

SOCIO - PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF INNOVATIONS

*Eldar Shahgaldiyev**Khazar University- Baku, Azerbaijan*

As a new field of study “Innovation” is part of contemporary philosophical thought often grouped with social philosophy, philosophy of science and technology. More precisely, it is part of the science of praxeology. The prioritizing of science as a key part of national development strategy is supported by a number of academics¹ of the book as a prerequisite to the practice of social change, in accordance with the current developmental stage of the globalized world.

There is a large body of research dedicated to the **socio-philosophical analysis of innovation**, examining its genesis, structure and specific characteristics.² However, in general, there is insufficient attention paid to its most important aspect regarding the philosophy of its measurement. This aspect is its reflective nature, which reveals its place and role in the development of society through the established categorical scheme of philosophical methodology. A justified philosophical model of innovation requires at least the two essential conditions: recognition sequence of the innovation process and increased financial investment in science (as science is becoming more and more expensive). Thus, the economic

context of understanding innovation is crucial for each research project.

But what distinguishes philosophy of innovation? In our view, the attributes of philosophical analysis are always theoretical schemes – categorical and methodological which in turn can be set in the universal sense, including the praxeological. In philosophy the multiple facets of innovation (high tech, novelty, patenting, techno sphere, technological innovation, advanced technology, commercialized innovation, induced innovation, innovation creativity, innovative changes, etc.) create certain confusions in the determination of notional apparatus and concept dichotomy, object and purpose within the history of human activity and resources. “On the one hand, innovation represents continuity with the past. It is continuity in the sense that innovation is about novelty, an idea that was present in many forms before innovation took on a central place in representations, as we will see. It is also continuity in the sense that innovation is, to many, concerned with technological invention, which is a dominant understanding of what invention came to mean over time. However, on the other hand innovation is a break with the past in the sense that it suggests that invention per se is not enough. There has to be use and adoption of the invention, namely innovation, in order for benefits to accrue.”³ As this paper does not pursue to explicitly clarify the terminological polemics around “innovation”, or its genealogical outline (about which much has been written), we will only seek to support the arguments that innovations should be analyzed within their internal contextual and structural elements related to a certain time. Thus, “innovation” is now more all-embracing in terms of its internal constituents and consistent elements.

Today, innovations from the leading high-tech industries significantly penetrate society and culture. Enhanced application of ICT technologies, biotechnology and biomedicine, artificial intelligence and anthropomorphic robots,

new biometrical devices such as iris checks, sound wave measurements, sound editions and other features or security checks that have become part of immigration procedures, open up new horizons and norms for scientific research, as well as generating new ontology and global "communication hubs" for further research. The modern world has also begun to dismantle the philosophical dichotomy of subject / object, and calls for the new "unbundling meanings".

Modern philosophy of science and technology should encompass the major technological advances of post-industrial civilization and innovative industry. In its turn, the latter should move in the direction of maximally "pragmatic philosophy". Thus, the new field of study is generated at the intersection between biosocial and technology, more precisely, at the edge of the boundaries of "novelty" and "traditional". This is a new crossroads, where the alternative ontology and epistemological models are expanding the axiological and moral horizons. That is why, it is quite logical to assume that the modern philosophy of science and technology should also serve as an innovation philosophy.

However, the object of its study is not only *the phenomenon of modern technology* and "high-tech" developments, but the essence of both. In fact, as a type of active agent, innovation substantially transforms and changes the content of the old traditional philosophical problems and issues, at the same time more involving the human presence as the main vector of development, which is directed towards the soaring technological intervention in biosocial spheres. It is useful at this point to provide some models of philosophical interpretations related to the identification of content analysis of innovation for greater clarity.

Robert K. Merton, Jacques Ellul, and Mario Bunge⁴ are the outstanding representatives of philosophical analysts of technology who have also delved into the holistic and scientific evaluation of innovation phenomena. In the book "The Technological Society" (1964) J. Ellul described all technological innovations as "technique" tended to be applied to the global applications of the repeated cycles for gaining the certain final and successful goals. He wrote that "technique" for him is potentially applicable to any area of life and is always judged and modified by the criteria of efficiency. While describing

technology, Mario Bunge states that it is unfortunate that the philosophy of pragmatism has given us less. He describes the relations between technology and philosophy "in terms of inputs and outputs. On the output side, he notes the technology supplies system-theoretical-ontologies (i.e. conceptual systems of the nature of scientifically knowable object like the Bunge himself has produced in a multi-volume treatise)."⁵

