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The Power of Ignorance

Smirensky, V.B.: **The power of ignorance.**
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Interrelations of knowledge and ignorance are considered in connection with problems of classification, increase of parascientific investigations and incomplete world pictures. The tension between knowledge and ignorance can never be overcome, because knowledge is secondary, relative, particular and finite, while ignorance is primary, whole, absolute, and infinite.

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Knowledge is a product of science, which has a certain paradigm and method. The scientific paradigm presupposes experiment, recurrence, or reproducibility, argumentation and deduction; new concepts and theories are deduced from ones already known, etc.

Within the framework of the unconventional or parascientific paradigm, we see that these principles are often broken: this paradigm allows irreproducible or unique experiments, it explains one unidentified phenomenon through another. Since this sharply contradicts the scientific paradigm, such methods are continuously being rejected and declared false.

But it is impossible to negate such inevitable changes as scientific revolutions, paradigm shifts and breakthroughs to not merely new, by fundamentally new knowledge (e.g. Fermat or Euler theorems). So, in the beginning we observe very long and sometimes ineffective attempts to find a manifestation. Besides, the very foundations of demonstrative knowledge are disputed because science cannot overcome the incomprehensibility of its foundations: every whole exists before any part of it does. As F. Jacobi said, the whole is taken for granted and the particular or the minor is deduced.

The role of a break-through grows and the importance of extracting new knowledge increases as we continuously discover a tremendous amount of ignorance, in accordance with L. de Broglie's statement: "The day before yesterday we knew nothing of electricity, yesterday we knew nothing about the enormous resources of the atomic nucleus. what do we not know today?" This regularity demonstrates that knowledge increase leads to the progressive revelation of ignorance.

K. Popper stated that knowledge and ignorance are bound together so tightly that one is impossible without the other. Knowledge does not grow from observations or the collection of data or facts, it originates from problems.

There is no knowledge without problems; but then there are no problems without knowledge and ignorance, either. This tension is never overcome (1).

The successes of science themselves can stimulate the increase of parascientific investigations. The latter can help to formulate a problem, to classify the subject area of ignorance and, finally, leads to the attempt to study the whole, but not the particular.

Attempts to gather all parascientific subjects in special classification divisions are not justified. It is difficult to discern the difference between the study of intuition, dreams and hallucinations and of such phenomena as foresight and clairvoyance, to differentiate the influence of sun activity cycles on the life of people and society from the influence of other stars and planets.

Comprehension and classification of the whole, and not of the particular, run into fundamental difficulties connected with an incomplete world picture since all that is observable is secondary and all primary entities (energy, matter, space, time, spirit, soul) are unobservable.

It is impossible to cognize primary entities, we can only realize, recognize and come close to them as to the absolute truth of being. The tension between knowledge and ignorance can never be overcome because knowledge is secondary, relative, particular and finite, and ignorance is primary, whole, absolute, and infinite.

Reference

(1) Popper, K.: The logic of the social sciences. In: The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology. New York 197., p.88