

Socio-physical parallelism

(On the absolute primacy of the social)

In the beginning I want to mention, that following text is rather an announcement of the possible idea that can be realized during further work, then the attempt to prove something by theoretical/scientific judgment.

The sources of this text are neither generally accepted philosophy of science, with its variety of shapes, nor social theory that embraces the sociology of the science. Usually, any kind of philosophical text (in our case, it doesn't matter how good or bad it might be), presupposes critical approach: Critical approach to the prejudices, that philosophy faces, luckily or not, on a daily basis, as well, as in that sphere and scope, of philosophical texts.

These days it's an open secret that philosophers are no more in a position to provide the rest of the world with precise picture of the universe. Instead, natural and physical sciences assume full responsibility for it. But still, the possibility of describing the social universe is something that intellectuals (philosophers and social theorists, in the most wide sense) can still tackle. The following text by and large addresses these two descriptions.

First of all, I would like to critically address the approaches concerning data and/or terminology usage in philosophical texts: 1. Approaches that blindly bring into play the science data as truth (even if it's for a short time), or as a source, and use it as fundament to put together the picture of the world or the universe, are by essence dogmatic and useless. It reminds me the efforts of the thinkers in the middle ages who applied theology (dogmatic or non-dogmatic) for creating the overall picture of the world. Thus, consequences were mostly theology, than philosophy. 2. In the 20th century, philosophers repeatedly placed science terms and concepts¹ into their texts. These terms

¹ i.e. popular in the middle of the 20th century, the description of the [social] world as the moebian tape known as Deleuze and Guattari concept (G. Deleuze, F. Guattari, Kapitalismus und Schizophrenie I, Frankfurt am Main, 1974), belongs to Albert Einstein.

used to change their meaning offering absolutely different indications and sometimes-weird explanations of the scientific theories.

Such approaches (I'm referring to the 2nd point above) often forced some modern authors to make rather funny mistakes. If we take a brief look at "Fashionable Nonsense"², - a bestseller that hit the book stands couple of years ago, - we find out that even authors like Kristeva, Lacan, Baudrillard and others couldn't escape false moves. Mistakes they made were mostly based on the authors' blind faith in the strength and invincibility of the scientific thinking (and not of the scientific data), not on the critical approach. I am far from insisting that philosophy or critical approach can actually inspect the science data but it can follow two things: 1. Do not take a scientific data for granted as something attractive and valuable to imitate on; 2. Accept it, like philosophy does it in case of physical or social life, – by the Kantian eye – when everything is shaped by the aprioric forms and categories, and be aware of the fact that it is impossible to step beyond the borders of the perception.

Overall goal for all fundamental sciences is to create a picture of the universe. According to the social theory view, images of the universe provided by both, science and mythology can be similar. They are characterized by I. strong intervention on the level of the everyday life technology³; II. Longing for precision in terms of either affirming or neglecting previous statements, or encompassing them in the new one;

Another example of philosophy's non-critical approach is its aspiration towards final conclusions: This ambition possibly, has its roots in the mythological and scientific perceptions. Counter instances of those are the texts of Kant or Heidegger: Reluctance of these authors to provide the readers with the final conclusions and totality of their

² Alan Sokal, Jean Bricmont, Fashionable Nonsense, Postmodern Intellectuals Abuse of Science, Picador USA, New York, 1997.

³ The superficial example of the intervention of the science can be the using of scientific technology, example of the intervention of the mythology – the analogy of the social order to the picture of the universe. But we will try to show that this conjunction and identity stretches more far and is deeper.

description shape the nature of their texts, resulting into growing possibilities of interpretations and even contradictory character of these interpretations.

Therefore, returning to the above mentioned, the philosophical approach to the scientific data should be descriptive instead of being conclusive.

Following this short and rather indistinct foreword I would like to make some points that would somehow explain what I mean under the social-physical parallelism:

I would like to start with the well known description of the changing social structures: Antiquity, Middle Ages and new time can be described as the frame for strict vertical structures: social reality in those times was seen as a vertical structure, with the governor on top, and the hierarchy, established by him, beneath. This kind of social order goes on through ages and centuries, and even spreading of seemingly influential Christianity, can't actually influence this structure.

