ФІЛОСОФСЬКІ НАУКИ

CONCEPTUAL DIMENSIONS
OF C. GEERTZ'S INTERPRETIVE ANTHROPOLOGY

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Authors analyse the method and conceptual constitution of C. Geertz's interpretive anthropology. They categorize it as a positively-oriented discipline aiming to explanative conclusions. The scheme of conceptual formation is explicated. Concepts of interpretive anthropology are deduced from the relevant aggregates of phenomena. Consequently, the scope of concept becomes identical to the content of representation.

Authors expose the nature and essence of "empirical universals". C. Geertz treats them not as instruments of phenomena classification, but as "core elements", which exist beside secondary "numerous cultural particularities". Consequently, concepts turn to constituents of cultural reality itself. Authors assert that C. Geertz reduces the formation of conceptual apparatus to the arrangement and interaction of representations. Thus the quality of abstractness is reduced to the size of the represented content. The specificity of the concept of meaning deployed by C. Geertz is demonstrated. He explicates the "return of meaning" through clarification of nature of social meanings, in showing their structure and the way of their interaction with the inner experience of social actor. So, the sense of "the return of meaning" is its emergence as an objective component and constitutive part of outer social experience. Moreover, the concept of meaning and the process of internalization of conventional social meanings are constitutive for culture itself.

Authors arrive to conclusion that the scheme of conceptual constitution does not fit with the concept of meaning, which is generic derivative of subjective hermeneutical logic and is hardly coherent with the established objective scheme of concept determination. That is why interpretive anthropology could hardly bind together the inductive method of concept formation and the logic of meaning. Consequently, all universal / particular difficulties are centered around the concept of meaning.

Key words: interpretive anthropology, conceptual constitution, meaning, methodology, representation, universals.

Globalization, taken as a powerful trend of postmodern worldview, generates a counter tendency to the kaleidoscopic vision of social reality. The interpretive anthropology of C. Geertz is an apt example.

Theoretical achievements of C. Geertz have been thoroughly studied by numerous English-speaking social scientists. It is enough to mention such highly-reputed names as V. Crapanzano, S. Nugent, S. Reyna, P. Shankman, J. Spencer, etc. Interpretive anthropology has got its adherents in post-Soviet countries as well.

The interpretive trend in cultural anthropology has been explored by A. Boscovic, Yu. Dzhulai, V. Kaplun, I. Kasavin, V. Kilkeev, A. Zorin, A. Yelfimov and others. For example,

V. Kaploun asserts that C. Geertz is proclaiming "a sort of a theoretical manifesto of the new approach in social sciences". On his opinion, C. Geertz is trying, "to define the specificity of social anthropology as a science" through Ryle's concept of thick description. Contrary to the common opinion, the profile of social anthropology is not determined by field work, but rather by "a special intellectual effort" [12, p. 5, 6]. V. Kilkeyev admits that C. Geertz applies hermeneutical method but notices that "inner logic" of his methodological deductions remains vague [5, c. 141−142]. Thus, the methodological basis of the interpretive anthropology needs further elaboration.

Hence, the point we are focused on is the specific character of the conceptual constitution of interpretive anthropology. Finding the key to conceptual and methodological arrangement of interpretive anthropology could add up to the filling of methodological *lacunae* in social sciences of post-Soviet countries and be of assistance to current advances in humanities.

C. Geertz's style of thinking crystallizes against the backdrop of the postmodern worldview. For him anthropological analysis is not a sort of "conceptual manipulation of discovered facts, a logical reconstruction of a mere reality". C. Geertz emphasizes: "To set forth symmetrical crystals of significance… and then attribute their existence to… universal properties of the human mind, or vast, *a priori weltanschauungen,* is to pretend a science that does not exist and imagine a reality that cannot be found. Cultural analysis is (or should be) guessing at meanings, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guesses, not discovering the Continent of Meaning and mapping out its bodiless landscape" [11, p. 20].

Thus, interpretive anthropology is not in for abstract constructions and their application to facts with intention to build a theoretically perfect picture of cultural reality, but it is a positively-oriented discipline aiming to explanative conclusions.

The strategy of research for C. Geertz is "to hunt for universals in culture, for empirical uniformities that… could be found everywhere in about the same form, and, second, to an effort to relate such universals… to the established constants of human biology, psychology, and social organization". To meet validity demands interpretive anthropology must demonstrate "(l) that the universals proposed be substantial ones and not empty categories; (2) that they be specifically grounded in particular biological, psychological, or sociological processes, not just vaguely associated with "underlying realities"; and (3) that they can convincingly be defended as core elements in a definition of humanity in comparison with which the much more numerous cultural particularities are of clearly secondary importance". [11, p. 38, 39]. Herewith author spots "a logical conflict between asserting that, say, "religion", "marriage", or "property" are empirical universals and giving them very much in the way of specific content, for to say that they are empirical universals is to say that they have the same content, and to say they have the same content is to fly in the face of the undeniable fact that they do not" [11, p. 39-40].

So, C. Geertz deduces concepts from the relevant aggregates of phenomena. We can also observe this trend in empirically-oriented conception of W. Dilthey [2, c. 273]. The "logical conflict", admitted by the author, is derivative of the reverse correlation between the scope and the content of concept. But he does not discern these aspects correctly, since he designates as "content" the filling of concepts applied in case study and the whole potential scope of their application. The author doesn't take into account that concepts, applied to concrete cases, are constituents of already formed representations, images of the object under consideration. Consequently, from his point of view, the *scope* of concept becomes identical to the *content* of representation. Besides, C. Geertz loses distinction of the process of representation constructing, where concepts operate actively, and the result – the constructed representation, wherein already passive concepts are bound. Hence two consecutive stages of research are covertly identified. As a result, concepts lose capacity of projecting onto the whole domain of potential data. The fact

that the scope of concepts is reduced to the already observed data stays unnoticed. Ergo, C. Geertz discovers "logical conflict" *between the abstract property of concept* as such *and the facts of its application* to the variety of cases. So, one side of this "conflict" is an abstraction and the reality is the other one.

Author of interpretive anthropology treats universals not as instruments of phenomena classification, but as "core elements", which exist beside secondary "numerous cultural particularities". Adjectives "particular" and "universal" are conceptual denominations of facts. They deliver predicates to facts and convey important aspect of cultural reality. But author transforms predicate into subject. Consequently, concepts turn to constituents of cultural reality itself. This is the way in which "empirical universals" are formed. We should notice, that he applies plural form ("universals") to reduce abstraction to the aggregate of facts cogently. Thus, the concept "empirical universal", (which, like any other concept, must meet the requirements of "*unum, verum, bonum*"), transforms into the multitude of "universal" collections. Reification of universals transforms into universal reifications. So, the universal / particular entanglement stays unresolved.

Since author focuses on cognitive product rather than cognizing process he is considering formed representations but not functional concepts. But already formed representations can't be the basis of cognitive logic since they are results of its application. The cognitive logic must "outrun" representations, i.e. it must be present in the process of cognizing before they are formed. But C. Geertz's reflections operate only in the realm of extant things. He notices existing representations but doesn't take into account the fact that their presence owes to a priori assumptions. Any concept, by its nature, is general [4, т. 8, с. 346]. Empiricism substitutes quality of generality, which is a priori inherent to any concept, by systematization of facts, which supposedly endows concept with this quality. Hence, generality became the product of "exercising" of phenomenon's "empirical universality" by researcher. But facts, as "things of their own kind" each, initially can't have nothing common but name which they are embraced by. Thus "name" (i.e. concept) must be present *before* the procedure of generalization as a frame which facts should fit in. Herewith the filling of "generality" (its sense) is extracted from facts, which are transformed into scientific subjects.

Nevertheless, C. Geertz finds concepts in "things themselves". He endows abstractions with status of things which they were extracted from. We can put it the other way: "empirical universals" transform into the "things of second degree" − they turn into particularities, which must act as "generals". Author tries to force content to act like a form. C. Geertz admits that ethnographic description is "microscopic"; "anthropologist characteristically approaches broader interpretations and more abstract analyses from the direction of exceedingly extended acquaintances with extremely small matters". Researcher confronts the same "grand realities" that other social scientists: "Power, Change, Faith, Oppression, Work, Passion, Authority, Beauty, Violence, Love, Prestige". These are "big words that make us all afraid", but they "take a homely form in such homely contexts" [11, p. 21].

We insist that size of object does not matter in interpretation of its sense. Large-scale interpretations are not more abstractive. C. Geertz covertly identifies content of representation with abstractness of concept. Herewith he ascribes to concepts (power, change, faith) the quality of "grand realities". Hence, reification of concepts is supposed. Author delves into extensive dimensions of concepts and forgets the procedure of filling with sense.

Author wants to underpin the validity of interpretive anthropology by positive heuristics; he tries to preserve the contents of case interpretations within theory. But this is a kind of utopian enterprise. Scientific knowledge is subject to specialization like any other activity. Consequently, theory needs *theoretical* grounding; it demands theoretical subject of its own kind, which later will be projected on facts of case studies.

