1: "I consider that thinking of the meaning of life is a waste of time (it is necessary to live simply and that's it)"

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
I agree	50	9,5%	9,5%
I partially agree	271	51,2%	51,6%
I don't agree	204	38,6%	38,9%
Subtotal	525	99,2%	100,0%
Total	529	100,0%	

5. Statement 2: "I consider that it is necessary to live for one's own sake"

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
I agree	61	11.5%	11.6%
I partially agree	268	50.7%	51.1%
I don't agree	195	36.9%	37.2%
Subtotal	524	99.1%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

6. Statement 3: “I consider that, in my life, there has to be something that would give it a sense”

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
I agree	406	76.7%	77.9%
I partially agree	93	17.6%	17.9%
I don't agree	22	4.2%	4.2%
Subtotal	521	98.5%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

7. Statement 4: “I consider that, in my life, there is something that would give it a sense”

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
I agree	422	79.8%	81.0%
I partially agree	75	14.2%	14.4%
I don't agree	23	4.3%	4.4%
Subtotal	520	98.5%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

8. Statement 5: “I reflected on the meaning of life, but I couldn't formulate my answer”

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
I agree	108	20.4%	20.7%
I partially agree	232	43.9%	44.4%
I don't agree	180	34.0%	34.5%
Subtotal	520	98.5%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

9. Statement 6: “From time to time, I feel that my life makes no sense”

	Number of choices	Percentage	Valid percentage
I agree	140	26.5%	26.7%
I partially agree	169	31.9%	32.2%
I don't agree	213	40.3%	40.6%
Subtotal	522	98.7%	100.0%
Total	529	100.0%	

The data confirm the working hypothesis that the meaning of life is to be a fundamentally important aspect of life for the respondents. In particular, this is evidenced by the data obtained in the analysis of the responses to questions 1, 6 and 7.

At the same time, the findings suggest that the majority of young people particularly difficult to formulate its position: what should be the meaning. This is quite clearly seen from the results of the responses to question 8. It is necessary to pay attention to the answers to question 4, according to which a sufficiently large number of young people expressed partial agreement with what to think about the meaning - it is a waste of time. At first glance it is difficult to reconcile with these questions 1, 6 and 7. However, it should be noted that 51% of respondents expressed partial agreement is that rather reflects the difficulty of personal verbal understanding and formulating meaning than the recognition of the meaninglessness of his quest.

Be attributed to the age characteristics? Youth are traditionally understood as a time of self-determination. Or is it consists in the fact that the question of meaning can not be resolved teleological, i.e. by reference to the particular purpose. Maybe it just confirms the position of the "philosophy of act" Bakhtin, who understands as meaning not the goal, but the attitude?

Answers to question 9 is largely confirm the correctness of V. Frankl that serious psychological problem of our time is the "existential vacuum", ie sense of meaninglessness of life. It should be noted that the same even driven Frankl percentage of young people experiencing similar problems about 60%. However, in this matter I do not quite understand the answer is "agree somewhat". Perhaps this embodiment, if the response would not be, then the data would be different.

Now I am quite difficult to interpret the data issues 2 and 3. When the questionnaire was developed, I realized individual sense of life in a teleological and social context. Then I equated the meaning of life and the meaning of death, that is, what makes life worth living, and what is worth dying. Now with the existential position of Bakhtin project "philosophy of action" this issue requires further theoretical studies.

Certain difficulties arise with the answers to question 5. When I developed the questionnaire, I considered this question as opposite items 1, 6, 7. I thought that if a man lives for himself, then he has no need to sense and, conversely, if a person needs a sense, he can not live just for its own sake. However, 51% partially agree with the proposal to issue 5 when compared with those questions 1, 6, 7, made me think. I think, however, that this contradiction can be clarified by relying on the term A. Sergeev, "One's Own". Perhaps their meanings are considered by respondents as part of ourselves (we can talk about their affairs, about their children, about their parents)?

Part II. Critical reflection.

The first issue I would like to view in the essay is a philosophical one. Is it possible to analyse the issue of the sense of life without viewing the idea of a sense in general? Is it reasonable? In the essay, I used the terms *sense* and *meaning* synonymously, but is it correct?

There are two main theoretical approaches to the issue of the sense in general. In the first approach, the sense is viewed as objective data. Consequently, the understanding means revealing a certain sense that is inherent to the "object". The second theoretical approach is connected with an interpretation of the sense as a result of producing it.

For instance, according to the logic and semantic theory by G. Frege, a sense is a way of presenting a denotation (meaning), i.e. a certain object-thing denoted by a name-sign (Frege, 1977). Depending on the context, the same denotation may have several meanings. A similar position was shared by A. Church, according to whom a sense is "what is understood if the name is understood" (Church, 1960). This objectivist position is logic-semantic by its

nature. The sense and meaning, as objective entities, were opposed by G. Frege to a subjective image of an object individually viewed by every person. According to the psycholinguistic approach by A. R. Luria, a sense, as opposed to a meaning, conveys an individual specific approach to a certain object (A. R. Luria, 1979). We can therefore speak of the sense as both something independent from an individual attitude and a result of an individual human attitude.

Yet, is the logical-semantic and psycholinguistic approach to the sense of words and sentences connected with the issue of life meanings? We must ask a broader question: is the sense a certain cohesive phenomenon, or do we speak about different meanings of the term *sense*, since we can speak of a sense in a socio-cultural, aesthetic, ethical, and existential meaning? Is there anything in common? In my view, the question is essential for the research.

