**SOCIAL-HUMANITARIAN KNOWLEDGE OF MODERN SOCIETY IN GLOBALIZATION**

The transitory character of modern conditions of development demonstrates new tendencies of societies’ activities and defines the necessity to theoretically review all spheres of their existence.

Radical changes in the life of modern humanity, the enhancing probabilistic and stochastic tendencies, growing social risks in all spheres of life require new theoretical and methodological approaches in cognition, explanation and comprehension of modern society, its adequate understanding and interpretation, suiting a radically changing social reality.

Thus, to our mind, since early XXI century the most important aspect of cognition of social reality in all social-humanitarian knowledge has become the question of the essence of its understanding and construing or interpretation.

Developing this problematic, P. Berger and T. Luckmann make a conclusion that social reality is constructed by specific subjective meanings of people during their activity. It is this subjective knowledge of society that becomes objective factuality, these authors state. [[1]](#footnote-1)

The problem of social reality, in this connection, becomes the problem of comprehension (Verstehen) and construing, in European languages – interpretation (from Latin – mediation, explanation) or construing the sense. From the point of view of modern sociology of knowledge, the social world only allows to be understood in a specific way and to a certain degree, and, depending on the set of values and orientation of the cognizing subject, to be construed, explained both to oneself and those around one in this or that way. [[2]](#footnote-2)

Continuing the tradition of A. Schutz, P.Berger and T.Luckmann pay attention to the analysis of the social construction of reality, emphasizing that society is both a human product and objective reality. In other words, modern society has a dual character – it is objectively factual and at the same time it is a construct of activity of human consciousness, it is basing on people’s subjective meanings.

And it should be borne in mind while analyzing societies.

In this connection the question “how do subjective meanings become objective factuality?” becomes the main one. This question is of a particular significance when there occur radical transformations in society, which refer to the changes of society itself, its social institutions and social being of individuals, which itself begins to possess new concrete meanings both for the individual and social groups of society.

Our world of today, which is complex and rapidly changing, resembles very little the European society described in the works by M.Weber. The distinguishing feature of the world of that period was rationality as purposeful and careful judgment while choosing the most effective method to solve a concrete problem. At that time rationality was seen as a progressive step in comparison with a traditional society and it seemed the principal form of human thinking which is capable of providing the presence of clear-cut organization of all social institutions, each of which fulfils its own specific tasks thanks to every worker’s high personal discipline and understanding of their role in the activity.

However, we observe that the modern world is not developing to Weber’s model and that the pace of its development and its changes are so radical that the concept of rationality can not withstand the pressure of innovations. Moreover, modern specialists in the field of studying society argue that modern man suffers permanent stress and shock, because his nervous system does not stand the high pace of changes. [[3]](#footnote-3)

Researchers are interested in signs of a new postindustrial society which has a range of other names (“technotronic”, “the stage of mass consumption”, “the third wave society”, “informational”).

We consider the main signs of this new informational society to be the change from production of goods to the production of services; the increasing employment in this sphere but not in the sphere of manufacturing, etc; and in the conditions of globalization, expansion of global informational networks and spread of personal computers, the main sign of establishing new postindustrial society is a transformation of information into the principal commodity, while producing, storing and processing information are called the main types of activity of all economically active population.

Probably today when we are observing the formation of a new world order we have to certify the debunking of the concept by the American scientist of Japanese origin Francis Fukuyama “The End of History?”. Basing on the theory of convergence and historical changes, he made a conclusion that with the collapse of communism as a historically significant social system the world’s history will see the disappearance of the last global collision – the conflict between the two systems. The world is becoming monopolar as the values of liberal democracy triumph in places where they were formerly rejected. And it means that history is losing its driving force because it is a global collision that can make turn the wheel of historical progress. And it is so despite the fact that local collisions and local conflicts are quite probable, the global world’s history must, according to Fukuyama, cease its development. The current political development is demonstrating the transformation of the system of international relations, where the motive force is still the collision, if you wish, of values when among sovereign states there is an attempt of a certain country to preserve its hegemony. Where will the wheel of history turn? The discrimination of Russia, which does not adhere to the principles of socialism any more, is of concern in this respect.

