UDC 101.1:168

ATTEMPT OF APOLOGETICS OF PHILOSOPHY SCIENTISM IN THE LIGHT OF REVISING THE TRUTH AS A PROPERTY OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE: THE PROBLEM OF VERIFIABILITY AND FALSIFIABILITY

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Summary. Analyzing Russian public discussions of the last two decades – both philosophical as such and the ones related to its institutionalization, including those in education, one can see the Sword of Damocles hanging over philosophy as a university discipline. Therefore, its retention in higher education involves such revision of the truth of modern scientific knowledge as to demonstrate that arguments for the unscientific character of philosophy, particularly arguments based on the thesis that it lacks any empirical grounds and therefore lacks falsifiability verification procedures, do not correspond to the modern level of research studies development.

Keywords: revising the classical image of science; proof and refutation of philosophical statements; mediation of philosophy relations with the world by the results of other disciplines.

There is an obvious paradox – on the one hand, self-reflection is a central thread running through the entire history of philosophy, its version outstanding in the words of Aristotle and Hegel respectively: «It is right also that philosophy should be called knowledge of the truth» [1, p. 94] and, moreover, a standard in the search for the truth (because «a thing has a quality in a higher degree than other things if in virtue of it the similar quality belongs to the other things as well» [1, p. 95], so «that that causes derivative truths to be true is most true», hence «the principles of eternal things must be always most true» [1, p. 95]); «Philosophy is an objective science of truth, a science of its necessity, of conceptual knowing; it is no opining and no web-spinning of opinions» [2, p. 78].

On the other hand, there is a long tradition of the opposite version of self-reflection recognizing the inapplicability to philosophical knowledge of the concepts of truth and falsehood suggested by different thinkers at different times, including ancient sophists and skeptics, Enlightenment thinkers (representative are the words by Rousseau «What is contained in the writings of the most celebrated philosophers?... should we not take them for so many mountebanks, exhibiting themselves in public, and crying out, *Here, Here, come to me, I am the only true doctor?*» [3, p. 27]), positivists with their critique of «metaphysics» and Husserl, who denied any truth verification of philosophical statements and, what's more, believed the objective reality to be beyond the boundaries of the philosophy subject. This tradition was especially common in Russian philosophy at the turn of the 1980-1990s when Marxist philosophy propaedeutics was criticized by the post-Soviet anti-scientists. According to their most consistent representative A. L. Nikiforov, «philosophy is not empirically verifiable or refutable» [4, p. 300], therefore it cannot prove even its fundamental principles, such as «matter is primary and consciousness is secondary» (or vice versa) [5, p. 113] and, in general, «does not care about evidences» [6, p. 20]. As for regular attempts of philosophers to justify their ideas by appealing to scientific ideas and social experience, they are not, according to A. L. Nikiforov, «the empirical evidence sought by science» because «they do not use ...empirical methods. This is just about the compatibility of the philosophical system with scientific data, but such

compatibility can by no means be considered as an evidence of the system's possible truth» [6, p. 20].

Justifying the opposite position, i. e. the idea that philosophy can at least be partially included in the complex of scientific knowledge and, therefore, it seeks to reconcile its statements with the natural and social reality, and developing methods of such reconciliation, I should first of all highlight the following fact: the above statements about philosophy lacking any empirical grounds and validation and rebuttal procedures can be regarded as the reverse of the fact that it analyzes all the objects that form the subject of special sciences. To illustrate the point, let me give the following example: in the framework of Hegel's dialectical solution to the problem of the relation between science and philosophy, the condition of their union was reconciliation of philosophical ideas with the reality and experience, i. e. philosophy must not ignore the empirical results of special sciences, what's more, it must incorporate them in the process of their use. Only bearing this in mind, one should interpret, for example, the following idea of Wundt: «Hegel ... calls philosophy 'thinking consideration of objects' – the expression indicating that purely empirical study of facts should be excluded from philosophy and that philosophy is pure thought» [7, p. 17]. I. e. the reason why «the empirical study of facts» can be excluded from philosophy is that philosophy, according to Hegel, «must not only be consistent with the experimental learning of the nature, but the emergence and development of philosophy as such has empirical physics as its prerequisite and condition» (by «physics» he means natural sciences in general) [8, p. 14]. What is special about such «consistency» in this case is that philosophy «picks up the material produced by physics on the basis of experience at the point where physics had driven it to and, in turn, converts it further, but without having to base it on experience as final confirmation» [8, p. 20]. Looking at these arguments in relation to the above discussion, one can agree with A. A. Gusseynov, who considered it logical that «now philosophers do not simply look at the world through the eyes of a stranger, but deal with the world as reflected in them, and ... they now do not pretend to be physicists or psychologists» [9, p. 14] and that «one can come across a philosophizing scholar more often than an experimenting philosopher» [9, p. 14]. I. M. Krylov, one of the most consistent followers of modern supporters of scientific philosophy, shows that philosophers simply do not need to repeat the experiments conducted by special sciences because they have enough material in the form of research findings from other fields – philosophy «draws material for its results by studying the available scientific results, finding its own content in them» [10].

