The Question of Management Science Paradigms

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Abstract: The article presents results of the comparative analysis of the various classifications of social sciences paradigms and their reflection in management science. It should be emphasized that management science requires transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary research based on crossing the boundaries between particular scientific fields and joint usage of different theoretical achievements and methodological workshops. Trans- and interdisciplinary approach is a general epistemological principle of management science. Furthermore, the thesis about the necessity to distinguish the phenomenological paradigm in management science based on A.-T. Tymieniecka's phenomenology of life is justified in the paper. Tymieniecka's phenomenology allows, on the one hand, to overcome the theoretical incommensurability, while, on the other hand, it makes it possible for representatives of various paradigms to cooperate with each other.

Keywords: paradigm, themata, social sciences, management science, phenomenology of life, phenomenological praxeology

SCIENCE ABOUT SCIENCE

In the world's literature on "science about science" there are various terms for the general definition of the work of scientists and its products. Currently, the term "paradigm" dominates, but at the same time there are "concepts of science", "research ideologies", "world views", "theoretical orientations", "epistemological frames", "archetypes", and "themata", etc. Before going over to the analysis of the popular concept, it is worth taking a closer look at the less-analyzed concepts.

The issue of scientific knowledge has been the subject of many thinkers' inquiries for centuries, which has resulted in different definitions and classifications of knowledge. The achievements of the Lublin School of Philosophy, and especially its outstanding

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representative, Stanisław Kamiński, make it easier to discern and organize the "science about science". Due to the formal subject and method used, Kamiński (1992) distinguished three types of "science about science": humanistic (history, sociology, psychology, economics, science policy), philosophical (metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of science, philosophy of culture) and formal (logic of the scientific language, formal logic, theory of reasoning, methodology of sciences).

Stanisław Kamiński claimed that the purpose of epistemological reflection on science is to extract philosophical assumptions of science. In his view, science is a complex, multiform and dynamic being. He developed the characteristics of various types of sciences and relations between them: deductive-a priori and empirical-inductive, humanistic and natural, practical and theoretical as well as philosophy and theology. He also proposed ordering the sciences; due to the admissible sources of cognition, he distinguished theology and natural knowledge, and within the natural knowledge due to the degree of generality of inquiry and the studied aspect – philosophy and specific sciences. Within the latter, due to the subject and method, he distinguished formal and real sciences, which are divided into natural science and humanities. He distinguished four great "concepts of science" (classical, modern, positivist and its subsequent modifications, i.e. neopositivism and critical rationalism, and the diachronic concept). According to Andrzej Bronk (1993), Kamiński's "concepts of science" recall Kuhn's concept of science paradigms.

Stanisław Kamiński claimed that despite the changes in the concept of science, the fundamental research questions had not change significantly. This statement is similar to the concept of "themes" (*themata*) developed by Gerald Holton (1996). *Themata* are key concepts, integral elements of science, forming the basis for its development. Typical *themata* are: resource conservation, infinity and finiteness, models, integers, discreteness and continuum, unification, complexity and complementarity, synthesis, diversity and resolution. *Themata* last for long periods of time and new ones appear rarely. They are proposed as an alternative to inductive, falsification and paradigm theory of science development. Essentially, the thematic analysis draws attention to the qualities necessary to generate knowledge and it places emphasis on both the discovery process and the context of discovery. Holton claims that theoretical thought is based on empirical data, analysis and the "thematic" dimension. The

concept of *themata* initiates research and provides a permanent foundation on which the theory is built. In the process of discovering scientific *themata*, they help to illuminate the source of inspiration and are the ultimate center, the basis for theoretical explanations.

Themata should not be confused with archetypes, metaphysics, paradigms or worldviews. The differences between thematic analysis and paradigms or worldviews are significant. Paradigms and worldviews contain elements of *themata* that are constant over long periods of time.

