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Cultural and historical roots of systematic anthropological psychology

Cultural-historical theory of L.S. Vygotsky is viewed through the prism of tendencies of psychology development, which are revealed by the transpective analysis understood as a tool of cognition of regularities of emergence of open self-developing systems to which science can be attributed.

It is argued that cultural-historical psychology can be placed among the theories of post non-classical level; i.e. having declared itself at the age of emergence of non-classical psychology, the theory left its time behind. This fact significantly hindered (and is still hindering) comprehension of the multidimensional logic applied by L.S. Vygotsky. It is shown that today this logic is becoming much more accessible for comprehension as science has started to embrace the ideals of post non-classical rationality.

In the system anthropological psychology a vast body of theoretical, methodological and methodic knowledge has been obtained which can be viewed as a basis for the development of the theory of motivation for the innovative behaviour, based on the understanding the self-development mechanisms of a person as an open self-organizing system (Klochko, 2008a).

The system anthropological psychology is understood by us as a relatively recent scientific development. Its special feature is defined by the fact that its authors' objective, while developing the methodological basis of this approach, was to ensure that it follows the mainstream tendencies of the objective development of the psychological cognition. It may seem that this task is redundant. Indeed, if we agree with L.S. Vygotsky that objective tendencies of the science development exist

as intangible powers, “standing behind the back” of a researcher and overriding their “mind and will” (Vygotsky, 1982), then it does not make sense to spend time trying to become aware of them. After all, any researcher is in the environment where these powers are active no matter whether a researcher is aware of them or not. On the other hand, objectivation of the tendencies themselves allows researcher to penetrate deeply in the heart of the “paradigm shift”, to become aware of their place in the mainstream science, that is to establish a connection with those ones who had been working in science before, and will be working after.

Our research show that the tendencies of science development can be identified with the help of the historic system approach, viewing it as a particular case of the transpective analysis application for researching the regularities of the scientific cognition movement (Klochko, 2008b). The transpective analysis is not just an approach to studying a dynamic phenomenon, but it is also a principle of studying the phenomenon in the process of its emergence, i.e. in the process of continuous complexity growth of system organization, characteristic of complex integrities (open systems). A series of accomplished researches proved that science can be viewed as an open system which complexity growth is accompanied by the sequential growth of system characteristics of the professional psychological thinking. Axiomatics on which the system anthropopsychology is built upon have absorbed almost all the methodological basis of TPS (Klochko, 2005). Referring to the “history of the question” it should be noted that the major question was related to the nature of interaction as a phenomenon having a generative effect. Experimental researches (which were carried out at the beginning of 70’s of the last century within the framework of the research program which later became what is known today as the meaning based theory of thinking developed by O.K. Tikhomirov) allowed to fix the moments of meaning emergence, what made it possible to maintain that meanings appeared on their own and not as a result of special (“meaning forming”) activity of a person (Klochko, 2005). The meanings “formed themselves” by settling themselves down on objects and marking them as significant, necessary, adequate to

a person's current condition. This "unexpected outcome" was attained through an attempt to confirm L.S. Vygotsky's hypothesis about the unity of affect and intellect, an attempt to experimentally "detect" this unity (Vygotsky, 1986). At that point we encountered self-organization as characteristic of person-dimensional systems for the first time. This unity revealed itself in a special way. Affect (emotion) goes ahead of cognition (reflection), attitude goes ahead of reflection, paving the way for a voluntary activity, guiding logical procedures, reducing and structuring search zones for a solution of the task. Emotions pointed at meanings which turned out to be one of the characteristics of the elements comprising the logical structure of a situation. It became clear that meanings (as well as emotions which "read" them) guided those objects into the consciousness which were adequate to a person's current condition.

That was how the multidimensional psychological reality, "subjectively distorted" objective reality (L.S. Vygotsky), but allowing to act in a selective manner, had been revealing itself. To any change in a person's condition (initiation of searching activity, motivation, goals etc.) the situation answered by the dynamics of the value meaning system together with which the object based (formal logical) structure of the situation was rebuilt. Gradually it became clear that this was particularly what made the difference between a situation and other objective reality, i.e. it had the value-meaning laden dimension, being not only a part, an actual, dynamic and sustained sector of a person's life.

