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Knowledge and Interest in Psychology: From Ideology to Ideology Critique and Beyond

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Abstract *Contrary to prevailing beliefs in the main-stream psychology, I argue that interests are structurally embedded in a scientific rationality supposedly oriented toward universality, objectivity and neutrality. Relying on Marxist thought, I look for the socio-historical genesis of scientific claims and their ideological functions. The first task of critique is to acknowledge that the supposed objectivity of science is an ideological claim. The next task should be a critical examination of the interests themselves, and especially the interest for control operationalized as a quest for certainty and quantification, widely shared in psychology too. Ideology critique must have two main objectives: critique of conditions which hamper psychic wellbeing and self-critique, i.e. critique of interpretive tools which are formative for both subjective and social worlds. I will argue that epistemological requirements for an ideology critique from the standpoint of psychology can be fulfilled only within psychology as a hermeneutic science.*

To raise the question on the relation between knowledge and interest in psychology is already a challenge to those positions, still strongly defended within psychology, which adhere to claims or - in the modest case – ideals of a pure and so called objective scientific knowledge which is supposed to neutrally represent reality “out there”. These positions assume that cognizing should be considered as a specific mental process of knowing, different from experiences of feeling and willing, and normatively separated from the influence of other experiences. In this way an objective cognitive representation of reality should be secured.

Such atomistic positions, which take analytic divisions as ontological entities, have already a history of some centuries - they are closely related with the modern world picture. The same pattern could be found in explanations of the physical world, but also of the social and mental world, as pointed out by Kurt Danziger: “Just as societies were considered to be formed by the combination of separate and independent persons, so individual minds could be thought of as formed by the association of separate mental elements.” (Danziger, 1994: 347). More precisely, there is also a connection between the mechanistic world view of the rising modernity and understanding of knowledge in mechanistic terms, as demonstrated by Charles Taylor with a reference to the basic cognitive process of perception: “The key to this is obviously perception, and if we see it as another process in a mechanistic universe, we have to construe it as involving as a crucial

component the passive reception of impressions from the external world. Knowledge then hangs on a certain relation holding between what is ‘out there’ and certain inner states that this external reality causes in us. This construal, valid for Locke, applies just as much to the latest artificial-intelligence models of thinking.” (Taylor, 1995: 3-4).

It is important to notice that, besides the field of artificial-intelligence, these positions have received a new impetus in new domains. Surprisingly or not, mechanistic atomistic construals have become favored also in the field of biology, precisely evolutionary psychology, an approach rapidly developing since the nineties of the 20th century, which tends to offer an explanation of the structure and functions of the psyche with a reference to the evolutionary principle of adaptation only. The mind is labeled as an “adapted mind” – and it is an outcome of successful brain solutions to adaptive problems encountered in the environment. But at the bottom there are only physical processes – as the first principle of evolutionary psychology states: “The brain is a physical system. It functions as a computer. Its circuits are designed to generate behavior that is appropriate to your environmental circumstances. The brain is a physical system whose operation is governed solely by the laws of chemistry and physics” (Cosmides & Tooby, 1997, principle 1, para. 1)

As far as the structure of the brain as a physical system is concerned, evolutionary psychologists see it as a modular structure,

“composed of a large collection of circuits, with different circuits specialized for solving different problems.... There is, then, a sense in which you can view the brain as a collection of dedicated mini-computers - a collection of modules”. (Cosmides & Tooby, 1997, principle 4, para. 4)

Except reductionism and atomism, characteristic of understanding cognition in many other approaches too, in evolutionary psychology we find also an outspoken denial of historicity of psychical functions. On the one hand, this is a logical consequence of atomism and reductionism which certainly cannot conceptualize any historical process. But on the other hand, evolutionary psychology excludes any change in psychical functioning since stone age contradicting in this way the core principle of the theory of evolution itself. “Our modern skulls house a stone age mind. The key to understanding how the modern mind works is to realize that its circuits were not designed to solve the day-to-day problems of a modern American -- they were designed to solve the day-to-day problems of our hunter-gatherer ancestors.” (Cosmides & Tooby, 1997, principle 5, para.5)

If we additionally take into account that the manifesto of evolutionary psychology (Tooby & Cosmides, 1992) coincides with another influential discourse - discourse of the end of history (Fukuyama, 1992), then the denial of historicity of human psyche has a broader meaning and implications that transcend the realm of a scientific theory. The fact that history has been suspended both from scientific and political discourses certainly deserves a closer analysis and a broader interpretation.

