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THE PHILOSOPHY OF ECONOMY: THE NATURAL SENSE OF HUMAN ACTIVITY

The article is devoted to the phenomenon of economy, which, in its turn, belongs to the subject field of philosophy. The author emphasizes that economy is the reproduction of basic material conditions of human existence and has the natural existence character. That means that interaction between nature and society takes such a form that reveals the essence of human existence.

Key words: *economy, philosophy of economy, activity, civilization.*

Introduction

The beginning of the XXI century is characterized by a number of essential changes in all spheres of human activity that have both local and global character. The mankind history has not had such comprehensive transformations before, so the mankind doesn't know any examples of going out of such a situation. Therefore, in spite of progressive achievements in science, engineering and technology, a modern man has to maintain and develop the ability of reproducing the conditions of his existence. Only due to his active nature, a man can become a real master of his own existence as well as of the world in general. That's why economy cannot be considered as a separate system that exists and operates separately from the world, it is closely connected with spatial-temporal environment. The organization of the economic system itself has several important determinants: historical and ecological. Therefore, we can speak about the economy correspondence to the space and time of the epoch, so the way the economy is organized determines the social space we have. Economy does not disappear anywhere and does not appear out of nowhere. It characterizes the very essence of human existence and a man's ability of reproducing the conditions of his existence, it directly creates the human living conditions. Thanks to economy there is the interaction between nature and society and that determines social and cultural evolution. Therefore, "economy is not just concomitant to a human life, it is its purpose as the way of human existence. To stop developing economy means to stop living in both physical-biological and fully human sense. Economy comprises all aspects of human life, including intellectual, cognitive and artistic aspects" [8, p. 24]. The modern researcher Yu. Osipov focuses on the fact that economy does not only help people reproduce the way of their existence, but due to his active nature, a man gets to know the world, himself, God, and, what is the most important, he can create his own artificial world. "To maintain economy is not only to survive, especially physically and biologically, but it also means to create something or to demiurgize. The highest manifestation of economical activity is

creativity...Economy, as well as life in general, is something necessary and responsible. A man can't leave economy like he can't leave his life" [8, p. 32]. In other words economy and life are synonymous, that's why they both have to be theoretically understood, which is possible due to the emergence of such sphere of knowledge as the philosophy of economy.

Consequently, *the aim of this article* is to disclose the nature, the content and main characteristics of the category of economy.

The theoretical basis for the research of the philosophy of economy consists of the works written by native and foreign scientists, such as: V. Bazylevych, V. Ilyin, V. Heyets, P. Kozlowski, L. Leskov, A. Neklesa, R. Nizhegorodtsev, L. Tutov, Yu. Osipov, A. Pryiatelchuk, A. Rihk, A. Samsin, A. Subbeto, V. Chekmarev, T. Yaschuk and others.

The Main Material Presentation

The modern stage of civilization development vitally requires all sides of material and spiritual life to be radically re-thought. But awareness of these changes goes slower than it is required by the modern state of globalization development. In this context, M. Moiseiev's opinion is fully reasonable: "The current world outlook must acquire new perspectives" [7, p. 305]. That is why the philosophy of economy offers some conceptual models for solving contemporary global problems.

It is no coincidence that this term is being increasingly used in numerous discussions of the social, economical, political, spiritual and cultural perspectives of the world development. In this case, S. Bulgakov's well-known work "Philosophy of Economy" is mostly referred to. The author of the book focuses his attention on two aspects. The first one reveals God's attitude to the world as to things which are transcendent to each other. The second aspect is an attempt to justify life in the world. According to S. Bulgakov, the form of such justification becomes the philosophy of economy. The key ideas of this work comprise the analysis of life and death phenomena as the primary antinomies of existence. Economy is the form of overcoming non-existence in existence – it is the category "that expresses the desire to turn the dead material into a living body" [2, p. 39]. The essence of the world process is the struggle between Meon and Being, and this is what characterizes the process of growth, the process of formation. But even meonlike non-existence has the germ of life and tends to organic-whole. A man, trying to transform the world, actually carries a program or a project of future reforms. In S. Bulgakov's opinion, the transcendent subject of economy is Sophia, or the mankind in its metaphysical unity, which is understood "not only in the empirical or static, but also in dynamic sense, as power and energy" [2, p. 95]. And then the author continues: "Individuals are just duplicate instances, some copies, their family is the idea, which initially exists in the Divine Sophia, the ideal model for reproduction" [2, p. 104]. In general, the thinker's concept is the attempt to create economic-Christian metaphysics and to unite economic and religious worldviews.

