

Methodological Problems of Social Sciences in the Context of Modernity Challenges

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Abstract: The study substantiates the idea that the causes of the current systemic crisis, many of the concepts of modern social science do not adequately reflect the changed reality, so, you need to review and improve the existing categorical apparatus. To do this, you must change meta-paradigm of modern social science which is still based on the Newton-Cartesian meta-paradigm. This change has long occurred in physics and more recently in the modern psychology. Otherwise, methodological inconsistency and weakness of explanatory potential of the social sciences in explaining and understanding of social processes is a natural phenomenon.

Key words: Methodology, globalization, crisis, explanatory potential, paradigm, metaparadigm, world economy, world politics

INTRODUCTION

A lot of scientists when analyzing the causes of the current system crisis, arrive at the surprisingly same conclusions, the essence of which is that a number of modern fundamental concepts of reality, consciousness, man, society and other processes today do not reflect the reality quite adequately. It means that the modern world over the past years has radically changed, so that, it naturally resulted in the fact that a number of old concepts have mostly lost their explanatory capacity and methodological soundness and viability. Realizing this fact becomes widespread. It includes “color-coded” revolutions, the explanation and understanding of which fall beyond not only the scope of historical materialism ideas but other existing social theories and paradigms as well. It can be seen in the domain of international relations when some events cannot be explained within the context of traditional concepts and perceptions. For instance, the events related to the incorporation or acquisition of the Crimea by Russia or the assessment and explanation of the events that occur in the South-East of Ukraine. Besides, in our opinion, we still do not have a satisfactory understanding of the nature and the essence of the global system crisis of the world. Actually, the best minds of economics are still not only able to prevent but even essentially explain the real causes, regularly shaking the world with economic crises. The explanations of numerous ethnic and religious conflicts that have been increasingly frequent lately are not very convincing and

clear to say nothing of the crisis of culture and spiritual values. All these facts in our opinion, clearly demonstrate the crisis of modern social science and its ideological and methodological framework. This fact is recognized by many people. However, in this case more paradoxical is the fact that scientists do not usually move beyond such recognition. If some attempts are made to explain the causes of the crisis in their subject area then as a rule, they are usually limited to methodological instruments of their science, recognizing the weaknesses of its explanatory potential capacity. While this problem in our opinion, falls beyond the methodological framework of an individual social science. Eventually, it is related to a more general problem with a so-called general meta-paradigm of modern science which is now obsolete and is not in compliance with the requirements of the modern science. To clarify this statement we will make a small introductory retrospective journey into the history.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research is devoted to studying methodological problems of social sciences in the context of modernity challenges. Empirical materials are developed on the basis of the theoretical provisions made by Annan (2000), Berentayev (2013), Grof (1992), Hayek (1992) and Inozemtsev (2009).

The issues realized during the research: theoretical literature on the research problem, comparative analysis of Kazakh, Russian and Foreign approaches

methodological problems of social sciences. And also this research study is about different conceptions discussing comparatively and retrospectively and also systemic structural, historic-philosophical and institutional analysis methods.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We will begin with the fact that starting from the 1970's, the scientific community more and more strongly recognize the fact that European civilization has been undergoing a profound cultural transformation residing in the "paradigm change" which is reflected in the revision of ideas and Western culture values prevailing in the world over the past centuries. This is overwhelming faith in the scientific method as the only sound approach to reality, opposition of matter and conscience, outlook on life in society as a competitive struggle for survival, belief in unlimited material progress based on economic and technological growth, a selfish principle of personal happiness, view of nature as a mechanical system.

With a view to understanding the need to change these paradigms, we note that the paradigm in science usually means generally, accepted theories and methods of scientific research. Paradigm is a set of assumptions that are operated by some particular science. Mendeleev periodic system, the quantum theory, Newtonian mechanics, the chaos theory, Darwin's theory of evolution and the psychoanalytic subconsciousness model can serve as examples of a paradigm.

With time, one paradigm inevitably replaces another. Actually, such radical changes in the views of the world can be observed in all sciences. In his famous book "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions", Thomas Kuhn reveals the structure and the mechanism of the transition from one paradigm to another. According to him, the shift of paradigms in science happens when a generally, accepted paradigm faces an abnormality a phenomenon that cannot be explained within the context of the existing worldview.