To make an interaction itself possible, such coherence of the opposing parties (systems) is necessary when each of the parties sees in another one "their own other", even though it has not yet become genuinely "their own", but having not had taken it for their own, i.e. having not included it in the system, the possibility of a system's sustainable existence is called into question. In essence it is about a law which ensures an order in the universe – *the law of interaction restriction*. Chaos exists only where there are no interactions at all or any interactions are allowed. Occurred interaction by itself points at the coherence which has become the cause of

interaction. Interaction itself manifests coherence to the same extent as coherence functions as the only and sufficient cause for an interaction. This is the mechanism of self-organization which is characteristic of the open systems. Where there is coherence, interaction happens in a self-arbitrary and will free manner, when we are talking about a person. Only open systems are capable of sustaining their intrinsic order through selecting exclusively from the environment what can sustain this order. Making themselves more complex in every act of interaction through including into themselves “their other”, writing it into themselves and restructuring themselves, systems develop the level of their system organization and exist as long as they increase their complexity. That is why self-organization is a necessary requirement for self-development of the complex systems. This is the way the nature of their evolution is assumed, no matter whether it is a person, a scientific theory, a biogenetical system, or any other system which can be considered an open one. Axiomatics of the theory of self-organizing psychological systems was built upon these postulates. Through the prism of this theory became clear L.S. Vygotsky’s thought that “psyche is the highest form of selection” (Vygotsky, 1982, p. 347) and S.L. Frank’s words that “a person is a living center of the situational powers aimed at reality. This intrinsic, subjective attitude of a person to reality, this orientation of a human soul to the world, shaping the very essence of what we call our life... was left outside the scope of a usual, the so-called “empirical psychology” (Frank, 1995, p. 441).

It was shown that such noticeable tendencies as humanization, humanitarization, onthologization of psychological cognition actually represent various manifestations of general tendencies of science development in the field of its anthropologization. One can be sure that psychologists will try to elaborate all the potential sources which have at least an allusion to containing knowledge about the nature of a person as an integrated phenomenon. Initiation of different projects such as humanistic, existential, humanitarian, Christian psychologies proves that this process is already occurring in science. We maintain that scientific psychology, as it

seems, is giving up the efforts to discover the function of psyche, making psyche itself the subject of research. Probably, gradually occurring understanding of illusionary attempts to guess the function of psyche, its mission and destination (psyche reflects, orientates, regulates, anticipates etc.) and on the basis of an empirically identified phenomenon build some integral (system defined) notion about it, is one of the causes of modern psychology crisis. Indeed, almost all of these guesses have acquired a status of explanatory principles a while ago.

In contrast to other variants of the anthropological psychology (or “psychological anthropology” – a notion which is often used as a synonym or analogue of the anthropological psychology) we use the notion “system anthropological psychology”. It does not necessarily mean that other variants of the anthropological psychology are “not system defined” or “less system defined”. We do not want to emphasize by this notion (system defined) the quality of a theory, but assert our understanding of the image of a person in psychology. A person gradually becomes the subject of the psychological science, but the outcomes of the transpective analysis assure us that the psychological (and not any other) study of a person starts in the case when the consciousness, psyche, the psychic in general begin to be understood through the mission they accomplish in the system of an integrated person, providing them with an opportunity to emerge (and remain) as an open self-organizing system with self-development being a regime of its existence. The system principle formulated in this form acquires a paradigm status. In the theory of the psychological systems known as TPS (abbreviation), development of which was started by one of the authors (V.Y. Klochko), a person is viewed as a complex dynamic spatial-time unity.

Anthropological move which objectifies the possibility of development of the psychological cognition “from a person to psyche” had been built into the TPS from the very beginning. This move was difficult to implement due to the following reasons. Firstly, this move contradicted the mainstream movement of psychological

thought “from psyche to a person”, accompanied by the attempts to understand the function of psyche, studying it and making different assumptions about the purpose of this most complicated device. The vast body of these assumptions has been gathered: psyche reflects, orientates, regulates, adapts etc. Some of those assumptions still remain not only authoritative, but also prioritized. The problem is that neither one of those assumptions, nor their sum do not bridge the gap in our knowledge about psyche. This gap is being inevitably and constantly reproduced because an intimate relation of psyche to higher order “integrity” with which it is hierarchically and subordinately connected is being continuously revealed in researches. Secondly, at that time a thought about the coming of post non-classical stage of science development, priority subject of which would have become self-developing person-dimensional systems, had not yet been articulated not only in psychology, but even in epistemology. That is why it was quite difficult to prove the very possibility of theoretically (in a system way) identifying the subject of a science. It was even more complicated to talk about that in the process of studying a system which though had been theoretically identified was a real system (a “living” and developing one) when a special role of psyche had been discovered which could not be even thought of in the process of its cognition as an established (empirically identified) subject of a science. That was why at the first stages of TPS development it did not make a lot of sense to put an emphasis on the anthropological character of a paradigm being followed.

System focus (a person as a self-organizing system) defines only one out of the possible ways of approaching a person as a subject of psychological (and not any other) cognition, drafting at the same time the borders of subject and problem fields which predetermine the number and quality of scientific tasks, solution of which is acceptable in the framework of the given methodology.

