



## EDITORIAL

# In Search of New Research Paradigms

Elena A. Stepanova

Institute of Philosophy and Law, Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences,  
Yekaterinburg, Russia

Permanent socio-cultural transformations, reflection on which is the main scope of *Changing Societies & Personalities*, continue to generate social theories with their own methodologies for constructing and representing social reality. The poly-paradigmatic nature of contemporary social knowledge implies its embeddedness in various theoretical systems that create alternative pictures of the world. On the one hand, social knowledge is pluralistic, that is, allowing for a plurality of equivalent explanatory concepts; on the other, it is interdisciplinary, that is, irreducible to the methodology of a single social or humanities discipline. The paradigms of social knowledge are immanently linked to social, political, economic and cultural contexts of a particular society. Structurally, these paradigms comprise not only explicit (conscious), but also hidden (unconscious) elements. The articles presented in the current issue of *Changing Societies & Personalities* demonstrate all these qualities: they are based on different conceptual foundations; they reflect specific features of the current state of the described societies; they are self-critical and leave room for further research.

In the article *Knowledge: From Ethical Category to Knowledge Capitalism*, Dmitry M. Kochetkov and Irina A. Kochetkova assert that contemporary economics considers knowledge as one of the main factors in economic growth, along with scientific and technological progress. The economic interpretation of knowledge is currently changing, and a new neoliberal paradigm of science and higher education is emerging. The authors aim to define “knowledge” as an economic category in comparison with various knowledge-based economic concepts. The authors analyze the learning economy where learning “is understood not simply as an access to information but as acquisition of certain knowledge and skills”; they describe the knowledge economy as an economic system where “knowledge is a key factor (or resource) in production and economic growth”. They examine the economics of scientific knowledge (ESK), an approach to understanding science, which relies on the concepts and methods of economic analysis in the study of the epistemic nature and value of scientific knowledge.

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Several helix models are constructed to elucidate interactions between the university, business, government, civil society institutions, etc., and to determine favorable conditions for sustainable development. Finally, the theory of knowledge-based public administration is proposed as a new research field.

In the article *Changing the Paradigm of Inclusion: How Blind People Could Help People without Disabilities to Acquire New Competences*, Konstantin V. Barannikov, Fayruza S. Ismagilova, Zijun Li, and Oleg B. Kolpashchikov stress the exceptional importance of involving people with disabilities (PWD) in the workplace. The initiation of effective disability inclusion programs has become a vigorous imperative for organizations, which presupposes the fulfillment of productive and competitive diversity for them, as well as the possibility for people with disabilities (PWDs—over 15% of global populations) to become equally recognized and appreciated for their potentials. The authors point out the wide distribution of a paternalistic paradigm—“a model of attitude towards a person who is incapable of independent existence and self-development and therefore needs protection, care, and control”. The authors disagree with this approach, claiming that PWDs possess unique potentials, particularly in mentoring activities. As a result, a new disability inclusion paradigm is proposed for involving successful blind professionals, who have the ability to adapt to changing conditions because of extraordinary tactile and auditory perception skills and cognitive capacities, including memory and language. In addition, successful blind people have a high level of ambiguity tolerance, which is a crucial quality for leadership. The article defines inclusion “as an intercultural interaction between people with and without disabilities”, which enriches organizational diversity and culture.

Rini Sudarmani, Tri Wahyuti, and Prima Naomi in the article *Surviving COVID-19 Pandemic: The Role of Social Media and Family Social Capital in Promoting a Healthy Lifestyle in Indonesia* describe the efforts of the Indonesian government undertaken to curb massive COVID-19 outbreaks. Specifically, the authors analyze the Policy of Emergency Public Activity Restrictions (PPKM), which, among other things, urges government offices, schools, and private companies to shift their operations to the online mode. As a result, the potential of social media and the number of social media users in Indonesia is constantly growing (about 160 million active users out of 272.1 million of total population). In particular, the article focuses on the role of women in the promotion of a healthy lifestyle, because “in Indonesia, mothers are responsible for the health and happiness of their families and they are also the ones who introduce new values and habits into family routines”. The authors investigate the relationship between the extent to which mothers in Indonesian families use social media and their views on the principles of healthy living based on the survey of 156 married female respondents conducted in 2020.

The article *A General Attitude towards Shopping and Its Link with Basic Human Values in the UK* by Francesco Rigoli proposes a classification of shopping as a prototypical expression of consumer culture according to the two broad conceptual frameworks: Self-expression theories and Social Status theories. The former “interprets the appeal of shopping as arising because shopping would be experienced as a manifestation of personal freedom, choice, and autonomy, allowing one to

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articulate one's own identity, rationality, and creativity". The latter maintains that "in consumer societies, which goods one purchases is fundamental for defining social status, thus rendering shopping attractive in the race for social rank". The author notes that the debate between Self-expression theories and Social Status theories raises an empirical question concerning the real appeal of shopping for common people.

Natalya A. Kostko and Irina F. Pecherkina in the article *Urban Identities in Russian Cities and the Prospects of Their "Smart" Development* investigates "citizens' ideas about the cities they inhabit and about the ideal city they would like to live in". The authors present the results of a survey conducted among the residents of three Siberian cities—Tyumen, Tobolsk and Khanty-Mansiysk, located in the Tyumen Region in Western Siberia,—in order to show the correlation between these people's urban identities and their willingness to contribute to their cities' "smart" transformations in the future. In the article, the concept of "smart city" is used, which offers a versatile view on how cities may integrate into the information society comprising such aspects as economy, mobility, environment, people, governance, environment, etc., as well as provides an attractive vision of the future. The authors stress that "an important element of the concept is its focus on public engagement and on empowering the citizens by inviting them to take part in the process of decision-making". In the article, different local contexts, which should be taken into account in governance practices, are investigated.

The article *Cognitive Attitudes and Biases of Victim Mentality* by Olga O. Andronnikova and Sergey I. Kudinov is focused on the problems of victimization and victim behavior, which are analyzed from different perspectives. The authors define victimization "as a consequence of negative events experienced by a person"; and victimhood "as a set of human characteristics caused by a complex of social, psychological, and biophysical conditions that exist in a cultural context and contribute to the maladaptive style of an individual's response, which leads to the damage of their physical or mental health". The nature of victim behavior and victimogenic cognition are examined with the purpose of verifying the main hypothesis of the article: the correlation between the level of victimhood and the irrational beliefs that determine the nature of victim behavior. The study is based on the interviews with 106 specialists in psychological counseling.

Christos Konstantinidis, Evangelos Bebetos, Filippou Filippou, and Eleni Zetou (Komotini, Greece) in the article *Gender Attitudes toward Homosexuality in Greece*, mark two major socio-political reasons for the massive rise of homophobia in the 1980s: first, the spread of HIV/AIDS, which caused the death of thousands of gay men, and second, the growing influence of fundamentalist Christian movements, which aggravated the hatred against the homosexual community. Concerning Greece, the authors note that the research on homophobia is limited; they mention the divided nature of the society where only half of the citizens are homosexual-friendly. Women are more receptive to homosexuality than men; younger people are more open-minded concerning sexual orientation than older people. The article pays special attention to homophobia in sports. Data on the current situation in various sports in Greece is collected and analyzed. The authors used the Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay

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Men (ATLG) scale to measure people's attitudes toward homosexuality. In addition, the relevance of the ATLG Scale to the population of Greece is estimated.

The BOOK REVIEWS section contains three reviews. *Trade, Politics and Borderlands: Russia and Britain in the Age of Enterprise* is a review of Matthew P. Romaniello (2019), *Enterprising Empires: Russia and Britain in Eighteenth-Century Eurasia* by Sergei V. Sokolov, who investigates commercial relationships between the British and Russian empires throughout the long 18<sup>th</sup> century. The second review *Orwellian Doublespeak: Dialogicality and the English Language* by Thomas Beavitt is aimed at validating (or rejecting) the ironic usage of the term "Orwellian" as applied in the context of contemporary English language scientific communication. The third—*Reactualisation of Triadology in Polemics with Postmetaphysics*—by Andrey V. Lavrentiev is a review of Oleg Davydov's *Revelation of Love. Trinitarian Truth of Being*, 2020, which is considered as an attempt to justify the truth of the Christian understanding of reality in the contemporary world.

Discussions around the topics raised in the present issue will be continued in the subsequent issues of our journal. In planning to introduce new interesting themes, we welcome suggestions from our readers and prospective authors for thematic issues, debate sections or book reviews.

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