A well-known British scientist Peter Russell, analyzing the problem of paradigm changes in science, believes that a model of the "revolutions" created by Kuhn in science or a model of paradigm shift should not be limited by individual scientific disciplines. What is more in his opinion, the entire Western scientific worldview in general should be considered as based on such a model in principle. In the Western worldview, all scientific paradigms are based on the following assumption: the reality is the physical world, space, time, matter and energy are the fundamental constituents of reality.

Since, all our scientific representations of the world are based on this assumption, says Russell, it is more than just a paradigm, it is a meta-paradigm, in other words, it is a paradigm that underlies all paradigms. This meta-paradigm explains so well almost all phenomena of the material world, therefore, it has hardly been ever questioned. And only considering the immaterial world, we begin to find weaknesses in it. Here, we mean that it demonstrates its impuissance when it comes to human senses and in recent decades in the explanation and understanding of current globalization processes.

The cause of these complications appears in the generally accepted scientific model. We know that the elementary particles are connected to the atoms which in turn, form molecules this is the model of physical bodies. Something similar can be said about a living cell. The same atoms are in the basis of the DNA, proteins and amino acids. This model allows to describe even the human brain, despite its incredible complexity. However, this model, according to the scientist, cannot be applied for the description of consciousness because consciousness is not material, matter does not have consciousness. Therefore, this meta-paradigm, cannot explain what consciousness is. Therefore, it is quite natural that within this model, none of the scientific theories can give the answer to the following question: How can something as immaterial as consciousness arise from something as unconscious as matter?

Hence, such a long series of unsuccessful attempts to explain the phenomenon of consciousness suggest that science to put it bluntly is headed in the wrong direction. All scientific theories of consciousness are based on the fact that this phenomenon is secondary in relation to the physical world which is described in categories of time, space and matter. This fundamental assumption was not questioned very often if ever. Hence, there are some attempts to adapt the abnormality of consciousness to the standard materialist worldview in the most complicated ways. Here, according to Russell, instead of trying to explain the phenomenon of consciousness in terms of materialistic natural scientific worldview it is necessary to formulate a different meta-paradigm which in contrast to the Newton-Cartesian meta-paradigm provides a broader base for understanding the phenomenon of consciousness and which as can be observed today has the information and field nature. If one accepts this point of view, then consciousness can be much easier explained by the terms of quantum mechanics than by the concepts of traditional philosophy or psychology. This actually happens in the sphere of modern transpersonal psychology which considers the human being not only as a biosocial phenomenon but

also as an information and field formation. Only in the context of the latter one can explain and understand many phenomena from the domain of consciousness which have been previously ignored by traditional concepts of consciousness. For instance, paranormal or extrasensory phenomena, the nature of the ideal and the like. According to Stanislav Grof, an outstanding modern psychologist in these sciences, a transition is carried out from the Newton-Cartesian view of the world to the new one. In his opinion these discoveries are able to completely turn upside down our understanding of the human psyche, its pathology and treatment prospects. Some of this data in its significance goes beyond the scope of psychology and psychiatry and challenges the entire Newton-Cartesian paradigm which is at the heart of Western science. It can radically change our understanding of human nature, culture and history and of the reality itself (Grof, 1992).

However, as distinct from the before mentioned sciences, i.e., non-classical physics and transpersonal psychology, the remaining ones, especially the social sciences, only now begin to realize that they have reached a new, more sophisticated level of reality connected with the most complex globalization, information and communication processes which as a whole created a new, more complex and more interconnected world economic system of the modern society. Today in the modern world in accordance with these processes and relationships, a new system of political, economic and international relations has formed as well as their new international architecture. Hence, weakness or exhaustion of the capacity of the old universal paradigms and concepts for explanation of this new and very complex social processes are clear. In other words, the modern world turned out to be much richer and more diverse than many existing social theories and expert forecasts. Today, the global policy processes turned out to be more similar to the processes of the micro-world or mega-world that is why the attempts to explain these processes at the level of the macro-world, i.e., more than a simple Newton-Cartesian meta-paradigm, clearly show their incompleteness and insufficiency.

