

УДК 122/129;16.

DOI <https://doi.org/10.24195/sk1561-1264/2025-1-10>**Poplavska Tatyana Mykolaivna**Candidate of Philosophical Sciences,
Associate Professor at the Department
of Philosophy and Sociology of Social
and Cultural Activity ManagementThe state institution "South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University
named after K. D. Ushynsky"

26, Staroportofrankivska str, Odesa, Ukraine

orcid.org/0000-0003-2492-8068

METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS OF CONTEMPORARY HOLISTIC EPISTEMOLOGY

The cognitive strategies currently prevailing in modern science are in urgent need of expansion and modernization. The holistic cognitive strategies proposed in this article have the potential to significantly broaden the epistemological methodology and thereby elevate science to a qualitatively new level of development.

***The aim of this article** is to analyze the methodological problems of contemporary holistic epistemology and the potential of its cognitive strategies in forming an integral picture of reality.*

***Methods of research.** The leading method in uncovering the specific nature of holistic cognitive strategies is the method of eidetic dialectics, utilizing the principle of the unity of ontology, epistemology, and anthropology.*

***The scientific novelty.** The scientific novelty lies in the problem of methodological analysis and consideration of holistic strategies of cognition, which have not yet been studied in modern philosophy.*

***Conclusion.** The modern era, with its immense achievements of scientific reason embodied in a myriad of technical and technological means, requires the restoration of traditional norms and values, which are capable of softening its internal contradictions. To this end, philosophical inquiry into human existence and being must be conducted from epistemological positions that do not exclude traditional norms and values from the cognitive domain simply because they are not subject to formal logical analysis rather, they must be accepted as paradigmatic foundations of the cognitive system.*

Socio-ethical and humanitarian issues must not be considered as secondary or auxiliary to the pursuit of truth, but as necessary conditions for the effective transmission and realization of that truth.

In this context arises an entire spectrum of issues related to the epistemological positions of both fragmentary and holistic strategies of cognition – strategies that actively shape corresponding worldviews. We cannot force the majority to think differently from how they are accustomed to thinking. But we can implement holistic cognitive strategies into our own practice of knowing thereby enhancing both the efficacy of our work and the quality of our lives.

The necessity of applying holistic strategies in modern science and in the philosophy of knowledge is dictated by several factors:

– *First, both scientific and philosophical knowledge by definition strive to provide the most adequate picture of being, pointing to its primal foundation. This goal cannot be achieved by relying solely on the methodology of formal logic, reductionism, rationalism, and merism.*

– *Second, being in its irrational manifestations, when analyzed strictly within the methodology of «classical» philosophy and detached from the insights of other forms of knowledge, loses its meaning for it ceases to adequately reflect the picture of reality.*

– *Finally, holistic strategies of cognition help form an integral worldview and holistic understanding of the world, which in turn encourages a more adequate relationship of the human being both to themselves and to the surrounding world. And this is an essential condition for the successful adaptation of any individual to the fast-changing rhythms of modern life.*

Key words: holistic epistemology, cognitive strategy, holism, rationalism, eidetic dialectics, multidimensional logic.

Problem Statement. The crisis of scientific rationality has confronted both scientists and philosophers with the urgent need to find a way out, which in turn has given rise to an extensive philosophical discourse concerning the expansion of the boundaries of knowledge, since the very paradigm of science has undergone a substantial transformation. «Our socially oriented understanding of how things really exist is seriously outdated. We are Newtonians in an Einsteinian world», – as this idea was expressed by contemporary Western thinker R. N. Bellah [1].

Methods of research. The leading method in uncovering the specific nature of holistic cognitive strategies is the method of eidetic dialectics, utilizing the principle of the unity of ontology, epistemology, and anthropology.

The scientific novelty. The scientific novelty lies in the problem of methodological analysis and consideration of holistic strategies of cognition, which have not yet been studied in modern philosophy.

