

THE CATEGORICAL SYSTEM OF PSYCHOLOGY. AN EXPERIENCE OF CONSTRUCTING A THEORY OF THEORIES IN PSYCHOLOGY

A.V. PETROVSKY^a, V.A. PETROVSKY^b

^a *Worked at Psychological Institute, Russian Academy of Education*

^b *National Research University Higher School of Economics, 20 Myasnikskaya Str., Moscow, 101000, Russian Federation*

Abstract

For decades, Soviet psychologists were engaged in the search for the cell (unit) of the psyche. The idea to transfer the ‘goods’ (the classical cell of the political economy of Marxism) into the sphere of psychological constructions seemed tempting. During the subsequent critical review, each of these “cells” has never emerged as the sole creator of the mental. The paper proposes a different interpretation of the mental world: it is formed not by a single “cell” in its development, but by a complex, multi-stage, internally connected, but qualitatively specific system of categories that finds sources for the development and internal organization in nature and society. The categories were identified that form pleiads and clusters in theoretical psychology, the “theory of theories”, in which psychology reflects itself. The pleiade of the categories of natural causality indicates phenomena that can be documented by objective methods, “from the outside” (biophysical data). The pleiade of protopsychological categories contains noumena (intelligible entities). A pleiade of basic psychological categories refers to phenomena that are available for introspection. The pleiade of metapsychological categories contains ideas (unity of the thought and the conceivable, self-fulfilling representations). The pleiade of extrapsychological categories are controversies (discretions that instigate a diverse reinterpretation of existence and the mutual criticism of ideas about it by different researchers). Each of the clusters of categories reflects a fundamental dimension of human existence. Such are substantiality (organism, being, subject, the I, personality); orientation (deficit, need, motive, value, ideal); activity (metabolism, reflex, action, object activity, freedom); cognitivity (signal, sensation, image, consciousness, mind); bias (selectivity, affectivity, experience, feeling, meaning); co-being (synergy, coexistence, interaction, communication, involvement); and reality (environment, field, situation, objectness, world). There are different logical mechanisms of the horizontal (pleiades) and vertical (clusters) integration of the categories inherent to the process of their theoretical synthesis, which reflects the logic of the phylo-, socio- and ontogenesis of human beings in their becoming and development.

Keywords: theory of theories, “cell”, natural causality, noumena, phenomena, ideas, controversies, substantiality, orientation, activity, cognitivity, bias, co-being, reality, ascent from the abstract to the specific.

The identification of a system of categories in the historicism of psychological analysis enables the historian of psychology to shift to the position of being a developer of theoretical psychology.

When researchers define the principle of openness in the categorical system as one of the principles of theoretical psychology, they become capable of expanding basic categories by means of a psychological understanding of thought on other concepts that exist in psychology. New dyads can be built in a similar way: a basic category – a metapsychological category. For example, the four basic categories first introduced by M.G. Yaroshevsky (when describing the categorical system of psychology) are joined by two more – *experience* and *subject* (Yaroshevsky, 1974). Metapsychological development of these categories (based on other – basic – categories) can be found, respectively, in such categories as *feeling* and the *I*.

So, currently in the development of problems of theoretical psychology, there may be noted a possibility of an upward movement of specifying basic psychological categories towards metapsychological categories with varying degrees of generality and specificity. A number of correspondences emerge between basic and metapsychological categories:

image → *consciousness*
motive → *value*
experience → *feeling*
action → *object activity*
*relationship (interaction)*¹ → *communication*
subject → *I*
situation → *objectness*.

The ratio of basic and metapsychological categories defined below can be interpreted as follows: in each metapsychological category there is a certain basic psychological category revealed through its relation to other basic categories (allowing the identification of the ‘systemic quality’ within it). While in each of the basic categories, any other basic category exists hidden, ‘compact’, each metapsychological category is a ‘development’ of these latent formations. The relationship between the basic categories of psychology can be compared with the relationship of the Leibnizian monads: each reflects each. If we try to metaphorically express the relationship between the basic and metapsychological categories, it will be appropriate to mention the hologram: a part of the hologram (basic category) contains a whole (metapsychological category). To verify this, it is sufficient to look from a certain view point at any fragment of such a ‘hologram’.

With regard to logic, each metapsychological category is defined through a unified subject-predicative construction, in which a certain basic category is in the position of a subject (to give an example: *image* as a basic category in the metapsychological category ‘*consciousness*’), and the predicate is the ratio between this

¹ It seems to us that M. G. Yaroshevsky (1974), when introducing the psychosocial attitude as a basic category, intrinsically meant what could be more briefly referred to as relationship or interaction.

basic category and other basic categories – *motive, action, relation (relationship, interaction), experience*.

Thus, the metapsychological category of *consciousness* is considered as the development of the basic psychological category *image*, and, for example, the basic category *action* takes on a specific form in the metapsychological category *object activity*, etc. The basic category, which functions as a logical subject of any metapsychological category, shall be called the *categorical core*, and the categories, by means of which this core category is transformed into the metapsychological category, shall be denoted as *formative (specifying)*. The formal relationship between basic and metapsychological categories is shown in the figure.

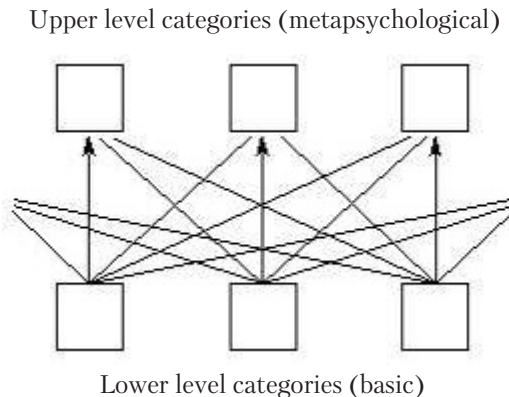
It is shown in the Figure that in accordance with the principle of openness of the categorical system in theoretical psychology, the lines of both basic psychological categories and of metapsychological categories are open. This is explained by the fact that some categories are emerging only today (for example, the correlation *situation – objectness*); like all arising ‘here and now’, they happen to be still partly outside the actual self-reflection of science.