It is not a hard job to pinpoint the correspondence between the social structures concerning the picture of the universe in Antiquity and Middle Ages: Mythological model of the universe usually presupposes demiurges on the top and less important gods, semi gods, heroes and other characters descending the hierarchical construction. This particular kind of order is more or less identical for all mythological systems, and occasional minor modifications can be considered as the relicts of times, when this kind of order had been assembled.

In this case, the relation between the social order and picture of the universe is apparent, and it doesn't create any kind of discomfort for an average thinker: he/she can always state, even if vaguely, that both– social and mythological - are artificial (not “natural”) and it is quite possible that in “that times” “consciousness” moved towards both directions thus, creating identical structures⁴.

This can, by the way, trigger discussion between the “realists” (sociologists) and the “idealists” (mythologists and writers). The former may attempt to prove that, first it

⁴ Here some critical approaches can indicate to the Athenian democracy and say, that this kind of structure is not possible to describe by the mythology. In this case I can base to the contents of the myths, in which the universe and universe rules establishing by the relations between gods and humans. Besides this, Athenian democracy necessarily means the fact of the existence of the Zeus (Pericles).

was the social structure that influenced the picture of the universe, and latter may say, that initially it was the mythology that formed the society according to its rules and images⁵.

Western civilization in modernity characterized by centralized systems when the center manages and governs and the social life assembles around it, when the main bulk of political or social mass is enclosed within the center, when strictly fixed periphery comes to existence and the social activity is directed from center to periphery and vice versa.

Contemporary democratic systems and representative democracies are the end result of all above mentioned. There's hundreds of thousands volumes dedicated to the subject of these structures started from development of the experimental science to surfacing of the nationalism⁶.

But the picture of the universe that matches this structure, forms bit by bit and finally transpire into a discovery of the atom structure, relativism theory and the theory of the big bang⁷. Correlation between relativism theory and democratic system is not hard to identify mainly when the subject of diversity of contents and importance of the position of the observer is being touched on in political theories, systems and normatives. It also goes hand in hand with the structure of the atom and the social systems, before and after its discovery. In this case, mass of the center is the main stimulator of the elements circulating around the concrete system. Again, the same structure is relevant to the

⁵ I suggest the readers not to begin to search this kind of distribution in the serious literature. The division to "idealists and realists" in this case is the metaphor only.

⁶ Hobsbaum E.J., Nations and Nationalism since 1780, Cambridge, 1990.

⁷ The theory of the big bang can be understand as the end of the elaboration of the vertical composed picture of the universe: the big bang theory describes the emergence of four main relations and then, constructing the universe by interrelations between this four (see: Paul Davis, The Superpower, NY, 1986). It is easy to see conjunction between this structure and the mythological genesis of the universe: i.e. in Greek mythology there is a story about emergence of the gods from chaos and then creating existing order by interrelations of these gods.

Modernity from discovery of the unconsciousness to the movements in literature⁸. All these brings the average thinker face to face with the dilemma: either he/she must declare, that the scientific/experimentally confirmed theories are secondary to the social structures, or he/she have to confirm the metaphysical assumption that the structures of the universe influence the social orders before their actual unveiling.

Present day reality presents even more challenges to an average thinker. Let's start with a brief description of contemporary social conscience and social systems: informational means plus technologies that emerged in the second half of the XX century allow the social systems and groups not to be tied with any particular geographical locations. Besides, stratification of the society gives possibility to create social groups, with their own centers that may have no connection to political centers. Democratic systems today create possibilities for the existence of the parallel and layered systems, micro-sociums and neo-tribes, with very small (but important) restrictions and limitations; The bonds between them (democratic and other social systems) mostly are formal, concealed and have minor influence on the members of that systems. These conditions have been described both in philosophy (Derrida⁹, Foucault¹⁰ Rorty¹¹), and in sociology (Bourdieu¹², Berger, Luckmann¹³, Giddens¹⁴)¹⁵. Besides, such a knowledge of

⁸ The modern literature, which neglect the central figure of the hero and describes the reality, as the interrelations of the personages around a center, speak about ethical relativism, can be considered as the similar structure to the atom structure and to the relativism theory.

⁹ Derrida Jacques, Dissemination, in Dissemination, The University Chicago Press 1981.

¹⁰ Foucault Michel, Language, counter memory, practice, Ithaca, NY. 1981.

¹¹ Rorty Richard, Contingency, Irony and Solidarity. Chicago Uni.Press. 1986.

¹² Bourdieu Pierre, Social theory for changing society, Boulder u.a. Westview Press. u.a. 1991, Bourdieu Pierre, Distinction, Cambridge, 1986.

¹³ Berger, P. Luckman, T. The Social Construction of the reality. 1967. Garden City, NY. Doubleday

¹⁴ Giddens Antony, The Consequences of Modernity. Cambridge, 1990.

¹⁵ Even if such authors as Giddens and Habermas refuse the emergence of the new order of society, their descriptions indicate new modes of contemporaneity ("Higher modernity" in Giddens works, and "post-capitalism" in Habermas i.e. Habermas, Theory and Practice, Boston, Beacon Press. 1973.)

the social order make a way into the literature: several movements and directions like phataphysics, fantasy, new wave and others described micro-sociums, so (in the case of high level of imagination) parallel worlds. By the end all this formed as the post-modern picture of the world, and penetrates as in politics, so in any sphere of the social life. Correspondingly, the picture of the universe begins to change: published in 2000 in “Scientific American” “Quantum Gravity and the Nth Dimension, The Universe’s other Dimensions”¹⁶, tells the story of the theory of the parallel worlds, existing in the universe, and propose universe as the unity of the worlds arranged like documents in the folder (folded universe) is the event of the same type and waits for the experimental approving, which it will get in some years¹⁷. This theory evaluated from the side of international scientific community as overturn and revolution in the conception of the universe, possible revolution in the technologies and etc. But, as I mentioned it above, social consciousness exists by this paradigm for the years.

Here we face the difficulties, that average thinker has to deal with: how the situation can be evaluated by him/her? I would also like to add that the list of the possible interpretations is virtually endless. On the scale of them some of poles are:

1. Radical: **absolute primacy of the social** according to which social “consciousness”/”awareness” defines all in the universe, including experimentally verified theories. Thus, social consciousness brings about not only the ideas about the universe, but the results of the experiments as well.
2. Metaphysical: **The primacy of the science:** the concepts of the universe develops, and social structures correspond to this concepts. The inherent nature of the social structures organizes itself towards “right” order.

¹⁶ N. Arkani-Hamed, S. Dimopoulos, G.Dvali, Quantum Gravity and the Nth Dimension, The Universe’s other Dimensions, Scientific American, # 6, 2000.

¹⁷ My “faith”, that this theory will be proved necessarily, based not on believe in the strength of the scientific mind or technology, but on the idea, that the world socium already have this structure. Corresponding to this, as in the “before” cases, this theory must be prove – i.e. my “faith” based on the thesis outgoing from this text, that if we have a structure of the socium, and have not corresponding picture of the universe, thus picture necessarily will elaborate and gain experimental approvement in nearest future.

3. Metaphysical-sociological: **The primacy of the scientists:** they generate the picture of the universe that has rather unconvincing influence on society. Consequently, society transforms faster, long before the scientists make public their efforts.
4. Metaphysical-radical: **New Theology:** The idea defines all, including the structures of consciousness and physical organization of the universe: God carries out his master-plan through the chosen ones and they spread it both in social reality and science.
5. Mystical: **self evolving nature of the universe:** universe undergoes changes influencing the social life and science in the process. In this regard, putting forward the idea that the cosmogony theory is false is not completely fair: consciousness follows ever-changing rules of the universe and changes accordingly.