There is a growing dissatisfaction with the assumptions of classical epistemology in the cultural specificity of modern science. In this regard, we can identify two main blocks of problems. The first relates to the fact that the formal-logical picture of the world, as it has evolved, has gradually led to the loss of meaning in existence and even to the assertion of its absurdity.

The second block of problems is associated with the fact that in studying the problems of being, classical epistemology has gradually led to the intensification of alienation between the human being, their consciousness, and existence as a whole. At the same time, many researchers note that the striving for a holistic, indivisible picture of the world is likely a deep and insatiable human need.

The restoration of the original wholeness of the image of being is possible only by forming a modern view of knowledge from fundamentally new positions. The need for an alternative approach to cognition – one beyond what classical theory offers – has been felt in both Western European and Ukrainian philosophy throughout the second half of the 20th century and into the 21st. This has been expressed in the pursuit of an organic theory of knowledge that overcomes the incompleteness and over-expansion of purely mental visions of knowing.

This idea was most clearly formulated by Alfred North Whitehead, who emphasized the need for new interpretations of all human cognitive activity and, accordingly, for the creation of a new field of knowledge – not just a theory, but rather a philosophy of cognition [2].

Turning to holistic gnoseology and its cognitive strategies is driven by the urgent need to restore the legitimacy of traditional norms and values, capable of softening the internal contradictions of modern science. What is required is a philosophical approach to human and existential knowledge from such gnoseological positions that do not exclude traditional norms and values from the cognitive field as something logically unanalysable – but instead embrace them as paradigmatic foundations of the system of knowledge itself.

For instance, in traditional Indian philosophy, which by its very nature is deeply holistic, epistemology was – and still is – developed, first, in relation to specific conceptions about the nature of the human being and their consciousness, depending on the level of development of their intellect and other cognitive abilities – which, of course, are not equal in everyone. Secondly, knowledge theory is structured according to the level and nature of knowledge itself, forming a kind of epistemological hierarchy, in which the meaning of knowledge changes depending on the hierarchical status of particular groups within society. Descriptions of such gnoseological hierarchies can be found in the writings of René Guénon, Mircea Eliade, Julius Evola and other researchers of ancient civilizations.

Thirdly, epistemology within the holistic tradition is developed in close connection with all dimensions of individual and collective being – vertically and horizontally – from mystical and priestly levels to levels of everyday practice, production, trade, engineering, construction, agriculture, craftsmanship, etc.

For example, when priests in the cultures of India, Egypt, or Ancient Greece formulated doctrines about the structure of the universe and the nature of humanity from the standpoint of the highest synthetic contemplation – grounded in “intellectual intuition” (Schelling, Guénon, and others) – they operated with concepts such as the One, the Eternal, the Indivisible, the Immutable. Meanwhile, teach-

ings developed for the warrior caste emphasized dynamism, movement, and the dialectical unfolding of the world. The cosmos for them was in constant motion. Yet this permanent dynamism did not negate the principle of the integral unity of the Universe, of the world and human being. This unity is understood as immanent, expressing itself through a paradoxical unity of opposites – the dialectics of diverse dyads or pairs (yin–yang, day–night, sky–earth, masculine–feminine, and so on).

At the same time, in the third caste – the caste of artisans or craftsmen – sacred knowledge was based on more concrete "technological" myths. Here, the focus was not on the structure of the Whole, nor on the study of all of nature (either in its transcendent priestly or immanent warrior dimension), but rather on specific spheres, typically linked to a particular profession. From this tradition arose a specific guild or artisanal science (and mythos), a vivid example of which can be found in ancient Rome's *Collegium Fabrorum*.

Similar views on the problem of knowledge and the transmission of knowledge are also found in Ancient China, where Confucius, in his treatises, developed the idea of four categories of people and their corresponding levels of cognitive capacity. He said that there are four categories of people distinguished by whether they possess knowledge (wisdom), are capable of acquiring it, or are not able to comprehend it at all.