The proposed method of ascending to metapsychological categories based on the categories of the base level is further briefly illustrated by an example of correlating them.

Image → consciousness. Is *consciousness* a metapsychological equivalent of the basic category *image*? In recent literature there are opinions that exclude such a version. It is argued that consciousness is neither what A.N. Leontiev defined as “in its immediacy ... a picture of the world opening to the subject, that involves the subject itself, their actions and states,” nor “a relation to reality”, but it is “a relation in reality itself”, “the totality of relations in the system of other relations”; it “does not have an individual existence or individual representation” (Leontiev, 1975). In other words, consciousness is supposedly not an image – the emphasis is

Figure 1

The relationship between basic and metapsychological categories. The basic (core) categories are linked with metapsychological categories by vertical lines in bold type, and the formative categories are linked by thin slanting lines



transferred to the category of *relation*. This view, as we believe, follows from a limited understanding of the category *image*.

The connection between the concept of *image* and the concept of *idea* that has a centuries-old tradition in the history of philosophical and psychological thought has been lost. The idea is an image (thought) in action, a productive insight that forms its object. The idea overcomes the opposition of the subjective and objective (it is quite reasonable to suppose that “ideas create the world”). When we identify in the image something which characterizes it on the part of effectiveness (and therefore, *motives*, *relationships*, and *experiences* of the subject), we define it as *consciousness*. So, *consciousness* is an integral image of reality (that in turn means the sphere of human action) that fulfills the motives and relations of subjects and contains its self-experience, along with the experience of the externality of the world in which the subject exists. So, the logical core of the definition of the category *consciousness* here is the basic category *image*, and the formative categories are *action*, *motive*, *relationship*, *experience*, and *subject*.

Motive → value. A test of the strength of the idea of ascending from abstract (basic) categories to concrete (metapsychological) categories can also be exerted using the example of the development of the category *motive*. In this case, a difficult question arises about a metapsychological category that should be aligned with this basic category: *significance* (N.F. Dobrynin), *worthiness* (N.I. Nepomnyaschaya), *semantic entity*, *value orientations*. However, though it is quite certain that all these concepts are aligned with each other and do correlate with the category of *motive*, they cannot (for various reasons) be considered the metapsychological equivalent of the latter. A way to solve this problem is to attract the category of *value*. When we require of values of a person, we ask about the hidden motives of the person’s behavior, however, the motive itself is not yet a value. For example, you can feel attracted to something or to someone and at the same time be ashamed of this feeling. Can such urges be considered *values*? Yes, but only in the sense that these are *negative values*. This phrase should be recognized as derived from the original – *positive* – interpretation of the category of *value* (talking about “material and spiritual, objective and existential, cognitive and moral values,” etc.).

Therefore, value is not just a motive, but a motive that owns a certain place in the system of self-relations of the subject. The motive that is considered as a value appears in the subject’s consciousness as the defining characteristic of its existence in the world. We are confronted with a similar understanding of value in both the ordinary and scientific consciousness (*value* in the ordinary word usage means a phenomenon, a subject that has a particular meaning, which is important and significant in any respect; in a philosophical plan the normative and evaluative nature of *value* is emphasized). Value is what a person, as G. Hegel puts it, recognizes as his or her own.

However, before a motive is perceived as a value by an individual, an assessment should be made, and sometimes even a reassessment, of the role that the motive plays or can play in the processes of self-fulfillment of the individual. In other words, in order for a motive to be included by the subject in the image of itself and

to come forward, thus, as a value, the subject must perform a certain action (an act of value self-determination). The result of this action is not only the image of the motive, but also the experience of this motive by the subject as an important and integral part of him or her. At the same time, value is what the subject sees as valued by other people, i.e. that has a momentum for them. The subject is personalized through values (acquiring an ideal representation and continuity in communication).

Motives and values, being intimate, are actively exposed in communication in order to reveal the communicating people to each other. Thus, the category of *value* is inseparable from the basic category of *relationship (interaction)* that is considered in both only in the external and in the internal plans. So, value is a motive, which in the process of self-determination is considered and experienced by the subject as its own inalienable 'part' that forms the basis of the subject's *self-presentation* (personalization) of the subject in communication.

Experience → feeling. The category of *experience* (in the broad sense of the word) can be considered as a core one in the construction of the metapsychological category of *feeling*. S.L. Rubinstein distinguished between primary and specific *experience* (Rubinstein, 1998). In the first meaning (we consider it determining to establish one of the basic psychological categories), experience is viewed as an essential parameter of the psyche, the quality of belonging to an individual of what constitutes the inner content of the individual's life; S.L. Rubinstein when speaking about the primacy of such an experience, distinguished it from experiences "in a specific, emphasized sense of the word"; the latter have the characteristics of the event as they express the 'uniqueness' and 'significance' of something in the inner life of a person. We believe that such experiences constitute what can be called a feeling. Special analysis of texts by S.L. Rubinstein could show that the way of becoming an eventual experience (a feeling) is a way of mediation: the primary experience, that forms it, act in its conditionality from the *image, motive, action, relationship* of the subject. Therefore, considering *experience* (in the broad sense of the word) as a basic category of psychology, the category of *feeling* – in the logic of the ascent – can be viewed as a metapsychological category.

Action → object activity. Object activity is a metapsychological equivalent of the basic category of *action*. Object activity is a whole self-valued action (that has initially collectively distributed character). The source of activity is the subject's motives, its goal is the image of the possible (as a prototype of what will happen), its means are individual actions addressing intermediate goals and, finally, its result is an experience of the relationship formed by the subject with the world.

Interaction (relationship) → communication. The *interaction* category (*psychosocial relation, relationship, interaction, communication*) is a backbone (core) element in the construction of the metapsychological category of *communication*. As part of the dyad of the basic and metapsychological level, *interaction* acts as the communication of people. *To communicate* means to relate to each other, to contribute or not to contribute, while implementing each other's individual goals and consolidating already established or forming new relationships. The constitutive characteristic of relationship is the acceptance of another subject's perspective ('acting out' its role) and the ability to combine in thoughts and feelings the personal

vision of a situation and the point of view of another and to act together with the other person. This is possible through certain actions. The purpose of these actions is the production of something shared (a 'third' something in relation to the communicating people). There are the following actions of the kind: communicative acts (information exchange), acts of decentration (putting oneself in the place of another) and of personalization (achieving a subject's reflection in another). The subject level of reflection involves the whole experience image of another person that creates additional urges (motives) for the partner.

Subject → I. In the logic of the 'ascent from the abstract to the concrete', the *subject* category can be considered as basic when constructing the metapsychological category of the *I*. The following understanding (definition) of the *I* can be proposed: the *I* is an idea of self-beingness (in terms of G. Hegel, "being-in-itself" and "being-for -itself") that is inherent to the subject. This concept includes the subject as much as its inherent image and the experience of itself in the system of relationships with other subjects in certain situations, as well as the processes of self-reflection and 'self-construction' as its internally motivated actions (self-worth of *cogito* and self-determination).

From the above it is clear that it would be a mistake to document only the described dyadic categorical grid as completed and final. The basic and metapsychological categories do not exhaust the categorical analysis of psychological cognition, the latter to be completed by showing that there is a unity of the phenomenon and essence in each of the psychological categories. This is the fundamental characteristic of the categorical system of psychology.

At one time, when trying to draw a line to demarcate a specific subject area of psychology, N.N. Lange introduced the concept of *psychosphere* designed to embrace the wealth and diversity of the phenomena in this science. Aligning Lange's views on the psychosphere with fundamental ideas of V.I. Vernadsky about the biosphere and the noosphere fosters an opportunity to understand and describe the true place of the psychosphere in a single space formed by nature and society. According to V.I. Vernadsky, the biosphere is an object activity shell of the Earth where the total object activity of living organisms (including human beings) manifests as a factor of the planetary scale and significance. Vernadsky, following E. LeRoy and P. Teilhard de Chardin, understands the noosphere as a new evolutionary state of the biosphere, in which rational human object activity becomes the crucial factor for the development of the former. It is typical for the noosphere to have a close relationship of the laws of nature and the laws of thinking and society. Hence, it is obvious that the psychosphere, while retaining its own unique objectness, integrates transformed processes that occur in the biosphere and the noosphere, in some cases being drawn to the former and in others – to the latter. This allows researchers of basic and metapsychological categories also to address the space of the biosphere, in the depths of which protopsychological categories have been formed that are essentially manifested in the basic categorical system of psychology. At the same time, the level of metapsychological categories contains the essential characteristics with respect to the extrapsychological categorical development determined by the specific characteristics of the noosphere. It follows that,

for example, the *need* (a protopsychological category) acts as an essence, and the *motive* (a basic category) acts as a phenomenon in which this essence is revealed. In turn, the *value* (a metapsychological category) manifests in the *ideal* (an extrapsychological category). So, we can conceptualize the categorical system of psychological cognition as a grid that forms five levels of categories (of which the first is in fact not a psychological category, but it is essential in relation to the overlying psychological categories) – biological, protopsychological, basic psychological, metapsychological and extrapsychological – that cover the entire psychosphere as a whole and generate the total conceptual apparatus of psychological science. For example, the conditional vertical *deficit – need – motive – value – ideal* includes the greatest variety of psychological concepts (instincts, desires, interest, inclination, value orientations, etc.).

The categorical system of psychology is rather fully described in the table 1.

There can be specified both *parallels* (pleiades) and *meridians* (clusters) of categories that are presented in order in the table. Describing the pleiades of categories, we will express here only two claims that require special explanations.

1. Each of the categories in any lines (for all its specificity) is inseparable from each other category of the same line (for example, the category of the *I* in the group of metapsychological categories is inconceivable without a correlation with the categories of *value, object activity, feeling, consciousness, communication, and objectness*; the category of *image* (a pleiade of basic psychological categories) is inseparable from the categories of *subject, motive, action, experience, interaction and situation*).

The content of the categories within each of the five pleiades in the table lines has a special cognitive status. The bottom line of the table, i.e. a pleiade of biological categories, points to phenomena that can be studied by objective methods, 'from the outside', just as physicists study objects of their field of knowledge. The accumulated facts are interpreted on the basis of schemes of natural causality. The second lower line of the table – the pleiade of protopsychological categories – encompasses what in the language of philosophy is designated as noumena – intelligible entities. Indeed, each of the corresponding objects is not directly given to the observer either in the readings of sensors, or even less by direct observation from outside. For example, even such a seemingly fully observable form of activity as a reflex cannot be understood without introducing special constructs, the nature of which eliminates the possibility of *contemplating* them (for example, Tolman's "intermediate variables", "moods" by M.Ya. Basov, etc.). In addition, in introspection the categories of this pleiade do not appear directly (for example, the *need* is revealed to us exclusively in the form of motives – the experienced impulses to action). In contrast to the pleiade of protopsychological categories, the next pleiade of the basic psychological categories contains phenomena that are more or less available to introspection. This is a pleiade of phenomena. This situation is true even in relation to such a difficult category as *subject* (we feel our subjectness when, for example, we make a choice between two possible actions, or when we suddenly err in our expectations, or when we intentionally act maladaptively – towards unpredetermined outcomes of a possible experience, etc.). Metapsychological categories constitute a pleiade of ideas. Every idea is not just a

Table 1

The categorical system of psychology

| | | Noosphere | | | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------------|
| Categories | Clusters | | | | | | | Psychosphere |
| | Substantiality | Orientation | Activity | Cognitivity | Bias | Co-being | Reality | |
| Extrapsychological | Personality | Ideal | Freedom | Mind | Meaning | Involvement | World | |
| Metapsychological | I | Value | Object activity | Consciousness | Feeling | Communication | Objectness | |
| Basic psychological | Subject | Motive | Action | Image | Experience | Interaction | Situation | |
| Protopsychological | Being | Need | Reflex | Sensation | Affectivity | Coexistence | Field | |
| Biological | Organism | Deficit | Metabolism | Signal | Selectivity | Synergy | Environment | |
| | Noosphere | | | | | | | |

thought about something; it is a unity of the thought and the conceivable, a thought charged by the impulse of self-fulfillment. For example, the category the I. It represents the idea of the subject's self-reflection. And this means that the very thought of yourself as a subject capable of contemplating itself, experiencing, and thinking, create its I guiding the process of reflection. That is why it is impossible to study the I in the same manner as we study physical bodies. The *I, value, object activity, feeling, consciousness, communication, and objectness* are all ideas that create their objects. And finally, there is a pleiade of extrapsychological categories. The cognitive status of these categories is paradoxical. They seem to play hide and seek with the explorer. Any step of cognition here seems to repel the cognizable content; the object of the research enters into a competitive relationship with the researcher themselves proving that it cannot be reduced to anything that could be known in advance. Thus, imagine the pleasure of R. Cattell (one of the outstanding researchers of personality) in admitting his 'defeat' in attempts to 'understand' personality, when he says that personality is like love, everyone knows that it exists, but no one knows what it is. It is to be recalled that disputes about ideals, the fundamental impossibility of constructing an algorithm for creativity, personal meanings being resistant to attempts to translate them into an alien language, the sacredness of comprehending the world, the intimacy of co-participation, – all these are signs of special categories; they can be called *controversy* categories.

We shall now discuss in more detail the clusters of categories that form the columns in the matrix above.

Clusters of categories of the psychosphere (*meridians*, verticals, columns in the matrix). Each of the columns in the matrix contains a well-defined cluster of categories. We are talking about clusters of categories, because each of the verticals quite distinctly symbolizes one or another fundamental psychological dimension of human existence.

The cluster of substantiality unites such categories as *organism* (zero level), *substance, subject, the I, personality* (the highest level). Indeed, if we understand substance as what corresponds to this term in the history of human thought, namely, the property of being the fundamental principle of something that ultimately means "to be the cause of oneself" (*causa sui*), then one can be sure: this is the essence of all categories in the vertical. The property of substantiality at the same time reveals itself more fully during the transition from the bottom to the higher steps in this row. So, if the quality of *self-causality* in relation to an organism is revealed in a rather limited way and means 'no more than' the vitality of an organic body of a living being when interacting with the environment (the reproduction of its own bodily integrity), then when applied to human beings, this quality also means the transformation of the surrounding nature into the organic body of the person themselves (which implies both adapting to the natural environment and submitting it to one's own will). Exactly the same 'increase' in the force can be registered in all other cases considered, as we move upwards in each of the generic categories that cover any of the verticals. We shall concisely discuss each of the cases.

The cluster of orientation (synonymous with *teleology, aspiration*) is a series of categories that includes *deficit* (zero level), *need, motive, value, ideal* (highest

level). The category of *deficit* that describes what is urgently needed does not mean that the organism has as already originally ‘recorded’ what is necessary for the existence – we can only talk about what the organism needs absolutely objectively; in other words, the latter may, so to say, ‘have no clue’ about its genuine interests, and even more so, in no way display them. As for need, it seems to assert itself with an activity (the need is ‘dependence as a source of activity’). Next comes the category of *motive*; unlike *need* in general, a motive is nothing but a subjectivized aspiration – a phenomenal givenness of the need. Keeping on the vertical ‘ascent’, we discover *value* as a form of intentionality – here we witness the motive recognized by the individual themselves that has been transformed into the goal of their actions. And finally there is *ideal*, a value realized by the individual that directs their object activity, and moreover, is presented in communication as a model for all.

The cluster of activity summarizes such categories as *metabolism* (zero level), *reflex*, *action*, *object activity*, *freedom* (highest level). Here (as in other cases) the same logic of an ever more profound and significant disclosure of the generic definition of human existence is maintained. Each step of ascending within the cluster more and more fully reveals the category of activity. The proposed interpretation of *activity* unites the Kantian-Hegelian epoch and the ancient epoch in the philosophy of causality. In the definition of *activity* in general we follow the most succinct of all conceivable definitions that was given by Kant: “activity is the causality of the cause”. The highest level of activity is the *primal causality* or, which is the same, *free causality*. In the development of Hegel’s views, a free cause can be interpreted as the *causa sui* (‘cause of oneself’), which gives us a general idea of the highest category of the cluster of activity (*freedom*). Such an understanding in relation to the categories of the psychosphere is specified in accordance with the teachings of Aristotle on four causes (‘material’, meaning something from which something is built; ‘formal’, something that provides a form for something built; ‘efficient, what or who is building, and the ‘final’, for what something is being built) and the Hegelian understanding of the free cause.

Metabolism is the first level of the activity cluster. The organism reproduces its own corporeality, namely, what it consists of, the ‘matter’ of its being; in this case, we talk about material self-causality; here formal, efficient, and final causalities do not yet act independently: inside the body itself it is not ‘recorded’ in which direction, who and why will act. In order to imagine what is happening, we can use the analogy of the water cycle in nature: there is neither formal, nor efficient, nor final causality, and yet the material self-causality and the preservation of water mass is evident.

The second level of the cluster is *reflex* (a holistic reflex act of behavior). Reflex activity forms a condition for the implementation of metabolism, when the latter is impossible in the present or, if nothing changes, in the future. In these cases, the body performs a ‘forward reflection of reality’ (P. K. Anokhin) that restores or prepares the course of metabolism. Here we see the manifestations of formal causality that act independently as a condition for the existence of an organism (however, it is still too early to talk about the autonomization of the efficient and final causalities). It is interesting that the metabolism ensures the transformation of, as it were,

a random, exploratory, one-time act of anticipatory reflection itself into a reflex by playing the role of reinforcement; as a result, not just the material composition of the organism but the integrity of a higher order is reproduced, – the body endowed with a reflex. Reflex contains formal self-causality (in the language of the concept of causality), which means the manifestation of freedom. The third level of the cluster is *action*. Action (*arbitrary activity*) comes to the fore when the free flow of a reflex act is impossible now or later without additional transformations of circumstances, and to ensure it a living creature should build an image of itself in the interaction with the environment (in addition to the image of it). In this case, the actual subjectness (who) – the efficient self-causality (that is another, higher manifestation of freedom) – emerges.

The fourth level is *object activity*. Here the very existence of the subject's ability to act is ensured, which constitutes the final landmark of activity – its final causality. It should be noted that object activity combines a variety of actions, the subjects of which may not be identical. In other words, the one 'for whom an object activity is performed, and the one 'who' acts is not necessarily an integral whole. Therefore, final causality can act here in isolation from efficient causality and, accordingly, formal and material causality. And finally, activity is successful only when it is reproducible; and this in turn indicates the final self-causality of activity, the subject's freedom in its implementation.

At the fifth, highest level of activity, the four causes act together, mediating each other, contributing to each other, belonging to each other and forming a true goal for each other, which means *freedom*.

The cluster of cognitivity (synonymous with *ideality, imprintedness, represent- edness, reflectedness*). This cluster includes the categories of *signal* (zero level), *sensation, image, consciousness*, and at the highest level, *mind*. All of these categories have in common the property of each denoting the fact that something is represented in something, the fact of 'being of a thing outside of the thing itself', as spoken of in philosophy. Tracing the path of ascent from the *signal* to the *compre- hension of the world*, we see that the world is more and more opened up to the person, that the picture of the world is being freed from the oppression of immediate deficiencies, the dominance of needs, the bias of motives, and the guidance of human values. We observe the way the relatively simple ability of an organism to respond to a biologically significant impact (signal level) develops into a more complex and mysterious *irritability* of an individual to abiotic influences (the ability to sense), turns further into the subject's ability to perceive (appearance of images), comes further to the personal ability to be aware of the world and, finally, ascends to the stage of comprehending the world where the person can discover fundamentally different worlds that are fundamentally incomplete being widely open or concealed. We witness the steps of advancing to the truth (*clear and dis- tinct, genuine, authentic, universal* or, on the contrary, *unique* knowledge).

The cluster of bias (synonymous with *significance, subjectness*). The term *bias* can be considered as a possible designation for the generic category that combines *selectivity* (zero), *affectivity, experience, feeling* and *meaning* (highest level). While selectivity is as yet completely 'unaddressed', objective, and teleologically neutral

(although certainly not without a cause), the meaning encompasses a feeling of self-worth that is fully realized by the individual; the feeling not only expresses but also surpasses the private interests of activity and communication. These are only polar categories representing the attribute of *bias*; a special analysis can show how, when ascending along the meridian, the diverse manifestations of a human being are linked in the *bias* more and more densely and indissolubly. In essence, this is a matter of deepening the processes of subjectivization while ascending to the existential *meanings*.

The cluster of co-being (synonymous with *sociality, community, involvement*). This cluster includes the categories of *synergy* (zero level), *coexistence, interaction, communication, and involvement* (highest level). Ascending along the steps of this row is a transition from the idea of functional coherence and indissolubility of two parts of an organism or two creatures to the idea of autonomy and at the same time reflection of their being in each other (co-being at the *coexistence* level implies that individuals accept each other only to the extent that their presence may disrupt the natural manifestations of their own life activities (this is an existence ‘near’, but not ‘together’). Co-being at the *interaction* level means mutual support, or, in other words, realization by at least one of the subjects of the instrumental function in relation to another (providing information, joining efforts, including physical effort, etc.). A commonality at the *communication* stage is, in fact, the *result of the shared* (as V. A. Petrovsky puts it). Such a *production* may not have the achievement of reflection, or presence, of a person in a person as its true goal. But if Heidegger’s words are true that “the person is a presence”, it should be recognized that ‘human in a human being’ can only be achieved at the highest level of co-being that is signified by the participation of people.

The cluster of reality includes the categories of *environment, field, situation, objectness, and world*. As one moves upwards vertically within the category, the categories more and more open up the area of existence. *Environment* is an area of physical and chemical prerequisites and results for the functioning of the body. *Field* is both a set of ‘incentives’ (in the paradigm of behaviorism) and *field* as a fundamental category of K. Lewin’s theory; the field is an area of manifestation of the reflex (impulsive) activity of a living being. The term *situation* corresponds to such concepts as *problem situation, problem* (cognitive, existential, and the like), *social situation of development* (L. S. Vygotsky, L. I. Bozhovich); speaking of a situation, we emphasize that the subject is acting to resolve it by ‘rising above it’. The next category is *objectness* (that is central for the development of the general psychological theory of the activity of A. N. Leontiev). And finally comes the most integral category – *world* (be it the version of S. L. Rubinstein, the author of the book *Man and the World* (Rubinstein, 1997), or the “life-world” by M. Heidegger). The world is “a multitude of worlds” (A. G. Asmolov); it can be said that the world is a unity of qualitatively unique worlds, that it is necessary to speak not only about multidimensionality, but also about the multi-worldness of the universe. To become a person means that the subject enters the “world of four worlds” (Nature, Culture, Communication, I myself), each of those being a projection of the universe that has significantly different laws of construction (for example, the parameters of space

and time in these ‘worlds’ may have little in common with each other), while the highest level in discovering the world by a person is given to the latter in the experience of the “real infinity” of the understood.

Thus, we have attempted to give an extremely generalized and maximally brief description of clusters and pleiades that enable the description of the structure of the psychosphere.

It should be noted that each category of theoretical psychology is generic in relation to a certain range of psychological (in a broad sense) concepts. For example, the category of *image* can be specified in such terms as *perception*, *presentation*, *imagination*, *memory*, etc. Take, for example, the category of *need*. There are various ways of classifying human needs: according to their subject (material and spiritual needs), according to their origin (natural and cultural), although other ‘rubrications’ of needs are certainly possible. In some cases, it is quite challenging to choose specific concepts in relation to a particular category. For example, what are the conceptual and specific specifications of the category *consciousness*? It is interesting that due to the recent rather popular introduction of the notion of *altered states of consciousness* (*altered consciousness*), consciousness, so to speak, is normally not associated by psychologists with any special term (although psychiatrists use the exact phrase when speaking of a “clear state of consciousness”, “clear consciousness”). We shall point out that in the proposed approach the differentiation of the types within the same category may be quite challenging. For example, the distinction between the subject of contemplation, the subject of thinking, the subject of experiencing, etc.

Along with the possibility of establishing genus relations that exist between particular categories and concepts (which indicates the diversity of psychological reality, and the richness of its forms), there is also a possibility of describing the conceptual architectonics in each of these categories, its internal structure; this tells us about the complexity of the psychological reality represented in the categorical model. We shall use the category of *image* as an example. Whatever psychological interpretations of the image we take, in any of them we are confronted with a number of concepts through which this category is meaningfully revealed. Here we have, for example, such constructs as “sensual fabric”, “percept”, “meaning” (Leontiev, 1975), or the forming a percept “primary sensory images” and “images of representation” about the world (Helmholtz), etc. The psychological structure of the *I* category can be another illustration of what has been said about the conceptual architectonics of the categories. As it contains the idea of the subject’s self-reflection, the category of the *I* is meaningfully revealed, for example, through such concepts as *self-assessment* and the *concept of I*, or, say, in the concepts of the ego-states of Parent, Adult, and Child (Bern), etc. etc.

The illustrations selected may seem too separated and fragmented; however, complete satisfaction could only be brought by an appeal to the entire conceptual apparatus documented in psychological dictionaries. It is easy to see that each of the categories forms the center of a particular psychological development, concept or theory, sometimes several conceptual systems (meanwhile, each of these theoretical developments contains a number of concepts, the connection of which forms

the essence of the category). It is obvious that the very outlining of these concepts in this work is rather difficult, not to mention the 'calculation' of the concepts contained in these concepts. At the same time, it should be noted that this is the perspective that naturally opens up for theoretical psychology while it reaps the fruits from the 'beds' lined with the parallels and meridians of the psychosphere. No doubt, the authors consider it possible in the future, if necessary, to clarify the 'elements' of the proposed table. But this does not mean that the logic of the construction of the categorical system may change. This refers to the immutability of the defining principles of the interrelation of categories:

- 1) ascent from the abstract to the concrete by synthesizing system-forming/core and formative categories;
- 2) essence as a phenomenon and the same phenomenon as an essence;
- 3) the counter determination of the psychosphere on the part of the biosphere and noosphere (biogenetic and sociocultural determination).

We shall note in this connection that some terms corresponding to the category elements in the table being developed are conditional and may be replaced by more successful ones in the future.

In the above table, three explanatory principles for the construction of psychological cognition are actually implemented: the principles of determinism, development, and systematicity.

The categories in each of the verticals of the table in their empirical implementation are determined from both the 'bottom' and the 'top'. Thus, the *I* category (metapsychological) includes (in a discarded way) a biological basis, since it preserves the typological and individual features of the nervous activity of the organism. But at the same time, the priority determinant for this category (if we bear in mind its empirical content) is the noosphere that gives rise to countless variants of interpersonal manifestations. Thus, the conditionality on the part of the biosphere does not lose its power here, although the priority in this case undoubtedly belongs to cultural-historical determination.

The transition between categories is thought according to the pattern of ascent from the abstract to the concrete. To a certain extent the protopsychological line responds to the idea of preformism, it contains in a compacted form all the richness that reveals itself at a higher categorical level. In this case, the pivotal role is played by the category that is directly below on the vertical; it owns primacy over the category above it that has, respectively, the nature of a derivative. *Formative* categories act as conditions for 'germinating' the capabilities inherent in the categorical core. The *value* category, as was shown, is a direct development of the *motive* category as it is *formed* through the categories of *experience, relation (interaction), action, etc.*

The logic of the development of categories presents the real history of the development of the human race and of a specific individual, both sociogenesis and ontogenesis. The categories, which are built vertically and located along the four horizontals of the table, form the nodal points for the development of the psychosphere. Thus, the category of *personality* appears only at the highest stage of socio- and ontogenesis, etc.

In the above categorical grid, the principle of systematicity (so important for theoretical psychology), is fully represented. Unfortunately, many times and over the past two or three decades, the principle of systematicity, although declared as a priority for psychological science, has never received a concrete embodiment and theoretical justification. The general psychological signs and principles that form the system have not been described. The fact that the idea of the ascent from the abstract to the concrete has been fulfilled in the table is a sign of the systematic nature of this categorical grid. This process is represented by the provision on the preformalism of transitions between categories at different levels, by identifying the categories that have the character of primate and derivative, that are *core* and *formative*, and involved in the categorical synthesis. This is also found in the demonstration of the idea of ascending and descending determinism (represented by the provision on the empirical filling of each of the categories with the contents of the levels above and below that ultimately border the noosphere and the biosphere). Therefore, we can talk about the unity of sociogenesis and ontogenesis.

It remains only to directly indicate the general mechanisms of system formation. In this regard, it is proposed to distinguish between the mechanisms and the corresponding effects of the horizontal and vertical (synchronous and diachronic) conjugation of categories in the process of their synthesis.

The mechanism of horizontal conjugation (pleiade) of categories is based on the existence of systemic qualities that are objectively inherent in elements of the same level in the categorical grid. It is implied that, along with the explicit content that distinguishes each category on the horizontal line, there are (though hidden) some content caused by other categories of the same horizontal. An analogy arises with the principle of the full interaction of substances formulated by Kant (everything that exists at a given time contains definitions inherent in everything else that exists at the same time point). Each of the categories of the same level bears the *imprint* of other categories of the same level. Each category is an extremely saturated conglomeration of thick layers of countless empirical data observed by experimenters in hundreds of laboratories. They could use other words (for example, in Pavlov's school they discussed, for example, not need, but reinforcement, not affectivity, but about a "collision", etc.). But their categorical meaning, having been deciphered by the means of theoretical psychology, makes it possible to diagnose the role of the doctrine of behavior created in Russia in the development of the categorical stem of world psychological thought.

In the light of the above, we should focus on two circumstances. As shown by M. G. Yaroshevsky, the interpretation of behavior developed on the basis of Russian science, having influenced American psychology, acquired a special direction in it having turned into a behavioral version that prevailed in this psychology for the entire twentieth century. The second circumstance is connected with the need to distinguish between the behavior that represents the fundamental pro-psycho-logical standard of living and its neuromechanisms reconstructed in other, namely, physiological categories (the biological level of the categorical grid).

When considering any categorical level, we discover its pathogenetic aspect. If one of the categories located on the horizontal line falls out or is impaired, the sys-

tematic quality of the categorical level is distorted, which affects all its other components.

All this enables observation of the possibilities in the categorical system that could address not only phylogenesis and sociogenesis, but also the pathogenesis of personality.

The categorical system of psychology cannot be grown from any one single 'grain'. This is especially important to emphasize, because every theoretical system (scientific school) of any significance in the history of psychology have been searching for a 'cell', which could be the starting point for building the overall configuration of the claimed teaching.

M.G. Yaroshevsky was the first scientist who explained the futility of this approach in the early 70s (Yaroshevsky, 1974). For adherents of the physiology of higher nervous activity such a hypothetical 'cell' was found in the conditioned reflex, in reactionology it was the *reaction*, in 'structural' psychology it was *gestalt*, in behaviorism it was *stimulus – reaction*, for early Freud it was *libido*, in the general psychological theory of A.N. Leontiev it was *object activity*, in the doctrine of D. N. Uznadze it was *attitude*, in the works of V.N. Myasishchev it was *relation*, etc. Apparently, feeling dissatisfied with the results of the search for such a 'cell', L.S. Vygotsky, the ideologist of these studies, consistently shifted from the *speech reflex* to the *sign*, then to the *value*, then the *meaning* and *experience* appeared. It is possible that if the life of this remarkable scientist had not been cut short so early, he would have rejected this in fact hopeless search and tried to find another theoretical solution. Not at all surprising is the persistence with which Soviet psychologists were engaged in the search for this sacramental cell of the psyche. It seemed more than tempting to transfer the classical 'cell' of the political economy of Marxism – the *goods* – into the sphere of psychological constructions. During the subsequent critical review, each of these 'cells' never appeared as the sole creator of the mental, which made it impossible to gain a complete picture of the mental world. The basis of the substantive interpretation of the psychosphere is not a single 'cell' in its development, but a complex, multi-level, internally connected, but qualitatively specific system of categories that finds sources for the development and internal organization in nature and society.

We shall point it out again: not a cell, even in its peak development, but a dynamic system of categories is able to embrace and reflect in itself the mental world of a human being. This also explains the rejected claim to build a single, all explaining theory of psychology. At the same time, it is expedient to try to preserve and realize the desire to construct a theory of theories of psychology.

The proposed project of *theoretical psychology*, as it can be assumed, contains the desired model of *the theory of theories*, a tool for resolving the historical crisis of psychology, which L.S. Vygotsky wrote about in those early years. We are talking about a categorical approach in the *construction of a theory of theories* in order to avoid duality in the interpretation of this phrase. However, another version of what the theory of theories should be like and what it should serve is quite possible: for example, to reveal the laws of the spontaneous formation of theoretical systems, the invariants of movement of psychological concepts and schools. A typical illustration

of such a movement is the destiny of psychoanalysis, reflexology, Gestalt psychology and personalism in the understanding of L.S. Vygotsky, the author of the *Historical Meaning of the Psychological Crisis*: "These destinies that are as similar as four drops in the same rain attract ideas along the same path" (Vygotsky, 1982). L.S. Vygotsky describes in detail the internal logic of the movement of an idea, and the natural stages of its origin and extinction. The idea of the inevitable logic in the movement of scientific thought illustrated by 'developed sciences' was very actively and fruitfully discussed in the works of G.P. Schedrovitsky and his school (the idea of *historical theory* of solving scientific problems, and *genetic reconstruction*), as well as in the works of other prominent philosophers. In this understanding, the *theory of theories* would target us to analyze and summarize tendencies, which, as we should emphasize once again, spontaneously manifest "with such surprising regularity, constancy, with such regular monotony in various fields, that they positively allow the prediction about the development of a different concept or discovery, of an idea" (Vygotsky, 1982). But speaking of the theory of theories, we hold a different view (however, it is fully compatible with the first perspective). We see in it not only a generalization and not only the principle of the construction of psychology as an integral field of knowledge. The idea that the 'cell' of the categorical system of psychology (and we are talking about each category, starting with the protopsychological categories), is woven from system-forming and formative linking threads that emanate from the 'cells' of the underlying level, is reason to think about the extent to which these connections are theoretically and empirically developed. Defining the category of *value*, we should, for example, refer to the categories of *motive, subject, action, image, experience, interaction, and situation*. It is quite probable that, purely formally, this and other similar definitions could involve all the categories listed. But the following question is quite legitimate: have the proposed definitions already been ensured by any available psychological developments? It is absolutely clear that the *elaboration* of intercategory connections (the subject of specific studies) and the *predetermination* of such connections (the methodological function of the categorical table) are far from being similar. The search for the relevant theoretical and empirical arguments in favor of the proposed definitions (which is necessary to establish a general view, to build *theoretical psychology*) is at the same time the development path of each of the specific areas of psychological knowledge. Theoretical psychology, in its categorical interpretation, is called upon (with reference to each specific theory) to answer the question: what this theory is for psychology as a whole, and what psychology as a whole is for each given specific theory.

L.S. Vygotsky, while developing the foundations of a new general science, thought of creating a special tool (*instrument*) that would allow him to master the practice of psychological knowledge. The future will show whether the categorical model of the *theory of theories* proposed by us is such a sought-after tool of knowledge, whether it fulfills the task of integrating and developing private psychological research.

References

- Vygotsky, L. S. (1982). Istoricheskiy smysl psikhologicheskogo krizisa [The historical meaning of the psychological crisis]. In L. S. Vygotsky, *Collected works* (Vol. 1, pp. 291–436). Moscow: Pedagogika.
- Leontiev, A. N. (1975). *Deyatel'nost'. Soznaniye. Lichnost'* [Object activity. Consciousness. Personality]. Moscow: Politizdat.
- Rubinstein, S. L. (1998). *Osnovy obshchey psikhologii* [Fundamentals of general psychology]. Saint Petersburg: Piter.
- Rubinstein, S. L. (1997). *Chelovek i mir* [The person and the world]. M.: Nauka.
- Yaroshevsky, M. G. (1974). *Psikhologiya v XX stoletii* [Psychology in the XX century] (2nd ed.). Moscow: Politizdat.

Artur V. Petrovsky (1924–2006) — full member, Russian Academy of Education (RAE), president of the RAE (1992–1997), D.Sc., professor.

Research area: history of psychology, social psychology, personality psychology.

Vadim A. Petrovsky — professor, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Member of the RAE, D.Sc., professor.

Research area: personality psychology, consultative psychology, mathematical modeling of behavior and consciousness.

E-mail: petrowskiy@mail.ru

Категориальная система психологии. Опыт построения теории теорий психологии

А.В. Петровский^а, В.А. Петровский^б

^а Работал в Психологическом институте Российской академии образования

^б Национальный исследовательский университет «Высшая школа экономики», 101000, Россия, Москва, ул. Мясницкая, д. 20

Резюме

Советские психологи десятилетиями были заняты поисками «клеточки» («единицы») психического. Представлялась соблазнительной идея перенести в сферу психологических построений классическую «клеточку» политэкономии марксизма — «товар». В ходе последующего критического рассмотрения каждая из этих «клеточек» так и не выступила единственным создателем психического. В статье предлагается иная интерпретация психического мира: его образует не отдельно взятая «клеточка» в ее развитии, а сложная,

многоступенчатая, внутренне связанная, но качественно своеобразная система категорий, находящая источники своего развития и внутренней организации в природе и обществе. Выделены и соотнесены категории, образующие «плеяды» и «кластеры» теоретической психологии — «теории теорий», в которой психология рефлексивна себя. Плеяда категорий «естественной причинности» указывает на явления, которые могут быть зафиксированы объективными методами, «извне» (биофизические данности). Плеяда протопсихологических категорий содержит в себе «ноумены» (умопостигаемые сущности). Плеяда базисных психологических категорий характеризует явления, доступные интроспекции, — «феномены». Плеяда метапсихологических категорий — это «идеи» (единство мысли и мыслимого, самоосуществляющиеся представления). Плеяда экстрапсихологических категорий — «контроверзы» (усмотрения, провоцирующие многообразное переосмысление сущего и взаимную критику представлений о нем со стороны разных исследователей). Каждый из кластеров категорий характеризует то или иное фундаментальное измерение бытия человека. Таковы — субстанциональность («организм», «существо», «субъект», «Я», «личность»), направленность («нужда», «потребность», «мотив», «ценность», «идеал»), активность («метаболизм», «рефлекс», «действие», «деятельность», «свобода»), когнитивность («сигнал», «ощущение», «образ», «сознание», «разум»), пристрастность («избирательность», «аффективность», «переживание», «чувство», «смысл»), со-бытийность («синергия», «сосуществование», «интеракция», «общение», «сопричастность»), действительность («среда», «поле», «ситуация», «предметность», «мир»). Различаются логические механизмы «горизонтального» (плеяды) и «вертикального» (кластеры) сопряжения категорий в процессе их теоретического синтеза, что отражает логику фило-социо-онтогенеза человека в его становлении и развитии.

Ключевые слова: теория теорий, «клеточка», естественная причинность, ноумены, феномены, идеи, контроверзы, субстанциональность, направленность, активность, когнитивность, пристрастность, со-бытийность, действительность, восхождение от

Петровский Артур Владимирович (1924–2006) — действительный член Российской академии образования, президент РАО (1992–1997), доктор психологических наук, профессор. Сфера научных интересов: история психологии, социальная психология, психология личности.

Петровский Вадим Артурович — профессор, департамент психологии, факультет социальных наук, Национальный исследовательский университет «Высшая школа экономики», доктор психологических наук, профессор, ординарный профессор НИУ ВШЭ, член-корреспондент РАО.

Сфера научных интересов: психология личности, консультативная психология, математическое моделирование поведения и сознания.

Контакты: petrowskiy@mail.ru