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**PHILOSOPHICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF
SOCIAL KNOWLEDGE**

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Annotation: The problems of methodology of social and humanitarian cognition at the present stage are considered. The analysis is carried out in the context of the correlation of the subject and methodological plans of science, particular sociological disciplines to the problems of the theory of knowledge.

Keywords: methodology, social cognition, social theory, empirical level, theoretical level, social philosophy.

The point of view seems to be quite justified, according to which the social theory formed in the XIX century was a manifestation of philosophical substantialism — it proceeded from the idea of the identity of social systems and set the vision of society as an integral structure subject to universal laws. Today, the scientific community is increasingly inclined to the ideas of antisubstantialism, including in relation to the world of human society. The ideas of structural orderliness and functional predestination are being replaced by an understanding of the procedural nature of the social. Scientists are increasingly talking about dynamic disequilibrium and instability as an authentic form of social existence. That is why the model of classical social science, focused on the principle of the inviolability of cognitive standards and claiming to build a total system of knowledge, is increasingly revealing its limitations today.

For this reason, the problems of methodological support for the social sciences, being undoubtedly a traditional topic of philosophical and scientific reflection proper, today acquires a new dimension. This is precisely due to the fact that the cognitive presumptions of classical rationality assumed a cumulative model of the development of science, therefore, we could only talk about an

increasingly detailed study of the methodological apparatus already available to scientists. Today, when the idea of a smooth and gradual increment of knowledge is replaced by the idea of a radical change in the ways of scientific conceptualization of the world, the initial principles of sociological knowledge, on which the basic theoretical models of social sciences are based, must be rethought in relation to the problems of interest to us. Without thereby denying the legitimacy of highly specialized sociological research and development, the author at the same time insists on updating the study of general philosophical issues of the methodology of social cognition.

This issue should be considered from two main perspectives: in the context of the correlation of the subject and methodological sections of science, as well as based on the analysis of the disciplinary division of labor — analyzing the specifics of the rights and obligations of general and private sociological disciplines in relation to the methodological foundation of scientific activity.

So, we will proceed from the correlation of the subject and methodological plans of science. In the most general form, the problem is posed as follows: the subject of science is one or another fragment of reality, methodology studies the subject matter of science itself, being an activity for understanding the ways, methods and forms of scientific knowledge production and its optimal organization. Comprehension of the subject of science is possible at the empirical and theoretical levels: the empirical level of consideration is based on the registration and generalization of specific facts; the theoretical one involves obtaining systematic knowledge about the object associated with the nomination and substantiation of hypotheses.

According to the author of the article, it is appropriate to raise the question of the correlation of the subject and methodological sections of science. Moreover, it should be both about clarifying the interdependence of the subject and method, and about the correspondence of different levels of the subject and methodological plans of science to each other. In the first case, the problem of priority is implied:

in most cases, it is given to the subject area — according to its specifics, researchers rightly believe, certain scientific methods should be developed. At the same time, it is undoubtedly necessary to take into account the fact that in many ways it is the methods available to science that determine the specific vision of reality, the depth of its understanding. From the standpoint of modern non-classical science, which problematizes the very concept of reality independent of observation, the study of this aspect of the problem becomes especially relevant.

Returning to the thesis about the possibility of correlating different levels of subject and methodological perspectives of science, we note the following correlations. The methodology or technique of conducting research as a set of special techniques and tools that determine the specifics of the application of a particular method can be brought into line with empiricism as a subject level as methodological knowledge. Methodology corresponds to the level of theory as a set of methods, i.e. a system of tools, procedures and operations aimed at obtaining information about objects of social life. The main subject of research here is the means and methods of obtaining new knowledge, the central issues are the logical structure of knowledge, the problem of substantiating the empirical basis of science, etc.

Philosophy, understood as the projection of a priori schemes onto social science for the reason that a distinctive feature of philosophical methods is their universality, or philosophy as a result of sciences, generalization of the data obtained by them — such interpretations, we believe, cannot be considered exhaustive.

So, the main difference between general sociological discourse and social philosophizing is not substantive (because for theoretical sociology as well as for philosophy, but unlike specific socio—humanitarian disciplines (economic theory, psychology), the subject is the systemic characteristics of society), but methodological. The methodological difference is not in the sense that the methods of sociology are predominantly empirical (concrete), but at the disposal of

philosophy they are always theoretical abstractions. But also not in the sense that philosophy is supposedly designed to systematize and generalize the methods developed by various social sciences — again, social theory itself can cope with this quite successfully.

The methodological specification, according to the author of this article, can be discussed in the sense that the problematization of the theory of science itself, its methodological tools, and the way of interpreting the object carried out within the framework of socio-philosophical discourse elevates social philosophy to the level of metatheory (whereas scientific methodology remains at the level of the theory of methods).

At the same time, we emphasize that social philosophy as a meta-theory is not only an attempt to formally analyze sociological constructions for their logical consistency, but primarily their meaningful interpretation. That is why philosophical methodology is not only an epistemological, but also an ontological perspective.

Thus, socio-philosophical consideration as a level of paradigmatic analysis of the social sciences involves discussion of a wide range of problems of an ontological and (actually) epistemological order. Ontological issues include such issues as the nature of social reality in its difference from natural reality, the problem of the correlation of the material and the ideal in public life. The epistemological group of problems is of an epistemological nature: methods of cognition of social life, ideals and norms of science prescribing certain standards of research activity. In addition, it is necessary to highlight axiological issues: value-oriented normalization of the activity of the subject of knowledge (note that today the study of this aspect of scientific activity is becoming increasingly important).

So, the article attempted a structural reading of the system of social knowledge, presented a kind of coordinate system of social sciences: by type of cognition (empirical, theoretical, metatheoretical), by methods of cognition (methodology as a study of the paradigmatic foundations of science, as a theory of

method and as technology), as well as based on disciplinary differentiation (social philosophy, theoretical sociology and specific social sciences). The proposed scheme, of course, does not take into account the whole variety of connections and relationships within science as a system of knowledge: the author is aware of the mobile nature of the boundaries between the levels of science, as well as the possibility of transforming the demarcation boundaries between different sciences and the emergence of new interdisciplinary fields of research. At the same time, the presented scheme is quite justified as a model.

In conclusion, let's summarize the reasoning: methodological knowledge, like subject knowledge, is an extensive system with various structural levels. Methodology in the strict sense is a level of meta-theory, whereas at the theoretical level of consideration it acts as various conceptual techniques and methods. The latter, in turn, are implemented empirically through special research techniques that determine the specifics of the application of a particular method. According to the author of the article, the methodology of the social sciences should be considered primarily a philosophical, rather than a private scientific discipline. Note that individual sciences can quite successfully work within the framework of "theoretical" and "empirical" (in the above sense) methodologies. However, no method or technique of empirical research can be considered justified by itself — "their effectiveness or status as research tools ultimately depends on solving philosophical questions about the nature of man and society, the relationship between them and their knowledge."

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