The first category includes those who possess perfect wisdom – that is, those who are born with knowledge, as it is granted to them by Heaven. The second group acquires knowledge through study; these are noble men who form the backbone of order in the Celestial Empire, reverently listening to the perfectly wise. The third category consists of those who persist in learning despite difficulty. The fourth – the people – are those who suffer hardship and are incapable of acquiring knowledge. «You can make the people obey», Confucius wrote, «but you cannot make them understand why» [3].

The difficulty of applying such an approach in contemporary society lies in the dominance, among the vast majority of people, of a particular type of mentality commonly described as rational or discursive. It has been shaped by the existing positivist and spiritually devoid educational system, which widely relies on strictly formal, one-dimensional logic. As a result, cognition, moving in a linear path toward any given object, dissects the world into parts with the sharp blade of its "either–or," only to construct from the lifeless fragments of divided reality a purely conceptual, abstract universe.

The well-known physicist John von Neumann, realizing that the quantum world could not be reconciled with Aristotelian «either- either», proposed a three-valued logic. To Aristotle's binary options – «either- either», – von Neumann added a third: «maybe». Some physicists believe that von Neumann resolved all paradoxes this way, while others view his ternary quantum logic merely as a formalism or clever device that, ultimately, fails to clarify the uncertainties of quantum phenomena. At the same time, transactional psychology shows that human perception of reality often begins precisely with the state of «maybe».

For holistic strategies of cognition to develop successfully, a new language is needed – not so much in terms of vocabulary (which even a layperson can eventually master), but in terms of a new way of thinking: an expanded, multidimensional logic. This logic differs from classical Aristotelian logic as radically as Euclidean geometry differs from Einstein's theory of relativity.

The formation of such a holistic mentality may be greatly facilitated by familiarity with Eastern logic, particularly Buddhist logic, which has preserved a unified worldview and mode of understanding to this day. A detailed description of this holistic mentality and multidimensional logic can be found in the writings of the renowned spiritual teacher and author Lama Anagarika Govinda [4].

Classical Western logic, explains Lama Govinda, moves toward the object of knowledge in a straight line, from a clearly fixed «point of view», an axiom, an unambiguously formulated premise; whereas the Eastern method of knowing is more akin to circling around the object of contemplation. The Western «frontal attack» leads to faster and more definitive results – yet these results are as one-sided as they are clear-cut. The Eastern thinker reaches his goal by means of a constantly renewed «concentric approach», moving toward the object through tightening circles; and as a result of the summation, or integrative convergence, of discrete impressions received from various angles,

a multidimensional, many-sided vision is formed-until, at the final and conceptually elusive stage of this concentric approximation, the observing subject becomes one with the object of contemplation.

From this experience, a symbol is born- a guiding sign, comparable to the symbolic language of mathematics – a paradox that transcends itself. Perhaps that is why this new language resembles the language of poets more than that of conventional scientists.

The challenge in developing this mode of thinking lies not in fixing the mind in accordance with the rigid system of classical logic, where two contradictory statements cannot be simultaneously true and no third option is allowed. The challenge is to keep the mind flexible – to allow it to change vantage points, to let it make its circuits around the object of inquiry. This form of thought does not negate traditional logic any more than higher mathematical logic negates basic arithmetic. Rather, it assigns each type of logic its rightful place.

However, even in Western culture there were methods analogous to those described by Govinda. It suffices to recall Socrates and his dialectical *maieutics*, which may be defined as the art of arriving at philosophical truths, the art of posing questions and discovering answers. Socrates conversed with various people and led them, through dialogue, to the truth – passing with them through certain stages of “birth” of that truth. The starting point was always some commonly accepted opinion on the subject in question, which was then subjected to a series of examinations and corrections, gradually transforming to embrace certain facts and finally yielding the content and form that Socrates himself sought.

The essence of the Socratic method lies in arriving at positive conclusions through a series of negations. His dialogues often ended by proving our ignorance of the very matter being discussed – for instance, what is good, justice, piety, etc. – and this, in itself, was the core of the inductive method [5].

