

Models of Social Cognition: from Classics to Post-Non-classics*

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Abstract—The article presents a model of intradisciplinary and philosophical consideration of social theory, and an attempt to synthesize them is made. The internal perspective allows to trace the basic interpretations of ontology and methodology of social (opposition "action-structure", "objectivism-subjectivism"), external perspective helps to compare the formation of social theory with transformations in the notions of scientific rationality. The main conclusion of the paper is the legitimacy of correlating the model of "classical - nonclassical - post-non-classical rationality" with the paradigms of social science which are under consideration.

Keywords—social cognition; methodology; scientific rationality; classical; nonclassical; post-non-classical social theory

I. INTRODUCTION

To date there are many options for the unification of sociological theories, attempts to bring them to a certain "common denominator." The key in this case is undoubtedly the problem of the criteria for singling out certain "research strategies", "scientific paradigms".

II. THE PROBLEM OF CLASSIFICATION OF SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES

To implement the "grouping" of various social theories many authors resort to various theoretical dichotomies. The most common model is the opposition "objectivism - subjectivism." Its peculiar «variations», as a rule, are "naturalism - cultural centrism", "positivism - antipositivism", "socio-centrism - anthropocentrism", "macroanalysis - microanalysis", etc.

These oppositions are widely represented today on the pages of specialized literature. In most cases they are considered to be "synonymous." From our point of view, although it is permissible to talk about the peculiar "lines of attraction" between them, however their complete identification is wrong: "socio-centrism" is not automatically "naturalism", likewise "anthropocentrism" is not the property of "cultural centrism" only.

That is why, in order to avoid terminological "abuses", it

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is necessary to point out the possibility of various interpretations of these concepts. From our point of view the opposition "naturalism - cultural centrism", "positivism - antipositivism" gravitate towards gnosiologism: first of all, it is an explanatory principle, a methodological standard on which social theory is focused. From these positions the history of the development of social knowledge is analyzed by L.G.Ionin [1], who considers it as a confrontation between "naturalistic" and "cultural-centric" orientations. While not questioning the heuristic value of the declared opposition, let us note, however, that in the framework of this approach the question remains unclear: is "social" a subjective reality or a reality of a supra-individual order, while "social" can be interpreted either by analogy with "natural", or as something different from it.

Also, from our point of view, we can not consider as completely satisfactory the approach where the ontological system of coordinates - the opposition "man-society" / "action-structure" is the only "borderline" in sociological constructions. The logic of this approach is characteristic of, in particular, V.A. Yadov, when he analyses modern sociology on the basis of the opposition of "macrosociological" and "microsociological" perspectives. Let's quote him: "Macrotheoreticians operate with the concepts of society, culture, social institutions, and global social processes." "Microtheoreticians" work with the concepts of social behavior, focusing on its mechanisms, including motivation, incentives for group action, etc. "[2]. Thus, the author thematizes the problem of how to think about "social" itself - at the level of "external" structures or interpersonal interactions. The difficulty, however, is that phenomenological sociology and social behaviorism can with equal success be included into the "micro-theoretical" orientation, which is conceptually not justified.

In this connection we affirm that in order to correctly explain the "sociological paradigms" it is necessary to take into account the mutual affiliation of the two previously outlined prospects - ontological and epistemological. Among the variants of this kind of conceptualization it is possible to mention the works of I.F. Devyatko [3]. The principle of classification proposed by the author is to single out the ontological opposition "social action - social order", as well as its methodological analogue - "subjectivism - objectivism". As a result, there are four sociological paradigms: "naturalism" (projection of "social action" and methodological "objectivism"), "interpretativizm" ("action",

"subjectivism"), "structuralism" ("social order", "objectivity"), "functionalism" ("order", "subjectivism"). Thus, according to the author "naturalists" and "interpretativists" are united in recognizing social action as the main subject of social science, but they differ in the way of understanding it - this a problem that initially came into the history of humanitarian thought as an opposition "explanation-understanding." "Functionalists" and "structuralists" insist on the primacy of social roles and unconscious structures in relation to the individual behavior of the subject. At the same time the author rightly notes the fact that if "structuralists" are guided by the "natural" causality in the construction of their explanatory models, the functional model tends toward teleology - the objective causality. However, from our point of view this feature of "functionalism" is not a sufficient basis for its reference to the category of "methodological subjectivism" along with "interpretativizm": at the present stage it is not by chance that functionalism is called «structural».