In our opinion, at the same time these sciences do not have a deep understanding of the need for a new science meta-paradigm and a new thinking meta-paradigm. There is no realization that in order to explain and understand the new peculiarities and trends of the world politics and economy, a new meta-paradigm of the entire science is necessary, so that, only on its basis the new theories and methodologies may be developed. In other words, today, it is quite clear for the scientific community that “the transformation of social and individual existence in the

conditions of modern information society, should be accompanied by a change in methodological research strategies of all sides of society life which in turn logically entails a review of the content and functions of the categorical apparatus of philosophy” (The philosophy of social synergies and ways of innovative thinking).

At the same time, it is necessary to realize that improvement of categorical apparatus and methodological tools of many sciences is eventually limited by those ultimate grounds laid down by meta-paradigm of modern science and its meta-paradigm of consciousness. In this event, the strait-jacket of modern social sciences, fettering their explanatory potential according to Grof is the old Newton-Cartesian meta-paradigm of science and traditional meta-paradigm of consciousness underlying these sciences which as distinct from the non-classical physics and transpersonal psychology in these sciences has not yet, been overcome. It means that today in contrast to the simplistic view of the world from the standpoint of linear thinking, non-linearity is a fundamental characteristic of the natural and social world as an open self-organizing system and suggests the consistency of choice of its development alternatives. Nonlinear system is necessarily multidimensional, multivariant and defies classically-linear methods of description which in turn create the necessity for the development of non-linear methods. It should be noted that the methodology of solutions of heuristic problems in nonlinear media is called non-linear thinking. According to this system of thinking, a major role in the world is played by disequilibrium and instability, randomness; the behavior of non-linear processes is variable and uniquely unpredictable, the order can arise spontaneously from chaos, nonlinear thinking denies the unequivocal determinism. And this alternation in terms of non-linear thinking, i.e., chaos and order, chance and necessity, differentiation and integration is a universal principle of self-organization of the natural and social world (The philosophy of social synergies and ways of innovative thinking).

Another peculiarity of modern knowledge is that now the most important objects of study, along with traditional subjects of reality both objective and subjective or processes of their interaction, becomes the “third” type of reality, i.e., a virtual reality which as a special kind of reality has certain properties and parameters of existence, dictates particular forms of behavior, communication, activities and ultimately has an adverse effect on a human being. And besides they justifiably give rise to the need to find a new methodology and worldview justification of contemporary processes of unity of the three types of reality.

Hence, according to some scholars, the before mentioned peculiarities of modern cognitive reality clearly point, at least at two of these new circumstances, the first one is that the traditional “classic” attitudes, stereotypes orientations in the field of explanatory schemes and methods (for example, orientation at completeness and comprehensiveness of reflection of the object, linear causality, the exception of the subject in the learning process, i.e., full objectivity) are giving way to new ones (for example, focus on the creation of a complex object as the integrity effectively manifesting itself, to ensure its safe and stable functioning, taking different points of view as acceptable, understanding that everything has its polarity and vision of any problem, any event on the one and on the other hand) while the second one shows that now the view of the world defining the modern world and dominating in it is the view not through tracking a single logical chain of events but through a variety of hypothesis about what is happening. It becomes self-sufficient in an effort to understand the set as a self-consistent ensemble and in the creation of various complex formations a production or public association, community of states, geopolitical alliance, corporations and co-operations (The philosophy of social synergies and ways of innovative thinking).

Without realization of these new realities, both in the sphere of public practice and in cognitive activity, the world will naturally face the most serious challenges. Particularly this can be clearly seen in the modern world economy and politics where old concepts do not correspond to the changed realities and new processes. I will start this excursion with an analysis of the fundamental concepts of world politics where new qualitative changes have taken place in recent decades. Noting these transformations, a Russian scientist Sledzevsky writes: An important feature of contemporary international relations in contrast to the past is that in this field, the number of the world players increased significantly, new interests appeared, the range of possible actions widened and therefore the quality and amount of information required for these actions changed. Besides, today not only the relations of geoeconomic and geopolitical factors change extremely fast but also the conditions of interaction between state and non-state (cross-border) political actors. New players have appeared on the horizon of contemporary world politics, i.e., global transnational corporations, megacities, social and cultural movements (of all forms, colors and directions), non-governmental organizations, religious-fundamentalist movements, international criminal networks and extremist underground organizations and structures already function as reality shows, on a different field of

international relations than the field of state (national) interests and obligations, civil consent and international relations arranged in a certain logic.