The use of dialogue to attain truth is one of Socrates’ greatest contributions to the history of philosophy, for before him, philosophers mostly postulated their ideas without challenge. In Socratic dialectics were embodied his anti-dogmatism, his pluralism, his tolerance toward differing views, and his deep irony. He did not consider himself a «father of wisdom», but sought only to awaken in others the aspiration toward truth. His famous saying – «I know that I know nothing, but others do not even know that» – is widely cited. For him, to know a thing meant to uncover its essence by stripping away the accidental and isolating those traits that are uniquely its own, even in the ever-changing flux of the physical world.

Socratic dialectic is, by its nature, eidetic (A.F. Losev) and multidimensional, for it allows all kinds of human experience – even religious and mystical – and accepts all forms of knowledge, including mythological and metaphysical.

In developing holistic strategies of knowledge, we must begin with the assertion that the essence of the universe and of the human being lies in the identity of their being: Being is fully present both in the object of knowledge and in the knowing subject and this is precisely what makes it possible to comprehend reality as a Whole.

Moreover, it is crucial to acknowledge and accept the fact that in holistic gnoseology, there is full equality among different forms of knowledge, those found in mythology, religion, morality, philosophy, science, art, and law. These forms are internally interconnected and represent inseparable, fused components of knowledge, each corresponding to a different facet of human nature and, hence, to distinct cognitive channels through which the world can be apprehended. The contents of mythological, scientific, religious, philosophical, artistic, and legal knowledge together form what may be called *integral knowledge* and at the same time, this «integral knowledge» is generated within each of these forms. What shifts over time are only the relationships among them: all are recognized as equal and necessary in constructing a complete picture of being, for each corresponds to the inherent capacities of the human being to know the world.

This *integral knowledge* possesses many of the same qualities that are characteristic of scientific knowledge. For instance, formal-logical methods of cognition are not rejected, but it is demanded that their results take into account the data and achievements of other forms of knowing. In relation to science, «integral knowledge» can function as a methodological foundation, since it accumulates

human understanding acquired not only through scientific methods but also through others many of which are irrational and rooted in other forms of cognition: mythological, religious, artistic, legal, philosophical.

In essence, all these features could and indeed should belong to philosophy. In that case, philosophy would truly fulfill the role of «integral knowledge». But in practice, philosophical inquiry is often constrained by the diverse value positions of specific thinkers, and with the decline of ancient culture, philosophical knowledge in the European region lost its integral character.

Thus, there exist various forms of knowledge about the world – from mythological, religious, and philosophical, to natural-scientific. The issue of integral knowledge, it seems, may be resolved through the broader acceptance and popularization of holistic cognitive strategies. This implies the inclusion of not only sensory and irrational methods of knowing – such as contemplation or intuitive insight- but also fully rational ones, such as multidimensional dialectics, induction, deduction, analysis followed by synthesis, and so forth.

The subject of philosophy is not the world of phenomena reduced to human sensations, nor the world of ideas reduced to human thoughts. Philosophy must not concern itself merely with the external order of phenomena, for it should not equate being with mere actuality; at the same time, it must not deny the knowability of being, understanding reality as merely the image or reflection of integral being. This implies that the true task and meaning of philosophy lie in the explanation and grounding of being in the discovery of its ultimate foundation, and thereby, its unity. In philosophy, there must be expressed the creative relationship of human consciousness to the transcendent world, while at the same time facilitating the transformation of transcendent truth into the form of freely rational thought.

Philosophy must grasp reality not through abstract observation or within the subject-object paradigm, but in the vision of being as co-being which is shaped and constituted by the act of a concrete individual. A similar position was held by F. Schelling, who insisted that the development of new philosophical foundations and methods must be guided by the «science» by which Nature itself operates: «Nature is not like human science, bound by self-reflection; in it, the concept is not separate from action, the intention from its realization» [6].

The essence of authentic philosophy, then, should not be in forming foundational beliefs for a person, but in refining the relationships between personal convictions, eternal values, and contemporary culture.

