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## НАТУРАЛИСТИЧЕСКАЯ ФУНДАМЕНТАЛЬНАЯ ОНТОЛОГИЯ ДЖОНА СЁРЛА

### NATURALIST FUNDAMENTAL ONTOLOGY OF JOHN SEARLE

*Фундаментальная онтология Сёрла является позицией представителя научного натурализма: для Сёрла мир представляет собой не только субстанцию, существующую независимо от нашего представления, но мир, по его убеждению, вписывается в естественнонаучную картину мира.*

*Приверженность Сёрла научному натурализму явля-*

*ется основополагающей, так как данная натуралистическая фундаментальная онтология определяет, что именно можно рассматривать в качестве философской проблемы. Сознание для Сёрла — биологический феномен, особенность физического мира. Два основных допущения философа: 1) сознание существенно для мозга и значений;*

2) сознание — биологический феномен, придает новые краски традиционной философской проблеме сознания, того, как согласовать субъективную природу сознания с объективной природой физического мира.

*Searle's fundamental ontology is a position of a scientific naturalist representative: for Searle the world is not only a substance that exists independently from our representations, but the world, in his opinion, fits the picture of the world of natural science. Searle's commitment to scientific naturalism is fundamental in the sense that this naturalistic fundamental ontology defines what should be considered as a philosophical problem. The mind for Searle is a biological phenomenon, a feature of the physical world that can be described by natural sciences. These two assumptions add new color to the traditional philosophical problem of the mind, the problem of how to reconcile the subjective nature of mind with the objective nature of the physical world in the light of studies of natural sciences. From the standpoint of a scientific naturalist, our fundamental view of the world and how it is described by natural sciences is largely correct, even if there is some disagreement about the details.*

*Ключевые слова: Сёрл, фундаментальная онтология, научный натурализм, ум, биологическое явление, перво-классный аспект, когнитивистика, материалистические понятия, проблема местоположения, действительность.*

*Keywords: Searle, fundamental ontology, scientific naturalism, mind, biological phenomenon, the first-class aspect, cognitive science, materialistic concepts, problem of location, reality.*

For John Searle, the mind is a biological phenomenon, a feature of the physical world that can be described by natural sciences. The philosopher's two basic assumptions are that consciousness is essential for brain, and consciousness is a biological phenomenon. These two assumptions add new color to the traditional philosophical problem of mind, the problem of how to reconcile the subjective nature of mind with the objective nature of the physical world in the light of studies of natural sciences. In fact, the mind-body problem is a part of a much wider range of problems, traditionally called the philosophy of mind. It embraces not only the «mind-body» problem, but also the vast specter of issues related to the brain-processes, the nature of human consciousness and intentionality of mental acts. In recent decades the philosophy of mind occupies a central position in modern philosophy, and even such traditionally important areas of philosophical thought as epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of action and philosophy of language are now being considered in the context of the philosophy of mind, or in some cases as its invariants [17, p. 16]. Now the philosophy of mind takes the first place among the other popular leaders of philosophical thought; this is understandable, because the language reflects our reality and this reflection completely depends on how the reality is reflected in our mind.

On the other hand, the intensive development of cognitive science opens vast horizons for the study of human thought and knowledge. The main subject of cognitive science is intentionality in all its manifestations [17]. The term «intentionality» is used to define the property of mental states with the way they can be directed to objects and states in the world. Intentionality includes «at least beliefs, desires, memories, perceptions, intentions (in the ordinary sense) and a large range of emotions» [17, p. 17].

The emergence of cognitive science was due to the false assumption that the brain is a digital computer, and consciousness is a computer program. Today it is obvious that a computer program is defined solely «in terms of symbolic or syntactic processes and consciousness is more than the syntax; it also includes the mental states with semantic content in the form of thoughts, feelings, etc., which are caused by a quite specific neurobiological processes in the brain» [17]. This idea has been demonstrated by John Searle in his famous thought experiment the Chinese Room Argument in 1980 [13]. This led to the fact that the name John Searle today is directly associated with the «cognitive revolution» that occurred in the second half of the twentieth century, which is a turning point in the social sciences to study the structures and processes of consciousness and brain processes of thinking and processing information. Searle has shown that the semantics of mental activity is determined by intentionality and subjectivity that is inherent to any human consciousness, as well as by «background knowledge and abilities» [16, p. 6]. Since the computer does not have intentionality, conscious awareness does not take place in its system.

John Searle is known as a philosopher of mind and scientific naturalist, although his ideas became known primarily through his research in the field of philosophy of language. Beginning with the philosophy of language, Searle goes first to the study of philosophy of mind, and then to study the structure of institutional reality. Such a sequence is determined not only by intellectual intelligibility, but also by Searle's ability to respond quickly to the changes of the contemporary philosophical context.

Searle studied at the University of Wisconsin, then at Oxford, surrounded by such outstanding minds of the twentieth century as J. Austin, G. Rayl and P. Stroson. The intellectual atmosphere of Oxford provided him the features that distinguish his style of doing analytic philosophy: clarity of the language, convincing arguments, logical approach, a focus on science, and the narrative style of approaching the problem. Overall, Searle adheres to all the basic statements of classical realism, the main thesis of which is one simply needs to believe in the existence of the world, thus providing the inherent proof of its existence. Common sense is the main ally of philosopher. David Papineau, professor of Philosophy of Science at King's College London says of John Searle: «Whenever he is faced with a conflict between common sense and arcane philosophical doctrine, he backs common sense every time» [8]. While common sense urges us to take science seriously, for Searle this requirement has to be in accord with the deep understanding of the reality of our mental life and with the fact that we have a free will [12, p. 9].

Searle always defends basic realism, and based not only on the fact of how the world works, but also on the idea that realism and the correspondence theory of truth are essential prerequisites of any sound philosophy, not to mention any serious science [15, p. 3]. According to Searle, this thesis is about the basic realism, and in fact, not a theoretical proposition, «rather — and in this he echoes Thomas Reid — it sanctions the very possibility of our making theoretical assertions in science» [3, p. 2], but also authorizes the attempt to construct a general theory in philosophy. That is why the theories that we create, can be understood only as a reflection of how things exist independently from our conscious reality. Without the belief that the world exists, and that it includes a lot of evidence that can help to confirm or refute our theories, the very possibility of science will be doubted [3].

Within Searle's philosophy, the problem of mind has two main vectors of consideration. First, he argues that modern philosophical thought is mistaken about the matters of mind, because it considers mind as something problematic and unsolvable. Secondly, according to the philosopher, the very formulating of the contemporary problem of mind is based on false assumptions, and what is currently known about mind and its relation to the brain is fundamentally wrong. Searle offers an alternative consideration of the problem of mind, where there is no more place for the metaphysical approach to the mind-body problem.

Searle's fundamental ontology is a position of a scientific naturalist: for Searle the world is not only a substance that exists independently from our representations, but the world, in his opinion, fits the picture of the world of natural science. It is obvious that one day we will find that some of the existing scientific theories are actually wrong [1, c. 1681]. However, from the standpoint of a scientific naturalist, our fundamental view of the world and how it is described by natural sciences is largely correct, even if there is some disagreement about the details. Searle insists on this position, stating that nowadays it is possible to be considered somewhat of an educated person with the condition that he/she has some idea of the «two main theories: the atomic theory of matter and the evolutionary theory of biology» [15, p. 6]. In particular, it is known that the Universe is composed of particles in fields of force, these particles form physical, chemical and biological systems, and the development of the biological systems is largely controlled by evolutionary processes [15].

Searle believes that the picture of the world presented to us by science, with a very high probability, corresponds to the way the world actually is. Consequently, he totally rejects the concept of philosophy adopted since Descartes, according to which the existence of such knowledge is problematic to a certain extent. Searle argues that the central fact of the modern world is that we already have a huge amount of knowledge regarding all aspects of reality, and knowledge about our world is increasing every day [2, c. 77]. That is what makes it possible for the philosopher to comprehend the projects of building unified theories of global scale (in the case of Searle it is the general concept of consciousness, language, and social reality) out of different kinds of knowledge that offer sciences.

Searle's commitment to scientific naturalism is fundamental in the sense that this naturalistic fundamental ontology defines what should be considered as a philosophical problem. In this regard, Searle is a model of such a method of doing philosophy [1, c. 1682].

Speaking against intellectual nonsense, Searle says: «If somebody tells you that we can never really know how things are in the real world, or that consciousness doesn't exist, or that we really can't communicate with each other, or that you can't mean 'rabbit' when you say «rabbit», I know that's false» [5, p. 29]. According to the method of «simple reduction», Searle's philosophical doctrines that lead to conclusions, which we know to be false, may be rejected. Searle uses this method widely, especially to debate with other philosophers. He uses it against those cognitive scientists who do not recognize the existence of consciousness, beliefs, or other components of mental reality. He directs his method also against the doctrine of linguistic behaviorism which was highlighted by Quine's famous argument «the native language gavagai» as an evidence of ambiguity translation in «Word and Object». According to Searle, «...if all there were to meaning were patterns of stimulus and response, then it would be impossible to discriminate

meanings, which are in fact discriminable?» [18, p. 125].

To determine Searle's place within the historical context, it is worth mentioning an essay written by Wilfrid Sellars in 1962 «Philosophy and Scientific Concept of Man» [23]. According to Sellars, philosophical problems are versions of the so-called problem of two images. From one hand, there is a «manifest image» (symbolic), which is the world in its ordinary perception. That is the world that we know through our experience, agents of consciousness perceive macrophysical objects from a subjective point of view [23, p. 17]. Moreover, the idea of the world, is filtered through a network of emotions, evaluations and teleological preferences. On the other hand, there is a «scientific image» — the world as it appears in the science and in description of mathematical physics in particular. This image of the world is mechanistic and independent from anyone's estimation and opinion.

The problem of two images in the other words is that many characteristic features of the «manifest» image seem incompatible with the scientific image. For example, love and consciousness have no place in physical ontology of objects governed by physical laws. In his latest work, «From ethics to metaphysics», Frank Jackson reformulated the problem of two images, renaming it as a «location problem»: «but a serious metaphysics... is continually going to be faced with the problem of location. Because the ingredients are limited, some putative features of the world are not going to appear explicitly in the story» [7, p. 5]. «What Jackson calls the purported or «putative features of the world» correspond to Sellars' manifest image» [12, p. 10]. Philosophers refer to the problem of two images, or location, when trying to explain the imaginary, implied, manifest image shown in a more scientific way. Jackson suggests that this interpretation leads to a de facto denial of the putative features [12].

Nevertheless it is clear that Searle supports both Sellars' and Jackson' formulation of this problem: «The overriding question in contemporary philosophy is as follows: We now have a reasonably well-established conception of the basic structure of the universe. But it is not at all easy to reconcile the basic facts we have come to know with a certain conception we have of ourselves, derived in part from our cultural inheritance but mostly from our own experience» [20, p. 101].

The logical structure of the eternal philosophical problems is in the thrall of two-images or location problem where putative features of experience should be aligned with the basic properties of the scientific picture of the world. For Searle, Sellars' and Jackson's theoretical framework is given to us by the physical sciences which view the world as a blind, deterministic, time-space set. These philosophers are representatives of scientific naturalism, and from the point of view of scientific naturalist Searle agrees that «philosophy begins with the facts of science». It contradicts the assertion that this world looks as it is described by science, so Searle asks the fundamental question of his philosophy: «How does a man — the conscious being fit into our physical reality?» Thus, for Searle, there is only one major issue in contemporary philosophy: How do we (people) fit into our existing world? How is it possible to fit us — «conscious, free, mindful, rational agents in a world that science tells us consists entirely of mindless, meaningless physical particles?» [19, p. 107].

The key word in Searle's argument is the word «entirely». According to scientific naturalism, the world has an entirely physical nature. The word «physical» should be explained the same way physics explains the concept of matter: physical matter has no consciousness, meaning, morals or free will,

it's irrational, mechanical, senseless, etc. But, if everything has a physical nature and people have a physical nature, then we cannot be conscious and have morals, ethics, free will, etc. However, people perceive themselves differently: as conscious, rational and free beings.

Consciousness exhibits properties that seem unacceptable to the scientific world. In particular, according to Searle: «consciousness consists of inner, qualitative, subjective states and processes of sentience or awareness. Consciousness, so defined, begins when we wake in the morning from a dreamless sleep — and continues until we fall asleep again, die, go into a coma or otherwise become «unconscious». It includes all of the enormous variety of the awareness that we think of as characteristic of our waking life» [19].

Conscious experiences are subjective, unlike objects of science that are available to universal perception. They have a unique view of the «first person» [12, p. 11]. Searle also appeals to other aspect of consciousness that many conscious states are intentional, and therefore imply the possibility of understanding. Stones or electrons do not have subjective experience, and are not capable to understand or to have intentionality [12]. There is the certain number of features of consciousness: it is a single whole, it has sphere of focus, it operates under the influence of a certain mood, many conscious states require background understanding that is not conscious, etc. However, for Searle it is a subjective qualitative experience that is a fundamental distinction between mind and body.

There are two possible answers to the problem of location of consciousness in the context of our scientific concept of the world. If consciousness cannot somehow be implicitly shown in the main scientific ontology, then we must reject it as completely illusory or «imaginary». According to Searle, both of these solutions are unacceptable variations of materialism. The first response reduces the mental phenomena to its compliance with the physical parameters. This is functionalist strategy, identity theorists and behaviorists. The second, more radical decision that comes from eliminative materialists, rejects the concept of the mental as an archaism.

Searle believes that consciousness is possible, following the direction of the third explanation. He sees himself as a supporter of the idea of mental autonomy, at the same time avoiding the extreme mind-body dualism (where consciousness is interpreted as too detached). Searle is trying to achieve consistency with scientific naturalism, not through the simplification or elimination of the mental to fit the specified parameters of physical, but expanding our understanding of the physical so as to cover mental. Describing this statement Searle writes: «There has never been such a problem as «naturalization» of consciousness: it is completely naturalized» [14, p. 63]. Thus, consciousness is a physical phenomenon, but Searle's physical reality is wider than the standard understanding of the scientific naturalism.

In particular, Searle argues that materialist theories, trying to naturalize consciousness, ultimately lead to vital, lacking of content, qualitative «as-it-feels» aspects of consciousness. Materialists refer to the subjective aspect as to intential, while Searle argues that something that is not related to the «first person» cannot be a contender for consciousness. Searle agrees with the task of «localization of consciousness in our general scientific paradigm of the world» [9, p. 47], but is concerned that the materialist solution stops working when it comes to reconciling the various aspects of elimination.

Searle's main concern is that the materialist theories of

mind disregard the first-person aspect, subjectivity, which is fundamental to the essence of human mind. Searle sometimes paraphrases subjectivity in terms of awareness or sensitivity. Other philosophers talk about subjectivity in terms of phenomenology or qualia. For example, pain may have a neurophysiological component, but it has no feelings, besides the brain processes that signal pain. All these markers lead to a qualitative experience that Searle considers an indicator of mind [21, p. 11].

On the one hand, realists like Searle believe that our experience of perceiving the reality (visual perception, tastes, sounds, smells, etc.) is caused by the external reality, that it is not logically dependent on the experience and representations. On the other hand, skeptics and idealists do not see the evidence that reality exists independently from our conscious experience. If all our experience is mediated, it is impossible to postulate an additional world that is independent from the representations. Skeptics believe that there is nothing independent in the representation of the wall, that creates an experience of our perception. Searle is strongly opposed to such a position. For example, Russell argues that scientific postulates do not represent the fundamental truths, but rather they are simple configurations of conscious experience or data of our senses. Thus, Russell considers the external world as a kind of likely assumption — a «logical fiction» or a paraphrase of series of phenomenological experiments related to the identity and constant change [11, p. 43].

In contrast to this position, Searle opposes the fact that: the world is mediated by our cognitive apparatus and does not imply that the world itself is somehow logically dependent on these experiments. «The existence of the universe does not depend on the experience of any being within the universe» [16, p. 25]. That is, according to Searle, «there exists a real world that is totally independent of human beings and what they think or say about it» [12, p. 12]. He calls it the external realism.

Searle believes that the existence of a reality is independent from mind, offering a transcendental argument, which claims that saying something based on facts, we automatically imply the existence of the reality independent from our mind [12]. Searle directed his transcendental argument against skepticism and idealism, which reject the idea of an independent from our mind reality. However, external realism offers us an argument that implies that if Searle is right, then we know that the reality, whatever it may be, does not depend on our mind.

Scientific naturalism overcomes the discrepancy that representative-independent reality exists, which requires that scientific image reflects the most basic features of reality. However, is it possible to reconcile Searle's conceptual relativism with his scientific naturalism? It is certainly difficult, but not impossible to simultaneously believe that the world is as it is described in science, and that the scientific description nevertheless are to some extent arbitrary. Searle believes that science describes the ontological grounds, whereas the ontological grounds can be presented in different conceptual schemes. According to Searle, the different conceptual schemes create different and apparently contradictory descriptions of the same reality, although this should not lead us to a kind of anti-realism about scientific positions [22]. The possibility of an infinite number of the conceptual schemes is easily compatible with scientific naturalism, though in a case if these schemes are comparable.

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## КОНКУРС-ДИСКУССИЯ

*Журнал «Бизнес. Образование. Право. Вестник Волгоградского института бизнеса», входящий в перечень российских рецензируемых научных журналов, в которых должны быть опубликованы основные научные результаты диссертаций на соискание ученых степеней доктора и кандидата наук, проводит конкурс-дискуссию на тему*

### «СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ УЧЕНЫХ XXI ВЕКА: ЭКОНОМИКА, ПЕДАГОГИКА, ПРАВО»

**К участию в конкурсе-дискуссии приглашаются аспиранты, соискатели,  
докторанты, научные сотрудники, магистранты.**

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*Условия проведения конкурса-дискуссии:*

*конкурс-дискуссия проводится в 3 этапа до 1 октября 2014 года.*

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