Another *modern conceptual source of the subject matter* is the "The Ellul Forum" founded in 1988. It plays a crucial role in illustrating and debating around the research and analyses of innovations. It publishes the articles and results of discussions on innovations, the critique referring to the technological civilizations connected with new trends of the world development. Professor Erik Persson writes: "The pathologies of "extreme science" and "the science of the implausible" show up almost everywhere in today's scientific world, the most spectacularly, perhaps, in fields such as genetic engineering, embryonic stem cell research, cloning, nanotechnology, artificial intelligence (AI), and robotics with their outlandish discourses on such topics as the transformation of all living matter into "gray goo" through an out-of-control self-replicating nanoproces ("the accident to end all accidents"), the selective killing of enemy populations through genetically engineered "nanoviruses", the cure of all illnesses through nanomedicaments or stem cell broths made on aborted fetuses, the cloning of human beings and the "uploading" of their minds into a computer's memory, or the future overshadowing and replacement of man by artificially hyper intelligent robots, just to mention a few popular themes of this kind. Evidently, also virtual reality and cyberspace must be included amongst the manifestations of "extreme science", exuding the typical odour of unrestrained technolatriy and pneumapathology"⁶ Technology is not an educational panacea. It is only a tool to help solve a broad based problem. We have to use technology rather than be used by it.⁷

Science, through its its historical development, can correct the "practical urgency of innovations" which is characterized by 3 types of changes in the scientific rationality followed by Stepin V.S. and Kuznetsova L.F: classical, non-classical and post-non classical rationality. They wrote: "the criteria for distinguishing them are: 1) The features of

organizational system of objects assimilated by science (simple systems, complex self-correcting, self-developing complex systems), 2) the inherent rationality of each type of system of ideals and standards of research (explanation, description, rationale, structure and construction of knowledge) and 3) the specifics of the philosophical and methodological reflections over the cognitive activity, ensuring the inclusion of scientific knowledge in their historical culture.”⁸

The methodology of scientific innovation constitutes the cornerstone for its perspective dimensions which includes three interrelated elements which are usually analyzed separately: (a) conditions for the effectiveness of innovation, (b) resources, models of commercialization of research, and (c) standards and risks of innovation.

Despite the abundance of existing interpretations about the socio-philosophical analyses of the *content and structure of innovation*, there are still some areas that require special attention from the scientists. Thus we believe that first of all, there should be a clear definition encompassing the universal scale of "innovation", its demarcation lines to be consolidated into the most effective artificial integrity. Second the process of thought in innovation (observations, hypotheses, experiments, laws and theories) is not connected only with the diversity existing between the old and new or various speeds of scientific developments, but also with "commonalities" of modern innovations for all to bring the ends together. But would it be possible? On this point, Wayne E. Bundy writes: "It is fortunate, indeed, that the scientific method is not universally accepted and is rigidly followed perception for discovery in science and technology. Such blind obedience would help to assure the persistence of status quo, thereby decreasing the credibility of the technical world.”⁹

Third, not all innovations applied in the course of the global production turn "the thing" into "hot money", "speculative transactions", that is why a thorough theory of "risks and management of innovations" also need to be in place.

Fourth, the continuing changes of innovation have the increasing number of attractive features for its users such as improvement of social welfare, social and economic accelerations, and product-development activities and so on. It clearly needs to more precisely analyze and categorize the user and producer relations while

applying innovations. From this end, professor Eric Von Hippel quite justifiably writes that "if an electrician were to develop an improvement to the installation attributes of a switch, it would be considered a user-developed innovation".¹⁰ This process will further inevitably need the establishment of "*democratizing the nature of innovation*".

Future developments in the formation of new innovations will undoubtedly belong to the concept of transformation of biosphere into noosphere and emerging of artificial life of biosphere and global society in the 21st and 22nd centuries. In our opinion, this kind of systematic socio-natural approach to the changes of innovative processes will present itself as the most comprehensive method to interpret the socio-philosophical and epistemological analyses of the issue. Evidently, innovations usually turn to inherit some remarkable *metaphysical processes* of the history and one cannot contradict the following arguments and conclusions drawn by Mario Bunge: "1. The world is composed of things, that is, it is not simple, and it is not made of ideas or of shades of ideas; 2. Things get together in systems (composed of things in more or less close interaction), and some systems are fairly well isolated from others; 3. All things, all facts, all processes, whether in nature or in society, fit into objective stable patterns (laws); 4. Nothing comes out of nothing and nothing goes over into nothingness; 5. Determination is often multiple and probabilistic rather than simple or linear.”¹¹

Now, let us say a few words about the most debatable and *contradictory sides of innovation*. Techno genetic rationale usually contributes to the improvement of life conditions of the humanity. However, at the same time it also leads to global degradation of human biosphere facilitating to the arousal of artificial life. It is also connected with the modern contradictory market economy and its formative role in the technocratic society. Scientists should more rigorously combine their efforts on the humanistic approaches to new discoveries and innovative practices and more pragmatically focus on democratizing innovations and creativity in modern organizations.

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Author's biography

Eldar Shahgaldiyev is Associate Professor at Khazar University, Head of Division of Graduate Studies and Research, and Associate Vice Rector. He joined Khazar University in 1999 as an instructor in Sociology and Educational Psychology. Previously he was Editor of "Yurd", issued by the Office of the President of Republic of Azerbaijan, Supervisor of the Training & Staff Competency Department at McDermott, and a staff member at IOM Azerbaijan.

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