Thus, the essence of the proposed changes in the strategy of cognition lies in the following:

1. The goal of any cognition must be the search for truth or the essence of things that to which knowledge is truly directed rather than self-affirmation or self-realization.

2. Truth is always relative, as it is multifaceted and multi-aspectual. Knowledge of one or several of its facets does not grant the right to deny the existence of all others. From this follows tolerance toward the opinions of others and a striving for cooperation rather than competition.

3. Since truth is multifaceted, its comprehension is only possible when all intellectual and spiritual aspects of the knowing subject are engaged. Therefore, the attainment of adequate or integral knowledge is achievable only in the harmonious unity of diverse forms of knowledge.

This list can certainly be expanded. Yet even what has already been said is enough to outline the circle of methodological challenges facing holistic epistemology. These range from the personal qualities of contemporary philosophers and scientists the «seekers of truth» to the conservative majority that divides all knowledge indiscriminately into «scientific» and «non-scientific». The range of methodological problems facing the reemerging holistic gnoseology is indeed vast. Nevertheless, life itself with its dynamism, fluidity, and demand for constant change compels us to search for a way out of the impasse in which not only science, with its methodology grounded in rationalism and reductionism, now finds itself, but also our entire technogenic civilization, with its cult of scientific and technological progress, egocentrism, individualism, and other «-isms».

Conclusions. The modern era, with its immense achievements of scientific reason embodied in a myriad of technical and technological means, requires the restoration of traditional norms and values, which are capable of softening its internal contradictions. To this end, philosophical inquiry into

human existence and being must be conducted from epistemological positions that do not exclude traditional norms and values from the cognitive domain simply because they are not subject to formal logical analysis rather, they must be accepted as paradigmatic foundations of the cognitive system.

Socio-ethical and humanitarian issues must not be considered as secondary or auxiliary to the pursuit of truth, but as necessary conditions for the effective transmission and realization of that truth.

In this context arises an entire spectrum of issues related to the epistemological positions of both fragmentary and holistic strategies of cognition – strategies that actively shape corresponding worldviews. We cannot force the majority to think differently from how they are accustomed to thinking. But we *can* implement holistic cognitive strategies into our own practice of knowing thereby enhancing both the efficacy of our work and the quality of our lives.

The necessity of applying holistic strategies in modern science and in the philosophy of knowledge is dictated by several factors:

- First, both scientific and philosophical knowledge by definition strive to provide the most adequate picture of being, pointing to its primal foundation. This goal cannot be achieved by relying solely on the methodology of formal logic, reductionism, rationalism, and merism.

- Second, being in its irrational manifestations, when analyzed strictly within the methodology of «classical» philosophy and detached from the insights of other forms of knowledge, loses its meaning for it ceases to adequately reflect the picture of reality.

- Finally, holistic strategies of cognition help form an integral worldview and holistic understanding of the world, which in turn encourages a more adequate relationship of the human being both to themselves and to the surrounding world. And this is an essential condition for the successful adaptation of any individual to the fast-changing rhythms of modern life.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Robert N. Bellah, Richard Madsen, Steven M. Tipton & 2 more. The Good Society. The New York Times Book Review, 1992. 368 p.
2. Alfred North Whitehead. Science and the Modern World. Simon and Schuster, 1967. 212 p.
3. The Analects: Conclusions and Conversations of Confucius. Univ of California Press, 2020. 176 p.
4. Govinda, Anagarika Brahmachari. Art and meditation: an introduction and twelve abstract paintings. Delhi: Book Faith India, 1999. 74 p.
5. Xenophon, Martin Hammond, Carol Atack. Memories of Socrates: Memorabilia and Apology (Oxford World's Classics). Oxford University Press, 2023. 304 p.
6. Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling. Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur. Edition Holzinger, 2013. 296 p.