The main theoretical-methodological indications that should be allocated in the study of social and cultural aspects of Bulgakov's concept of economy are the following: 1) the world is economy itself; 2) economy is the possibility of nature cultivation and its humanization; 3) economy is both a process and a product of labor;

4) culture is an economic way of creating the life of society; 5) thus, nature is the basis of culture and the material for human activities; 6) the essence of economy is that it is a spiritual phenomenon; 7) economy is "creativity – reproduction" model, it is both the process and the result of cultural creativity; 8) economy and art are different manifestations of the integral cultural process, which is aimed to harmonize the human existence; 9) a man's purpose is to create the "space economy" as a single social and cultural organism [2].

Taking into consideration the ideas mentioned earlier, the thinker sees the economy as a special kind of human activity connected with production and exchange of material and spiritual wealth.

It includes productive activities, which result in manufacturing different products, commodities and other material values and non-productive activities associated with doing work of different types, including research work and service providing, the results of which are alienated as goods. Economic activity also refers to the activity of different economic entities in the social production sphere, aimed to manufacture and to sell goods, works or services the value of which is determined in a certain price. That means that business entities can be: organizations which, in the form of professional activity, produce and sell goods for public use, perform work and provide services; organizations that consume the results of economic activities; organizations engaged in professional administrative activity in the economy. The important point in this context is that in the process of goods production the owner first satisfies public interests and needs and then, consequently, his own ones. Modern life requires consciousness to be formed precisely at this level as the world is considered to be a single entity where the economic activity is determined as realization of the subject's creative potential aimed at meeting the needs and interests of the community, where there is interaction between individual and collective issues, personal and public issues, local and global issues.

So, nowadays the philosophy of economy claims to be the general theory of human activities as well as to be the part of general philosophy like philosophy of law, religion, art, and as the way of actualization of the noospheric idea in the field of economy. According to G. Baturina, Yu. Serov and G. Smirnov, "the historical development of noospheric idea was of a hidden, subconscious nature. It was discussed under different names in art, philosophy and science; its development is uneven: it made a breakthrough in one sphere, and then it echoed in other cultural forms" [11, p. 172].

Thus, the previous discussion leads to the conclusion that updating the world research as the economy research is stipulated by a number of different factors. The main factor is a global environmental disaster, which is caused by the man's consumer attitude to the nature. As I. Dmitrevska fairly supposes, "many of our troubles are due to the fact that we do not take into consideration the biological coziness of our planet. In fact, there is not any inanimate thing in its pure form, everything is somehow included in the biocoenosis as necessary and sufficient conditions for life. But the man does not develop his sense of belonging to all living beings and the understanding that his own life is unique as well as the life of other living beings" [11, p. 24]. The environmental crisis is connected with the crisis in

spiritual and economic spheres, and therefore we can generally speak about the global crisis of civilization. The crisis has also affected the scientific area related to the economy research, for example, it emerged in Economics in the form of inadequate ideas concerning the real essence of the processes that are occurring in the economy, and especially in domination of the so-called economic pragmatism that justifies any economic act and leads to maximizing the profit. Therefore, we need to resist further cultural disintegration and, especially, inter-estrangement between the economy world and the world of spiritual and material culture.

The key stages in the development of the philosophy of economy include such theoretical areas as neo-liberalism, communicative pragmatics and the theory of postindustrial society. They are different in considering different economic processes and their social value.

The most important ideas in the neoliberalism sphere belong to K. Popper [9], L. Mises [6], F. Hayek [3]. Neo-liberalism is aimed to justify the maximum economic freedom for a subject of social activities under the planned economy conditions and market economy conditions. These are the aspects that are thoroughly analyzed in the works of the mentioned above authors.

The Communicative theory also has its own vision of the economic essence of a man. It focuses on the discursive and ethical transformation of the economic theory, which is based on such traditions as utilitarianism, pragmatism and behaviourism. This approach can be traced in the works of K. - O. Apel, Yu. Habermas, K. Homman.

