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## Social Ontology: Problems and Prospects for Development

Richard Grego  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
Southern New Hampshire University  
USA  
e-mail: grego\_richard@aol.com

### Abstract

Currently, “social reality” is seen as communication between people. Most of the social processes taking place in the world are global in nature, that is, they can have both positive and negative trends in their development. Positive trends help the subject (person) in his life together with other subjects (people), and negative trends, on the contrary, interfere with the modern subject (person).

**Key words:** ontognoseological approach, non-classical social philosophy, social ontology, phenomenological sociology, intentionality.

**Introduction.** Social ontology is, on the one hand, the work of ancient philosophers (Heraclitus, Parmenides, Plato, Socrates, Aristotle), on the other hand, the work of philosophers representing German classical philosophy (Kant I., Hegel G.V. F.) and, of course, the work of representatives of “phenomenology” (E. Husserl, M. Heidegger).

Martin Heidegger presents the “social ontology” as an “analytics of presence”, arguing that the “presence” is considered by some being, who, in turn, understands being.

Therefore, “presence is not only ontic, but also “ontological”, that is, it is able to build an “ontology”. Being that the “presence” considers its own is “existence” [7].

“Here is being” gives a person a unique opportunity to be present, not paying attention to either being or existence” [7].

For the modern ontology, the main thing is the installation on the position of “not-own-other”, that is, on the “other”, existing not by the already known, but by its own standards.

Methodological principles on which modern “social ontology” is based: a person does not know what he is doing. He does not know whether he did right or wrong; at the same time, sociality must be perceived only on the basis of the analysis of schemes and concepts [3].

“Social ontology” combines the objects of research “phenomenological sociology” and “social phenomenology”. Phenomenological sociology deals with problems construction of social action; connected with social anthropology, social psychology, ethnomethodology [4].

**Modern “social ontology”: theoretical aspects.** Modern “social ontology” is largely represented by “non-classical social philosophy”. Modern “social ontology” is based on the principles of the “ontognoseological approach”.

The principle of intentionality of the consciousness of the subject (person). Intentionality helps the subject to reveal the hidden prerequisites of the subject’s focus on the object of influence. The principle of “other world” is aimed at interaction with “other” subjects of the world. The principle of “nonantization of the world” considers the subject as a certain “particularity” in relation to the surrounding world (the efforts of several subjects are necessary for an objective knowledge of the surrounding world). The principle of “multi-subject sociality” understands social reality as the endless interaction of social actors (the concept of “rhizomes” in postmodernism).

Social theory and methodology captures the dynamics of the structures of sociality, that is, it represents the existence of these structures as a “dynamic social form”. But today, “social theory” and “methodology” are not able to capture the whole dynamism of social life and the whole variety of social changes. Therefore, individual perspectives of socio-historical dynamics are displayed and the theoretical models that never happen in life are “covered”.

“Social ontology” represents a social form as a “construction”

arising from the interaction of people. She characterizes the interaction between people in the framework of direct contact, that is, interpersonal communication [3].

At a time when the diversity of social life is no longer revealed by the available cognitive resources, the concept of “social action” is beginning to lose its fundamental position. The concept of “social action” by M. Weber cannot explain the following points:

- Indirect communication of people;
- Social time;
- The sequence of human acts;
- Social qualities of human subjectivity [1].

Naturally, problems arise with the explanation of social forms, and the vitality of these forms, that is, their stability and subjectivity. The "social form" can be sustainable only in the case of its “quasi-material presentation as a “rigid structure”.

This concept cannot explain the temporary stability of “social forms”, which is understood as a certain “subjective composition”.

“Subject composition” is the linking of divided and opposing subjects into an internally “self-developing system”. The following properties are characteristic of a “subject composition”:

- Discreteness;
- Spatial separation and disconnection of social communication.

These properties unite and develop “social forces” and, thus, are the main conditions for the syncretism of “subjective composition”.

Following the ideas of M. Weber, we can state that any “social reality” should be constructed or constituted within the framework of a “self-developing system”, which involves the knowledge going beyond this reality. Namely, the “synergetic approach” to “social reality” allows one to go beyond (“step out”) beyond the limits of “social action”. This “departure” (“performance”) can occur only in the sense of taking into account the social qualities of things.

The subject in the process of mastering or knowing “social objectivity”,

“objectifies” it and with this action “self-reveals” itself. Thus, the subject affirms itself as a special subject possessing objective ability. Namely, in this case, the human being begins to build the process of his own “co-existence” with others.