Though such views on human mind and more generally on human subjects have their long and influential history, there is also a history of critiques of such views. The most general critiques were directed against mechanistic models as inappropriate for conceiving of any life processes. A target of critique has been also a passive, mirroring role ascribed to subject which is supposed just to react to environmental stimuli (for example, Kant's critique of empiricism, or Piaget's critique of the myth of sensual origin of knowledge). The most demanding critique has as its object a general ahistorical understanding of human subjects. This is a critical position assumed by Marx and thinkers belonging to Marxist tradition of critical theory. Marx has radically historized both the object and subject of perception, thinking, feeling and acting. In *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* he states: “The development of the five senses is a labor of the whole previous history of the world.” (Marx, 1932/1994: 75)

This is a conclusion from an analysis showing that senses and objects of sensation cannot be separated - objects need senses to be perceived, but senses need objects as the confirmation of their capacities. Historizing human senses means at the same time historizing human world. It is through historical embeddedness of human senses or any other psychic function that atomism, mechanicism and of course ahistoricism can be overcome.

Through historical reconstructions it becomes clear that human cognition is necessarily related to interests too – interests which draw attention to a specific subject-matter, which determine the approach to it, shape the interpretive horizon. But in the same way as knowledge is no direct copy of supposed real affairs, understanding of knowledge is also relative to some selected aspects of knowledge production. The fact that there are different accounts of knowledge - as pure or saturated with non-cognitive elements, for example, - is in itself a reason to go beyond the scope of knowledge. More generally, this approach relies on Marxist insight that consciousness is determined by social being.

The Quest for Objectivity

The normative denial of any relation between scientific knowledge and interest is certainly an expression of the still prevailing self-understanding of science. But it is in itself an expression of the commitment to a value which is constructed as objectivity – or, in other words, it is an expression of the interest in objectivity. To be objective means to be guided by rational, possibly universal and formal, non-subjective, impersonal criteria. It is also supposed that to be objective means to be free and protected from prejudices. Such an attitude obviously belongs to a tradition of understanding of prejudice before Hans-Georg Gadamer started arguing for a “rehabilitation of prejudices” as a condition of possibility of understanding itself (Gadamer, 1960).

Though it might seem self-evident, the quest for objectivity has its own social history. In order to understand the commitment of science to objectivity and the construal of objectivity itself, I will argue, it is necessary to understand the meaning of objectivity within the broader context in which science takes part. Science as a form of consciousness is also determined by social being.

The quest for scientific objectivity is part of more general social requirements which were constitutive to the transition from medieval to modern times. Instead of the medieval focus on particularities, the modern world has required and developed a principle of universality. There were many different forms of medieval particularities – territorial, social, legal, conceptual. They were abandoned in the course of the formation of a new world and new order. For the new epoch a new foundational principle was needed. The new, modern world has started its self-formation on the principle of human self-determination (Blumenberg, 1988, Koyre, 1973/1981). In this way the previous theological heteronomy was replaced by the principle of human autonomy which has become the generative principle of core institutions of modern epoch: social contract, legal order, enlightenment project, free scientific inquiry. Within the framework of a new world understood as a human world attention was shifted to individual actors which were seen as the embodiment of the principle of human self-determination. It is only through the instantiation of the principle of human autonomy in ascribing and acknowledging auton-

omy and freedom to every individual actor that the universality of the principle of self-determination can be legitimately claimed. In other words, with modernity individuality has become a universal structure. This is not a contradiction, but a description of a mutual reciprocal relationship between individuality and universality. This relation is indeed a challenge to conceptualize it. Immanuel Kant met that challenge in a way which relates human individuals and human race. When elaborating his *Ideas For a Universal History From a Cosmopolitan World View* (1784) he stated in his second thesis: "In man (as the only rational creature on earth) those natural capacities that are directed to the use of his reason are to be fully developed only in the race, not in the individual (Kant, 1784). Similarly, though in a context of a critique of Hegel's philosophy of right, Karl Marx formulated the essence of man: "Man is the world of men, the state, society." (Marx, 1844/1994: 28)

The way of relating individuality and universality through a constitutive relation between society and individuals is actually the most productive way of conceptualizing that relation. As a matter of fact I would argue that this is a modern solution of that problem which was on the philosophical agenda from the Greek times to scholastic thought.

The profound changes in the world order and in the position of humans in modern times were reflected in different domains – economic, social, political, philosophical. Together these domains have shaped the new epoch as a modern epoch with a different social organisation, but also with a different world view and different anthropological beliefs. The principle of universality has been constitutive for most of them.

Without the principle of universality it would not have been possible to define all human beings as free and equal – as, for example, in Locke's philosophy. "Men being...by nature all free, equal and independent" (Locke, 1690/2010, par. 95). Such an understanding of human beings was not just a symbolic pronouncement - though even in that form it was a great achievement. It has become a principle of organization of political society – which is again a great historical achievement of the modern epoch. Additionally to its political operationalisation the understanding that all human beings are by nature free and equal builds a foundation for the modern legal system - equality before the law being the undisputable basic juridical principle.

