

Heterogeneous Actor and Everyday Life as Key Concepts of Evergetics

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Abstract Is considered the role of the concepts of “heterogeneous actor” and “everyday life” in the making of Evergetics—postnonclassical science on management processes in the society, which, in contrast to the classical management science, doesn’t separate the subject from the object, but, quite the contrary, proceeds from their superposition and takes into account the correlation of knowledge about the object (a situation in the social life) with individual features of the subjects, i.e. heterogeneous actors performing not only cognitive, but also communicative and activity-related functions to control the situation. Each actor exists simultaneously in two worlds: in the life world (everyday life) and in the system worlds, where the man-actor turns into a depersonalized “element” of the system, interacting with other “elements” by the established rules. During the negotiations in everyday life, focused on finding a way to settle the situation which should satisfy everybody, heterogeneous actors, acting as “practicing social theorists” or “ordinary sociologists”, have to reach a mutual understanding and consensus on the choice of value priorities that will provide an opportunity to formulate the objectives, criteria, restrictions and, ultimately, the problems demanding their solution in the formally organized system world, which is studied by classical science. Therefore, the Evergetics, returning the language of science in everyday life, is created as a value-oriented science that answers the question “what for to do?” and “what to do”, while the traditional management science seeks to answer the question “how it should be done? (in the best way, whenever possible)”. So, the Evergetics doesn’t conflict with the classical management science, but is its necessary complement corresponding to postnonclassical stage of the science’s development.

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1 Introduction

Evergetics (Vittikh 2014b, d)—a value-oriented science on the management processes in the society, based on the postnonclassical scientific rationality (Stepin et al. 1996), has, as an important role, the concept of heterogeneous actor, accomplishing, in common with other actors, cognitive and activity-related functions to resolve any problem situations in the society, in accordance with their subjective view of the world, interests and value priorities (Vittikh 2014a). Thus, each actor is at the same time an investigator and a person participating in decision-making, which means that a scientist who studies management processes in the society and who is also an actor, “loses the privileged position of an absolute observer and acts only as a partaker in social life on an equal basis with others”, therefore, a number of scientists (including J. Habermas and A. Giddens) “substantiate the idea of re-examination of the social status of science and of the new concept of cognizing subject, to return “home”, in everyday life”, the language of science (New Philosophic Encyclopedia (in four volumes) 2010).

Also, the activist sociology (Yanitsky 2014) “presupposes a social activity of both professionals and ordinary citizens involved in the transformation of social structures,” and consciousness of “the importance to own local and/or situational knowledge, of the need for vision problems “from below” in a specific social and cultural context”.

As well, “moving of the science into everyday life” is pushed at the forefront in the work Vittikh (2014a), where the theory of intersubjective management, applied to a specific real-life situation in everyday life, is being developed not by some detached observers—representatives of science, but by heterogeneous actors, acting, in the words of A. Giddens, in the quality of “practicing social theorists” (here, the scientists are treated as professionals, creating for them the methods and tools to construct such theories).

The significance of the concepts of heterogeneous actor and of everyday life for the formation and development of the Evergetics is due to the fact that “the study of everyday life means an approach to the world of man and of his life itself as to a value” (New Philosophic Encyclopedia (in four volumes) 2010).

2 Society as an Object of Postnonclassical Science

Classical scientific rationality excludes from consideration everything that relates to the cognizer and to the means of his activities; thereby are created the conditions to obtain objectively true knowledge about the object, in which there is no touch of human subjectivity. However, if the society as a totality appears in the quality of an object, then this approach turns to be unacceptable, as the separation of subject and object leads to the fact that society will be studied without human beings, as some “quasi-natural” object, and any subjective factors, including valuable ones, will be excluded from consideration.

In the social life, the subject not only cognizes the world, but he creates it. In this case, the actor takes just the place of an external “unified” subject of classical science, this actor is “inside” of the object (i.e. society) and communicates with other actors who have appeared in their common life situation, which is, in most cases, a problem situation, when an unsatisfactory state of affairs is realized, but it is not yet clear what should be done to change it (Novikov and Novikov 2007). In their quest to find a way out of this situation, the actors, together (following the Poincaré’s conventional concept of truth, which treats the truth as a result of an agreement), produce intersubjective knowledge and systematize it in the framework of intersubjective management (Vítikh 2014a), on the basis of which a collective decision on how to resolve the situation will be then made. In this way, the science, on the postnonclassical stage of development, increases the “radius of its action”, going beyond the offices of scientists and research laboratories and so intruding into everyday life, in the life-world of the human beings. The man-actor who is not a professional scientist, becomes a key figure and a kind of a “reference point”, because the organization (or, rather, self-organization) of management processes begins with the formation of the community of heterogeneous actors, perceiving themselves to be in a situation which they regard as problematic. In other words, the postnonclassical scientific rationality aims to restore the link between the science and the life-world of the human being, i.e. to solve the problem posed by E. Husserl in his monumental work “The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology”.