In this expanding space of freedom from the restrictions, the rules associated with the traditional political and legal concepts such as “national interest”, “national sovereignty”, “national territory” no longer apply as tough as before but instead non-legal (“shadow”) principles of fast maximization of benefits, anarchic rules for determining one’s own interests and goals in accordance with the type of game function in which these structures, movements and organizations are included in a specific situation, at a time (Sledzevsky, 2011).

The necessity to rethink and clarify many of the fundamental concepts of world politics and therefore, take into account these changes in the decisions and practical actions is quite evident today. In the opinion, the new rethinking is also required for the concepts associated with the explanation and understanding of so called “color-coded” revolutions or “planned chaos” that occurred recently in Eastern Europe, CIS countries and which devastatingly ran down the Middle East and North Africa in recent years. These can be attributed to events that occur in the South-East of Ukraine. This refers to the seizure of power by members of the Maidan, the transition of the Crimea to Russia, on the basis of the so-called referendum and finally, the fratricidal war which today is happening in Ukraine, the war between Ukrainian and Russian peoples, i.e., between the Slavs who have always considered themselves to be brothers.

The failure of not only the historical materialism ideas about the development of modern society but also the weakness of the explanatory potential of many other well-known universalist paradigms. Indeed in reality, none of the current theories, claiming to unambiguous and complete interpretations of the historical process was able not only to predict but even clearly explain the nature of the occurring processes (Mitroshenkov, 2011).

Hence, a very important and difficult task of social science is the necessity for understanding and interpretation of a number of concepts in particular from the field of international law in the context of the events that are taking place in Ukraine. Here, evidently, we should speak not only about the precedent related to the transfer or seizure of the Crimea by Russia or events in the south-east of Ukraine and in principle which actually paves the way for a review of the entire system of international relations, international law, the principle of inviolability of borders, sovereignty and territorial integrity, compliance with international treaties, etc. Today, in world politics there are processes that actually

destroy or more precisely have destroyed the established system of international relations and international law. The danger of the current situation is not only in the fact that Russia is revising the established system of international relations but that the example of Russia in the revision of the system of international relations and law has not been unique in the recent years. It includes the US position in Iraq and Afghanistan and the NATO and the European Union's position with regard to Kosovo and Libya as well. This sad list of violations of international law can be continued, unfortunately.

In our view, an important cause of the destruction of the existing system of international relations, *inter alia* is the creation of a unipolar world. It means that if before the destruction of the socialist system, the entire system of international law and security was based on parity between the two world systems then now it is broken. If before there was a communist and market fundamentalism, then now only one is dominant today. It is the market fundamentalism with all its values and priorities. According to well-known financier George Soros this fundamentalism today is even more dangerous for the open society than, the totalitarian ideology. The major weakness of the modern world system of capitalism is that it allowed the market mechanism and the profit motive to penetrate all areas of activities, even where they substantively have no place and the second weakness, according to him is instability and unpredictability which is intrinsic to capitalism, especially, these qualities are inherent in financial markets (Soros, 1999).

It means that every time the market situation in the world consists of many thousands of summands that are actually impossible to be taken into account as a rule it is an outcome resulting from tens of thousands of factors which in principle cannot be taken into account. It means that millions of people enter into the market relationship, each of which has a different capital, different abilities, different information, different communications, etc. It is an incredibly big scope of information which nobody is able to collect and process including the most modern and the biggest computer in the world. Therefore, it is impossible to predict exactly as in the natural sciences, what will happen in the future. One can only talk about some of the common features and trends of the probable development of world processes. Therefore, in the strict sense there is not an economic science as one of the greatest market economy specialist Hayek believed (Hayek, 1992). Perhaps in view of these features of the market system, various economic crises regularly occur which cannot be predicted even by the world most prominent economists. One can arrive only at one conclusion: it is a comprehensive system that integrates