The principle of universality is exemplified also in Descartes' inauguration of common sense as an epistemic instance. "Good sense is the most fairly distributed thing in the world; for everyone thinks himself so well supplied with it... In this matter it is not likely that everybody is mistaken; it rather goes to show that the power of judging well and distinguishing truth from falsehood, which is what we properly mean by good sense or reason, is naturally equal in all men." (Descartes, 1637/1978, p. 7) It is on this assumption that Descartes elaborated a "method of rightly directing one's reason", which is actually the content of his Dis-

course on the Method.

However, it is important to remember that in spite of his commitment to the universality of reason, Descartes could not ignore the diversity of opinions among people. Following his very well known universalistic statements, Descartes added some sentences to explain the diversity among people, in spite of the supposed equality of common sense. "...the diversity of our opinion does not arise because some men are more rational than others, but only because we direct our thoughts along different ways, and do not consider the same things." (Descartes, *ibid*). Thus, Descartes drew attention to some neglected aspects accompanying universality claims, or more precisely he pointed out that the universality claims nevertheless presuppose some previous selection of the objects and ways of knowing. Thus, it would be justified to say that universality is not the whole truth of reason.

Another important project of universalization was transformation of a qualitative human activity into common human labour which can be described in quantitative terms and therefore detached from the subjectivity of the working person. "Only pure quantities are commensurable, the comparability of working quantities is therefore dependent on the reduction of all working qualities to common human labour, defined in purely quantitative terms. It is only by doing this that rational savings can be really made. And mechanics is, in essence, an exact science concerned with the comparison of labour effects. Accordingly, it may be said that manufacture is a presupposition of modern mechanics." (Borkenau, 1934/1983: 20)

In his study on *The Transition From Feudal to the Bourgeois World View* (1934), supported by the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt on Main, Franz Borkenau, described by his colleagues as a sincere Marxist, analysed the socio-economic roots of bourgeois patterns of thinking. Marxist theory offered him conceptual and explanatory tools to look for origins of modern thoughts in socio-economic changes that occurred after the dissolution of the feudal order. In other words, Marxist theory sees relations and interdependence where other approaches see presupposed autonomy and independence - be that independence of the individual from society or independence of thought from social being. Though a self-conscious individual cannot exist outside of society, it is possible to ideologically negate or ignore that and again ideologically postulate a kind of auto-poietic autonomy of individual and his/her thinking.

I share the Marxist standpoint in my analysis of the ways in which psychology understands its knowledge production. Therefore I look for roots of knowledge not in isolated ideas or other knowledge but in social being itself. It is there that interests are generated. But it is important to stress that social being itself is symbolically mediated, it is a self-interpreting kind, not an independently existing natural kind. Therefore social being is not isolated from thinking. It is, as Charles Sanders Peirce said referring

to the universe: “it is perfused with signs, if it is not composed exclusively of signs.” (Peirce, 1931-58: § 5.448 fn)

Bearing that in mind I continue the reconstruction of social genesis of the quest for objectivity within the context of modern world. The epochal shift from a closed and hierarchical medieval order toward a new infinite cosmic and human order (the title of Koyré's book is very telling indeed *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe*, 1957). required changes in all basic concepts. At the same time, the newly developed concepts contributed to further changes in other domains and in general beliefs and values. Concepts describing the physical world also changed – in medieval times Aristotelian qualitative physics reigned supreme while modern physics started in opposition to Aristotelian cosmological and physical conceptions, especially his teleology (Koyré, 1973/1981). With the Newtonian conception of absolute time, space, force and universal laws of motion milestones of the scientific revolution of the 17th and 18th centuries were laid down.

An essential feature of the modern scientific spirit has been quantification (see Michell, 2003). This was part of a general programme of mathematization, i.e. of translation of previous, especially Aristotelian and medieval qualities into quantities, and that in both the natural and the human world. Though there are important classical mathematical conceptions (for example, Pythagorean), and, though there is also a continuity in obsession with numbers, as stressed by Michell (2003), the modern epoch has given this old attitude the scope and status of a quantitative imperative.

The quest for quantification has also served the quest for objectivity. The appeal of quantitative language derives from its promise of taming the subjective, personal, local, in favor of objective, impersonal, universal as superior values. The quantitative language is suited to deal in an impersonal way and on a universal scale with human capabilities, needs, activities, relations as well as with natural phenomena. Additionally, quantification allows dealing with great number of items in a uniform way – «quantification is a technology of distance...reliance on numbers and quantitative manipulation minimizes the need for intimate knowledge and personal trust. Quantification is well suited for communication that goes beyond the boundaries of locality and community» (Porter, 1995: IX).

In this way, quantification was seen as a tool of overcoming the local and particular, on the way to the universal. Again, it should be remembered that universality in its different shapes, though favored by many powerful means, has its other side. For the sake of understanding the function of universality in modernity, it is important to take that other side into account.