3 Life-World and System World

The man exists simultaneously in the life-world and in the system world. The concept of “life-world” introduced by E. Husserl—“it is an actuality where the man has been living initially; it is his inalienable reality. The natural science grows from this reality, that’s why it must be associated with the life-world” (Zotov 2010). The life-world has a subjective-relative nature, wherein all the realities are attributed to the man, and this matter doesn’t belong to the natural science, but to the phenomenology.

E. Husserl explains that, for example, the historical life-world of the Greeks is “not an objective world in our sense, but it is their notion of the world, i.e. their own subjective meaningfulness of all the realities, having a value for them, for example, with gods, demons, etc.” (New Philosophic Encyclopedia (in four volumes) 2010). In the A. Schütz’s Phenomenological Sociology, the notion of the “life-world” is considered as an intersubjective everyday world, as a world of daily life (Dictionary of Philosophical Terms 2004).

In the system world, the actors are transformed in any depersonalized “elements” that are in a fixed relationship to each other. In contrast to communicatively structured life-world, which is a sphere of private and public life, the system world, including subsystems of economics and politics, is formally organized (Habermas 1993). Despite the fact that the modern societies, built on democratic principles, assert the primacy of the life-world over the subsystems, according to Habermas (1993), “a colonization of the life-world is happening: the imperatives of autonomous subsystems, having thrown

off ideological veils, conquer, like colonialists, who came to a primitive society, the life-world from outside and impose assimilation process to it”.

If we talk about classical management science, it is engaged in the management processes in the system world, in which everything is reduced to the design, development, modernization and maintenance of a wide variety of systems. From the middle of the last century (Johnson et al. 1971) up to the present days, the systematic approach is a generally accepted methodical technique, which not only causes, but cannot cause any doubts about the usefulness and high effectiveness of its application. And this is, of course, true, but as long as the system world does not lose touch with the life-world. If the system world is closed on itself and is developed in the interests of the systems themselves, it doesn't mean at all that the society and the people as its components will be gainer. For example, systems analysts can improve the system for railway traffic control from the point of view of cost saving of any resources, and, as a result, a certain “system effect” in interests of the railway administration will happen. But it can create a significant inconvenience to passengers who built their life-world reckoning on the existing, non-modernized scheme of passenger traffic.

In the system world, the “projections” of people act on functions, positions, powers and interaction mechanisms, inherent to this or that system, so far as a living man from the life-world is aware of his belonging to the system, sharing its “rules of the game”. The system is treated by him through the “prism” of accepted theoretical provisions, methodical materials, instructions, used tools, models and so on, which forms the basis for the formalization and modernization of management processes, ultimately, to improve the efficiency of the system. All this corresponds to Weber's doctrine of formal (instrumental) rationality, his depersonalized “ideal bureaucracy”. In other words, the system world integrates with instrumental rationality (in contrast to communicatively rational life-world which opposes against cognitive—instrumental narrowing of mind) (Habermas 1993).

4 Heterogeneous Actor and Everyday Life

The classical management theory and systems analysis don't take into consideration the man as an entity, with all his “subjectivities”, i.e. they consider a uniform (homogeneous) model of society. Such rendering the man “out of brackets” does not allow the use of his individual capabilities in management processes, since they are ignored on principle. At that, the notion of the “human factor” is used to emphasize the “interfering” role “subjective elements” of the man in management processes, proceeding from the fact that the “subjective”, as a rule, is regarded as something “negative” (we cannot, surely, agree with that). Therefore, “since about the second quarter of the twentieth century, the issue of subjectivity has been entering to “resonance” with the problem of finding a proper human resource of society development” (Philosophy of Science and Technology 2008).

The Evergetics, which uses the concept of heterogeneous actor (i.e. heterogeneous model of the society) and everyday life, is focused on solution of this problem. Its basis is a phenomenological approach to the construction of the theory of public management (Vittikh 2014c); in fact, “the phenomenological method of E. Husserl

is unique because it treats the physical world and the consciousness of an individual as interconnected parts of a whole” (Stevenson 2007). The man-actor, situated in the life-world (in everyday life), first of all, realizes himself (together with other actors) to be in a problem situation, so they create in common an intersubjective community. At that, each of them realizes simultaneously his belonging to this or that system, i.e. to the system world. However, comprehension by the actor of the sense of situation in the life-world precedes the system analysis, because actors must firstly reach an understanding and consensus on what problems need to be resolved for settling the situation, i.e. they initially need to understand “what to do?”, and then to answer the question “how to do?” (Vittikh 2014b).

Thus, the Evergetics is not in conflict with the classical management science, but rather it is a necessary complement corresponding to postnonclassical stage of science development, related to everyday life of people. “The range of problems and topics of life (day-to-day life of people) has been usually ignored and slighted as lying outside the scientific disciplinarity... A. Schütz introduced this term for the sake of conceptual grasp of intersubjective reality, significant for the social actors as a representation of an indiscrete totality of the world of human existence... Meanings, shared by “all” in everyday situations, form the world of primary-typed (anonymized) meanings, operation of which allows to combine the perspectives of actors, acting as “routine sociologists”... Outside the (primary) world of everyday life are (secondary) fields of professionalized “ultimate semantic spheres”, the meanings of which are available in full only for actors, involved in these spheres and specialized in it, and “opaque” for the “uninitiated” (Newest Sociological Dictionary 2010).