Turning to the analysis of the concept of "paradigm" introduced by Thomas Kuhn (1962), it should be recalled that he described it as a set of concepts and theories defining the foundations of science at a given time. Paradigms are widely recognized as scientific achievements that at some point provide the scientific community with models of problems and solutions. Kuhn emphasized the incommensurability and struggle (competing) of paradigms, which lead to scientific revolutions changing the dominant paradigm. Scientific revolutions are a non-cumulative developmental episode in which the old paradigm cannot be maintained and is replaced by a new paradigm. The new paradigm cannot be built on the preceding one, but rather can only change it, because the institutional scientific tradition emerging from the scientific revolution is not only incompatible but also disproportionate to the one that appeared before it. The revolution ends with the victory of one of the two opposite paradigms.

Wojciech Sady (2015, 126; 127) states that during scientific revolution the key problems, criteria for assessing their solutions, ways of perceiving the world, as well as the language used to describe phenomena change; above all, the active assumptions of the thought style change; "the emergence of a new style of thought is the work of chance… This randomness further deepens the impression that scientific opinions do not qualify as objective knowledge". This statement is consistent with Paul Feyerabend's thesis that science is never a completed process; therefore it is always a pre-fact. Therefore, simplicity, elegance and compatibility are never necessary conditions for scientific practice. Logically perfect versions (if they exist) usually appear for a long time after imperfect versions that have contributed to the enrichment of science (Feyerabend 1975).

As a result, in modern meta-scientific deliberations, a science development scheme was built, in which three periods were distinguished:

– pre-paradigmatic (proto-science), in which all facts seem equally important, and scientific activity consists in collecting data about facts;
– paradigmatic, i.e. a period of normal science, practiced by groups of scientists who share a common paradigm; the paradigm is implicitly acquired during learning;
– revolutionary, i.e. the periods in which numerous anomalies appear that lead to a crisis ending in a breakthrough - the victory of a new paradigm.

PARADIGMS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES AND IN MANAGEMENT SCIENCE

There are various classifications of paradigms in the science. The typology of Gibson Burrell and Gareth Morgan (1979) is often used. They distinguish four main paradigms in social sciences: functionalist, interpretive, radical humanist and radical structural paradigms.

The functionalist paradigm is based on three intellectual trends: sociological positivism, Marxist theory and German idealism. This paradigm seeks to provide rational explanations of social issues for effective regulation and control. It is also approached from the practical side to social problems; the so-called social engineering is characterized by concern for providing an explanation of the *status quo*, social order, consensus, social integration, solidarity, the need for satisfaction and topicality from a realistic, positivist, deterministic and nomothetic point of view (Burrell and Morgan 1979, 26-28).

The interpretive paradigm—with sources in German idealism—focuses on understanding the fundamental nature of the social world from the view of subjective experience. It deals with issues related to the character of the *status quo*, social order, consensus, social integration and cohesion, solidarity and topicality. It is a nominalist and anti-positivist, voluntary and idiographic approach. It perceives the social world as an emerging social process that is created by individuals. Social reality is not specific and does not exist in an objective way, but is an intersubjective creation of participants, i.e. people living in a given community. Interpretivists recognize the thesis that the world of human affairs is coherent, orderly and integrated (Ibid, 28-31).

The paradigm of radical humanism, shaped by the Frankfurt School, captures the social world from a nominalist, anti-positivist, voluntarist and ideographic perspective. Proponents of this paradigm proclaim that

human consciousness (so-called false consciousness) is dominated by ideological superstructures. Therefore, they call for freedom from the limitations that apply and hinder human development—a critic of the *status quo*. They demand radical change, emancipation, and potentiality. This paradigm forms the basis of the anti-organization theory (Ibid, 32-33).

The paradigm of radical structuralism developed under the influence of Marxism, and it presupposes the existence of a concrete (material) social reality that can be explored and described. It is based on an analysis that emphasizes structural conflict, domination, contradiction and deprivation. Fundamental social contradictions make the present way of life unjust and unattainable for people. Structuralism is based on the assumption that the role of science lies in the fight against human enslavement by society; hence, the commitment to radical change and emancipation, which can only be achieved through the complete transformation of society. Intervention must be integrated at the political, regional, community and interpersonal levels. Radical structuralism is realistic, positivistic, deterministic and nomothetic (Ibid, 34-35).