All these theories have nothing to do with critical thinking though, I would like to note here that according to traditional approaches primacy of the social consciousness seems to be the easiest to be adopted and proved by the philosophers and social theorists.

The analogues can also be found in other fields of fundamental sciences, such as development of the ethology¹⁸ or physiology¹⁹, biological theories of the universe

¹⁸ In contemporary ethology is possible to discover the signs of the description of the parallel worlds. i.e. in the article "Prey selection and feeding habits of the large carnivores in the Southern Kalahari" (1984, Koedoe, # 27.) Mills M.G.L. describes the hunting behavior of the predator species in the overlapped ecological niches: author, by fact, neglects the idea of struggle for survival between this predators, and says, that even if they hunting on the same species, they prefer as preys different age groups. This kind of reality more indicates on the parallel order of the existence, than to the natural selection. This approach contradicts the idea of struggle for survival and establishing the structure relevant to the contemporary social life. (See also Malcolm J.R. Van Lawik B.N. Notes on Wild dogs hunting zebras. "mamalia", 1975, # 2). I Think, the same description is possible correspondingly to the plants species.

¹⁹ In the beginning of the XX Century the discussion between physiologist about the thinking or conditioned reflex characterized human or social animal, was nothing else but the discussion between two orders and pictures of the universe: Between atomic-mythological, which proves

manifestation, etc. Here, I would like to note briefly that this instance of placing side by side the data of physical theories and social consciousness was the most convenient way to illustrate the current situation in case we refuse to limit ourselves within the confines of traditional sources. Of course, the serious discussion about the social, that defines the picture of the universe, is impossible²⁰. But, if we stay only in the sphere of the thought, we can not find the contrary arguments to the absolute primacy of the social, even if we go deeper into above described science data²¹.

There is interesting view to the problem of the subject from the absolute primacy of the social: If the social is the primary, subject can not be the definer and always be the follower: I.e. in this case subject will be based on the social, thus, the subjects investigated by Kant and Husserl must be differ, as the subject described by Husserl and contemporary one. From this basis the question in the mind of the adept of fundamental science can arise: if the subject is secondary, i.e. it defines by the social, what defines itself the social? The answer on this question can be a lot and various, and all of them will go beyond our experience and become metaphysical, i.e. based only on thought, without any empirical source.

But, if here we begin to discuss the subject, who will not be concrete, but cognitive-transcendental-metaphysical, it will manifest to us only without the content, but out of the form too. I.e. we can not find there anything, which will not be put there from the social and because of the social.

that there is only one center (or, in this concrete case, that the conditional reflex is only one base and source, i.e. center), and the picture of the parallel worlds, which says, that there are other worlds and dimensions except ours and us (see: «Ответ на замечания проф. Н.А.Рожанского по поводу научной деятельности И. Бериташвили» «Письмо проф. Н.А. Рожанскому» «По поводу критики С.А. Петрушевского» в: И. Бериташвили, Труды, «Мецниереба» Тбилиси, 1984. «Answer on Prof. Rojanski's remarks on the scientific works of Prof. Beritashvili» Beritashvili, Works. Tbilisi, 1984. (Russian)).

²⁰ I mean with earnest and scientific attitude

²¹ Social not only by the means of the social forms, but by the means of the social structures: in this case in the concept of the social there must be include as literature, so culture of sex, the rules of the eating, science and etc.

In the end I want to bring up a question: is it expedient for philosophy, which studies primary, to study subject, if there exists suspicion, that it is secondary? And is it not right it in this case, on the background of above mentioned, that the aim of philosophy is not the subject, but primary? And is it not right that once more it is already time to return to pre-Socratic (Heideggerian) notion and stay question about the primary?

All this questions emerges from that strange conjunction, we can see between data of the fundamental and experimental sciences and social structures and orders. And, what is important, in the empirical time social structures and orders of the west²² presuppose the experimental and theoretical data.

But here I want to note, that in the lineal time the fact to be first, or previous, must not absolutely and necessarily mean to be the source and/or the basis.

²² Becoming more and more total.