

FEEDBACK ON CONSCIOUSNESS AND THINKING

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ANNOTATION

Consciousness is the state of the individual's mental life, expressed in the subjective experience of the events of the external world and the life of the individual himself, in the report on these events. Consciousness is opposed to the unconscious in its various versions (unconscious, subconscious, etc.). Consciousness is one of the central concepts of classical Western philosophy. The sciences of man, in particular, psychology, also proceeded from a certain understanding of consciousness.

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INTRODUCTION

At the same time, the comprehension of consciousness was associated with significant difficulties. In the end 19th century biologist T. Huxley even expressed the opinion that the nature of consciousness, in principle, does not lend itself to scientific research. Many psychologists in the 19th and 20th centuries (W. Wundt and others) believed that only individual phenomena of consciousness can be scientifically investigated, as for its essence, it cannot be expressed, although consciousness is subjectively given in experience.

Meanwhile, philosophers tried to analyze its nature and formulated the following concepts of consciousness. 1. Concept is identifying consciousness with knowledge: all that we know is consciousness, and all that we are aware of is knowledge. Most of the representatives of classical philosophy shared this idea, supporting it with a reference to the etymology of the word: the Latin name for consciousness comes from the words cum and scire, i.e. means shared knowledge (the same in Russian). True, some philosophers did not agree with this understanding. For example, Kant believed that an individual, in principle, cannot have knowledge about what is inside his consciousness is the Transcendental Subject, although the latter is recognized as a deep carrier of individual experience. Other philosophers gave an example of the perception of an unfamiliar object, which, from their point of view, is not knowledge, but, of course, is an act of consciousness. In reality, everything that is realized is knowledge of one kind or another.

This applies, in particular, to the perception of an unfamiliar object. For this perception to be possible, the subject must have certain perceptual hypotheses and even carries out the act of thinking - while the very process of using these hypotheses is not realized (see Perception). Perception, therefore, is knowledge, contrary to the opinion prevalent in classical philosophy. Another thing is that this knowledge can be very superficial, associated only with the selection

of an object, distinguishing it from the rest and suggesting the possibility of further study. The subject's awareness of his emotions, desires, volitional impulses too is knowledge. Of course, emotions, desires, volitional impulses themselves are not limited to knowledge, although they suggest the latter. But their awareness is nothing more than knowledge of their presence. However, the conclusion about the identity of consciousness and knowledge does not follow from what has been said. Modern philosophy, psychology and other sciences about man are faced with the fact of unconscious knowledge.

This is not only what I know, but what I don't think about at the moment and therefore I don't realize, but what I can easily make the property of my consciousness: e.g. my knowledge of the Pythagorean theorem, the facts of my biography, etc. It is also the kind of knowledge that I have and use, but which can be realized with great difficulty, if at all can become such. This is individual implicit knowledge, used, for example, by experts, but it is also implicit components of collective knowledge: the awareness of all the prerequisites and consequences of scientific theories is possible only under certain conditions and is never complete. Some emotions are usually not recognized and desires, some deep-seated personality attitudes. Thus, knowledge is a necessary condition for consciousness, but the condition is far from sufficient. 2. A number of philosophers (first of all sharing the positions of phenomenology or concepts close to it - F. Brentano, E. Husserl, J.-P. Sartre, etc.) Distinguish not knowledge, but intentionality as the main feature of consciousness: focus on a certain subject, an object.

From this point of view, all types of consciousness have such a sign: not only perceptions and thoughts, but also representations, emotions, desires, intentions, volitional impulses. According to this point of view, I may not know anything about the object, but if I isolate it through my intention, it becomes the object of my consciousness. With this understanding, consciousness is not only a set of intentions, but also their source. The bearer of empirical consciousness, according to E. Husserl, is the empirical I, and the bearer of "pure", transcendental consciousness (embodying its a priori structure) is the Transcendental I. In this way, the intentional object of consciousness does not have to really exist: it can be imaginary. Consciousness can be intentionally aimed at physical objects (real or imaginary), at ideal objects (numbers, values, etc.), or at states of consciousness itself (real or imaginary).

Unlike Husserl, Sartre believes that the original intentionality of consciousness is directed to the real world, that the Transcendental I does not exist and that the empirical I is not only not assumed with the need for individual consciousness, but even its appearance distorts the nature of consciousness.

A characteristic feature of mental phenomena, incl. and consciousness, distinguishing them from all other phenomena, is intentionality. But intentional experiences can also be outside the sphere of consciousness - unconscious thoughts, emotions, intentions, etc. In phenomenology, in essence, the psyche and consciousness are identified; the subject is interpreted as absolutely transparent to himself. The facts of incomplete self-evident self cannot find an explanation when equating consciousness with intentionality. Thus, intentionality is also a necessary but insufficient condition of consciousness. 3. Sometimes consciousness is identified with attention. This position is shared by a number of philosophers, but it is especially popular among some psychologists who are trying from the point of view of cognitive science to interpret

consciousness (i.e. attention with this understanding) as some kind of filter on the way of information processed by the nervous system.