Another typology was proposed by Egon G. Guba and Yvonne S. Lincoln (1994), who define the paradigm as a set of beliefs about ultimate things or first principles. The paradigm, in their opinion, cannot be proven in any conventional way. In the original version, they distinguished four paradigms: positivist, post-positivist, critical and constructivist (Guba and Lincoln 1994, 109-111). The positivist paradigm is an approach assuming the existence of laws that govern social reality. The knowledge of this reality is independent of the context. Laws governing reality have a cause-and-effect nature. In the case of the post-positivist paradigm, it is assumed that social reality is an objective fact (as in the case of the positivist paradigm). At the same time, it is recognized that it is constructed by different individuals. Reality is imperfect and needs to be analyzed in a multithreaded way—it can be defined stochastically. Research results also depend on the researcher's influence on social reality. The third paradigm is based on critical theory. It assumes that social constructs are created by social, political, cultural, economic and historical forces. Influential people play a special role in this process. Over time, these constructs take on the characteristics of social reality and can be treated as an objective social reality. The cognitive process has a dialectic character, takes place in mutual interaction between the

researcher and the subject. The aim of cognition is to critically analyze the elements of social reality. The constructivist paradigm is based on the assumption that there is no objective social reality. It is a construct of the minds of individual people. Therefore, research in accordance with this paradigm must relate to the experience of individuals in their interactions with the environment. Social constructs cannot be evaluated in terms of truth and falsehood.

In later years, this typology was supplemented with a fifth—participatory paradigm (Heron & Reason 1997). The basics of the participatory paradigm form the so-called cooperative research, which are conducted jointly by the researcher and participants of the research. In this way, the studied people (communities) become co-explorers. Together, they participate in the description and interpretation of social reality. This is consistent with the belief that to study something, one must participate in it, and the participation is both shaping and changing, as the reality under investigation is always subjective and objective (Heron & Reason 1997, 278).

Mary Jo Hatch (1997) proposed a paradigm typology more adequate for the science of management. She distinguished classical, modernist, interpretive-symbolic and postmodern paradigms. The classic paradigm, based on neo-positivism, includes the first works in the field of management sciences (Frederick W. Taylor, Max Weber and Henri Fayol's works). The modernist paradigm, whose representatives are James March and Herbert Simon (1958), describes the organization from a functionalist and systemic perspective, striving to formulate general assertions, which are the basis of principles with a universal character. The interpretive-symbolic paradigm, represented, among others, by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966), treats the organization as a process of constructing and reading social reality, underlining the uniqueness of social structures. The postmodern paradigm is—as Hatch observes—"an incredible mix of ideas"; its peculiarities are defragmentation, cultural and epistemological relativism, the use of symbols and metaphors, cognitive subjectivism and program inconsistencies.

Robert Craig's (1999) metamodel of communication theory is a good complement to the commonly known typologies of paradigms. It is true that Craig's typology is narrowed down to the so-called tradition of communication, but these traditions have clear features of paradigms (Craig 2009). Traditions offer separate, alternative terminologies describing different ways of identifying communication

problems—also important in management practice. Craig (1999, 151) lists seven major traditions: socio-psychological, which treats communication as an interpersonal influence (Who says "what" to whom? With what effect?); cybernetic, engaging communication as information flow and reducing uncertainty; rhetorical, reducing communication to elaborate public speaking; semiotic, engaging communication as a process of sharing meaning through signs; critical, treating communication as a reflective challenge to an unjust discourse; socio-cultural, for which communication is the creation and performance of social reality; phenomenological, engaging communication as experiencing yourself and others through dialogue. Em Griffin (2014) believes that it is possible to combine different traditions. Although every tradition defines communication in its own way and creates barriers to stop foreign ideas, some researchers overcome these barriers and, through "cross-pollination", create concepts rooted in different traditions.