C. Geertz reduces the formation of conceptual apparatus to arrangement and interaction of representations. Author conceals the logical kernel of the problem under the layer of "extensive" rhetoric: the study of particular facts aimed on specificity he names "the study of small-scale object", the study of facts with abstractive intension he names consideration of "the great problems of reality". He forgets that positive heuristics, which he hopefully takes for basis of scientific validity, is the product of study focused on specificity. Wherein the object of research cannot be "small" or "large". It must correspond to the aim of case research and be related to the specific nature of the given branch of knowledge. Power, change, faith, etc., are abstract concepts, but not "big problems of reality". Word combination "big problems of reality" denotes attitude of researcher to phenomena, conveys their significance. Consequently, it has definite content (or, at least, content limited in certain aspect). But "power, change, faith" are abstract concepts (i.e. unapplied concepts). That is why they have no definite content, but scope − they only suggest potential volume of phenomena under consideration.

Nevertheless C. Geertz tries to reduce the *quality* of abstractness to the *size* of content. He does not take into account that the "size of object" is the property of phenomenon itself, whereas the size of content of representation is not [7, c. 78, 79, 85]. Hence concepts of anthropology, on his opinion, must picture cultural reality "itself". The author transforms mental act into existent "cultural model", finds his "real substitute", reifies it. This is the way he formulates "big problems of reality" − metaphors of the scope of concepts, images of layman's everyday mentality.

In similar way C. Geertz treats "major methodological problem" of finding the transition "from a collection of ethnographic miniatures… to wall-sized culturescapes of the nation, the epoch, the continent, or the civilization" and of "moving from local truths to general visions" [11, p. 21].

Thus epistemological problem of induction, which is inseparably entangled with the constitution of concepts, is transformed into the problem of summing up of representations. But pushed out of the door methodological problem comes back through the window in the guise of "general vision's" finding. And again author treats it through extensive constitution of concepts. Despite widely-accepted stance of H. Rickert, who sees the goal of sciences of culture in the study of "historical individuum", C. Geertz takes extensive sum of representations for the key to the constitution of concepts [6, c. 277]. Thus, interpretive anthropology could hardly bind together the inductive method of concept formation and the logic of meaning.

So, from one side, the logic of interpretive anthropology appeals to epistemological and mental tradition invoked by hermeneutically-apprehended concept of meaning deduced from "inner experience" of individual and, from the other side, to empirically oriented inductive logic of positively-molded science which rests upon underpinning of objective "outer" experience. This dualism is the driving force of conceptual construction of the whole interpretive anthropology enterprise.

Thus, meaning as the key concept of interpretative method is hardly coherent with the established scheme of concept formation. Consequently, all universal / particular difficulties are centered around the concept of meaning.

C. Geertz states: "Meaning <…> is back. The only problem is that it is very hard to figure out what that means". Author points that inner experience, nowadays "is going on outside the self". He asserts: ""Experience"<…> no longer seems adequate to frame by itself our understanding of the passions and actions we want <…> Firmer, more determinate, more transpersonal, extravert terms − "Meaning," say, or "Identity," or "Power"— must be deployed to catch the tonalities of devotion in our time" [9, p. 172, 169, 170]. He follows Max Weber's stance, which demonstrates that "religious ideals and practical activities tumble forward together as they

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move through history, forming in fact an impartible process, that "Meaning" began to be seen as something more, or something other, than a set gloss applied to a settled reality". Nowadays we don't see "a bright line between eternal concerns and those of the day; we don't see much of a line at all". Author admits: "Most everywhere <…> we see religiously charged conceptions of what everything, everywhere is always all about propelling themselves to the center of cultural attention" [9, p. 171, 172].

According to C. Geertz, the nowadays' search for identity had "become less of an individual matter; less a personal project, more a collective, even a political, one". There are "organized efforts <…> to advance the worldly fortunes of one or another variety of public selfhood". He stresses that proliferation of autonomous political entities encourages "intensely specific, intensely felt, public identities" [9, p. 175, 176]. A variety of "ideologies, movements, parties, programs, visions, personalities, and conspiracies <…> have entered the competition for societal hegemony" and the right "to prescribe the public morality" [9, p. 172]. C. Geertz comes to a conclusion: "The concept of culture <…> is essentially a semiotic one. Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. It is explication I am after, construing social expressions on their surface enigmatical" [11, p. 5].

Thus the author is finding a key to the explaining of the return of meaning through clarification of the nature of social meanings, in showing their structure and the way of their interaction with the inner experience of social actor. The indispensable prerequisite of this interaction is the entrance of inner experience to the outer social realm. We can suppose that focus on the interaction of "inner" and "outer" *experience* is the outcome of the initial empiricist stance of the author.

So, the sense (or meaning?) of "the return of meaning" is its emergence as an objective component and constitutive part of outer social experience. Moreover, the concept of meaning and the process of internalization of conventional social meanings are constitutive for culture itself.