Thus, comprehension of the world of society at present is characterized by a shift from rationalism to understanding, construing and interpreting social reality which is chaotic, non-determined and thus unpredictable in its development.

In our opinion, philosophy, sociology, cultural studies and political studies are the most methodologically important for cognizing, understanding and explaining the modern social reality. Each of the above mentioned areas of knowledge has made its own significant contribution to the development of new methods of cognizing social medium.

In globalization the heuristic potential of interdisciplinary and integrative approaches growing out of synergy is of great importance to researchers. The principles of tolerance and pluralism, which allow the understanding of equivalence and cognitive importance of any knowledge regardless of its axiological value and praxeological multidirectional variability, are of significant novelty.

Not of a lesser importance for the development of modern methodology are the philosophical issues of modern global studies, social forecasting, concepts of activity and communication, modern interpretation of Marx’s concept of alienation of labor, which to the full extent promote the renewal of methodological guidelines and establishment of new research tasks in current philosophy and cultural study. They define the modern society as society of risk, in which random and chaotic processes are dominant.

Modern methodological approaches to analyzing chaotically changing social reality imply: the usage of cognitive possibilities of the principles of tolerance, pluralism and dialogueness of social knowledge; implementation of hermeneutic approach while analyzing the integrative nature of man, his national and social character; the prevailing usage of idiographic rather than nomothetic methods to analyze society; considering multiple modern social-humanitarian concepts to be complementing and enriching each other.

Only such a foundation can provide an adequate understanding of the essence of radical transformations occurring to the modern world in which social risks increase, chaotic and stochastic processes strengthen, the number of transitive societies in all of the Earth’s regions grows and the processes of formation of man as a true subject of social relations are becoming increasingly longer and cost-consuming.

As an example one can consider the modern international relations characterized firstly by dynamic global processes which have a significant influence on the forming world order.

Increasingly more often we determine not one cause but an interaction of several causes and factors at once as the distinguishing feature of persisting and newly occurring conflicts. The multidimensional problem of providing security, preserving peace and stability of development coupled with new threats, primarily of international terrorism, and consequences of migration processes, is becoming the main one for the world community, integrating national, regional and global interests. For any state preserving conditions for its sustainable development is a national priority.

The analysis of modern international relations within the framework of political science makes it possible to speak about the qualitative change of the essence of world policy itself. Facing a host of common problems that can not be solved within state national borders, the world policy, which is a result of transformation of international connections and interactions, feels the necessity to expand its own subjects. And we see that not only states, interstate unions and international organizations are acting today on the world arena, but also international nongovernmental organizations and other players are actively involved in the process. The research of such processes necessitates the interdisciplinary approach.

It should be noted that hermeneutic approach to empirical research in any sphere of society provides correct, unbiased and objective knowledge, including not only the description but also the correct interpretation of social phenomena under study. “The phenomenon of comprehension, - H.G.Gadamer wrote – not only permeates all the connections of man with the world… It has an independent meaning in science and opposes all attempts to turn it into any scientific method.” [[4]](#footnote-4) The methodology of hermeneutics directs specialists studying society towards looking upon developing any social theory connected with analyzing empirical research as a problem of comprehension and interpretation.

The provision of hermeneutics that comprehension is based on cultural tradition, life experience, history and language and forms an inseparable link between the acts of cognizing and comprehending through intentionality and sense-making attitude of people to the world is methodologically important for all modern social humanitarian knowledge, as E. Gusserl claimed.

Any governance in society is an effect on social behavior of not only an individual person, but groups of people and society as a whole, and this conclusion gives grounds for an extremely broad understanding of socio-cultural adaptation of processes of governance. They are considered as a rationally organized communicative activity and besides as one of the most significant global processes of modern cultural and civilizational development.