KENNETH D. STRANG'S RESEARCH DESIGN IDEOLOGY

In the management science, other terms are used in addition to the term "paradigm". Kenneth D. Strang (2015) proposes research ideologies (researcher's socio-cultural philosophy) as the broadest concept referring to the subject of modern management science. Research ideology refers to how a scientist thinks about knowledge claims and what research methods he considers acceptable in science. The term "research ideology" is the equivalent of other terms used by scientists in this field of science: W. Lawrence Neuman (2000) uses the term "worldview", Michael Q. Patton (2002)–"design strategy", Egon G. Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln (1994)–"paradigm", Earl Babbie (2010)–"epistemological framework", Michael Crotty (1998)–"theoretical orientation", John Gill, Phil Johnson and Murray Clark (2010)–"archetype", Robert Yin (2009)–"philosophical beliefs".

Kenneth D. Strang distinguishes three main paradigms, three socio-cultural philosophies, applied in modern management science: positivism, pragmatism and constructivism. Research ideology reflects the researcher's attitude towards sources of scientific knowledge as being on the continuum—on the one hand based on scientific theories (explicit knowledge), on the other on qualitative, "silent" meanings expressed by research participants (tacit knowledge). Strang believes that the socio-cultural philosophy of the scholar is not fixed but dynamic, which means that the knowledge, experience, learning and

socialization develop the ideology of the scholar in combination with his/her basic personality and attitude.

The philosophical attitude of a scientist (also an entrepreneur and a manager) can be generally defined on the basis of axiology (ethics), epistemology and ontology. These categories within ideology are the basis for comparing and understanding the terminology and research priorities used by individual scientists (Strang 2015, 18). In business and management, *axiology* refers to the hierarchy of values conditioned by organizational, regional and global culture. It also covers moral values and their impact on business ethics. Strang (2015, 19-21) emphasizes that religious values are a factor that should be taken into account when examining organizational culture. It is also important to understand that scientists come from different cultures and are followers of certain religions or are agnostics and atheists. The religion confessed by a scientist can influence his research ideology. The *epistemological* factor influences the researcher's choice of specific research methods and terminology. There are many differences in the terminology between scientific disciplines; and different notation systems are used: some in operational research and others in social sciences. These differences usually appear either as a qualitative or quantitative approach which, in fact, means preferences for specific data collection and analysis techniques. The researcher's epistemological preferences influence the choice of statistical techniques: in engineering design, vector analysis can be used to analyze data compliance, while in management psychology, the correlation of the exploration factor is used. These differences significantly affect the researcher's ideology. The *ontological* factor influences the general understanding of reality by the researcher. In the science of management, ontology is related to how things exist: as "palpable" versus "intangible", explicit versus implicit, attitude versus behavioral intention. The ontological factor influences what the researcher considers to be real or imagined, true or false, or conscious versus unconscious. A positivist researcher is often looking for facts, such as numbers or behavioral results, which agree or disagree with accepted *a priori* scales. A pragmatically oriented researcher usually interprets numbers and behaviors, degrees of compliance with *a priori* scales, creating new construction scales or their combinations. Constructivists engage participants to interpret behavior, and thus go beyond the *a priori* accepted scales to create new constructions.

Ontological preferences also have an impact on the shape of the scientist's research ideology.

Research ideology has a twofold significance. First, it obliges scientists to express their philosophical views, because ideology affects the selection of research methods and the interpretation of research results. Second, research ideology (the paradigm) serves as a common basis for the communication of scientists and the mutual understanding of their publications. In fact, knowing the ideology of another researcher helps to understand his conceptual patterns and methods.