There exists an opportunity to take into consideration objective tendencies of the emergence of the psychological cognition and understand that such frequently

singled out tendencies as humanization, humanitarization, onthologization of psychology, which are viewed as a rule as separate and linear, are actually only different forms, different manifestations of the tendency of anthropologization of the psychological cognition. This tendency reflects the essence of the paradigm shift occurring in science. Apart from that, the level of psychologists' system thinking has changed: it has become much easier for them to understand a person as a self-organizing system. Post non-classical science refers to this kind of systems which means that quite persistently discussed in scientific literature issue of the "architecture" of science, based on the ideas of post non-classical rationality, will lead in the end to an integrated person, to a system defined person as a subject of the science.

Within the framework of this approach the psychic represented itself in its spatial continuousness – as something that ensures a long-term range of a whole system, allowing it to select from the environment what is adequate to its actual needs (e.g. makes sense) and appropriate (e.g. has the status of value since self-development is the shift from an opportunity into reality, providing for the sustainable existence of a system). In fact, this determined the transition of the theory to the field of system anthropology. It turned out that this transition does not exclude methodological principles of psychology which have naturally been developed, but integrates them in the frames of a new and more complex principle. For example, system, developmental and determinism principles lose their autonomy when a self-organizing system becomes the subject of the science. The principle of system determinism which allows to objectify those effects of self-organization, which are viewed as new psychological formations, determining the choice of particular directions for self-development that is made by a person, acquires a critical importance. "Self-actualization of a person" is only a form in which self-development of a person – a major means of their existence as an open self-organizing system – is represented (Galazhinskiy, 2002). We are convinced that anthropological psychology is quite a broad subject and problem field of science,

boundaries of which are only outlined, but the transpective of the psychological cognition is directed towards these fields in particular.

Diversity of scientific theories is an integral part of scientific progress. At the same time this diversity itself reflects an evolutionary direction of the scientific progress. This fact is embraced by the notion of “transpective”: science is not developed from the inside, but being an open system, it interacts actively with its environment and enriches itself through actively drawing from it missing models of thinking, manners of argumentation, examples of overcoming the dichotomies, images of a person which exist in the area of philosophical, religious, cosmological, esoterical and any other knowledge.

Knowledge about the way of forming “the multidimensional life space” of a person, about the sequence of acquisition of this space of the new dimensions, about rising up of a person’s consciousness to the new level as a consequence of that, has been developed (Klochko, 2005). Thus, a person themselves reaches a new level of sovereignty increasing the level of openness and demanding a new educational environment which would have made this process continuous and coordinated with themselves. Theory and practice of education has to include a special task of coordinating these demands with educational actions and influences in a list of top priorities. Educational projects have to meet these expectations, i.e. they have to be coordinated with the regularities of the emergence of “the personal in a person”, which can not be ignored or evaded even by means of the latest educational (pedagogical) “technologies”. Only providing this coordination makes it possible to ensure the regime of self-development of a person under conditions of education as a social institute. A child of a person is a special phenomenon, essence of which is an opportunity (to become a person), concentrated within its small body that exists under conditions of “tensed expectation” for such external conditions interaction with which will allow this opportunity to turn into reality. Equifinality is a dynamic feature of an educational system, organizing the transfer of children coming from a

common start and different initial conditions to one and the same final condition – having become a person, being a person. Regularities lie not in the diversity of transitional ways, which is clear by itself, but in the availability of those stages and phases which a child would have to go through before becoming an accomplished (an integrated) person – a sovereign personality capable of being involved into an innovative activity aimed at the outer world as well as at itself (self-building, self-development etc.).

Psychological study of a person begins in the case when the consciousness, psyche, the psychic in general become to be understood through the mission that they accomplish in the system of an integrated person, ensuring their possibility to become (and remain) an open self-organizing system, existence regime of which is self-development.

I believe that psychologists are going to accept the idea of L.S. Vygotsky - that the "positive role" of psychic is not to reflect the world, but to "subjectively distort reality for the benefit of an organism" (Vygotsky, 1982, p. 347) - as the axiomatic basis of cultural-historical theory. For only through such "distortion" a person gets the opportunity to act consciously, i.e. to comprehend the sense and value of their actions. I insist that this idea in particular forms the basis of systemic studies of L.S. Vygotsky: psyche and consciousness are not identical with reflection of the world. Their functional meaning lies in the generation of a multidimensional reality that cannot be reduced to either a subjective reality, or an objective one. Pretersensual dimensions of objects constituting "the external field" of a person's being inalienable from a person and included into the definition of a person as an integral phenomenon are formed in this generative interaction of a person with the world.