If we attempt to examine such a phenomenon as power, first of all we will have to make the economic analysis of objective = material foundations of political power, because the type of power, the method of governance, the character of taken political decisions, etc, depend on the form of ownership, organization of labour and management, material resources, the level of well-being of people, national wealth and so on.

Socio-psychological analysis makes it possible to determine the orientation of consciousness and psyche of the participants in the political process, etc, which is important from the point of view of social-political forecast.

While culturological analysis allows determining the peculiarities of modern political power which were formed under the influence of this or that system of social norms and values, legal and moral principles, traditions of a certain historical culture, which allows identifying dominant factors of power in modern political theory. Thus, making use of various approaches to explore the phenomenon of modern power and summarizing the results, we can argue that power was and is a multifaceted, integral, universal phenomenon of human life, the product of human activity, dependent on society and socio-cultural factors of development of society, its traditions, values and norms, material, spiritual, legal and political culture of society. But not to a lesser degree it is dependent on their interpretation. It is quite obvious that an interdisciplinary approach is necessary.

In another example, noting the politization of current migration process, which leads to the transformation of the political system in the countries of Western Europe, we can not ignore the socio-cultural factor. Social-political consequences, connected with migration, are of structural institutional character and increase the risk of conflicts of social, economic, political and cultural character.

The above mentioned examples demonstrate the significance of a cultural component while analyzing modern phenomena and processes in globalization.

The most important aspect of study in this respect is national identity. An individual associates himself with the cultural heritage of the country of residence, sometimes combining national and state identity, which allows consolidating society, strengthening its integrity. In globalization a reverse process is also occurring – erasing, blurring the borders of national identity. Consequently, there is an increasing need for self-identification and discovery of stable identity as a prerequisite of individual freedom. As a result, in society of mass consumption the need for self-identification becomes a symbolic demonstration of “soft power” which is built upon a variety of consumer temptations and gives flexible features to identity.

The project of culture of mass consumption is formed basing on national identity and high culture, which allows the state to successfully integrate into the global community.[[5]](#footnote-5)

According to modern researchers of society, the hermeneutic approach to studying society provides correct, unbiased and objective knowledge which includes, besides description, a correct interpreting comprehension and comprehending interpretation. That is why hermeneutics is an instrument of criticism of false consciousness and distorted forms of communication, predominantly, any ideology and scientism, which still claim to dominate in the structure of modern social-humanitarian knowledge.

Society itself in the light of modern philosophy of postmodernism does not look as a sum of roles performed by individuals or their specific activities (political, scientific, etc), but is seen as a diverse and structurally complex vital sphere of man’s being. This emerging new paradigm of “life worlds” is a ground for the growing priority of spirituality of society over objective traditions of vulgar economism.

This shift manifests itself in the growing importance of socio-cultural approach and new methodology while studying the activity of modern man and the whole society.

From the standpoint of modern social humanitarian knowledge any form of human activity involves constant review and new interpretation of meanings of phenomena, engaged in the reproductive human activity.

Extrapolation and interpretation of phenomena and processes under study take the most important place in the process of rethinking of being. Extrapolation implies the transfer of accumulated wealth, axiological and cognitive meanings onto the phenomenon to be cognized, i.e. cognition of the unknown through the known.

This is the reduction of the new to the old, which turns the unknown into something that is mastered and meaningful. Rethinking is constantly present in everyday life, forming the basic cultural foundation for the usage of objects and meanings on the basis of formerly accumulated experience. Extrapolation is the transfer of existing cultural tradition, legends and norms onto the constantly expanding circle of new phenomena of reality in the social being of a subject, a group, society.

The interpretation occurs as a result of internal conflict in culture itself and manifests itself in ambiguity of axiological meanings, which every subject possesses, which, eventually, results from invasion of objectively given natural and cultural reality into the human subjective reality.

Interpretation is a creative and, by its essence, an innovative act of changing of accumulated meanings, a certain point of growth of culture. If operations with culture on the basis of extrapolation can be considered as comprehension, then operations on the basis of interpretation can be considered as rethinking, as a change of meaning implying the development of culture, as a movement of thought between the old and the new meaning.