not only macro and micro-economic indicators but also the results of the interactions of people at different levels. That is when analyzing and studying it, it is necessary to be based not only on objective and rational indicators and calculations but also on subjective ones, taking into account the psychology, opinions and moods of the people as is done in the theory of Elliott waves. At least, until now, a more successful tool for the analysis of the market does not exist. Actually, it is a theory of crowd behavior, the so-called sociodynamics. Delusions are common for crowd. Markets with the crowd's point of view are absolutely illogical. While the modern economy is built on the fact that all investors are rational objects, that is all their actions are rational: they make rational decisions on the basis of the information they have. While the crowd as economic agents behave irrationally. As we noted before, Hayek speaks about it.

At the same time, western economists do not always take into account the socio-economic consequences of the structural imbalance in the development of world capitalism. This refers to the fact that since, the mid 1970ies in the world economy as we know, transnational corporations and transnational banks began to play a major role which based on the basic principle of the market-Getting the Maximum Profit, began to close companies in the West and carry them to the countries with low-cost labor (China, Southeast Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, etc.). These changes have resulted in not quite unplanned outcomes and unforeseen consequences, i.e., on the one hand this led to the fact that the middle class lost millions of jobs which were given to developing countries and on the other hand in developed countries, the increase of jobs began to occur mainly in the non-manufacturing sector. Production of goods decreased in developed countries. The unemployment rate began to rise dramatically. In short, these peculiarities of Western capitalism created very complex problems in their own countries, the solution of which at present is a headache for Western economists and politicians.

Another important feature of modern capitalism is the fact that the financial capital is dominant among all forms of capital today. This means that today the financial market has become the most global market in the international arena (Muntyan, 2015). If in the period through 1990-1998 the gross world product and the volume of trade in the world increased by a few percent, then the value of securities transactions increased by almost two orders of magnitude (Anonymous, 2000).

Due to the development of telecommunications technologies multi-billion dollar amounts are transferred instantly from one part of the world to another day and

night. The current international financial system has proved to be very effective in terms of computerization and liberalization of currency and financial relations at the international level. Within a short historical period, commodity-money relations of the international financial market involved all regions with human activities, the proportions and balance of powers between states and corporations have changed as well as the relationship between politics and economy, finance and industry, competition and scientific and technical progress (Muntyan, 2015). Rapid dissemination of financial information throughout the world due to the internet, the continuous movement of private capital with the help of various financial instruments: securities, companies' shares, mutual funds, commodity futures, etc., activities of financial stocks and exchanges practicing loans against securities and speculations on the exchange rate are truly global in nature.

However, the danger of the world capitalist system becomes acute which at the beginning of the 20th Century was named by Pareto as the "financial bubbles" economy. Since, the financial speculations have become more attractive than any production activity, the number of financial transactions is far more rapid than the number of real commodity agreements that will eventually lead to the global financial crisis. The first of these was the Asian financial crisis of 1997-1998. There is a growing concern about the fact that "the integrity of cultures and the sovereignty of states" can be put under the threat (Annan, 2000).

In the context of the before mentioned trends in the world economy, the role and functions of the national state radically are changing. It is related to the fact that today, in the world economic system, the growing role is played as we have noted before, by the new actors, transnational forces transnational corporations and transnational businesses, international governmental and non-governmental organizations which have a decisive influence on Foreign and domestic policy of sovereign states, especially, the weak and the small ones. Today, transnational forces have destroyed the national sovereignty in the former sense. Structures of transnational corporations are "interspersed" in the economic spaces of all countries. Economic, scientific and technical, industrial, structural and investment policies of weak countries are formed by transnational forces rather than by the national government. Inter-state and international institutions have impact on the domestic policies in their areas. Under these conditions, the maximum possible preservation of the national sovereignty of the weak and small countries objectively requires the formation of self-sufficient regional

associations that can withstand a one-way globalization. This is an objective process associated with the fact that the national borders of small states are too narrow (Berentayev, 2013).

In other words, in today's world, under the influence and the impact of powerful external forces, a new architecture of the international community has been almost formed in which the field of activities of traditional national states has significantly narrowed and decision-making at the national level is carried out more frequently under the direct influence and in the interests of new actors in the international community. That is why, actually, none of the national economies can develop without the most active participation in global economic processes.

