

METHODOLOGICAL DIFFICULTIES IN DEFINING THE CONCEPT OF “SOCIAL” IN MODERN RUSSIAN PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT

Today the modern Russian social philosophy is at one of the turning points of its existence, as its future fate and the issue of the very existence of social philosophy as a separate section of philosophy are being decided. Having experienced a significant influence of the poststructuralist paradigm, the Russian social philosophy has largely lost the methodological tools for working with the concepts, which not only reduced the reflective potential of social philosophy, but also marginalized it to a considerable extent. Without the definition of its central concept, the definition of real or nominal, social philosophy cannot develop as the ultimate reflection of the social organism, since it does not define its central concept, the concept of social. The second methodological issue of the modern social philosophy, if abstracted from the definition of the concept of social, is its break with the previous philosophical heritage - the Soviet school of social philosophy, which has been represented by historical materialism and scientific communism. Building itself in the poststructuralist principle of antihistoricity and methodological chaos, the modern Russian philosophy breaks down into discourses, without having not only the common methodological and epistemological principles, but also, as a consequence, a common problem field at the same time.

Keywords: social, social philosophy, Marxism, methodology, philosophy.

INTRODUCTION

The linguistic aspect shall first of all be singled out in the problem of posing the question of the concept of social in the modern Russian social philosophy. The proximity of such concepts as "social", "sociality", "society" and "public" made the concepts synonymous for most researchers, and it should be noted that the social philosophy itself was a heir to historical materialism that was built on the philosophical heritage of K. Marx and F. Engels. At the same time, the founders of historical materialism distinguished such concepts as "social" (soziale) and "public" (gesel/schaftlich). Based on the general meaning of the original works of K. Marx and F. Engels written in German language, one could make a general conclusion that the concept of social (soziale) was used by them to distinguish legal, economic and other formal types of relations from the social relations, and the concept of public (gesel/schaftlich) was used as a broader concept in its content and scope, which meant the society in an extremely broad sense. The incorrectness of Russian-language translations of the classics is very clear. And in our opinion, the various forms of thinking, consisting in language, are the most important factor.

The second aspect of this issue is the reluctance of Russian researchers to problematize the concept of social as the central concept of social philosophy. Here we can note several vectors of the absence of such problematization: firstly, the influence of anti-scientific poststructuralism, which has essentially turned philosophy from the rigorous science it has been, for example, in the Soviet era, into art. The art itself does not need to define the concepts and categories, since the art does not face the issue of rationalization and rational. The art itself is the substantial irrational. For the philosophy, such an approach should not be fundamental as it is not only scientifically, but also meaningless to try to rationalize the irrational. Since the irrational is always highly subjective, it is an individual experience and an attempt of its rationalization is also subjective. And the science, which is the philosophy in our understanding, should not turn into art. This issue, the issue of defining the concept of social, should be actualized and rediscovered in the context of emergence of a new philosophical paradigm - neoclassical philosophy that combines not only the synthesis of epistemological components of classical philosophy, the methodological tools and the return

to metanarratives from which the poststructuralism has been trying to abandon in the manner characteristic to it, giving birth and affirming a new matanarrative - the rejection of metanarratives. Secondly, the very attempt undertaken by the Russian philosophers in the early 1990s, that is, to build the social philosophy on the basis of poststructuralism, has turned out to be incorrect, because each poststructuralist discourse has its own notions and methodology and the range of issues being surveyed (and solved one way or another) in one poststructuralist discourse, may not only be unresolved, but simply not relevant to any other poststructuralist discourse. For example, the range of issues dealt with by Jacques Derrida appears to be not only irrelevant and unsolvable, but not considered by Deleuze and F. Guattari in their concept of schizoanalysis and nomadic methodology in principle. Thus, the fundamental philosophical issues were not raised and were not solved by the poststructuralists, since they could not be solved in accordance with the requirements of science. The science, like classical philosophy, strives to search for objective truth and improve the cognition methods, and the poststructuralism affirms the primacy of subjective truth over the objective. Thus, the formation of a single social and philosophical paradigm in Russia was not possible, the social philosophy broke up into various social and philosophical discourses, which seriously affected not only the marginalization of social philosophy as a spiritual and practical space of human activity, but also called into question the possibility of social philosophy as such, since the social philosophy could not exist either in the isolated marginal discourses, or in the form of social metaphysics.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The basic methodology of this study is the method of ascent from the abstract to the concrete, ascending to the principles of dialectical logic of K. Marx and F. Engels. When analyzing the historical development of Russian social philosophy, we used the principle of unity of the historical and the logical. In addition, within this study, we used the general scientific methodology, in particular, the methods of analysis, synthesis, historiographic methodology, comparative approach, and observed the logical sequence of elements of scientific presentation.