In his reconstruction of the hidden agenda of modernity, Stephen Toulmin (1990) examined the forgotten or neglected aspects of the modern universal rationality and demonstrated that consequences

of that neglect are quite dramatic – its logic has led to no lesser disaster than wars. He summarizes the dynamics which shaped the seventeenth century and also determined the most important phases of the later history in the following way: “Whatever sorts of problem one faced, there was a supposedly unique procedure for arriving at the correct solution. That procedure could be recognized only by cutting away the inessentials, and identifying the abstract core of ‘clear and distinct’ concepts needed for its solution. Unfortunately, little in human life lends itself fully to the lucid, tidy analysis of Euclid's geometry or Descartes' physics. (Toulmin, 1990: 200)

Nevertheless, history witnesses that there have been relentless attempts to subject subjectivity to ‘clear and distinct’ concepts and accompanying disciplining praxis. Even more, both concepts and praxis have been justified with reference to the supposed best interests of the subjects themselves. For that purpose important semantic work has also been necessary - objectivity has become desirable as a kind of protection against the turmoils of subjectivity. At the same time objectivity has been understood as a way to deal with great numbers and distances – which were already on the agenda of the rising modernity and saturated with connotations of democratization. Thus, the quest for objectivity has its origin in social morality, as argued by Theodor Porter (1995).

Consequently, it is important to bear in mind that the pursuit of objectivity in sciences is part of a more general social project. In one word, Porter argued, not science but social morality is the birthplace of the quest for objectivity - contrary to the widespread belief. Relying on these insights by Porter, it would be fruitful, in my view, to reflect on their further consequences. As beliefs in the origin of the quest for objectivity in science are strongly defended by the sciences themselves, Porter's revision of the sources of the quest for objectivity must have implications for our understanding of science. Consequently, the adoption and representation of the quest for objectivity by sciences as their immanent quest is a misrepresentation of the social processes and an inadequate self-understanding of the science.

In epistemological terms, this is a very egocentric view – indeed, a view far away from the supposed pursuit of objectivity. It is not surprising then to claim that science functions as an ideology (Habermas, 1974) - in its literal sense as a false consciousness and in a broader sense as normalizing and justifying instance, i.e. powerful means of defining the normal and justifying the exclusion and repression of the deviation. Normalizing control is a good example of an ideological achievement. Or, as elaborated already by Horkheimer and Adorno (1947/1985) in their *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, idolatry of the existing and power is an omnipresent ideology. The supposed commitment of science to objectivity is certainly one of the most powerful ideological tools as it already linguistically suggests disinterest where interests are actually at work.

From the analysis offered here it can be concluded that interest is structurally embedded in a scientific rationality supposedly oriented toward objectivity.

There is another structural dimension of interest in science, embedded in its instrumental attitude toward nature as the object of knowledge. Yet, knowledge acquisition is not only led by the instrumental interest of control. As Habermas (1968/73) has demonstrated in his seminal book *Knowledge and Interest*, instrumental interest is a transcendental condition of the possibility of knowledge of nature, as developed by modern natural sciences. "Conditions of instrumental activity arose contingently during the natural evolution of humankind; but they also link, by transcendental necessity, our knowledge of nature with the interest in the possible technical control of natural processes... When we regard human being as belonging to the category of tool-making animals, we imply thereby a scheme of both an activity and comprehension of the world" (Habermas, 1973: 49; 55).

Within this framework it is important to refer to Habermas' critique of Marx. Habermas criticizes Marx because he interprets the process of the self-constitution of humankind merely in terms of labour, understood as the material activity of instrumental operations applied to external nature, and thus abolishes interaction as another form of practice, i.e. interaction as communication motivated by the practical interest in understanding among the members of the community. It is within this broad perspective of the self-constitution of humankind that Habermas claims: the theory of knowledge is necessarily connected with the theory of society, or "a radical critique of knowledge is possible only as a theory of society. This idea is implicated in Marx's theory of society, even if it is not part of the self-understanding of Marx and Marxists." (Habermas, 1973: 9)

Even if we accept Habermas' objection against Marx and Marxists for an inadequate self-understanding, insights on the interdependence of thinking, knowledge and society can be found in analyses of many Marxists. Herbert Marcuse, for example, warned already a half a century ago: there is a logical link between instrumental rationality and dominance: "Not only is its application, but the technique itself is dominance (over nature and over people), methodic, scientific, calculated and calculating dominance. Certain goals and interests of dominance are not just afterwards and imposed from outside on the technique – they are included already in the construction of the technical apparatus itself; the technique is always a socio-historical project, in it it is projected what a society and its dominant interest intend to do with people and things." (Marcuse, 1965/1977: 207-208)

The emancipative outcomes of technique are essential elements of the modern project of progress. These outcomes strengthen the social status of science and serve as justification for further scientification of life. However, the very same technical progress has become also a target of critique, especially in a naturalistic

romantic movement which opposed the rationalism of Enlightenment. Marcuse's critique draws attention to a deeper level of construction of technique, where human beings are projected as secondary to technique, as dominated by technique. Due to foundation of technique in scientific knowledge and instrumental interest not only to nature, but also to human beings, it is clear that science itself is at stake in critiques of technique.