Namely, in the “beingness” of the subject are its subjective “self-definitions”, about which various experiences arise. Since the subject with the help of his subject abilities builds his life process, therefore he feels its internal relationships.

The “own objective being” of the subject helps him “move through life” or “socially formed and organized objectivity”. As a result of this, the subject acquires a unique ability - self-affirmation of himself in society through the modification and updating of various cultural forms.

The self-realization of the subject is always “subjective”. The “subject nature” of the subject’s self-realization cannot be expressed by the position “man is a thing”, that is, the subject realizes his “self” in society not only through his consumption of certain objects.

In “subject diversity”, the subject “communicates” with “others”. This communication is intersubjective, since it already has “clearly” or “secretly” a variety of patterns of human interactions. The communication of people between themselves and the world of things can be: “direct”, “implicit” and “indirect”.

The “intersubjectivity of communication” of the subject is the presence of the subject in its “subject being”. That is why the subject is associated with completely different sets of people. We can distinguish the stages of the use of “subject diversity”:

- A combination of “subject diversity” with the process of its activities;
- The embodiment in objects (“things”) of new schemes;
- Possession of the “social form”;
- The identification and embodiment in the subject (“thing”) of its own “social significance”;
- Identification of “settings” for another person;

- Orientation to the logic of “social interactions”.

The subject in "social reality" manifests itself in two different ways:

- tries to be himself (“self-existent”);
- Transform “social reality”.

**The polysubjectivity of “social reality” by J. Habermas.** The 20th century is a very complex, controversial, and surprisingly extraordinary century. This century is simply “replete” with a variety of problems.

The most interesting problems of this century are the so-called “ontological problems”. They have not quite the same structure as they had before. “Ontological problems” are:

- Abstract categories of being;
- Diverse forms presented in human “co-existence”.

In accordance with the new “ontological problems”, the 20th century dictates to us a new concept - the concept of “multi-subject sociality”.

The essence of the concept of “multi-subject sociality” is as follows:

- “social reality” is interpreted in the procedural aspect;
- “social reality” is explained as a result of the interaction of various actors.

This concept is associated with the “phenomenological methodology” of fixation and characterization of the “other”.

In the concept (or theory) of J. Habermas “communicative action”, “intersubjectivity” is understood or is a grasp of the individual nature of the constitution of social reality, which determines the role of temporality in relation to social forms [6].

The philosopher analyzes society in the form of “communication”. Namely, according to J. Habermas, the “communicative model” is called upon to renew by revising the classical concept of rationality and to indicate the extent of the critical attitude to the social structure.

J. Habermas distinguishes between the “vital world” and the “system”. Any strategic action corresponds to a “system”, and “communicative action” corresponds to a “vital world”. The life world is symbolically mediated production and reproduction of society by acting individuals [6].

“System” is a system of actions and interactions of individuals. Society is considered as a “life world” and suggests the necessary connection of social analysis with the internal perspective of individuals and the hermeneutic “connection” of the researcher’s own understanding with the understanding of the participants in the “life world”.

“Communication” is one of the basic concepts of the concept of "communicative action" by J. Habermas. “Communication” is a type of interaction between people, involving information exchange.

“Communicative action” includes three main features:

- Communicative rationality, opposing cognitive-instrumental narrowing of the mind;
- Two-stage concept of society;
- Modern theory.

“Communicative action” has four varieties:

- “Teleological action”;
- “Regulated action”;
- “Dramatic action”;
- Truly “communicative action”.

In the “social action” the image of the “other” is reproduced, since it is a kind of stabilizer of this action and determines the possible functions, roles, orientations, “builds” the perspective of the behavior of individuals. “Other” is that which is not “I”, that is, “different”, presented, however, in relation to me and to me. In German classics there is the concept of "one-another."

**The phenomenon of "other things" by E. Husserl and J.-P. Sartre.** E. Husserl considers the “other” as one of the phenomena constituted by acts of “co-knowledge”. But in the process of constituting the “I” considers the “other” to be the subject constituting the world in which the “I” is only one of the constituted phenomena. The result is two types of items:

- “Non-data in the original;
- “Fundamentally inadequate in their givenness” [2].

Therefore, the “other” is transcendence in relation to the “I”.

J.-P. Sartre believes that the only possible connection between the

two individuals is a relationship of mutual denial (“nonantization”). The philosopher puts the individual consciousness of "I" in a certain mode of "being for another," which somehow relates to the "other." But “being for another” is not yet “being for itself” [5]. In this case, the “subjectivity” of the “I” turns into an empty zero and, of course, does not mean any connection with something external to it. J.-P. Sartre dissolves the "I" in the "other" and the "other" in the "I".

The existence of the “Other” is “allowed” in “social being” and is a constructive form that creates social interaction. Therefore, an “assumption” can be transformed into a “constructive form of social interaction” only during the interaction itself. A “constructive form of social interaction” is a form of a process that is “built” by several entities, it is a form that adds or updates the characteristics of all positions included in the interaction.

For the subject, “co-existence” with other subjects turns out to be a form of unfolding of its individual being, the development of its individual forces.

For the modern ontology, the main thing is the installation on the position of “not-own-other”, that is, on the “other”, existing not by the already known, but by its own standards.

The “other” intentionally suggests the following feature: it can be completely different and indefinable, since the “other” can be a single object, a single subject, or a group subject or object.

The dynamic aspect of “social being” is presented as follows: “social being” is not given directly; it resists “taming” in those forms that are visible on the surface. The objectives of modern "social ontology" are the following:

- Identification of forms of “social interactions”;
- Rethinking the forms of “social interactions”.

“Rethinking” is the definition of specific contexts for the emergence, preservation, change of forms of “social interactions”, their boundaries and capabilities.

The modern “social ontology” needs an “everyday experience”. “The experience of everyday life” is the search and finding of some completely new

social problems of modern co-society. “The experience of everyday life” in a completely new way “evaluates” the social sciences, as it gives them a “human meaning”. In addition to the “experience of everyday life”, it is necessary to introduce “the experience of scientific social science” into the “social ontology” [8].

Previously, “social ontology” and social studies were formed on the basis of two main methodological principles:

- A person does not know what he is doing. He does not know what he did right or wrong. Therefore, an objective and “detached” analysis of the surrounding reality is needed;
- Sociality must be understood and perceived only on the basis of the analysis of schemes and concepts that a human being creates.

Modern social reality is completely irreducible to either one or another methodological principle.

At the present stage, social ontology is a combination of two philosophical disciplines:

- Social phenomenology;
- Phenomenological sociology.

Phenomenological sociology deals with the problems of constructing social action; connected with social anthropology, social psychology, and ethnomethodology.

Social phenomenology is a new branch of philosophical science, which is based on the ontogenesis approach. At the end of the 20th century, it was discovered that the natural sciences had gone far ahead and it was necessary to justify a new social science by constructing a new ontology. Non-classical social ontology involves a revision of the meaning of subject-object relations. Thus, non-classical social philosophy is engaged in the construction of a new ontology based on the ontognoseological approach [4].

**Conclusion.** As a result of the analysis, we can conclude that the principles of the ontognoseological approach are as follows:

1. The principle of intentionality of the consciousness of the subject, due to which it is possible to identify hidden premises of the

orientation of the subject to the object.

2. The principle of intersubjective approach. He aims to identify the relationship "I - the Other." It is revealed in the principles of "another world" and "non-anantization of the world."
3. The principle of "other world" is that a person sees and recognizes in the interaction of himself and the Other as non-self.
4. The principle of "nonantization of the world" consists in the representation of the subject of knowledge that both he and the other subject carry only the partial essence of social reality. Therefore, only by combining our efforts in cognition of this social reality can we correctly and truly explain and interpret this social reality.
5. The principle of a multi-subject sociality consists in understanding social reality as a result of the interaction of various actors.
6. The principle of social action involves the identification of acts and contacts of individuals, the discretion of their internal and external characteristics.
7. The principle of communicative action is to understand that there is an interaction between all entities and each entity individually, the essence of which is information exchange.
8. The semiotic-personological principle is, on the one hand, the formation of one's personal image of social reality, and on the other hand, the formation and change by the subject of cognition of an already created personal image of social reality. It includes three principles:
  - The principle of constructive shaping of social interaction is to create a form of social interaction.
  - The principle of one's (original) "not-one-another" (propositional non-oppositional opposition) is the formation of one's personal form of social reality with the help of a defining idea.
  - The principle of rethinking the transcendental hermeneutic experience in creating a new idea, which will become the

defining idea in cognition by the subject of social reality.

The nature of the methodology of social cognition determines the specificity of the language of non-classical social ontology.

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