

Проблема свободы уходит своими корнями в сферу ментальной активности человека как возможности продуцировать индивидуальные смыслы на основе базовых образоструктур сознания и его рефлексивной функции. Смысл рождает выбор...

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INTERNATIONALISATION OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES – CHALLENGES FOR RESEARCH AND RESEARCH POLICIES IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

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In the context of globalisation and systemic transformation of the world community international collaboration in the social sciences and humanities (SSH) is currently meeting with increased public attention; expectations and funding. It seems that in a world where social phenomena increasingly possess a transnational dimension, an international and interdisciplinary research orientation becomes mandatory for analysing and explaining them. Recent technological, political, economic and social developments have created new necessities, yet also new possibilities for international exchange. However, preconditions for and effects on international research collaboration in the SSH have not yet been sufficiently discussed. The planned publication aims to fill this gap by addressing some of the fundamental challenges for research and research policies that result from the internationalisation of the social sciences and humanities in different parts of the world. In so doing, it will give special attention to countries and regions outside the traditional 'centres' of academic knowledge production and introduce the specificities of selected research communities in 'Non-Western' countries to an international audience.

International collaboration in the social sciences and humanities is of course no new phenomenon. SSH have engaged in international activities since they emerged from philosophy and differentiated into disciplines in the context of the creation of modern nation states. The extent to which international activities played a role in the past certainly varies across disciplines. While some disciplines, like anthropology, have always been international due to the nature of their topics, some other disciplines have only recently expanded their international activities.

Under the current conditions of globalisation and systemic transformation international collaboration in the social sciences and humanities faces two major challenges: firstly, internationality is no longer limited to comparing similar phenomena across different nation-based societies; instead, because of the globalisation of social reality, internationality be-

comes part of the nature of the social sciences phenomena themselves. Reflecting on international aspects thus is no longer an additional optional scientific activity, but becomes a necessary ingredient of investigating social reality. This implies, secondly, that international collaboration in the social sciences is no longer mainly a matter of exchanging ex post views about the outcomes of research carried out in national contexts; instead the collaborative generation of knowledge about the international nature of the phenomena social sciences and humanities are dealing with becomes a sine qua non for scientific work.

These trends can be considered paradigmatic changes of scientific work in the social sciences and humanities that are widely underestimated. They create fundamental challenges for research as well as for research policies that have not yet been fully understood.

As of today, internationality in SSH research is commonly still defined by the multiplicity of research subjects' national backgrounds, thus – unconsciously and certainly unwillingly – re-introducing national categories as the guiding perspective into international academic activities. This relapse into national perspectives is not only still dominating research agendas, but also research policies that promote international partnership.

The conceptualization of international collaboration on the basis of national categories and the construction of research agendas that serve the needs of individual nation states have most obviously severe implications for constructing an international research agenda. Very often, aims and topics of international research cooperation are dominated by the agendas of a limited number of countries, which define what should be considered the major concerns of a globalised world. In order to solve this important problem and meet the global challenges, social sciences have to give strong responses and provide a platform to discuss and explain the nature of the fundamental changes in the social reality and social sciences.

These changes and challenges affect all the regions. If we apply this thesis to Belarus, then we can talk about some special global and regional challenges here.

1. Global challenges to Belarus. Primarily, the global challenges for research mean the changes in the world economy that influence – directly and indirectly – the financial situation for research in a particular “third” country. Belarus, like many other countries; is interested in the new “global” topics such as global illegal migration, trafficking, unemployment, ecological and moral issues, and the like. Belarusian scholars can contribute their knowledge to the transnational projects on these global issues. The problem is that Belarusian scholars do not have enough resources for SSH.

2. Regional challenges. These challenges are also very important. For example, the Belarusian post-soviet region differs from the Central-European region such as Poland (although both belonged to the socialist camp). Scholars from each region can easily understand each other and cooperate because of their common background (in case they are not politically biased). It makes sense to work together in the Central-Eastern European region regardless of the fact what countries belong to the European Union, and what are not. Actually, in the post-soviet region all the scholars are experiencing the shortage in financing their research. That is why it is necessary for Belarusian scholars to cooperate with the partners from the European Union in any topic that is available at this moment.

3. National challenges. Of course, Belarus as a post-soviet developing country is aimed to improve the standard of living, and Belarusian scholars are oriented to perform better research, contribute to their country benefits, improve the system of education, etc. In order to achieve the national goals, Belarusian scholars need the international support.

In case the country, region, and the global community of scholar can properly understand these challenges and act accordingly, then there is a chance for social sciences for further successful development under the new complexity of the global world.