In other words, everyday life is considered as a primary “indiscrete totality”, and narrow, divided among themselves professional spheres of activity—as secondary ones. Accordingly, the heterogeneous actors “immerse” initially in a life problem situation and seek to comprehend its meaning, acting as ordinary people with all their subjective features, intellectual abilities and perceptions of values. However, it is exactly these “everyday researchers” who develop jointly intersubjective knowledge about the current situation and develop ad hoc the theory of intersubjective management, on the basis of which they make decisions about what tasks need to be resolved for settling the situation (Vittikh 2014a). After that, the “system world” is included in the work, wherein narrow professionals begin to act, among whom might operate also the same actors from the “everyday life world”.

5 Comprehension of the Meaning of Situation by Heterogeneous Actors

The first thing the actors should do having faced with an uncertainty of life situation is to comprehend the meaning of this situation, which can be interpreted in different ways. In the context of this study, it is advisable to use a pragmatic approach to the definition of the meaning which considers it from the standpoint of an individual man-actor who is the subject of activity. Then the meaning becomes a value and a characteristic of usefulness of the object for the man, so this meaning is acquired as applied to a particular life situation, which is evaluated as indefinite because of multitude of competing opportunities (Philosophy of Science and Technology 2008).

Such an approach was developed by Frankl (2012), who considered the man's search for meaning as an innate motivational tendency inherent in all people and being a major driver of behavior and personality development. He wrote that the perception of the meaning is "the awareness of opportunities in the background of reality, or, more simply, the awareness of what one can do in relation to this situation". Längle (2014) has specified: "That possibility, which we distinguish by its value and significance as the best in the circumstances, which bears in itself the fullness of vital existence, is just the meaning of the current moment... Meaning—it is always a realistic path, appropriate to circumstances... Meaning in the existential sense is a function of two variables: every time, both conditions are changed,—i.e. opportunities of quite certain actual circumstances,—and are changed properties, capabilities, talents of the man who turned out to be in these circumstances... What is significant for us is meaningful... What we do not care is meaningless".

For example, a problem situation may consist in the fact that a man needs to get to the other side of a river. The situation gives him three options: wait for the arrival of the ferry, walk a few kilometers on foot to the bridge and then cross the river on it, and finally, swim the river across. If the man is not very well, and he has the time to wait, then it would make sense to use the ferry. In the case where time is limited, and he cannot cross the river on his own, it would make sense for the man to pass walking the way to the bridge and then to use it for crossing the river to the other side. For a good swimmer, it is a direct sense to swim across the river.

The situation will be essentially complicated, if we assume that there are several persons in this problem situation, and all of them are bound by a restriction: they have to overcome the river together, using a single, common to them all, method of crossing. Then, for them, it can make sense only one of the three options offered by the situation, despite the fact that, at the beginning, each participant of river crossing has seen his own subjective sense in this situation. In order to reach such an agreement, they must undertake complex multilateral negotiations using mutual persuasion, and find a consensus.

Relying on the introduced concept of meaning, Frankl (2012), in the same work, sets out his view of values: "There are meanings that are inherent in people of a particular society, and even more so—the meanings that are shared by a lot of people throughout history. These meanings relate to the human condition rather in general, than to unique situations. These meanings are just what we understand under values. Thus, the values can be defined as meanings universals, being crystallized in typical situations faced by the society, or even by the whole of humanity. Possession of values makes easier for a human being the search for meaning, since, at least in typical situations, he is delivered from decision-making".

It should be noted that Längle (2014), using definitions of meaning and value formulated by V. Frankl, determines in his own interpretation of responsibility. "Responsibility is my answer to the meaning that resonates with my highest value. Therefore, the responsibility has nothing to do with the duties that someone imposes on me. Responsibility is a manifestation of freedom. It cannot be substituted by observance of regulations, laws, guidelines and operating instructions. Responsibility is the expression of my affection to a human being, to an idea, or to another value. Responsibility is a manifestation of relationship!"

6 Conclusion

Thus, in the Evergetics, comprehension of meaning of a problem situation, cognized in everyday life (in the “life-world”) by heterogeneous actors, having subjective perceptions of values, is an important stage in organization of management processes in the society, preceding the decisions of traditional, classical management problems and systems analysis of the objects of management. In processes of the negotiations focused on a finding of a way arranging everybody and settling the situation, the actors should reach mutual understanding and a consensus in the choice of valuable priorities that will provide an opportunity to formulate the purposes, criteria, restrictions and, finally, to define the problems demanding decision in the “system world”. Solved problems (let’s say, in the form of newly created systems) start to transform the situation in everyday life in the direction of reduction of its uncertainty and, when the degree of uncertainty will reach an admissible size, the situation is considered settled. If the uncertainty exceeds admissible limits, then it occurs a “return” to comprehension by actors of meaning of a new problem situation in the “life-world”, formulation of new problems and their transfer to the “system world”. Such “cyclic causal dependence” between these two worlds in a combination with uncertainty can be considered as a model of social self-organization in the society.

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