To conclude, universality and objectivity of science are not neutral claims - on the contrary, they are very much saturated with interests. The first tasks of ideology critique is to acknowledge that the supposed objectivity of science is obviously an ideological claim. The next task should be directed toward critical examination of the interests themselves. And it is wise to be vigilant - dominance over nature has expanded into dominance over people. External dominance has become internalized. How then can subjected subjects reclaim their freedom?

If psychology is science of subjects, it should play its role in these processes - as it has played in those who has brought about docile subjects adapted to be adjusted..

It is clear, psychology is at stake here in many ways. It can continue ignoring the repression and requiring adaptation at any price or it can change its role and reclaim emancipative tasks.

Psychology as a Science

Psychology as a science was institutionally established in a context characterized by already well advanced processes of modernization - industrialization, urbanization, rationalization, formalization, scientific and technical progress. In a kind of social learning through modeling psychology was supposed to imitate the successful natural sciences – in their methods and goals, but then consequently also in their understanding of knowledge production and science itself. Though there were also defenders of a different psychology (for example, Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie*, Dilthey's descriptive psychology, Giorgi's phenomenological psychology), they remained marginalized or forgotten in the dominant historiography of psychology.

As the dominant historiography of psychology is itself built on a very simple individualistic and empiricistic epistemology, it is no wonder that certain epistemologies prevail among psychological conceptions remembered in the historiography of psychology (see Jovanović, 2010b). Dominant epistemologies are epistemologies of natural sciences constructed on the belief that there is an independently existing reality which can be known by the use of appropriate scientific methods. It is assumed that discovery of the causes of the processes allows for its control and control is a powerful tool for attaining certainty.

Logically speaking attaining certainty presupposes belief in the

deterministic nature of the world. In view of the fact that there are reasons and empirical evidence which contradict such a view, at least as far as the human world is concerned, it is reasonably to accept that there are no logically compulsive reasons to adopt the deterministic view. Despite the fact that there has been a strong tendency - especially over centuries in the modern times - to take determinism for granted not only in the sciences but also as a general world view, it could be concluded that there might be other than logical and empirical reasons to defend the deterministic position.

Stephen Toulmin considered the quest for certainty at the beginning of the modern epoch as a defense reaction against the devastating experiences of religious wars and other dramatic events which had shaken our trust in the world. Once established as a possible solution to catastrophic uncertainties, the quest for certainty has become a generative structure which delivered rules and norms for how to deal with all domains of life - not only nature. Certainty has become imposed even there where by definition no certainty is ever possible - in human actions and in social actions.

Paradoxically enough the consequences of the imposition of certainty were no less dramatic than the reasons which led to its formation. While the original conditions physically endangered human existence, the proposed solution tended to conceptually marginalize or even eliminate human agency. Kurt Danziger has analysed this peculiar eliminative trajectory: "...the determinants of human conduct are now seen in terms fashioned after Newtonian natural philosophy. Hume was a convinced determinist. Human action, he claimed, resulted from the workings of a mental machinery that followed regular and predictable patterns. There was no difference in principle between causality in the physical sphere and causality in the mental sphere. In both cases causal determination involved merely the regular succession of perceived events. No 'hidden powers' could be made responsible for the regularities presented in experience. On the psychological level this meant the elimination of any concept of human agency." (Danziger, 1997: 44)

At a social and societal level consequences were not just conceptual - they turned out to be very material. As critically pointed out by Stephen Toulmin, the logic of modern rationality as a vehicle of pursuing and attaining certainty led to wars as its radical form. What was originally meant as a remedy against the war turned out to be the recipe for it - is it possible to imagine a stronger repudiation of the quest for certainty?

In spite of that, the quest for certainty continued to be acknowledged as a legitimate goal which is then supposed to legitimate means employed to achieve that goal.

On its way to achieve that goal psychology was ready and often also enthusiastic to give up - first the soul, then the mind, and

consciousness, and finally any possibility to conceptually preserve human agency.

Such beliefs have shaped a long lasting tradition of naturalism within psychology. "In both naturalism and objectivism there is an assumption that psychological events have fixed natural forms, which a few lucky philosophers and an army of systematic investigators have found and labelled. Thus, to each label there corresponds a fixed natural form[...] Where it is not simply secondhand repetition, naturalistic history tends to [...] suggest that the terms of current discourse have been determined by nature and not by art" (Danziger, 1994: 334 - 335).

The tradition of naturalism and objectivism of modern science in general, and specifically in psychology is closely linked with the dominant status of method in the production of knowledge. The focus has shifted to methods - to the extent that methods have prevailed over subject-matter. It is out of these beliefs that a very strong attitude of methodological imperative or methodolatry, as described by Kurt Danziger (1990), has developed. A rising methodological consciousness at the threshold of modernity was expressed already in Descartes' (1978) writing *Discourse on the Method of Rightly Directing One's Reason and of Seeking Truth in the Sciences*, published in 1637.