Consequently, interpretive anthropology considers meaning the core of outer social experience. We should notice that here we see above-mentioned "big words that frighten us all" (Identity, Power). So, the universal / particular entanglement, which we dealt with higher, has direct connection to "Meaning". And, besides, the concept of meaning is "the big word" itself. Moreover, meaning is projecting these "big words" onto social realm. It plays the role of instrument through which "big words" get their filling with sense. It is the way in which they are being interwoven in the real historical context. It is this way, that they acquire particularity, "relativity" (in terms of C. Geertz). We should stress that in this process of "objectification" *the concept of meaning* (element of inner experience) is a kind of "converting" to *real social meaning*. Nevertheless, this is not an ontological transition from "nothingness to being", (which C. Geertz drops hints about), but the change of scientific representations from psychological to sociological. "Meaning", as a part of inner experience, is no more real and no more of a concept, than "social meaning" is a part of real social order and concept of social science altogether.

This thesis is equally valid for author's statement that interpretive anthropology is constructing representations of second and third order (the "first order representations" are existing cultural meanings) [11, p. 15]. So, we can say that interpretive anthropology deals with "representing of representation". We should notice that this is not the specific trait of interpretive anthropology itself: any science is busy representing representations (any chemist, biologist or mathematician must choose between various tacks, i.e. "representations" of the problem under consideration and build his own one afterwards). Thus, meaning is intricately interwoven into

social and cultural textures. C. Geertz expands: "One of the more useful ways <…> of distinguishing between culture and social system is to see the former as an ordered system of meaning and of symbols, in terms of which social interaction takes place; and to see the latter as the pattern of social interaction itself <…> Culture and social structure are then but different abstractions from the same phenomena" [11, p. 144−145].

In this statement C. Geertz considers meaning a part of cultural and social reality, more precisely, a mediator between them. "Societal hegemony" is the pinnacle of the social deployment of meaning. Moreover, the "meaning" emerges as the center of societal mechanism. The concept of meaning is pairing with the corresponding concept of the "social sensibility". In this way the cultural meaning causes the reaction of social actor through sensibility imminent to him as a member of social community.

So the understanding of the concept of meaning paves the way to the comprehension of the entire interpretive-anthropological endeavor.

Let us resume: concepts of interpretive anthropology are constituted in inductive way as "empirical universals"; the "extensive" logic of factual filling is the kernel of conceptual constitution. The scope of concept is covertly identified with the content of representation. Consequently, concepts of interpretive anthropology became implicitly analogous to representations.

This scheme of constitution does not fit with the concept of meaning, which is generic derivative of subjective hermeneutical logic and is hardly coherent with the established objective scheme of concept determination. That is why interpretive anthropology could hardly bind together the inductive method of concept formation and the logic of meaning. Consequently, all universal / particular difficulties are centered around the concept of meaning.

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КОНЦЕПТУАЛЬНІ ВИМІРИ ІНТЕРПРЕТАТИВНОЇ АНТРОПОЛОГІЇ К. ГІРЦА

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Автори розглядають метод і конституцію понять інтерпретативної антропології К. Гірца. Вона характеризується як позитивно орієнтована наука, націлена на пояснювальні висновки. Надається експлікація схемі формування понять. Концепти інтерпретативної антропології виводяться з відповідних сукупностей феноменів. Внаслідок цього обсяг понять стає ідентичним змісту репрезентацій.

Автори висвітлюють природу і сутність «емпіричних універсалій». К. Гірц потрактовує їх не як інструменти класифікації феноменів, а як «сутнісні елементи», котрі існують поруч із «другорядними культурними особливостями». Тому поняття перетворюються на складники культурної реальності як такої. Автори стверджують, що К. Гірц зводить формування концептуального апарату до упорядкування і взаємодії репрезентацій. Так якість абстрактності редукується до розміру репрезентованого змісту. Демонструється специфіка концепту значення, використаного К. Гірцем. Він пояснює «повернення значення» за допомогою висвітлення природи соціальних значень, показу їхньої структури і способу взаємодії з внутрішнім досвідом соціального актора.

Отже, сенс «повернення значення» полягає у набутті ним статусу об'єктивного компонента і складової частини зовнішнього соціального досвіду. Крім того, концепт значення і процес інтерналізації соціальних значень стають визначальними факторами самої культури.

Автори доходять висновку, що схема формування концептів не кореспондує поняттю значення, яке є похідним від суб'єктивної герменевтичної логіки і не відповідає об'єктивній схемі визначення концептів. Саме тому інтерпретативна антропологія стикається з труднощами при спробі узгодити індуктивний метод формування концептів з логікою значення. Отже, всі труднощі співвіднесення універсального й особливого зосереджені довкола концепту значення.

Ключові слова: інтерпретативна антропологія, формування концептів, значення, методологія, репрезентація, універсалії.