Hence, the rethinking of the fundamental political economy categories such as nation, state, national interests, national sovereignty, the norms of international law, *inter alia* in today's new reality, caused by globalization and information and communication processes that altered modern capitalism by giving it new features. Here, it means as noted above by the well-known financier Soros of all types of capital in modern capitalism, the financial capital is the main today. Therefore, in the international arena it is quite natural that the financial market has become the most global one. These fundamental processes of the world economy of course, could not but affect the international processes and quite naturally created a new architecture of the international community, the analysis of which is extremely important for the contemporary social science. Especially, in the field of understanding of social processes in the context of the latest transformations of social life, revision and improvement of its categorical apparatus and more specifically, the development of a new methodology for the study of these new processes. In the context of this statement in our view it is appropriate to bring the outcomes of "brainstorming" organized by the magazine "The Wall Street Journal", 18 groups of young leaders on three critical issues regarding the ongoing crisis in 2009. The questions were as follows:

- What is the most destructive policy error that led to the crisis?
- What regulatory system blow produced the greatest regulatory failure?
- Where was the greatest blow to the market

Responses of various groups in general can be reduced to the following factors which in the opinion of young analysts are responsible for the breakdown of the world financial system. Erroneous belief that markets may

be self-regulating and effectively correct themselves and the refusal to take into account the inevitable collateral damage. Too much of easy money not secured by anything has been proposed on the long-term basis, the price of risk was strongly underestimated, especially when the risk premium fell to almost zero. Almost religious faith in the mathematical modeling based on questionable data sample which eventually replaced common sense. Failure to give full disclosure of the risks, inability of the global financial system to avoid a global oversight when one of these risks actually appeared on the world market. The excessive complexity of new financial instruments that accompanied the stimulus to destruction.

The bottom line of “brainstorming” is a postulate that the world is currently experiencing the need to radically change the economic paradigm and it is necessary to look for new ways to create a new global financial system (What happened to the world economy? “Brainstorming” of young leaders in 2009).

We cannot but agree with the conclusions of young leaders. They are right that the modern world, society, economy has entered a new stage of development which is already characterized by an incredible variability and instability. Therefore, there is quite understandable unpredictability of many phenomena in various fields due to these peculiarities. Pointing to these processes, the researchers of the famous book “The global crisis. Beyond the obvious”, wrote: “In the world there are unexplored forces. On the surface everything seems quite normal as if nothing has changed. But in fact, unexplained things occur. Perhaps very soon-tomorrow or the day after tomorrow the invisible but important changes will suddenly become apparent by having a huge impact on our lives. However, if we do not explore the hidden part of the iceberg as soon as possible at one point it will come to the surface itself and it will be too late” (Reich and Dolan, 2010).

This also applies to Kazakhstan which being integrated into the world economy proved to be, like many countries in the world, caught up in the global economic crisis. Therefore, Kazakhstan as well as many of the countries affected by the crisis is looking for effective ways out of it. With this regard one may recall several principles from the field of political leadership, skillfully used and in use by outstanding leaders in the process of reforming and modernizing the country. Firstly, this order is a clear statement of objectives, refusal from all kinds of demagogies. Secondly, it is always a careful analysis of the means to achieve these objectives to minimize the spent money and effort. Thirdly, a clear understanding that the solution to these problems requires the mobilization of all available forces and means. Understanding that solution of the major objectives of the state is impossible without discipline and mobilization and self-restriction. And as a consequence the rejection of

institutions and individuals by the system to prove their incompetence or futility. Fourthly, it means the established rigid order because without it, it is impossible to ensure its effectiveness in the conditions of modernization it is a very important means of implementation of the plan of reforming and modernization of society (Inozemtsev, 2009).

CONCLUSION

The study analyzes the crisis of the methodology of the social sciences in the context of globalization. According to the researchers of today explanatory potential of many universalist methodologies are exhausted because the modern world today looks more like a microcosm while trying to explain the methods as a macrocosm. For an explanation and understanding of contemporary processes, especially in the field of world economics and politics, we need a new science and metaparadigma thinking.

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