In spite of its simplicity, there are many striking features in this epistemological model which require a closer analysis: a presupposed reality is subjected to methodical intervention in order to be known, but the influence of that intervention on the knowledge process and result is not acknowledged - quite the contrary, the objectivity of knowledge and truth is claimed. This discrepancy between the ongoing intervention (most clearly in experimentation) and a contrafactual assumption that knowledge products are free of any intervention of subjects should be in itself a sufficient reason to subject that model to a critical examination. But more than just that is at stake.

The striking features of this epistemological model become even more provocative when this model is applied to human sciences, and especially psychology. Epistemic situation is transformed in many ways in human sciences: subject-object relation is actually a subject-subject relation, all methodical capacities of the subject are present at both poles. Formally speaking, if classical epistemological model should be applied under such conditions two options would be possible: either no knowledge claims could be made at all, as the epistemic situation does not fit to the model, or the epistemic model should be changed in order to reflect the specific epistemic situation. I will argue for the second option for the following reason: as the knowledge in human sciences should be for the sake of building human world, epistemic situation should be shaped in such a way as to allow understanding what makes humans subjects in constructing human world, or what prevents them to be subjects. Only in such an epistemic situation would be possible to look for ideological transformation of consciousness

and develop an ideology critique.

Having in mind the goal of revealing interdependence of knowledge and interests behind the supposed objectivity and universality of psychological science. I'll turn to the analysis of epistemic situation in psychology whose outcomes should contribute to my main argument: interests are indispensable for knowledge production. Therefore, a critique of scientific knowledge should include interests too. Only in this way knowledge can serve as a means in emancipative transformation of society.

The domain in which psychology has constructed its subject-matters consists of phenomena which are available in many ways in everyday life activities. Even more, as the most specific domain of psychology belongs to the experiences from the first person perspective, subjects in their role as experiencing and acting subjects and agencies are already implicated in the subject-matter of psychology. However, from this starting configuration different methodological scenarios have been developed in the history of psychology. They encompass a full range from an exclusion of the first person epistemic perspective as a legitimate subject-matter of psychology, on the one hand, to elaborations of the foundational role of psychology among other sciences on the grounds of epistemic benefits of the first person perspective as psychological subject-matter, on the other hand.

As the first methodological scenario, which excludes the first person epistemic perspective, is actually characteristic of natural sciences, an analysis within the framework of psychology has to stress that the subject-matter of psychology belongs to human kinds, and not natural kinds. Thus, this epistemic position is constructed as a mismatch of subject-matter and method, and this mismatch is resolved toward privileging the method. As already said, Danziger has described that attitude as a methodolatry.

The opposite methodological scenario in psychology, which privileges the first person epistemic perspective, has been developed within different theoretical and epistemological frameworks. Nevertheless they share the same basic idea that psychology has a foundational role for other human sciences. The two best known representatives of the foundational thesis are Wilhelm Dilthey and Jean Piaget, who stand for hermeneutic versus naturalistic conception of psychology. This means that foundational thesis can be defended without reference to hermeneutics. A more radical, or stronger foundational thesis requires, however, a hermeneutic approach. Hermeneutic approach is necessary for understanding meaning-making processes which are essential for subject-matter of psychology. "It is the hermeneutic character of the objects of the human sciences that allows for critique. Critique means demonstrating the possibility of different hermeneutic relations. As critique is an interpretive endeavor applicable to issues of a hermeneutic character, it is understandable that the natural sciences do not criticize natural phenomena." (Jovanović, 2010a: 584) By adopting a naturalistic epistemological model, psychology is de-

prived of conceptual means of a critical science.

Though a defender of a strong, hermeneutic claim of foundational role of psychology Wilhelm Dilthey is hardly mentioned in histories of psychology as the history of psychology is dominated by naturalistic models. Dilthey's project had to complete the task Kant started in laying foundations for natural sciences, i.e. "to lay a foundation for the study of society and history", as it is said in the subtitle of Dilthey's *Introduction to the Human Sciences*. Dilthey's starting point is lived inner experience, as it is experienced by the subject, i.e. the specific domain, experience from the first person perspective, in which psychology constructs its subject-matter. "All science is a science of experience, but all experience has its original constitution and its validity in the conditions of our consciousness [...] we lay hold of reality as it is only through facts of consciousness given in our inner experience." (Dilthey, 1983/1988: 72).

Following such argumentation Dilthey comes to psychology as "the first and most basic special science of the mind" (Dilthey 1983/1988: 95). But as Dilthey was already familiar with a psychology oriented toward natural science, it was clear to him that it was necessary to develop another kind of psychology that could fulfill the expected foundational task. "Psychology can solve the problem of such a fundamental science only to the extent that it stays within the boundaries of a descriptive science" (Dilthey 1983/1988: 95).