The theory of postindustrial society develops the idea of scientific progress as the basis of social development. This idea is proved in the works of such scholars as D. Bell, E. Toffler, M. Castells, F. Fukuyama, V. Inozemtsev and others.

For example, the American scientist E. Toffler asserts that today humanity is experiencing a new technological revolution (the "third wave"), which replaced the agricultural and industrial civilizations. That is the universal introduction of the newest third generation computer systems in all spheres of public life. The consequent increasing rate of social, economic, political, and cultural changes will result in breaking down the individuals' adaptive mechanisms. That can cause either a social protest in its different forms, from pacifism to nihilism, or escanism expressed in the flourishing of subcultures. Under these conditions, the thinker considers global cooperation to be of extremely great importance in solving global problems [10].

Another modern western theorist Francis Fukuyama also tries to understand deeply the essence of social transformations. He forms his own economic concept based on Adam Smith's ideas. According to the philosopher, the key characteristic feature of the developed human society is trust which is displayed both at the individual level and at the social one. Trust is the factor that determines progress. The success of "self-realization" of a particular society does not depend on the market principles and following the traditions. It depends on the level of trust existing in the society (trust to the public institutions and to the state, in general).

Fukuyama suggests the classification of the societies based on the amount of trust existing in the modern hierarchical structures. In his opinion, the group with a

high level of trust is formed by "selected", "based on trust" liberal democracies (the United States, Germany and Japan), whereas the traditionalist countries (China, Mexico), European "credulous states" (France, Italy), as well as the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, represent the societies with a low level of trust [12].

Economic progress, in F. Fukuyama's opinion, is a kind of a society's reward for the inner harmony, lack of which prevents economic prosperity. A society can achieve such harmony only in the process of social evolution, that does not imply "jumping over" some separate stages ("from feudalism into communism") [12, p. 192].

The important element of this theory is the phenomenon of "social capital". It is the people's ability to work together in a team to achieve a common goal. The essence of this phenomenon comprises the fact that apart from the skills and knowledge, it comprises the people's ability to create some kind of community. It is of fundamental importance for economic life as well as for social existence, in general. In its turn, this ability for uniting depends upon the existence of the certain norms and values within the community, as well as on the individuals' willingness to subordinate their interests to the group's interests. The shared norms and values result in forming mutual trust that has its economic value.

The accumulation of the social capital is a complicated and largely incomprehensible cultural process. It is very easy to contribute to its depletion at the governmental level, and it is extremely difficult, almost impossible, to do something to restore it.

Conclusions

Having analyzed the main theoretical directions of the philosophical and economic research works, we can make the logical conclusion that the research emphasis has changed during the development of the economic theory. Thus, for example, in the early stages of its development the attention was focused on the influence of various institutions (political, religious) on the economic life of the society. The modern conditions of life have made their adjustments. Today the emphasis is on the economic sphere of the society as the system of roles and statuses associated with production and distribution of goods and services. The basic research is aimed at identifying the impact of the economic factors on various forms of social behavior. Therefore, we can assert that at the present stage of globalization, the political and economic shift is taking place, where the economy plays a significant role in a man's existence.

To continue analyzing the foundations of the philosophy of economy we should define the modern meaning of the term "economy". Today the term "economy" has a few semantic meanings. First, economy is the complex of means of production which are used by the owner (or the society) to meet their needs. Second, economy is a social form of production. The third meaning, which should be mentioned in our research, is that economy is the complex of production relations existing in this or that social system.

The bright example of the economy revealing a man's nature and defining his existence is the answer to the question what a man does while being busy with

economic activities. He grows crops, builds a house and brings up his children. People are occupied with farming and their own household. And all that is considered to reflect the creative nature of work. There is another question to be answered: in what way does a man act in the economic system? First of all, a man produces something. The statement that production has always existed is questionable, as being engaged in economical activities, people always produced some things and did some work, and production was supported by economic development, labour division and labour transformation into work as one of the means to keep a man's vital functions. In the process of production a person makes an effort to do this or that particular job fulfilling in such a way the task that does not correspond to his real nature. Thus, the national tradition which in principle is reflected in everyday speech does not have the concept of "producing children" or "producing crops". It uses the concept of "bringing up or growing up", instead. So the philosophy of economy is exactly the branch of science that studies a true human nature, that is the realization of the person's natural potential. The man's activity in the economic sector reveals his inner creativity, because work provides the unity of the man and the nature, in harmony with the man's inner world. We can declare that economy creates the man himself. Therefore, the philosophy of economic management correlates economic knowledge with moral values while economics is very often indifferent to the moral aspect, because its main aim is profit and maximizing that profit.

