

## COGNITIVE FAITH AS AN ATTRIBUTIVE PHENOMENON OF COGNITION

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The relevance of the research is due to the insufficiently developed epistemological analysis of the phenomenon of faith in connection with the prevalence of logical methods in gnoseology. The goal of the work is a philosophical and gnoseological analysis of the phenomenon of cognitive faith in the process of cognition. The leading approach to the study of this problem is the dialectical method, which allows us to consider cognitive faith comprehensively as a subjective-personal act of acceptance by the subject of cognition in his thought activity of knowledge as true in two ways: unconsciously-pre-reflective and conscious-reflective. The article presents the results of a critical analysis of the traditional epistemological interpretation of faith, based on an attitude of opposing faith and knowledge, which makes it possible to view faith as a phenomenon of subjective reality of the individual subject of cognition, his thought activity; as "cognitive faith". The materials of the article can be useful for the development of questions in the theory and methodology of scientific knowledge.

**Keywords:** faith, knowledge, truth, cognition, thought activity.

### INTRODUCTION

The cognitive process cannot be limited purely by the logical development of objective knowledge, the subjective side in it, including the personal and psychological characteristics of cognition, is also important. A comprehensive study of the cognitive process, in particular the dialectics of the justification and development of knowledge, the knowledge of the authentic and probable, should include a philosophical-gnoseological analysis of the phenomenon of faith.

The phenomenon of faith is not limited to religious faith, but is an important component of the inner spiritual world of a man, a mental act and an element of the cognitive-mental, creative activity of a man. Although scientific knowledge in its final expression is aimed at the exclusion of the existence of faith, its acceptance at various stages of scientific knowledge presupposes the "participation" of faith, which can be called cognitive faith (from Latin: cognition - cognition). In the cognitive sense, faith denotes confidence in the truth of scientific foundations and conclusions in the expressed hypotheses; adoption of ideals and norms of scientific activity; trust in scientific authorities.

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The tradition of epistemological interpretation of faith is connected with the consideration of the phenomenon of faith in the process of cognition. In history the first interpretation of the phenomenon of faith in the process of cognition is the opposition of faith and authentic knowledge, which can be called the tradition of epistemological interpretation of faith (from the Greek episteme - authentic knowledge, science) (Popper, 1983).

This tradition originates in the teachings of ancient philosophers (Plato, Aristotle), who tied the faith with an unreliable opinion, the subjective conviction that emerged when researching observation data (Plato, 2007), and contrasted it with reliably-true knowledge based on thinking and reason (Aristotle, 1984). The setting for the opposition of faith and knowledge was strengthened in the philosophical and religious writings of philosophers of the Middle Ages (Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Erigena, Roszelin, Abelard, etc.) who asserted the idea of the superiority of faith over the reason as the expression of the prevailing power of religious authority over human consciousness (Boober, 1995). The discussions about the correlation of faith and reason that arose over the course of many centuries were reduced to questions about the principle admissibility and possible degree of the use of rational methods for substantiating or interpreting the “truths of faith” (Russell, 2001).

In modern times, philosophy, by virtue of secularization and orientation toward natural science, has largely ceased to support the idea of the primacy of faith over knowledge, but the tradition of their opposition has been preserved by adopting other forms. Thus Locke, linking faith with the “consent of the mind” and the “twilight of probability,” notes that it only makes up for the lack of rational knowledge in the conditions of “the absence of clear and reliable knowledge” (Locke, 1960). Thomas Hobbes interprets faith as acceptance of judgments on trust in someone else’s knowledge (authority) in cases of lack of true knowledge, obtained “by the right inference from the consequences established by experience” (Hobbes, 1964).

Epistemological tradition of contrasting knowledge and faith makes itself felt until now. Thus, A.A. Starchenko (1979), defining faith as “recognizing the truth (or falsity) of a concept without rational justification of it, but only on the basis of trust (opinion of authority, tradition, etc.)” speaks of the opposite of faith and knowledge: “faith is needed when there is no corresponding knowledge, and vice versa, wherever there is knowledge, faith becomes superfluous”.

## **METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Criticism of the epistemological interpretation of faith**

In our opinion, the tradition of the epistemological interpretation of faith hampers the fruitful analysis of this phenomenon, because it is based on an incorrect

opposition of faith and knowledge, understanding of “knowledge” in a too narrow sense (Teplykh, 2009).