Kenneth D. Strang does not show superiority to any of the paradigms, but starting from a pragmatic point of view, he states that the diversity of approaches (the "wealth" of methods and techniques) allows for optimal preparation of research strategies. In other words, it allows the theoretical incommensurability to be overcome. This view of paradigms is important and consistent with John Brockman's concept of the Third Culture (1995). Jerzy Bobryk states that the hostility of the culture of natural science (*Science*) and the culture of humanities (*Arts)* harms the mission of all science. He proposes that the basis of the Third Culture should be dialogue, not a simple synthesis, focusing rather than merging; dialogue undertaken with the awareness of differences and acceptance of the limits of both natural and humanistic human vision (Bobryk 2009, 56).

Strang's typology of paradigms, however, has some drawbacks. He included in the constructivism not only critical analysis, well-established theory, ethnography, research in action, and case study, but also phenomenology. Inclusion of phenomenology into constructivism is baseless. In their book *Research Methods in Clinical Psychology*, Barker, Pistrang and Elliott (2002) distinguish two main traditions that use qualitative research, i.e. phenomenology and constructivism. Phenomenologists strive to understand the perception and experience of the world by a given person. Constructivists, on the other hand, focus on the language used in social interactions: its influence on culture, history and social structure. In this light, the typology of Robert Shaw (2010) is noteworthy; he does not abuse the term "paradigm" and talks about research approaches in science and their counterparts in management science, namely: positivist theories of sciences–positivist theories of management, constructivist theories of sciences–constructivist theories of management, and phenomenological theories of sciences–phenomenological theories of management.

The phenomenological paradigm is of great meta-scientific importance because it allows going beyond scientific disputes (revolutions) and to identify and explore key *themata* of management science. This effort requires "overcoming" the theoretical incommensurability and producing a synthesis of philosophy (especially personalism and phenomenology), knowledge science and management science. In the management science, a discussion is underway, aiming to synthesize various organizational and management approaches (Rogoziński 2008; Strang 2015). Kazimierz Rogoziński (2008, 17; 19) notes that the dominant technocratic (positivist) paradigm was built on the material production process. Within its framework, a systemic approach is strong, which is not epistemologically or methodologically sufficient. The organization is treated as a set of elements considered due to the types of couplings between them, and not because of the substantial differences between the elements. This author proposes a new paradigm of management science, which is to be created on the basis of the *poietic*/*naturalness*/*service* process and assumes the autonomy of entities participating in it. Undoubtedly, an important source of inspiration in the creation of a new paradigm of management is phenomenology that, thanks to the study of meaning and interpretation of meanings, allows for deeper exploration of organizational reality (Rogoziński 2008; Heil 2011; Gill 2014; Küpers 2015; Strang 2015).

THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL PARADIGM OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE AS A PHENOMENOLOGICAL PRAXEOLOGY

Salahaddin Khalilov (2012) rightly states that phenomenology has a special place among the philosophical teachings, which try to create an integrated view of the cognitive process in the 20th century. Phenomenology appears as a new stage in the development of the history of Western thought:

> There was a need for a truly great philosophy. Max Scheler's phenomenological idealism-realism, Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology, Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception and other new phenomenologies were not, in fact, a direct continuation of Husserl's teaching but the result of the inclinations towards becoming distant from it in different directions as well as towards approaching philosophical problems. And finally, we encounter the phenomenology of life and we return back to the truly great philosophy. The guarantor of this return is Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka … Poles coalesce at the top.

> … To move away, it should be found in the methods which could complete and rescue mankind from the one-sided thought and from the syndrome of 'alienation', and pave the way for moral richness (Khalilov 2012, 7-8).

Phenomenology enables a deeper insight into human life and human action, synthesized by Jan Patočka (1996) as three basic "movements" of receiving / acceptance, of survival and of transcendence. This third movement especially defines "phenomenology of life and of human condition" established by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka. She found the "Archimedean point" – based on which philosophy can relate to different disciplines of science (and not only) - in human creative acts, within this *philosophia prima* that stresses on the interdisciplinary communication (Tymieniecka 1989, p. 181). She described (argued) the possibility of linking phenomenology with science—psychology, psychiatry—as well as with fine arts and literature; as she asserts in a 2008 interview, phenomenology "passed the pragmatic test" not only in theory:

> Looking back today, we see that phenomenology has entered all sectors of knowledge, in praxis, as much as much as in theory. Phenomenology is discussed in physics, embryology, and elsewhere—not by everyone, of course, but by some. So, its relevance is a simple matter of fact nowadays, but in 1955 it was a problematic question that I addressed (See Torjussen, Servan and Oyen 2008, 26).