RESULTS

It should be noted the uniqueness of such a phenomenon as Russian social philosophy. The Western European civilization is characterized not by the social philosophy, but by the social theory. These branches of knowledge and reflection are not identical, as E. Giddens noted, the social theory: "is an analysis of widespread philosophical issues, but it is not a philosophy in the entire sense of the word" [1]. The Western European philosophical thought does not set the task of researching the social phenomenon, the social is considered exclusively by the social sciences, in particular, it is singled out a special branch - the social theory. The book by Kenneth Morris "Marx, Durkheim, Weber: formation of modern social theory" [2] became a program document of the West European sociologists studying the social in its practical implementation, in the context of its identification with the activities of social groups. The completely different ideas prevail about the social theory in general and about the phenomenon of social in particular in the Soviet and modern Russian philosophical thought.

The social philosophy as a separate philosophical branch of knowledge did not exist until the end of the Soviet era. The social philosophy in its modern form appeared after the collapse of the USSR, and was based on historical inertia on the methodology and achievements of historical materialism in the first years. The issue of social was not raised in the historical materialism as a unique phenomenon of the Russian-language reading of the legacy of Marx and Engels, since it was designated and solved in the writings of the classics. After abandoning the Marxist doctrine and attempting to build a new philosophical reflection of the social organism, a methodological and epistemological void emerged: the social philosophy could not define its central concept. At the same time, the current trend in the development of social philosophy shows us the absorption of anthropological discourse by it that becomes part of the social and philosophical discourse. This symptom is also a consequence of an indefinite central concept. Since the concept of "social" in the Russian language is synonymous with the majority of social sciences with the notion of "public", it makes sense either to return to the delineation of such concepts as

"social" and "public" offered by K. Marx and F. Engels and try to build a social philosophy in the context of its epistemological principles, while not rejecting the previous experience of the Soviet philosophy, but recapturing and testing the concepts and categories in the context of reflection of the modern social organism, while revealing their methodological and heuristic potential, or to make an attempt to explicate the notion of social based on the modern philosophical thought, but there is the issue of an adequate methodology, which, on the one hand, cannot be resolved in favor of the poststructuralist methodology, which may be confirmed by the experience of the last two decades; on the other hand, it is necessary to turn to the methodology of the classical philosophy of historical and dialectical materialism. The methodology itself cannot be the object of ideological confrontation and political bias, which, in effect, only harms the philosophy itself. The figures of K. Marx and F. Engels can be treated differently, but one should not deny their significant influence not only on the public thought, but also on the very development of human history in the XX century. Note that the appeal to the previous methodological tools and the very method of philosophical reflection indicates only the crisis in which there is a social philosophy today.

DISCUSSION

The Russian philosophy, representing a cultural and historical reflection of the Orthodox sense, did not consider the issue of definition and philosophical substantiation of the concept "social". The appeal to the social in a philosophical context was a feature of the Western European philosophical thought, and Russia, according to the apt expression of P. Ya. Chaadaev, was extremely "far from Europe" in the XIX century [3]. As noted above, K. Marx and F. Engels were focused on the detailed study of the social phenomenon and the delimitation of related concepts in their works. The Soviet Marxist philosophy, continuing to develop the ideals of Marxism, went on the wrong path of studying the social phenomenon, distorting the meaning and interpretation of the founders of dialectical materialism, whereof the famous Soviet Marxist E.V. Ilyenkov wrote in his works [4]. The modern foreign philosophy does not deal with the study of range of social issues, the Western European philosophical studies are mainly related to the field of analytical philosophy, the philosophy of science and the interdisciplinary branches. The social phenomenon is studied in the West in the context of so-called social theory and sociological disciplines. The most famous works of the last decade devoted to the study of social from the standpoint of different approaches include the studies of J. S. Dolvik [5], P. Wirski [6] on the construction of social in the political and spiritual spaces, as well as the work of Austin Harrington [7] devoted to a detailed analysis of social theory. The works devoted to the sociological analysis of the conceptual range of social issues are of great research interest [8]. The modern domestic philosophy, under the dominance of the postmodern paradigm, does not pay due attention to the study of social theory and the phenomenon of sociality, however, there is an increasing number of works devoted to the criticism of poststructuralism, in particular, the book by I.A. Gobozov "Who Does Need such a Philosophy?! From Searching for Truth to Postmodernistic Chatter" [9], as well as the researches of social phenomena from the position of classical philosophical methodology are of great interest [10].

CONCLUSION

Thus, the topic of social in the modern Russian social philosophy is dramatized: despite the absence of even a general definition of social as a central concept, the social philosophy itself attempts to claim the status of ultimate metaphysics in its extreme form, as the utmost possible modern metaphysics in general, as evidenced, for example, by the absorption of social philosophy of anthropological discourse, which, in a certain context and in the form in which it exists today in modern Russia, is outdated. The absence of a clarified concept indicates a crisis and stagnation in the development of social philosophy. This is the symptom that often pushes the researchers not to develop the key concepts, but to speculative, subjective forms of philosophizing in the field of social reflection. In our opinion, the issue of finding and defining the concept of social is associated with the need to return to the classical forms of constructing the philosophical concepts. From the time of Aristotle, the philosophy cannot but be self-reflexive, so every

researcher should also ask a more fundamental question about how the social philosophy is possible. It is possible to talk about its "opportunities" in the future only with the search for the concept of social.

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