Dilthey's project of descriptive psychology presupposed a different subject-matter and different method comparing to existing naturalistic explanatory psychology. "The object of descriptive psychology as a *Geisteswissenschaft* was immediate lived experience (*Erlebnis*) given as a structural system (*seelischer Zusammenhang*) which cannot be reconstructed from isolated elements connected by hypotheses. *Erlebnis* is a distinct form of experience in which there is no distinction between the experiencing subject and the experienced. Our epistemic attitude to *Erlebnis* is understanding. "*Die Natur erklären wir, das Seelenleben verstehen wir*" / We explain the nature, we understand the psychic life. (Dilthey 1974: 144)" (Jovanović, 2010b: 316).

In summary, Dilthey epistemologically emancipated psychology from its role of imitating natural sciences and argued for its uniqueness which establishes it as a foundational science for sciences of history and society, i.e. *Geisteswissenschaften*. It should be repeated once more that, surprisingly or not, history and historiography of psychology preferred the role of imitation instead of foundation.

Having that in mind I turn to Piaget's position as another version of foundational role of psychology. His argumentation in favour of a central position for psychology among all other sciences is also derived from the specificity of its subject-matter, though his understanding of the subject-matter of psychology is very differ-

ent from Dilthey. For Piaget (1970) “knowledge of the psychological foundations of a notion has implications for the epistemological understanding of this notion.” (Piaget, 1970: 5). Thus, in Piaget’s view, psychology can transform traditional epistemology as a branch of philosophy into scientific epistemology which is constructed as a genetic epistemology. “Genetic epistemology attempts to explain knowledge, and in particular scientific knowledge, on the basis of its history, its sociogenesis, and especially the psychological origins of the notions and operations upon which it is based....The first principle of genetic epistemology, then, is this – to take psychology seriously.” (Piaget, 1970: 1; 9) Analysing Piaget’s claims about the foundational role of psychology it is clear that it is possible to defend a foundational thesis while remaining within the framework of naturalism. Even more, Piaget has salvaged the epistemic agency as he understands knowledge to be an active process of construction. This active, operational side of knowledge is indisputable. But knowledge, or more general mental activity is an intentional activity, it is directed toward objects, it is about objects. Piaget has no concept in his epistemology to conceive of that other indispensable dimension of mental activity.

The epistemic subject is not just active, as Piaget constructed it, it is essentially meaning-making. “It is only this meaning-making subject that can make sense of the world in which it lives. Interpretations given by human subjects are not arbitrary supplements that can be added to or subtracted from the human world; they are constitutive of the human world. And it is only this meaning-making subject that lives according to norms and can subject the world to critique. Therefore, it is logically necessary to assume a hermeneutic approach aimed at grasping meaning (of intentions, activities, discourses, objectified works) as a precondition for a critical approach.” (Jovanović, 2010a: 580)

Without such conceptual tools psychology is deprived of the possibility to take a critical attitude toward domains where it constructs its subject-matter, which is the human world - and toward psychological representations of that world as its inherent part..

Knowledge and Interest in Psychology

The past and the history of psychology could teach us that there are many ways that phenomena belonging to or associated with the domain of psychology could be approached, researched, explained or interpreted. This very fact calls for an analysis that will include more than just scientific knowledge. It is reasonable to assume that there must be driving and directing forces behind scientific choices - as it is the case with the individual psychic functioning too. An additional reason to go behind the knowledge stems from the fact that different scientific positions have different social status - some being main stream, while others are on the margins or even repressed, forgotten. It would not be very plausible to assume that these social differences are consequences

of the differences in respective cognitive achievements only.

Given the fact that some knowledge of psychic phenomena is available to any subject from the privileged epistemic position of the first person, psychological positions can be differentiated with regard to their attitude toward that domain of experience. In this way it is reasonable to ask what lies behind the choice to respect or to ignore the subject’s experience.

If we take the paradigmatic cases from the history of psychology - namely introspective or phenomenological psychology, on the one side, and behaviorism, on the other side, then we can realize that these are not just different psychologies but different world views and different anthropologies. They are certainly not just neutral, objective accounts of the “reality over there”. They rather construct the very reality – in the first case as belonging to human kinds or, in the second case, as belonging to natural kinds. These accounts are not two pictures of the same reality, they are very different realities as much as a self-conscious agency is different from a falling stone.