REFERENCES

1. Robert N. Bellah, Richard Madsen, Steven M. (1992). Tipton & 2 more. The Good Society. The New York Times Book Review. 368p. [in English].
2. Alfred North Whitehead. (1967). Science and the Modern World. Simon and Schuster. 212 p. [in English].
3. The Analects: Conclusions and Conversations of Confucius. Univ of California Press. 2020. 176 p. [in English].
4. Govinda, Anagarika Brahmachari. (1999). Art and meditation: an introduction and twelve abstract paintings. Delhi: Book Faith India. 74 p. [in English].
5. Xenophon, Martin Hammond, Carol Atack. (2023). Memories of Socrates: Memorabilia and Apology (Oxford World's Classics). Oxford University Press. 304 p. [in English].
6. Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling. (2013). Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur. Edition Holzinger. 296 p. [in English].

Поплавська Тетяна Миколаївна
кандидат філософських наук,
доцент кафедри філософії, соціології
та менеджменту соціокультурної діяльності
ДЗ «Південноукраїнський національний педагогічний університет
імені К. Д. Ушинського»
вул. Старопортофранківська, 26, Одеса, Україна
orcid.org/0000-0003-2492-8068

МЕТОДОЛОГІЧНІ ПРОБЛЕМИ СУЧАСНОЇ ХОЛІСТИЧНОЇ ГНОСЕОЛОГІЇ

Існуючі в сучасній науці стратегії пізнання потребують розширення та модернізації. Пропоновані в статті холістичні стратегії пізнання можуть значно розширити пізнавальну методологію, тим самим вивести науку на якісно інший рівень розвитку.

Мета цієї статті – аналіз методологічних проблем сучасної холістичної гносеології та можливостей її пізнавальних стратегій у формуванні цілісної картини світобудови.

Методи дослідження. Провідним методом у розкритті специфіки холістичних стратегій пізнання став метод едетичної діалектики з використанням принципу єдності онтології, гносеології та антропології.

Висновки. Сучасна епоха з властивим їй розмахом досягнень наукового розуму, втіленого у різноманітні засоби техніки та технології, потребує відновлення у правах традиційних норм і цінностей, здатних пом'якшити її протиріччя. Для цього необхідне філософське пізнання людини і буття з таких гносеологічних позицій, які не виключають традиційні норми та цінності з ментального поля дослідження, що не піддаються логічному аналізу, а приймають їх як парадигмальні підстави системи пізнання.

Соціально-етичні та гуманітарні проблеми не повинні бути лише супутніми пошуку істини, а повинні розглядатися як необхідна умова ефективної трансляції істини. У зв'язку з цим виникає коло проблем, пов'язане з гносеологічними позиціями фрагментарної та холістичної стратегії пізнання, які активно впливають на формування відповідних типів світогляду.

Ми не можемо змусити переважну більшість думати інакше, ніж вони звикли, але можемо впроваджувати у свою пізнавальну практику саме холістичні стратегії пізнання, тим самим підвищуючи ефективність свого життя та своєї роботи.

Необхідність застосування холістичних стратегій у сучасній науці та філософії пізнання обумовлена такими факторами:

По-перше, тим, що як наукове, так і філософське знання зі свого визначення прагне дати найбільш адекватну картину буття із зазначенням його першооснови. Цієї мети не можна досягти, спираючись лише на методологію формальної логіки, на редуccionізм, раціоналізм, меризм тощо.

По-друге, буття у його ірраціональних проявах, аналізоване у межах методології «класичної» філософії, у відриві від досягнень інших форм знання, втрачає сенс, оскільки перестає адекватно відбивати картину буття.

Нарешті, по-третє, холістичні стратегії пізнання формують цілісне світосприйняття і світорозуміння, яке і сприяє адекватному ставленню людини як до себе, так і до навколишнього середовища проживання, що є істотною умовою успішної адаптації будь-якої людини до ритмів сучасного життя, що швидко змінюються.

Ключові слова: холістична гносеологія, стратегія пізнання, холізм, раціоналізм, едетична діалектика, багатовимірна логіка.