Firstly, contrasting faith and knowledge is incorrect. The concept of “faith” can be logically clearly contrasted not with the notion of “knowledge”, but with the concept of “disbelief”. On the other hand, the notion of “knowledge” allows such a contrast not with respect to the concept of “faith”, but only with respect to the concept of “ignorance”.

Secondly, the understanding of “knowledge” as “true”, “reliable”, “proven”, “justified” is a narrow, limited interpretation of this phenomenon. The distinction here is between “what is taken for granted”, and “what is proved”.

However, knowledge is not limited to reliable knowledge. When it comes to knowledge, it is usually understood not only as an objective and true knowledge that has already received a logical and practical knowledge, but knowledge is hypothetical, including the moment of ignorance, probabilistic propositions and assumptions, and other types of knowledge in which its relativity, historical limitation is distinctly expressed. In every knowledge that is believed to be reliable, there is a prerequisite part that cannot be justified within the framework of this system of knowledge or taken for granted.

According to E.A. Evstifeeva (1984), knowledge, “often includes such components that are still being taken for granted, evoke a certain degree of trust, which stimulates a critical analysis, the search for evidence and practical evidence”. This is also said by V. A. Lectorsky (2007): “Knowledge, presupposes the validity of the proposition. Since full validity of this kind can only be said in some cases, scientific knowledge proves to be inseparable from the elements of faith”

Therefore, knowledge cannot be logically unequivocally opposed to faith, because there are significant difficulties in trying to outline the entire range of what should be referred to the category of knowledge. They are even greater when we distinguish between “ready” knowledge, fixed in one way or another, and “becoming” knowledge, that is knowledge in the context of the real process of cognition.

In general, the main drawback of the epistemological interpretation of faith is that faith is analyzed not in relation to the actual knowledge that man actually possesses, but only to the ideal of knowledge - to the truth. Within this ideal, they also receive their definite meaning as a striving for a sharp opposition to knowledge of faith, as well as a desire for a close rapprochement between them.

Obviously, such a statement of the problem is methodologically incorrect, because research begins with the question that it can only end with. Here, “the symphony is without a composer,” because, by limiting gnoseology only by analyzing true knowledge, the researcher excludes from the cognition of its creators - the real subjects of cognition. Over the board of epistemology, its source is selected, its essence is the creative process of the research activity of the subject, that is, the process of production of knowledge.

### **Dialectical interrelation between faith and knowledge**

It can be said that the epistemological interpretation of the relationship between faith and knowledge is characterized by a metaphysical way of solving this problem, because these two phenomena are opposed to each other as mutually exclusive, having unchanging boundaries of their existence. At the same time, the possibility of their *contradictory interconnection and interpenetration* is not taken into account.

In our opinion, epistemological analysis should be based on the idea of a dialectical interconnection of faith and knowledge, which is justified when we consider the relationship between these phenomena not as an abstract, “*productive*” plan as a relation of two “*essences*”, but when we put them in the “*procedural*” context of knowledge, carried out by the cognizing subject.

The dialectic of faith and knowledge is revealed in the contradictory nature of the process of cognition itself as “knowing ignorance”; as the process of the birth of knowledge from ignorance, the movement from incomplete knowledge to a more complete one. The search for truth requires belief. “Since,” G.I. Ruzavin (1997) notes, “the comprehension of truth is a long process in the course of which errors, mistakes and paralogisms are possible, insofar as in the real search for truth it is always inevitable to resort to assumptions, opinions and belief” (Ruzavin, 1997). According to D.M. Ugrinovich (1985), in the process of cognition, “irreligious faith” acts as a “potential reservoir of knowledge,” which can be actualized in the course of further theoretical and practical verification. V.P. Filatov (1989) notes that faith “receives confirmation of the authenticity and practical effectiveness of the experience and knowledge based on them. Faith in this process transforms into confidence, into conviction”.

The need for faith in cognition is connected with the contradictory nature of the objective truth itself, which arises and exists only at the dialectical junction of the “absolute” and “relative” truths, the exhaustive and available knowledge, between which, in the words of F.F. Shamal (2000), “lies the infinity of the unknown, which becomes only an object of faith”. V.I. Nesmelov (1992) says the same: “The content of faith is made up of actual accomplishments of the ultimate ideal of knowledge, and therefore a huge mass of available knowledge of man actually exists only in the formation of faith”.

At the same time, every belief is “substantial”, there is always some “accepted” knowledge, as G. Hegel (1977) pointed out: “... what I believe in, I know, it is a certain content in my mind ... faith is too, knowledge, only in a peculiar form”.

