HERMENEUTICS AS ONE OF THE TRENDS OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

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Summary. This article explores hermeneutics as one of the areas of modern philosophy and science. The process of formation of the extrapolation of the methodology of hermeneutics into various humanitarian spheres of scientific activity is analyzed: history, jurisprudence and philosophy.

Key words: hermeneutics, philosophy, science, methodology, hermeneutic circle, deciphering, interpretation, understanding.

Hermeneutics, being the methodological denominator of all the humanities, has reached the universal significance of a general theory of text interpretation as the central object of study. Deciphering the semantic component of the text directly depends on the historical, economic, ideological remoteness of the interpreter from the object of textual interpretation, as well as on the nature of the sign-semantic and structural elements contained in the text. The process of isolating and restoring the original position of the meaningful and semantic core of the text is accompanied by the subsequent process of identifying the latter into a system of general contextual meaning, the horizon of which varies within the limits of everyday, scientific, artistic-figurative and philosophical narratives. The type of textual interpretation coincides with the subject orientation of the sign-symbolic system within various areas of hermeneutics, namely, philological, theological, historical, philosophical, teleological, legal, where the disclosure of the true essence of meaning acts as the main goal setting.

The founder of general hermeneutics is considered to be the German philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher, whose approach is associated with a certain kind of dialectical art, as well as the fundamental method of all humanities. The tool of mental and psychological "getting used to" the inner world of the author, developed by Schleiermacher, made it possible to reconstruct an object or phenomenon at a deeper and more detailed level. The maximum restoration of the true author’s message is carried out due to the following three applied principles:

• The principle that the main goal of hermeneutics is the requirement to understand the essence of the text and its author better than the author himself understood himself and his own work.
• The principle of “better understanding”, according to which a modern researcher needs to know and understand better the world of the author and his text.

• The principle of the hermeneutic circle, according to which the ratio of the part and the whole is considered as a total sum of meanings, where in one case a part of the text is considered in relation to the entire text as a whole, and then comes the understanding of the meaning of the whole in relation to its parts.

An alternative position in the interpretation of the relationship between the part and the whole considers the text-monument as a part, and the culture in which it unfolds and acts as a whole, which makes it possible to present the decoding of the semantic core through the prism of understanding the individual thought of the author and the general background context. Schleiermacher expresses the dialectics of the part and the whole in the following fragment: “The richness of the language and the history of the author’s time are given as a whole. Based on it, the work of the author must be understood as a separate... Every full-fledged knowledge is in this imaginary circle so that every particular can be understood from the universal, of which it is a part, and vice versa. And every knowledge is scientific if it is obtained in this way. It follows from this that the process of understanding can never act within the framework of a completed and final version, which complicates the process of approaching the authenticity and original identity of the content, turning the process of understanding into an endlessly moving thought in a circle. Schleiermacher made a total revolution in the field of the humanities, fixing hermeneutics as the methodological foundation not only of philosophy, but also of literary criticism, jurisprudence and historiography, but also of all other humanities, which, according to Schleiermacher, are aimed at creating conditions for understanding and clarifying meaning. The Greek word hermeneutike literally translates as “the art of clarification, interpretation”, and in the modern sense implies a certain practice of interpreting, disenchanting, deciphering texts. Modern philosophical hermeneutics is born and receives its progressive development within the framework of the philosophical heritage of G.G. Gadamer, in the well-known work “Truth and Method”, published in the 60s of the XX century. The theoretical foundations of hermeneutics were the principles developed by Gadamer based on the synthesis of concepts: “understanding psychology” by W. Dilthey, the theory of the “horizon” and “life world” by E. Husserl, and the doctrine of language by M. Heidegger.

The hermeneutic tradition of Gadamer, which made a significant contribution to solving the most important methodological problems of the humanities spectrum, as well as the problems of substantiating the integrity of the system of scientific knowledge, influenced the construction of the methodological base of humanitarian knowledge. Having ontologized the apparatus of hermeneutics and proved the status of the presence of being in language, philosophical hermeneutics received scientific and social recognition, securing the right to form and further develop in the philosophy of science. The category of understanding in hermeneutics is an integral part of not only humanitarian knowledge, but also in interdisciplinary scientific research.

The strengthening of the status of hermeneutics is observed in a successful attempt to extrapolate its methodology to various fields of scientific activity, for
example, to the field of cybernetics and computerization, where the mechanism of
growth of various antagonistic paradigms is especially pronounced. The observed
tendencies of strengthening the role of hermeneutics are manifested in the system
of comparative analysis of the hermeneutic and pheno+enological philosophy of G.
Shpet and P. Ricoeur, the value of which is determined by the introduction of the
latter into the basic direction of philosophical research.

Shpet's hermeneutics, which became widespread in the second half of the
20th century, is a generalization of the phenomenological tradition of Edmund
Husserl and Paul Ricoeur within the framework of the classical system of textual
interpretation, where conditions arise that make it possible to apply a comparative
approach to the analysis of their ideas. An example of the concepts of the two
presented thinkers is an expression of ideas between which a half-century distance
stretches, a comparative analysis of which will allow us to trace the evolution of
hermeneutics from primitive exegesis, which incorporates a set of disparate
techniques, to an independent direction of philosophy and science, where a huge
palette of concrete scientific and special methodological concepts.

Ricoeur's aspirations to identify common grounds in hermeneutics and
psychoanalysis, where in both cases there are interpretative motives for the search
for metaphysical principles in the totality of phenomena and sign-symbolic forms as
expressions of a hidden meaning, expresses the discrediting of the methodology of
interpretation of psychoanalysis, structuralism and phenomenology. The
anthropological sphere, touched upon from the position of the hermeneutic
apparatus of Emerich Coret, is also criticized, where it is interpreted as the starting
point of human existence through the prism of perceived existence - the world
provided by a complex of individual, sociocultural and phenomenological
manifestations. Correlating the process of understanding with the unfinished act of
contact with the "horizon of the world", Coret deduces the latter from the perspective
of further comprehension of meaning. Ricoeur thus reconstructs the prerequisites
for the transformation of hermeneutics into a universal methodology for the study
of the social sciences and the humanities. He believes that the countless number of
interpretations and their opposition is a positive consequence of the interpretation,
as it expands the overall horizon of understanding.

The systematization of the methodological apparatus of hermeneutics
gradually leads to the expansion of the spectrum of its consideration within the
framework of Wolfianism, namely, in the person of I.M. Khladenius, thanks to which
special recognition of hermeneutics is achieved by introducing this methodological
toolkit into alternative areas of knowledge to theology, for example, history. Bringing
hermeneutics to a completely new logical and philosophical level and accentuating
psychology as the most important tool of hermeneutics allowed Chladenius to
strengthen its status in private scientific disciplines.

The analysis of various scientific and philosophical sources contains many
different definitions of hermeneutics, subdivided according to their breadth and
level of coverage. In a narrow sense, hermeneutics (Greek hermeneutike -
interpretation) is the art of interpretation, the theory of interpretation and
understanding of texts. In a broad sense, this term defines a trend in philosophy in
which understanding is seen as a condition (comprehension) of social being.
References: