

**PHILOSOPHICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY OF
THE ESSENCE OF CONSCIOUSNESS**

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Annotation: *The focus of the article is the development of methodological foundations, which took place in the framework of testing research programs that study the mental sphere. This philosophical consideration is characteristic in that it implies a correlation between research methodology and worldview foundations when it comes to consciousness as an object of study. This research generalization does not imply an appeal to the ordinary opposition of the “ideal-material” and seeks to find a new format for coordination between research programs that study the mental sphere, with a focus on the unity of philosophical knowledge.*

Keywords: *Apperception, perception, thinking, psyche, speculative approach, naturalistic approach.*

Throughout the history of human knowledge and in every era, the desire to discover the ultimate meaning, which brings clarity to the very nature of cognitive abilities, does not fade away. The desire to reveal one's foundation is an integral property of rationality, the attributive participation in which defines human beings as a species (*homo sapiens*) and is expressed in a tendency to self-knowledge, which is necessarily inherent in rational beings. In ancient times, this desire was organically woven into the fabric of traditions, manifesting itself in mythology and spiritually mystical illuminations that preceded the philosophical style of thinking. Philosophy, emerging relatively recently, turns this human tendency to self-knowledge into a systematically organized subject field, along with the knowledge of the surrounding reality. The latter, however, may be more urgent from the point of view of a biological being, while for a rational being, self-knowledge may turn out to be a more important task, on which the existence of an individual as a physical-biological conglomeration may also depend. Based on this, perhaps following Schelling.

The existence of epistemological problems in the classical philosophy of consciousness confirms the mediation of this topic in more complex forms of research "questioning". It also points to the special role of achievements in these areas for the entire body of philosophical knowledge. The desire to reveal the generative foundations of psychic reality that underlies all human conscious activity (including the process of cognition itself) can be considered as a fundamental task for philosophical creativity. And no matter how much philosophy seeks alternatives to its application, the problem of the nature of consciousness and the “psyche” is inevitably woven into the fabric of philosophical topics until it receives a sufficient and complete explanation, if at all possible.

In addition to the fact that through thinking a person seeks to reveal the nature of the self-evident givenness of consciousness, the entire sphere of mental activity in its totality appears in the act of reflection as a subjective sphere of reality, just as active as the external world of objects. This inner reality of experience is to some extent more self-evident for the subject of cognition than the

reality of objects and non-subjective relations that appear to consciousness through feelings and form one or another subjective idea of objective reality.

The relevance of the topic of the study of consciousness for the philosopher is determined by the fact that the final theory of the nature of mental reality is the key to the final clarification of the main ultimate philosophical issues related to epistemology, as well as the problem of correlating the mental and the physical. The broader significance of revealing the nature of consciousness and the psyche lies in the fact that it can serve as the self-determination of human beings about the rest of the world and to themselves in an era of the fading of spiritual values and the loss of stable life orientations. Despite this, it is noteworthy that the question of the nature of the psyche and consciousness in the discourse of classical philosophy never occupied a central place. Moreover, in the works of one or another serious thinker, this issue could not be completely absent.

Since the New Times, the self-evident given of consciousness to itself in the mental act finds sufficient expression in Cartesian cogito, which became the basis of new rational psychology. As can be seen from the very grammatical structure of this verb, thinking, in this case, comes from the first person. In the logical sense, thinking is carried out through the subject, the latter is the structural carrier of consciousness, i.e. – the soul. Ideas about the soul as a single carrier of all mental abilities are inherited by philosophy from more ancient worldview formations that preceded the emergence of philosophy as a specific form of cognition of reality. For a long time, this concept performed an explanatory function, one way or another integrating all ideas about the mental sphere into one stable concept. In the process of development of new branches of knowledge, such as medicine, physiology, biochemistry, psychiatry, the concept of "soul" is gradually dismantled by naturalistic reduction, giving way to simpler conceptual formations. Having turned out to be completely alien to the new scientific worldview, it is also being forced out of the philosophical terminological tools. However, the need for such an integrating concept, generalizing the entire set of descriptions of the mental sphere, has retained its relevance, especially for metatheoretical purposes.

Immanuel Kant, in the preface to the second edition of the Critique of Pure Reason, noted: "Whether the knowledge that the mind operates on the right path of science or not is being developed can easily be established from the results. If this development, after careful preparation and equipment, finds itself in a dead-end as soon as it reaches the goal, or in order to achieve this goal it is forced to go back more than once and break new paths, and if it is impossible to achieve unanimity of various researchers on how to realize the common goal, - then after all this it can be said with certainty that such a study has by no means entered the right path of science but operates only gropingly" [4, p. eighteen]. This remark is rightly attributed to the attempts of various directions that study consciousness and the mental sphere, to achieve an extremely clear and consistent description of these phenomena within a single study format. From which follows the need to undertake a return back to clarify the possible development of this issue during the worldview transformations that accompany the genesis of philosophical knowledge. Perhaps this is what will make it possible to detect certain trends that could clarify the position in which this field of study is at the moment. This task, however, is complicated by the fact that the rationalistic formulation of the question of the "nature of the soul" has existed for about 2500 years. In the history of philosophical thought, this was marked by the first attempts to find a physical correlate of mental phenomena, undertaken by doctors and naturalists of antiquity, as well as by the flourishing of the ancient philosophical tradition, which laid the matrix for the further development of the culture of philosophical knowledge. At the same time, the question of how this problem is united in its development has not been studied, it is noticeable that the questions of a thousand years ago have retained their relevance, however, a number

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of significant worldview and cultural transformations that have occurred during this period, which influenced the foundations and tasks of philosophical creativity, are obvious.

Thus, the worldview issues that have existed throughout the development of philosophy must somehow correlate with modern issues related to the study of consciousness, cognitive science, psychology, and other research areas that seek to reveal the nature of mental phenomena. The need to disclose this relationship is also caused by significant difficulties associated with the definitions of these concepts. Since it is almost impossible to give exhaustive definitions of these concepts, but their use without basic definitions is heuristically incorrect, it is necessary to establish the etymology of the words expressing them, as well as the genesis of their content, which led to the assignment of this terminological role to them.

But already defining these concepts would mean some basic terminology associated with a working set of basic theories. So, for example, it is most convenient at the moment to define "psyche" as the totality of all "higher nervous activity", but already in this case there is a problem of ambiguity in the mechanism of correlation of many complex mental forms given to a person in the self-evidence of his own experience. Of course, the solution to many cognitive difficulties may lie in the exact definition of the scope of these concepts, as well as their reference. But for this, again, it is necessary to consider the genesis of their content, as well as the study of cases semantic analogy, which requires an appeal to the methods of comparative studies and linguistic analysis.

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