A similar conceptual model is suggested by another Russian sociologist Y.M. Reznik [4]. In his analysis he also proceeds from two basic demarcations. The dichotomy associated with revealing the initial "cell" of the social is the opposition of the "action-structure": the advocates of "actionism" insist on the determination of "society" by the purposeful activity of individuals; for the "structuralists" the social order, on the contrary, is not a consequence, but the source of the actions of the actors. Opposition, conditioned by the accepted cognitive standard, is the opposition of "objectivism-subjectivism". "Objectivists" proceed from the thesis of "a unified standard of science", and therefore insist on the use of "quantitative" methods in social science. "Subjectivists," on the contrary, appeal to a "qualitative" methodology in the sciences of society because of their «alien scientific nature».

Thus, the author also outlines four directions of sociological theorizing. The "actionist objectivism" includes B.Skinner's social behaviorism, R.Darendorf's conflict theory and others; the "systemic objectivism" includes the neo-evolutionism of L.White and the structuralism of K.Levi-Strauss. "Activity subjectivism", represented, in Reznik's understanding, by G. Bloomer's symbolic interactionism and A.Schütz' phenomenological sociology, "is based on the notion of social life as a subjective reality, generated by a combination of individual acts of consciousness and the actions of people ... while the social life itself loses its status as objective and complete "[5]. The sociology of knowledge of P. Berger and T.Lukman, as well as the existential sociology of E. Tirikyan, are classified as "systemic subjectivity" and are characterized by the author as "concepts of subjectivist orientation which recognize the existence of supra-individual structures or systems independent of individual actions and people's perceptions" [6].

Differences between I.F.Devyatko and Y.M. Reznik's classifications, despite initially very similar strategies of analysis, are partly connected with the fact that I.F.Devyatko tries to present the historical genesis of the formation of the main paradigms, whereas Y.M. Reznik appeals, first of all, to the present. In the proposed scheme it is noteworthy that the

representatives of phenomenological sociology turn out to be "on both sides of the barricades" - A.Schuts and I.Hoffmann are classed as "actionists," while P. Berger and T.Lukman are "structuralists." In our opinion, this "inconsistency" of phenomenology is by no means accidental: phenomenological sociology will, in the course of its theoretical development, really focus more and more on the synthesis of "activity" and "structural" approaches in understanding the social reality. This is partly acknowledged by Y.M. Reznik himself: "In an effort to overcome the one-sidedness of their position, the advocates of actionist subjectivism introduce the concept of "intersubjectivity." "They recognize the existence of typical representations or social meanings that are the product of interaction between people ... People construct social reality by developing sets of patterns and social meanings in the process of joint activity. In this sense the social world is a product of collective creativity of people, of their intersubjective interaction» [7].

So, following the interpretation of a number of basic dichotomies of sociological knowledge, which are singled out on the basis of the thesis-antithesis principle, we must admit that the modern stage of development of the sociological theory is characterized by a clear tendency to revise this kind of "binarism". Today the mutual influence of structuralist and interpretative models is obvious: I.Hoffman and G.Garfinkel experienced a serious influence of structuralism, P.Bourdieu - of symbolic interactionism. TF.Korkiuf rightly mentions the movement from "social structures to interactions"(N.Elias) and from "interactions to social structures" (P.Bereger, B.Latour) [8]. The theory of structuration by E.Giddens, the concept of "microinstruments of macro-level phenomena" by R.Collins, the theory of the communicative action by J.Habermas can also be considered as integrative.

III. FROM CLASSICAL TO POST-NON-CLASSICAL SOCIAL THEORY

The strategy of our further consideration is connected with the fact that to the presented "internal" perspective on the social sciences - on the basis of the planned demarcation lines "action-structure", "objectivism-subjectivism" - should be added the "external" one: we need to try to understand the specifics of setting and solving the key issues of social knowledge proceeding from the prevailing ideas about the ideals of science, which existed in different historical periods.

The model "classics - non-classics - post-non-classics», to which we appeal, was largely established thanks to the work of the most influential theorist of science V.S.Stepin, who proposed the mentioned scheme in the late 80's. Let us briefly dwell on the historical and conceptual "localization" of the ideals of rationality. "Classical rationality» (XVII - XIX centuries), according to V.S.Stepin, was based on the atomic structure of the world, on the principle of distance interaction, as well as hard determinism and understanding the system being completely determined by the properties of its constituent elements. At the end of XIX - beginning XX century there is a transition to non-classical rationality. This period was marked by a number of scientific revolutions: the

formation of quantum theory in physics, the discovery of the paradoxes of the theory of sets in mathematics. As a result, "experimental confirmation" is no longer synonymous with "scientific", the imperative of "the clarity of the principles of the theory", which was inherent to "classics", is replaced by the principle of "inner perfection of the theory" (Albert Einstein). Post-non-classical rationality is characterized by V.S.Stepin on the basis of the categories of "interdisciplinarity", "complex research programs", and its formation is associated with the formation of synergy [9].

Thus, V.S.Stepin, characterizing the rationality model, first of all speaks of natural science, trying to connect classical mechanics with the concept of reality as a "simple system", quantum mechanics with "complex self-regulating" objects, and synergy with "complex self-developing" systems. At the same time he admits the possibility of introducing a general model and its conceptual interpretation into social knowledge. However, in general, it can be noted that the author confines himself to remarks of a rather general nature: "... In different versions of the structure and dynamics of society there are common components, this fact sets the general outline of the picture of social reality. We can state a certain agreement on the view of the society as a complex, historically changing system. The picture of social reality includes the notion of this system, and as its components, three main subsystems are singled out: economy, socio-political subsystem and culture ..."[10].

Thus the problem of the specifics of the socio-humanitarian "classics - non-classics - post-non-classics" is not properly studied by V.S.Stepin; most sociologists today still think about the history and methodology of social sciences within the framework of the "classical-nonclassical" scheme, which, in our opinion, has largely exhausted its heuristic potential and is no longer an adequate instrument for analysis.

In our reasoning we will rely on the general conceptual framework proposed by V.S. Stepin. In accordance with the activity approach, the scientist in his analysis proceeds from the scheme "object - means and operations - subject". This scheme, in his opinion, directly correlates with the main subsystems of science: 1) scientific world pictures, 2) ideals and norms of science, 3) philosophical and ideological foundations of knowledge. Ideas about the object of science are formed proceeding from basic ontological assumptions, which are fixed in the framework of the "picture of the world"; the task of elaborating the tools for describing the object of cognition, which correspond to its specifics, is solved by means of singling out certain "ideals and norms of science". To "ontological" and "epistemological" dimensions of science the "axiological" one is added: the subject's problem is posed as a problem of value-targeted orientation of scientific activity.

At the same time considering the "science" in the unity of "ontology", "epistemology" and "axiology" V.S.Stepin comes to the conclusion that each "ideal of rationality" assumed its system-forming "slice": the "classics" was focused on the characteristics of the Object of cognition,

"non-classics" - on the Method, "post-non-classics" - on the measurement of the Subject.

We will dwell in more detail on the analysis of "the models of rationality", which include a number of basic ontological and methodological concepts that determine specific approaches to research, as well as the goals and values of cognitive activity.

Classical rationality in the most general form is the ideal of cognizing the reality "in itself". The postulation of an object of science, which did not depend on observation, presupposed the elimination of any subject, namely, the elimination of all "subjectivity" is regarded as a guarantee of the reliability of knowledge. The methods within this model also do not have an independent status - they are the construction blocks of the building of Science.

As a general scientific there functions the mechanistic picture of the world, which predetermines the consideration of social:

- mathematized natural science is a model for constructing social sciences, they should therefore be guided by a formal description with the possibility of its experimental verification;

- in an attempt to understand society proceeding from "natural" dependencies objective causation is rejected as non-scientific, it is attributed to "outdated" "theology" and "metaphysics"; it is replaced by a causal explanation.

In contrast to the "objectively" oriented "classics", within the framework of "nonclassical rationality" the problem of the Method comes to the fore. The fundamental principle is as follows: the picture of reality is relative to the means of its comprehension - the conceptual apparatus, research techniques. As a consequence, to replace the factual objectivity comes "objectivity by the rules." The instruments of knowledge themselves become the subject of special reflection.

This feature of "non-classics" reveals itself not only in physics (the role of observation in quantum mechanics), but also in social cognition. An attempt to substantiate the specificity of socio-humanitarian knowledge is carried out at the level of the method: the separation of "natural sciences" and "cultural sciences" is not an objective distinction, but two different ways of interpreting the reality. Within the framework of the social theory, the "nominalism" of M.Weber comes to replace the "realism" of O.Cont: the social "does not exist," but "means." The "explanation" of the social whole gives way to an "understanding" of the actor's individual action. As a consequence, target causation is restored in rights: the social sciences are now oriented not only to the causal "why", but also to the teleological "for what?".

"The emergence of post-nonclassical rationality," states V.S.Stepin, "requires a new deepening of reflection on scientific knowledge. The field of this reflection includes the problems of sociocultural determination of scientific activity "[11]. Thus, "post-non-classics" introduces the thematization of the cultural-historical conditionality of science, placing on

the agenda the problem of its correlation with the extra-scientific value orientations of the subject [12].