Secondly, let us consider the fact that while the classical ideal of science was primarily empirical validity, suggesting the possibility of reducing any scientific knowledge to its solid foundation, the current level of scientific research suggests, according to L. A. Mikeshina, an authoritative expert in the field, that «the traditional and conventional word combination 'theory verification'... is a rough and vague term with quite complex and controversial procedures behind it» [11, p. 314], particularly because «it is not the theory itself and the underlying scheme model that are tested, but its empirical interpretation and empirically verifiable consequences» [11, p. 314], and, as a result, «the theory cannot be rejected if certain facts contradict it, but it also cannot be justified even if there are some facts that unequivocally prove it» [11, p. 314]. Similarly, N. I. Martishina, another well-known contemporary specialist in epistemology and philosophy of science, considering the revision of the classical scientific understanding of validity in terms of both content and feasibility, notes that «the first attack is directed

at the central understanding of validity in classical science – the empirical validity» [12, p. 33], criticism of which is associated with the «rejection of theory as consistent movement from experience through a series of minimal, strictly calibrated generalizations» [12, p. 34]. From the fact that scientific theory is not derivable from experience, it can be concluded that, first, scientific theory cannot be completely reduced to experience in order to verify it, and secondly, it is not refutable in an unambiguous way – «in terms of modern realistic methodology, if a fact contradicting the theory is detected, the theory should not be rejected automatically unless you have exhausted the possibilities of modification and protection» [12, p. 34], and, as a result, «refutation of the theory is often complex and time consuming and is certainly beyond the scope of the empirical process» [12, p. 34].

When summing it up, N. I. Martishina lists the following factors that determine the impossibility of complete empirical validation of a theory [12, p. 34–36]: dependence of the experimental data on the means of observation and investigation procedures; complexity and ambiguity of empirical interpretation of theories with high level of abstraction that do not have the element-by-element connection with the reality; theoretical loading of an experiment as such, including the impact of the hypothesis on the experiment plan, the choice of tools and, more importantly, the interpretation of the results, which makes the concept of the critical experiment problematic.

To summarize, we can say that while the classical (17–19th centuries) program of science construction made it impossible to accept that philosophy is science, even specific science, due to the problematic relation between theory and empiricism, Duhem-Quine thesis, which summarized criticism of this program, and according to which theoretical statements, in principle, cannot not be fully predetermined by empirical data (as Duhem and Quine, according to V. N. Porus showed that «scientific theory is not an isolated system of statements, but is associated with extensive background knowledge, and therefore can always be «saved» from refutation if we make the appropriate changes to this «background» [13, p. 218]), deprives this criticism of the scientific status of philosophy of its persuasiveness and does not allow us to deny scientism to philosophy. In other words, understanding that both the program of the experiment and interpretation of its results depend, to some extent, on the original theoretical orientation of the researcher does not allow us to unambiguously and fundamentally oppose natural sciences as «totally empirically grounded knowledge» to philosophy as «unverifiable, unfaslifiable and therefore unscientific» knowledge.

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