The semantic polyphony mentioned above requires clarifying the term "economy" through taking into account the modern stage of its development, because the traditional analysis through the recognition of such forms of existence as rural economy, planned economy, national economy, natural economy and commodity economy is insufficient nowadays. Therefore, economy is the special kind of human activity associated with the production and exchange of material and spiritual wealth. Along with that, economic activity includes both productive activities, which result in manufacturing different products, commodities and other material values and non-productive activities associated with doing work of different types, including research work and service providing, the results of which are alienated as goods.

The conducted analysis shows that the notions defined above acquire the features of economic activity. They also have the status of structural levels of philosophical and economic knowledge.

Using this approach makes it possible to assert that the philosophy of economy and the philosophy of business are those opposites to social and economic reality that embody particular strategies of social development and different paradigms of economic thinking. The main indicator in differentiating the economic consciousness and business activities is the phenomenon of individual economic freedom.

Then the philosophy of economy, being one of the directions of the philosophical and economic knowledge, can be represented as a linear system of economic development and its means form the algorithms of social and economic activities. That testifies to its teleologic nature and isolation of economic relations within a single entity. And the philosophy of business, in the context of this analysis, is presented as the activity that functions according to the principle of nonlinearity.

In the context of social synergy, the philosophy of business appears not only as

the leading factor for socialization of the economic entity, but also as the source of economic knowledge externalization. That's why the social and creative potential of the philosophy of business is disclosed in the context of the synergy effect as the result of natural cooperation between the individual economic freedoms within the integrated economic system. However, within the economic system as the integrated philosophical paradigm, business and the economy appear to be interdependent structures that function in the harmonious interaction.

So, the philosophical and economic knowledge can be generally represented as the system of the following levels: the philosophy of economy, the philosophy of business and the philosophy of social management. Each of these elements consists of the social and economic interests, economic culture and economic ideology.

In the modern philosophy of economy (the latter, by the way, is going through the stage of overcoming the purely economic approach to understanding the economic systems' efficiency), there is the transition from understanding of the "internal" efficiency of the economic system to understanding of its "external" efficiency that is determined by its relationships with the social world and the environment. This means that economic rationality is taken in its broader context, first and foremost in its correspondence or non-correspondence to practical (normative), value concepts. We are talking about overcoming the narrow-utilitarian approaches of "pure Economics" and, therefore, the purely economic rationality of the market and the subordination to the practical reason, which is known as the moral and ethical reason.

Consequently, economy as a general philosophical concept reveals the objective, purposeful connection between the man and the natural and cultural worlds. The philosophy of economy considers economy to be a purposeful, value-focused and rational way of reproducing existence that functions and develops in the unity of production and economic, social, spiritual and ideological connections of the world community. The man is represented here as an active being. His activity takes such a form that the subject appears to be the cause or the source of the world changes. This activity is conscious and creative. Thus, economy itself reveals the very essence of man because it emphasizes interdependence between the man and the nature.

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ФІЛОСОФІЯ ГОСПОДАРСТВА: ПРИРОДНІ СМИСЛИ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ ЛЮДИНИ

Стаття присвячена феномену господарства, яке, в свою чергу, належить до предметного поля філософії. Автор наголошує на тому, що господарство являє собою відтворення базових матеріальних умов існування людини, має природний характер існування, тобто відбувається така форма взаємодії між природою і суспільством, що розкриває сутність існування самої людини. **Ключові слова:** господарство, філософія господарства, діяльність, цивілізація.

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**ФИЛОСОФИЯ ХОЗЯЙСТВА: ПРИРОДНЫЕ СМЫСЛЫ
ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ ЧЕЛОВЕКА**

Статья посвящена феномену хозяйства, которое, в свою очередь, принадлежит к предметному полю философии. Автор отмечает то, что хозяйство являет собой воссоздание базовых материальных условий существования человека, имеет естественный характер существования, то есть происходит такая форма взаимодействия между природой и обществом, которая раскрывает сущность существования самого человека.

Ключевые слова: хозяйство, философия хозяйства, деятельность, цивилизация.

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