


## **Philosophy Topic No.18.**


### **THEORY OF COGNITION**

What is cognition? That is the question flowing through the centuries and essential for each turning point of the mankind. Respective to the might of a human one could get to the essence of many phenomena that were of interest as the knowledge was the vehicle to the solution of different problems.


There are stages of cognition- senses, perception and presentation = this stage comes with the feelings and the forms of the abstract thinking = notion, judgment and deduction.



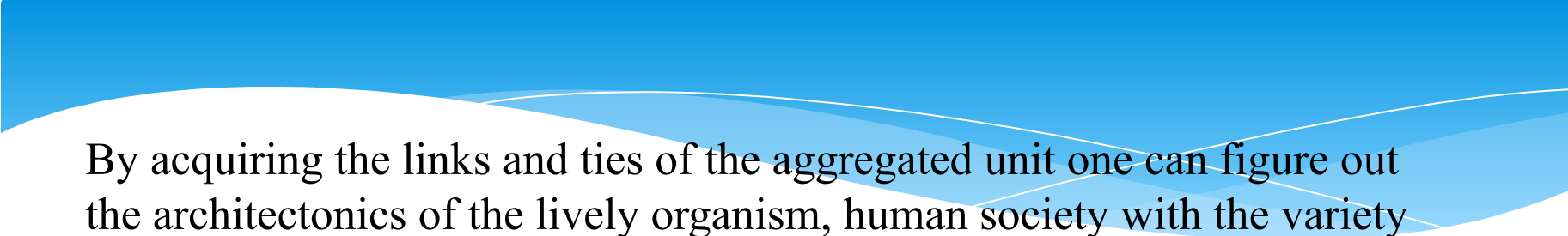
Methodological function of philosophy first of all comes out as working out of the universal rules and principles of the cognitive and practical activity which is achieved by means of the most general notions = categories. In this connection we should refer to: whole and part; system, structure, element, link, relation, form and content, general, particular and single. Thanks to them the philosophic principle of “unity of the variety” makes and gets its methodological sense.



All the categories are interconnected. If we take the category “whole and part”, which were worked out as early as the ancient times, it is not easy to figure out this dialectical equation. It was quite a sensation that the whole was broken down into the parts. The notions “part and whole” reflected two things in particular: 1). All the objective things were made and composed of some plain and primitive things; 2) People are capable of breaking down the initial objects into the parts. The historical view on the whole was perception of the final concluding state. Breaking into the parts became the common devise of study in different areas of knowledge (Physics, chemistry and others). Scientists analyzing the parts and extrapolating on the principles of the whole turned out to be non-effective as the broken into parts the human body and organism was not the right copy or reflection with something very important which was missing.




Later in the course of history the necessity of dealing with complex notions and big numbers was getting more and more vital. The new technical projects with telephone, electric and transportation systems were put into effect. To look into these complicated systems with “whole and part” in the picture was not sufficient any more. This inspired the introduction of some new categories like “system”, “structure”, “element” and “link”. In fact the emergence of these categories was the result of the relevant response to the new challenges. The category of “system” implies the combination of the elements not as the summary of the components, but the operational network with all the elements interrelated and interacting as one aggregated piece of machinery. An automobile can be looked at as the combined unity of the blocks and parts, but the actual essence is in the movable vehicle with the expected capacities.



By acquiring the links and ties of the aggregated unit one can figure out the architectonics of the lively organism, human society with the variety of cultures and the process of thinking. So, the categories system, link, element supply us with the possibility of getting to the point of “unity of variety” with the inner interconnections and interactions. But going along the lines of further development we come across some other categories like relationship, structure, form and content. Relationship can denote some stable interactions. If we take up the row of figures we encounter the relations of “more and less”. The relationship can refer the notions of friendship, hatred, cooperation, support as well as disgust and competition. Each system of relationship embraces the changing and stable elements.

The system of stable elements sets up the “structure” of the system. Talking of the structure we should mean the elements and subsystems concluded into the stable and steady relations of interactions. The common and familiar structures are well known when we talk of the “social structure”, “structure of the authority”, “structure of the notion” and etc.