Socio-cultural discourse looks upon the world of culture as a live human activity, not its abstraction. The creative ability to turn the world from a prerequisite of being into one’s own individual personal result makes clear the growing importance of modern culture, which is capable of retaining the old and producing the new cultural samples. [[6]](#footnote-6)

The modern theory of culture convincingly proves that the presence of multiple types of culture in the world provides each nation with unity, mutual understanding, and, thus, optimal conditions of existence in specific natural and historic circumstances at a certain social moment.

The historic existence of a people itself presupposes that the influence of objective factors of changing natural and social being necessitates the change of socio-cultural priorities of society, new people’s needs and interests emerge, changes in the activity of all social institutions occur accordingly, as well as the transformation of mass social processes which determine the economic and political orientation of society, its social structure and morality as the main element of spirituality.

As a rule, modernization processes, when they are happening effectively, are in theory and in practice based on a weighted proportion of traditions/innovations, which on the whole provides a positive assessment by the people of the changes occurring in society. The success of modernization depends on the degree of comprehension and approval by the population.

As the experience of the past decades shows, noncritical borrowing of social concepts of modernization from other countries does not provide the optimal existence of all transitive societies, including Russia, because they are significantly different from those peoples and states which refer to the proverbial “Golden billion” of humanity.

Not of a lesser importance for the development of modern methodology are the philosophical issues of modern global studies, social forecasting, concepts of activity and communication, modern interpretation of Marx’s concept of alienation of labor, which to the full extent promoted the renewal of methodological guidelines and establishment of new research tasks in current philosophy and cultural study. They defined the modern society as society of risk, in which random and chaotic processes are dominant.

Modern social philosophy ordinarily understands any social object as an open dynamic social system which possesses complex connections, functions and relations in the interior and the exterior, has high risks and, consequently, its behavior is described by probabilistic or stochastic notions, rather than principles of classical determinism, and is set forth as equivalent or equally possible scenarios of the development of a social system.

The field of postmodernism acquires a particular importance for modern methodology of social cognition. Postmodernism is multivalent and dynamically flexible, it is a complex of philosophical, epistemological, scientific-theoretical and emotional-aesthetic notions depending on the historical, social and national context. Postmodernism acts as a specific way of perceiving the world, of mental outlook and assessment of both man’s cognitive abilities and his role and place in the surrounding world.

The principles of tolerance and pluralism allowing the understanding of equivalence and cognitive importance of any knowledge regardless of its axiological value and praxeological multidirectional variability are of significant novelty in the modern conditions of development.

Modern methodological approaches to analyzing chaotically changing social reality imply: the usage of cognitive possibilities of the principles of tolerance, pluralism and dialogueness of social knowledge; implementation of hermeneutic approach while analyzing the integrative nature of man, his national and social character; the prevailing usage of idiographic rather than nomothetic methods to analyze society; consideration of multiple modern social-humanitarian concepts to be complementing and enriching each other.

The problematic of transitive or transitory society is being increasingly in demand both in the theoretical and particularly in the utilitarian practical aspects, because transitivity at present has a global character, embracing, essentially, all civilizations and cultures of the world. Modern transitivity possesses multiple diverse forms and levels, which significantly enhances the chaotic nature of all occurring ethno-socio-cultural processes.

Only such a foundation can provide an adequate understanding of the essence of radical transformations occurring to the modern world in which social risks increase, chaotic and stochastic processes strengthen, the number of transitive societies in all of the Earth’s regions grows and the processes of formation of man as a true subject of social relations are becoming increasingly longer and cost-consuming.

Thus, modern philosophical and culturological knowledge should possess quite a high degree of tolerance to all the works exploring modern social reality and man residing in it.

One more particularity involves the fact that modern social humanitarian knowledge looks upon multiple social concepts as complementing and enriching each other, as a peculiar integration of philosophical, sociological, culturological and other humanitarian knowledge, each of which has its own specifics, a system of categories and fields of study.

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