

BOOK REVIEW

Shadrikov V.D. (2021). The return of the soul: Theoretical foundations and methodology of psychological science. M.: Publishing House "Institute of Psychology of the Russian Academy of Sciences"

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Abstract: The monograph "The Return of the Soul: Theoretical Foundations and Methodology of Psychology" return psychological science to a paradigm under the name of the mentalism, in which the subject matter of psychology is defined in terms of the patterns of organization of the human mental world. In the mentalistic paradigm intelligence acts as a system that provides the construction of mental representations of what is happening based on the processing of information coming as from the side of the external environment, and from the side of individual mental experience (accordingly, the unit of analysis is object-related thoughts as a special kind of mental structures). V.D. Shadrikov suggests a way to implement this new paradigm to understand the nature of the soul. The author illustrates his theoretical positions with empirical results using the author's methods.

Keywords: Subject Matter of Psychology, Mentalism, Soul.

1. Introduction

The monograph "The Return of the Soul: Theoretical Foundations and Methodology of Psychology" occupies a special place among the numerous publications of V.D. Shadrikov, since an attempt to generalize knowledge about the nature of the mind is made in this work. The book discusses the methodological and theoretical foundations of a new definition of the subject matter of psychology. The idea of thought as the main category of the inner life of a person and the belief in the need to return the concept of "soul" to the system of scientific categories of psychology is the basis of the proposed approach.

Paradoxically, although the word "psychology" in ancient Greek literally means "the science of the soul" (psyche – "soul", logos – "teaching"), nevertheless,

psychologists, regardless of their affiliations, defiantly left from the soul as a subject of study. V.D. Shadrikov does not merely state that the soul should become the subject of scientific psychology. He suggests a way to implement this new paradigm, namely, to understand the nature of the soul, it is necessary to study the inner world of a person, the unit of analysis of which is thought. The study of the patterns of generation of thoughts and their functioning is, in his opinion, a real tool for studying such a complex mental phenomenon as the soul.

Thought operates as the main category that characterizes the content of a person's inner life. V.D. Shadrikov identifies the following distinctive characteristics of thought:

1. Thought expresses the unity of the image and attributes of an object.

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2. Thought is an ideal construct.

3. Thought always has a subjective character. The process of subjectivation of thought proceeds along three lines: (1) the need of the thinking subject is objectified in thought; (2) thought forms the moral position of the subject; (3) a socio-cultural transformation of thoughts takes place.

4. The structure of thought includes three components such as content, need, and experience. It is in the unity of these three components that makes the thought to appear as a living knowledge.

5. Thought is born from the desires and experiences of a person. Consequently, each thought contains not only the qualities of the objects of the external world, but also the qualities of the person, therefore each thought is personal thought.

Accordingly, new definitions of thinking and intelligence are offered.

Thinking is a qualitatively specific psychological process, the essence of which lies in the generation of thoughts and in working with thoughts using a system of intellectual operations aimed at solving a problem by revealing objective properties, connections and relationships. The most important characteristic of thinking is object-relatedness. Intelligence is the ability to generate thoughts and establish relationships between the images of perceived objects (phenomena, events) and their attributes. The author identifies a common basis for object-related thought, the inner world and the soul of a person: both thoughts, and the inner world, and the soul are a need-emotional-content entity. When analyzing the world of the inner life and soul of a person, according to Shadrikov, several factors come to the fore.

Firstly, the role of past individual experience is emphasized, during the formation of which both its enrichment and its individualization (in the form of individual preferences) take place, up to the development of one's own lifestyle. Accordingly, the complexity of the inner world and the unpredictability of its manifestations increase: a mild person,

outwardly timid and dim, performs a heroic act, and a nice person turns out to be a scoundrel, etc.

Secondly, it is noted the special role of understanding in realizing the content of the mind. Understanding is realized in three ways: (1) understanding is implemented through the establishment of personal meaning, (2) understanding is carried out through the disclosure of functional significance, and (3) understanding is performed through the establishment of logical connections with previous experience.

Thirdly, the mind presented as a totality of objective thoughts, manifests itself in communication and activity primarily through cognitive, motivational, and emotional abilities. Personal qualities begin to be part of abilities, and abilities penetrate into the composition of personal qualities. The intellectual qualities of a person such as far-sighted, inventive, curious, wise, gifted, sensible, and others develop on the basis of abilities. Thus, personality traits and abilities determine each other and develop in a single process of genesis of individuality as a system. In other words, abilities are part of the content of the human soul.

It should be emphasized that the author illustrates his theoretical positions with empirical results using the author's methods.

Empirical research 1. Individual differences in thought generation.

The task of the study is to investigate the process of generating thoughts that arise in the person when perceiving a particular object. In order for the process of generating thoughts to have a detailed character, it is necessary that the object of perception is not familiar to the respondents and that it is possible to freely manipulate the object, revealing its potential features (feel, shake, examine from different angles, etc.). A souvenir of an oil corporation was used as a stimulus-object, which by function is a timer that measures a strictly defined period of time of one of the phases of oil distillation

equal to 27.3 seconds. The object has a cylindrical shape 12 cm high and 5 cm in diameter, inside the cylinder there is a spiral, along which, when turned from top to bottom, black liquid flows down, and air rises from the bottom upwards along the spiral, compensating for the changed pressure in the middle of the vessel.

According to the instructions, the respondent is to describe this object as completely and accurately as possible, highlighting all of its signs (properties) that he/she can detect. During the experiment, any manipulations with the object can be carried out. Respondent has 15 minutes to complete the task.

Main results:

1. The generation of thoughts decreases over time from 5.6 attributes to 0.05.

2. First of all, the respondents identify the attributes of the shape and size of the object, then the signs associated with less common categories (temperature, stability, smoothness, etc.), the signs that begin with the words "similar to ..." have the least frequency.

3. Those respondents who made a guess about the functional purpose of the object identified more thought-related attributes than those who did not make such guesses.

Empirical study 2. Productivity of thought generation in individuals with different levels of intelligence.

Method "Working with thoughts". As a stimulus object, we used a CD, known as an optical information carrier, in the form of a flat plastic circle with a hole in the center, designed for recording and reading information using a special device.

According to the instructions, it was necessary to describe this object as fully and accurately as possible, highlighting all its features that the respondent could detect. They were allowed to carry out any manipulations with the disk. Execution time is 20 minutes. R. Cattell's "Culture-Independent Intelligence Test" was used to assess the level of intelligence.

Main results:

1. Respondents identify the following types of features: (1) attributive (flat, two-sided), (2) functional (storage, read, reproduce), (3) subjective (dull).

2. The higher is the IQ score of the respondents, the longer they retain the ability to produce thinking associations.

3. Respondents with a high level of IQ reproduce attributive and subjective features when describing an object; respondents with lower IQ level more often identify subjective and functional features.

4. Mental activity is accompanied by the emergence of specific experiences which lead to an increase in the energy component (gaiety, optimism, ardor).

So, what, in our view, is the significance of the monograph by V.D. Shadrikov?

Firstly, Shadrikov's research return psychological science to a paradigm under the name of the mentalism, in which the subject matter of psychology is defined in terms of the patterns of organization of the human mental world. One of the basic directions within the framework of mentalism is the study of the structure and laws of the functioning of the human mind, including intelligence. If in the cognitivist paradigm intelligence is considered as a system that receives and processes information coming from outside (respectively, the unit of analysis is "elementary information processes"), then in the mentalistic paradigm intelligence acts as a system that provides the construction of mental representations of what is happening based on the processing of information coming as from the side of the external environment, and from the side of individual mental experience (accordingly, the unit of analysis is object-related thoughts as a special kind of mental structures).

Secondly, the content of mental activity comes to the fore, which has an individualized character (according to Shadrikov, substantive thought as a mental structure is a deeply personal formation). This leads to an important conclusion about the complicated

relationship between mental experience and behavior. The same mental structure can be associated with different behavioral responses, while the same behavioral response can be associated with different mental structures.

Thirdly, we get an affirmative answer to the question of whether an objective analysis of the nature of the mind is possible through subjective phenomenology, in particular, through the self-reports of the person. Indeed, the person himself is a very accurate source of information regarding mental events, and, therefore, the elements of content reported by the person can be regarded as valid indicators of the features of the organization of his/her inner world.

Fourthly, the problem of developing new research methods is posed - explicative methods that make it possible to unfold (literally "pull out from inside out") the real nature of a mental phenomenon through a certain variety of its manifestations (one of such methodological procedures is the

"Working with Thoughts" technique). It is not surprising (and quite right, from our point of view) that the author considers the theoretical statements and empirical data presented in his monograph as a great contribution to the study of the subject matter of psychology.

Highlights:

- Scientific publications in Russia comply with advanced international standards.
- The Russian bibliometric database has a hierarchical structure. The RSCI core is included in Web of Science.
- Russian psychologists have published more than 4,500 articles over the past five years.

Reference

1. Shadrikov, V.D. (2021). The return of the soul: Theoretical foundations and methodology of psychological science. M.: Publishing House "Institute of Psychology of the Russian Academy of Sciences". [Shadrikov, V.D. (2021). Vozvrashcheniye dushi: Teoreticheskiye osnovaniya i metodologiya psikhologicheskoy nauki. M.: Izd-vo «Institut psikhologii RAN»].