"Objectivism" of classical rationality assumed complete elimination of the subject, viewing it as a passive transponder of Truth. In the framework of «non-classics», the subject is restored in rights, but precisely as a subject cognizing, armed with a universal scientific method. In this regard it should be specially emphasized: within the framework of neo-Kantianism, the idea of a methodological isolation of the humanities was articulated, but at the same time there was a requirement for it to retain the same degree of "objectivity" and "reliability", which were typical of natural science.

If "classical" sociology thought about "social" by analogy with "natural", the "nonclassical" one places "culture" in the center of consideration as a value dimension of human life. However, it sees in it the focus of universal meanings: "individual" here is always through the prism of "universal". Thus, the empiricism of positivistic sociology, which dissolved "values" in "goods", was replaced by the transcendental idealism of neo-Kantians. The cognizing Ratio was understood as the object of human identity. Therefore the axiological attitude to the object is a theoretical one: the practical is declared evaluative, that is, subjective and it cannot be the object of strict sciences about culture. "Post-classics" in the face of phenomenological sociology (as well as a number of related concepts - Y.Habermas, etc.) will try to justify a practical, concerned attitude toward the object, restore the rights of rationality of everyday life, which preceded the objectifying reflection of science.

The subject will cease to be understood as an abstract cognitive object, which excluded everything empirical, socially conditioned. A person will appear as an agent of sociocultural practices. Therefore the "social" itself, which in the traditional sociology was considered extremely abstractly, as an unproblematized background and the general premise of cognitive activity, will be presented in "post-nonclassical" social discourse in its entire conceptual completeness as the «Lifeworld», as the semantic universe of a particular culture. This strategy, in our opinion, marks a general reorientation of research thinking, which is associated now with a comprehensive analysis of the forms of everyday human existence, the stereotypes of his thinking. Such a depreciation of the importance of common sense and routine everyday practices so characteristic of the "classics - non-classics" will be severely criticized.

IV. CONCLUSION

Let us sum up. In our analysis we proceeded from an intradisciplinary and philosophical examination of social theory, attempting to synthesize them: the internal perspective allowed us to trace the basic interpretations of ontology and methodology of the social (oppositions "action-structure", "objectivism-subjectivism"), external perspective helped to include social sciences into the broad philosophical context, to compare the formation of social theory with transformations in the perceptions of scientific rationality. As

a result we can conclude that the model of "classical - nonclassical - post-nonclassical rationality" can be correlated with the paradigms of social science itself. "Classics" as a model of science within the framework of sociological knowledge is the closest to the positivistic program formulated by O.Cont. Among its characteristics are: a "structural" vision of social reality, quantitative methods of its analysis, an ideal of value-neutral research. "Nonclassical sociology" is, first and foremost, a neo-Kantian program of substantiating social and humanitarian knowledge, for it is to the largest extent characterized by "methodologism", which determines the specificity of "nonclassical rationality" in V.S.Stepin's interpretation. «Non-classics" is marked by the formation of the so-called "qualitative research methods which are different from the quantitative standard of natural science disciplines" (the initially declared opposition of methodological "objectivism-subjectivism"). In terms of ontology, the "sociological non-classics» puts forward the "activity-oriented" in contrast to the "systemic", which focuses on the interpretation of social reality. First and foremost this is undoubtedly the theory of "sociological nominalists" by M.Weber and G.Simmel.

«Post-non-classical rationality", which implies, according to V.S.Stepin, the reflection of the sociocultural conditioning of science, in social science will be realized, in particular, within the sociology of knowledge of P.Berger and T.Lukman, as well as the sociology of everyday life by A.Schutz. The first subject of their analysis will be those processes by which a certain system of knowledge becomes socially recognized as a "reality"; A.Schutz, by turning to the analysis of the "Lifeworld", problematizes the correlation between "scientific" and "profane" in social cognition. In general, it can be stated that the common for these and several other versions of modern social theory is an attempt to revise the opposition "social action - social order" on the basis of the synthesis of structuralist and hermeneutic approaches. Dualism will be replaced by "duality": "Subjects of activity and structures can not be viewed as two independent categories ... Structural properties of the social system act both as means of producing social life in the form of continuing activity and at the same time as the results produced and reproduced by this activity" [13].

Within the framework of this article we presented the general conceptual frameworks of sociological "classics, non-classics and post-non-classics". In the conditions when the ideas of the crisis in modern social science, as well as the need for a cardinal methodological review of its foundations, are constantly reproduced today by various researchers, further elaboration of this topic seems to be one of the pressing tasks facing social and philosophical thought.

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