It should be noted that interdependence of the elements of the system are universal to the absolute extremes. If we break them off we take up some abstract thinking otherwise they are dead and not broken. When the analysts separates the whole unit into parts for the investigation purposes with some concentrated look into the part = analysis then he should get the synthesis to restore the system and put it into motion.

**Form** is the category fixing some stable relationship of the structure considered separately and isolated from the subsystems and elements.

**Content** is the category denoting the package of elements and subsystems concluded in this or that structure.

In objective reality the form and content make up an integral unity. They can be separated exclusively for the cognitive purposes. They are in the state of dialectical unity. Hegel made a point that: “content is the transition of form into content and form is the transition of the content into the form. Talking of the interrelation of form and content we should make a point that content is the leading part of the equation. Talking of the live organism we should discriminate the parts of the body and their functions as content while the links and interrelations make up the form of the organism. In spite of the dialectical integrity of the two the decisive factor is the content as it pushes and creates the shape of the form – the character of the internal and external links of the organism. The form is very active and can either hamper or contribute to the content and get the transit into the content. The form can be internal and external. The outside perception of the statue tells us a lot from the esthetical point of view, but the inner relations not visible to the observer gets to the point closer to the most fundamental category which is **regulation.**



Regulation or Law represents the most fundamental links and relations which are absolutely independent of our will or consciousness and “exist” inside the stable, functioning and dynamic systems. They are different from the “internal form” as exclusively stable, reproducing the necessity with the capacity of restoration and originality. The unity of variety tells us that the existing variety is bound up with objective links and interactions. Each system or phenomenon has its elementary parts setting up their subsystems with the former as the universal concrete. At the same time these systems and phenomena can be the elements or particular parts of some greater system. So, “general”, particular” and “single” are in fact the notions with the dialectical interrelation of the variety of natural and social life.


Philosophic study of the Unity of the Variety can create the right methodological approach and rules of cognition and human activity.



**Truth** is the problem of the adequate and correct reflection of knowledge or the real state of things was created in the ancient Greece. Nowadays there are different views on the issue of truth. One of them is the coherent truth when the theorem deducted from the axiomatic statement creates the equation that concludes the interrelation of the integrated notions. The deficiency of this truth is that it is not applicable for the practical use when it comes to the big systems as being the result of the formal logics.

The other one is the correspondent theory of truth which relies exclusively on the visible properties which can be touched and sensed. The defects of this theory is obvious as there is a good deal of reality bound up with the interactions which are not visible and sensed.

The key element of understanding the objective truth is that it is in the state of permanent motion and development and be in the capacity of absolute and relative truth. So, the objective truth is in the state of the relative truth which is changeable and continuous while the absolute truth. The absolute truth is the extreme terminal as the intention of a scholar for the extensive and exhausted knowledge.




The criteria of the truth is practice that undermines the arguments of the coherent and correspondent truth (The proof of the pudding is in the eating).

**Objective truth** is the reproduction of the elements of the knowledge irrespective of the human's attitude. "The moon rotates around the Sun" – this is the example of the truth unchangeable in spite of the point of view.

**Absolute truth** is the concrete truth irreversible state of things with the full and complete knowledge.

**Relative truth** is the most common state of things. Relativity is due to the limit of our knowledge of something that is in process of change and motion.

**Confusion and Fraud** can be the result of the wrong method or lie driven by the subjective interests of people, political parties or institutions.



**Methods of Cognition.** There is a variety of methods available in each science which are applicable respectively to the targeted goal with the equipment and other means of cognition. But these methods never go beyond the boundaries of one or two sciences. Here we are talking of some universal methods applicable for all the sciences to this or that extent.

**Method of ascending from abstract to the Concrete.** All the elements are analyzed separately in every detail as abstract as the part of the whole. The next stage is the synthesis of all logically acquired as parts of the whole system as the unity of the variety.

**Method of models and systematic principles.** The models are created to achieve the positive results in some other area. The use of the animals as models of the prototype = humans body to create some new medical drugs. Mathematic models are used in creating some new systems.

**Experiment and observation.** Observation is known as of the ancient times as the passive acquisition of the reality. Experiment is the special devise when the elements of the system are isolated and studied exclusively the influence of the studied objects.