Consciousness with such an interpretation plays the role of a kind of distributor of limited resources in the nervous system. In this regard, attempts have been made to measure the "field of consciousness". Meanwhile, a number of facts of mental life defy explanation from such a point of view. Known, for example, the facts of inattentive consciousness, in particular, in a car driver, conducting a conversation, realizing what is happening on the way, but not closely watching everything. You can talk about the center and periphery of the field of consciousness. Attention is directed only to the center of this field. But what's on the periphery is also realized, albeit indistinctly.

You can talk about different degrees of consciousness. A sleeping person is not aware of what is happening around him, but a certain degree of consciousness exists during dreams. Something from the environment (although by no means all) is realized even with somnambulism. The experiments of modern American psychologists J. Lackner and M. Garrett, who showed that information perceived by a subject without attention, are very important for understanding the relationship between consciousness and attention's less, to some extent, is realized by him and affects the understanding of what is realized in the presence of attention.

4. the most influential understanding of consciousness in philosophy and psychology is associated with the interpretation of it as self-consciousness, as a self-report of the in my own actions. Such an understanding can be combined with the interpretation of consciousness as knowledge (in this case, it is believed that knowledge takes place only when the subject is reflectively aware of the ways of obtaining it) or as intentionality (in this case, it is believed that the subject is aware not only of the intentional object, but also the act of the intention itself and itself as its source). The classical understanding of consciousness as self-consciousness is associated with J. Locke's theory of two sources of knowledge: sensations related to the external world, and reflection as the mind's observation of its own activity. The latter, according to Locke, is consciousness.

The same understanding of consciousness is characteristic of Kant and Husserl. According to Kant, the condition for the objectivity of experience is the self-consciousness of the Transcendental Subject (transcendental unity of apperception) in the form of the statement "I think" accompanying the flow of experience. It is this self-awareness, according to Kant, that ensures the unity of consciousness. According to Husserl, "pure consciousness" is expressed in the form of transcendental reflection aimed at consciousness itself. Consciousness, with this understanding, acts as a specific reality, as a special "inner world" given to the subject completely directly and cognizable with full certainty. The way of cognizing consciousness is self-perception, which, as a result of training, can take the form of self-observation (introspection). The latter was widely used in the sciences dealing with the phenomena of consciousness, in particular in psychology. Self-consciousness is an undoubted fact that expresses an important feature of consciousness. At the same time, understanding consciousness as an independent reality directly given in self-consciousness gives rise to a number of difficulties (see Self-awareness). In addition, a number of facts can be indicated when consciousness is not accompanied by a clear self-awareness.

Contrary to Kant's opinion, the real unity of experience is not necessarily accompanied by the thought - "I think." It seems that J.-P. Sartre is right when he distinguishes between self-consciousness in general and such a special form of it as reflection. Without some form of self-awareness (sometimes very fuzzy, poorly expressed), consciousness is really impossible. Without this kind of self-awareness, the subject cannot control his own actions - as external and internal (work of thinking, imagination, desire, etc.). The flexibility of action, its variability, and the creative nature are impossible without a certain amount of self-control. Subjectively, this appears in the form of a special experience of the events of the external world and the life of the subject himself, in the form of self-report in these events, which are characteristic features of consciousness.

Reflection is the highest form of self-awareness, expressed in the fact that the subject carries out a special analysis of the ways of his activity and phenomena of consciousness, incl. and self. Reflection arises only on the basis of mastering the language and other means of inter-human communication. Therefore, consciousness in its developed forms is a cultural and social product. Specifically, human consciousness and as its center are not determined by human biology; they arose in a specific historical period and in specific cultural conditions. Modern cognitive science, in collaboration with philosophy, tries to study precisely the nature of consciousness (contrary to the opinion popular in psychology of the late 19th - early 20th centuries about the impossibility of such research as scientific). Of particular interest is Dennett's concept, put forward in the framework of such a study, that consciousness is not a field or a filter, but a special kind of activity of the psyche associated with the interpretation of information entering the brain from the external world and from the organism itself. Each such interpretation is hypothetical and can instantly be replaced by another, more appropriate to the real situation.

As a fact, consciousness is represented to the subject by that hypothetical interpretation that prevails over others (this process takes place in a millionth of a second). However, the discarded interpretations do not disappear, but remain and can be realized under certain conditions. Therefore, according to Dennett, the line between conscious and unconscious phenomena is very blurred.

An important feature of consciousness is its unity. It is expressed both in the unity of all components of the external and internal experience at a given moment of time, and in the awareness of the unity of the experienced past and present. I. Kant believed that the unity of consciousness can take place only under the condition of the unity of the Transcendental I, which is the center and bearer of consciousness. The results of modern research of consciousness (both in philosophy and in psychology and other sciences about man) provide grounds for statements that I am a cultural-historical product and that therefore the unity of consciousness that this I provides is also not initially given. The unity of consciousness is determined not by biology, not by the peculiarities of the brain (the presence in it of some "central authorities") and not by the psyche itself. It is determined by the presence of the Self as responsible for the activities and actions of the subject. Therefore, the unity of consciousness is built together with the in specific cultural and historical conditions. Modern cultural and social situations threaten the unity of I and consciousness. In the history of philosophy, consciousness has sometimes

been understood as synonymous with a set of ideas - individual or collective. In this sense, this term was used, for example, Hegel and Marx ("social consciousness", "class consciousness", etc.).

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