The analysis of the social origin of the quest for objectivity has shown that objectivity itself is a powerful interest derived from interests of social morality. Relying on the same analysis it can be understood that there is a link between the quest for objectivity and the quest for control. Or more precisely, objectivity itself already establishes a relation, an attitude which exercises control over the “objects” as it excludes the possibility of reciprocal interaction of subjectivities. There is no room for subjectivity either in the position of the subject of knowing or in the position of the object of knowing. In the case of human and social sciences objectivity means translation or reification of subjectivity at both sides of epistemic situation. It is indeed a strange claim - the most reliable way to know subjectivity is to deprive of it -both the subject and the object of knowing. But this claim is actually a performative claim directed toward control - it describes a procedure of controlling subjectivity by excluding it. Of course, these cognitive procedures are already practical programmes how to deal with human subjects.

It is easy to recognize that such an attitude prevails within psychology – in its theorizing, in its dominant research practice. Control is assumed as a legitimate goal and procedure. It is justified with reference to objectivity – it secures and serves objectivity of knowledge. In this way it is meant that it has no other function but to serve objectivity only. But after the disclosure of social interest behind objectivity, control within psychology cannot remain isolated from that broader social context. In other words, its function in promoting and strengthening the culture of social control cannot be ignored - and should not be exempted from critique.

In order to be able to fulfill that critical task psychology needs some profound changes - in its understanding of its subject-matter, in its methodological orientation, in its commitments. To con-

struct the subject-matter in the domain of human kinds instead of imposing natural kinds on human kinds is the first step. It is not possible to know the self-interpreting animal, i. e. humans (Taylor, 1985) by excluding, for the sake of objectivity, their self-interpreting capacities. It is not possible to know intentionality by researching causality. Meaning cannot be observed, it requires understanding. And understanding is not a monological introspection, but the construction of a relation between a sign and signified for an interpreting agency which is a member of a community using signs as means of communication and as tools of thinking, feeling, acting.

For these changes within psychology to be possible it would also be necessary to acknowledge that interest, specifically an interest in understanding, is not an obstacle that should be removed from the knowing process. Understanding intentions of subjects, understanding the meaning of expressions - linguistic or artistic ones - is a condition of possibility of knowing of interpretive and self-interpretive activities and actors. Understanding meaning cannot be replaced by establishing causal relations. Interest for understanding is not interchangeable for interest in control that prevails in psychological research and theorizing. Understanding cannot be achieved if it is not set and acknowledged as a goal. But the teleology of understanding is not an external goal, it redefines the whole epistemic situation. The epistemic situation oriented toward understanding is different in every single aspect. Thus the interest in understanding is the condition of possibility of knowing subject-matters that belong to the domain of human kinds, i.e. which require interpretation of meaning in order to be identified. This interest in understanding in a research epistemic situation has its foundations in the interest for understanding as constitutive for practical life. The interest for understanding is obviously indispensable for any common activity. Some shared understanding is necessary for the reproduction of society. That interest also includes understanding other interests in so far as other interests are discussed or negotiated. Even the prevailing interest for control is not exempted from a necessity to be understood - regardless whether it is for the sake of improvement of control or its critique.

In the same way as the dominant culture in psychology, the culture of control, has been part of a more general project of control, any alternative project would require transformations in many domains. But without psychology that project cannot be accomplished - we have learned that lesson many times in history. However, psychological knowledge is necessary, but not sufficient. First of all, psychology needs to change in order to be able to be part of a broader change. For example, in order to be able to resist temptations and pressures of commodification it needs to make the conditions of commodifications "its own object of study so that it analyses them from a position that will also change them" (Parker, 2009). We could learn from Marx that commodification is a general process which includes also transformation i.e. reification of subjectivity. Commodification of psychology as science

is part of the same process. By self-critical reflecting on its own commodification psychology could lay foundations for critique of conditions of commodification. A change from acceptance and reproduction of commodification to its questioning would be the first step in changing it.

Different conditions for ensembling social relations toward human beings have to be a common achievement for which mutual understanding is indispensable. At the core, whatever other goals might be, mutual understanding is their condition of possibility. But, conditions of possibility of understanding include much more than just command of linguistic and hermeneutic skills. Their origin is the same as the origin of the essence of human being, i.e. social relations. Vygotsky has convincingly shown that "all the higher functions originate as actual relations between human individuals" (Vygotsky, 1960/1978: 57). More generally, Marx resolved the human essence: "In its actuality it is the ensemble of social relationships" (Marx, 1845/1888/1994: 100) It is in and through social relations that knowledge is constructed and in these relations interest are articulated.

Thus, to build a different historical "human essence" it is necessary to change social relationships. Psychology can contribute to that by including them in its own object of study, instead of ignoring them or translating them into individual psychological matter. Naturalization and psychologization have proved to be powerful ideological means to prevent any idea of change. But at the same time they speak for the force of discursive means.

After discursive turn in human sciences it is necessary to acknowledge that discourse is itself a powerful practice. Interpretation and change of the world are not and cannot be separated - they are intrinsically linked. Interpretation is implicated in any change at the same time as change is implicated in any interpretation. To interpret psychology differently is not enough to change the world, but a liberated world certainly needs a different psychology. Both another world and another psychology are necessary.

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