The issue is in the language. When I wrote the essay, I viewed it from the standpoint of the Russian language and the need to translate it into English. But why did I not try to find a broader linguistic context? I think that was an omission on my behalf. I am talking about the borderology programme languages: Russian, English, and Norwegian. We need to view the etymology of the words *smysl* (Russian), *sense* (English), and *betydning* (Norwegian). It is also important to analyse the daily word usage practices. In our daily Russian, we may use the same word *smysl* in various aspects: socio-cultural, aesthetic, ethical, and existential. Moreover, when we speak of the issue of meaningfulness, value, or a right way of living, we prefer to use the word *smysl* (“sense”), not *znachenije* (“meaning”). The situation is more pluralist in English. It is therefore important to view the difference of the expressions *meaning of life*, *sense of life*, *purpose of life*, *meaning in life*, *purpose in life*. It would also be necessary to view the difference of Norwegian expressions, such as *livet betydnings*, and *meningen med livet*. In my view, the very language may itself give answers to certain questions of the research. We both mean an etymological analysis of the root meanings and an analysis of word usage.

The difference between *sense* and *meaning* is connected with the aforesaid language aspect. In the logical-semantic and psycholinguistic aspects, the said ideas are differentiated. Still, how much is it usable with regard to the meaning of life?

After a discussion with Jan during a session in December, I realised that the differentiation between a sense and a motive needed a more serious background and research. It is therefore necessary to carry out a deeper analysis of the term *motive*. It is needed to view the issue from the standpoint of the theory of activity developed by Leontiev, Rubinstein, Vygotsky, and Luria, leading Soviet psychologists. In the theory of activity, they give the following definition of a motive as a *subjectified need*. Writing the essay, I thought that the approach directly contradicts Bakhtin's *philosophy of the act*. Now I realise that the issue requires further research. Why did I not pay attention to the *activity theory* despite reading some works by the psychologists five or six years before? In my view, the answer is partially in the language. If, in English, we speak of a philosophy of the **act** and the **activity theory**, i.e. derivatives of the same root, in Russian, we speak of *deyatel'nost'* and *postupok*. The connotation of a *postupok* is more about a personal action and personal involvement, while the connotation of *deyatel'nost'* is about an anthropological aspect, i.e. a characterisation of the human interaction with the world differing from simple activities of animals.

I also used qualitative and quantitative methods in the research. What is the difference between the approaches? The very categories of quality and quantity were first introduced by Aristotle in *the Categories*. Aristotle related the category of quality with something that gives a certain definition to a thing, i.e. with sustainable, passing, and inborn features as well as with endurance. The quantity was viewed in a broader connotation compared with what is understood nowadays. Aristotle thought that the quality is a number, word, surface, body, time, and location.

Currently, the specific idea of quantitative methods is related to the fact that the data received is expressed numerically. In a qualitative research, receiving accurate numerical data is not required. I will give you an example: if the body temperature may be measured by a thermometer that must show its accurate temperature, a correct measurement of a headache does not exist. Quantitative methods better suit more open and general information while qualitative ones work better for more specialised and deeper issues.

Quantitative research issues.

The first issue was related to representation. We had data, not official, but quite reliable for a general idea: 13,758 people (5,697 full-time university students, 8,061 students

of technical and other colleges, 10–12 year students of secondary schools and gymnasiums), that is why the limit of 13,500–15,000 people. We could therefore calculate representative sampling. However, since the data was not official, they could not be referred to in science articles. That was why we approximately determined the number of questionnaires available for a proper representation: young men and young women, students of universities, colleges, and high schools.

A particular technical challenge (that eventually gave us a new organisational experience) was to find an appropriate percentage of male respondents in both university and high school and college students. The challenge was also caused by the fact that in our university (Murmansk State Humanities University), girls are largely more represented. In fulfilling the task, I asked an interviewer to carry out the study in male rooms of the MSHU hall of residence. The interviewer had already shown a good performance. Yet, I did not take the following fact into account: if one is successful in a study in already organised forms (for instance, when a teacher or a lecturer gives them some time during a lesson or a lecture), that would not mean they can organise a study themselves. As a result, as I learned, he had only left the questionnaires in the rooms with a request to fill them in when they had time to do it. I was therefore unaware of a range of certain aspects with regard to the questionnaires, namely, whether the respondents were copying from each other, collectively decided to give socially acceptable answers or, conversely, wanted to be jocular in their answers. That therefore prolonged solving of the issue.

On the other hand, I encountered the aforesaid problem of “median” or “transitional” variants of replies, like “I partially agree”, “I neither agree nor disagree”. At the time, I thought that the variants had to be present in any questions of the questionnaire. But later, analysing the results, I thought deeply about the meaning of the questions and answers and realised that, in some cases, it would have been better not to give any “median” variants. In my view, however, the issue may not be solved before the study itself. It is therefore important to carry out pilot studies, not just to get preliminary results but to test and improve the questionnaire itself.

Qualitative research issues.

The main problem of qualitative research is a certain subjectivity inevitably associated with the researchers themselves. This is true even of such traditional adopted in sociology, psychology and social anthropology methods: in-depth interview, observation, and life-story. The more inevitable subjectivity in interpreting the "text" of the artwork. Using the same example with vertigo, we can say that this interpretation is like trying to establish the presence of dizziness or even more so its degree is not from himself, but from another person. In this case, we are always dealing only with symptoms that we need to correctly interpret (gait, complaints, etc.). Therefore, in the essay I decided to pass on only the essence of the existential interpretation of the movie *The Matrix*, rather than a detailed analysis of all the key characters and many scenes as I originally planned.

Another problem is correlated to philosophical studies and qualitative research. Can a Hollywood blockbuster as the product Gestell provide opportunities for analysts Gestell? However, as I wrote in the first part, in my opinion, literary texts always offer opportunities for finding meanings that may be unclear to the author.

Another question I asked myself after the completion of the essay: why I did not apply for such affordable way for me to study as group discussions with students?

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