The concept of *ontopoiesis*, which expresses creative connections (in reference to the category of "creative act") between space, bios and culture, is the leading concept in Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka's philosophy. This concept means that everything that exists is entangled in an ongoing creative process. *Ontopoiesis* emphasizes the creative factor of all existence. The continuous process of creation is a fundamental manifestation of life, and the overwhelming creation becomes the content of the logos of world and of man. The most complex manifestation of "creative act" is Human Condition, which is the general state of humanity. In this perspective, the philosophy itself plays an important role as a manifestation of "creative experience".

Tymieniecka's emphasis on the meaning of the human "creative factor" reveals the "moral meaning" of the intersubjective social world. Phenomenology of life allows "multiple rationalities" that divide science as a common source, providing a basis for interdisciplinary communication and sustaining the development of

"phenomenological praxeology". It supposes a dialogue about man, which is the common subject of all areas of science, mediated by a unique meaning that is the foundation of a living and cultural world. According to Tymieniecka, the phenomenological praxeology should refer to the existing branches of philosophy: cosmology, ontology, aesthetics, ethics, philosophy of science, metaphysics, etc. Her phenomenology lays out a further direction for investigations, not only for philosophical ones. Assumptions concerning the creative nature of man may provide a basis for new developments of classical problems of ontology, epistemology, axiology and anthropology, as well as of social science and management science. She rightly states that rationality is not a privileged way of knowing. There are instinctive and intuitive signposts in the course of a life (Tymieniecka 2011, 15). It is very important to distinguish the difference between constitutive and creative subjectivity. Tymieniecka considers that the passive nature of classical phenomenology cannot explain the creative activity of man; it is necessary to consider, besides the constitutive function, the *creative function* of man. In contrast to the intentional object, the object of the creative act is not determined by the inner nature of the acts, but it is "the object of the search". Creative imagination plays a major role and, as a real *dynamis* of the human world, it is based not only on knowledge but also on the world of "elements" and passions. A similar parallel is between classical praxeology and phenomenological praxeology. Tymieniecka's phenomenology centered on the creative experience, providing a good basis for the analysis of management understood as creating a "co-create space".

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The question of the paradigm is crucial for both the development of management science and management practice in organizations. The choice of a specific paradigm (research ideology) has a decisive impact on the results of research, the creation of theories and their dissemination. Research ideology has a significant impact on the research strategy, the selection of research methods and inference rules. It also has an impact on the education process, and thus in shaping the worldview of scientists, entrepreneurs and managers.

The science of management must overcome the theoretical incommensurability—that enables Tymieniecka's phenomenology. Although theoretical incommensurability makes paradigms difficult to combine, it is possible to cooperate between researchers representing

different paradigms. However, certain conditions must be met for such a cooperation to be possible. Mutual respect and knowledge about the ontological, epistemological and axiological foundations of research projects is necessary. Paradigms, on the one hand, are the basis for comparing and understanding the applied terminology and research priorities; while, on the other hand, they serve as a common basis for communicating and mutual understanding of their publications. A contemporary scientist, wanting to do his research carefully, cannot ignore the achievements of philosophy.

The phenomenological paradigm is one of considerable importance (meta-scientific) in seeking answers to the key *themata* of management science, because it allows to rise above disputes (revolutions) and to focus on the identification and exploration of key *themata* of management science. In this regard, Tymieniecka's phenomenology of life allows to explore reality in its plenitude, and to answer questions that have always interested people (Cozma 2009).

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