In the dialectical understanding of knowledge, it is affirmed that faith cannot be eliminated from cognitive activity. In this case, the phenomenon of faith is not just a kind of random “pendant” of this activity, but is organically included in the cognitive process. In addition, every faith carries a certain content (“idea”, in which it is believed), which is nothing but knowledge, in spite of its problematic character in many cases.

In this connection, the real essence of the problem of faith in cognition is not to assess this or that content of faith in its relation to the ideal of knowledge, but to explain the very possibility of establishing faith as a phenomenon of cognition (Baranets, 2004). Undoubtedly, the subject of cognition strives not for faith, but for true knowledge, - why in this case is it possible for him *to believe instead of to know?*

The solution of this question can be given only *in the interpretation of the nature of faith as a fact of the subjective reality of the cognizing subject included in the process of cognition*, which makes it possible to determine the significance of faith in the cognitive process.

#### **“Existential horizon” of cognitive faith**

In gnoseological analysis, faith must be conceived as a phenomenon of subjective reality of the individual subject of cognition, his cognitive activity (*cogito*), or a cognitive phenomenon or “cognitive faith,” which implies the impossibility of its (phenomenon) abstraction from representation, manifestation in the “living”, subjective-personal reality of the cognizing subject.

Thus, the “*existential horizon*” of the phenomenon of cognitive faith is set, the boundaries of its manifest existence, “as-being,” are defined. This is very important, because the question of how and where there is faith (and therefore, how it arises and how it ceases to exist) is the key.

This is important because often the phenomenon of faith deprives the status of its subjective and personal being, attributing faith to various “transpersonal” entities: “collective”, “mass” and “institutional” entities. In such transpersonal forms, the existence of faith presupposes objectification, objectification of its “content” and disparagement, subjectivization of the latter. Of course, and at the level of the individual subject, these processes necessarily take place. At the same time, as D.I. Dubrovsky (2002) notes, “outside of” living “representation in the subjective reality of individuals, no faith can exist”.

Cognitive faith is inextricably linked with the person of man. If knowledge can be expressed in a clear, articulated form of constrictions, concepts, theories, can be alienated from a person and stored in the form of information, then faith is an inseparable phenomenon of consciousness and cognition. V.P. Filatov (1989), using the term “cognitive faith”, notes that she “cannot be alienated from the individual who possesses it, and in this sense it is logical to take it to the human parameters of cognition”.

#### **Cognitive understanding of the process of cognition**

The methodological necessity of taking into account the “existential horizon” of cognitive faith presupposes a proper interpretation of the process of cognition itself.

In our opinion, cognitive interpretation presupposes an understanding of cognition as a process of thought activity of the subject, in which the subject acquires new knowledge about the object according to the formula “*ego cogito cogitatio cogitatum*” (“I think of what is conceivable”). In this formulation, the consciousness of the cognizing subject (ego) is regarded as the cogito of some “cognitive content” (cogitatio, “knowledge”, “object of knowledge”), which is directed at the objective reality that is outside of consciousness (cogitatum, “being”, the “object of knowledge”).

Cognition as a thought activity of a subject can be represented as a process of solving a research problem, which involves three elements: “given,” “find,” “solution.” Indeed, the possibility of knowing suggests that the subject must “know” and “not know” his object. The subject must “know” his object, believe it to be real, which is possible if the object is “forcibly given” to the subject, or is to him in consciousness (“given”, “known”). At the same time, knowledge is always directed at something “unknown” (“X”), the fact that the subject does not yet know about the object, but can find out (“sought”, “unknown”). The process of cognition (the “solution of the problem”) consists in the penetration of the subject into the essence of the object (into the “unknown”) through the thought-constructing of this essence on the material of its phenomenon in consciousness (on the basis of the “given”).

Proceeding from the cognitive interpretation, the epistemological problem of obtaining true knowledge about the object can be represented as follows:

- 1) knowledge about the object (cogitatio) exists only in the consciousness of the cognizing subject as subjective products (cognitive, mental constructs) of his thought activity (cogito);
- 2) At the same time, this knowledge is not directed to itself, but to the being of an object outside the consciousness of the subject (cogitatum);
- 3) therefore the subject needs to transfer subjective knowledge (cogitatio) to objective being (cogitatum), to objectify mental reality, i.e. Recognize (accept, agree) certain mental constructs not only belonging to the subject himself, but also relating to the being of the object, as being consistent with it, describing the object “as it really is”;
- 4) from the position of critical, reflective thinking, the subject needs to justify the ongoing transfer of knowledge to objective reality.

## RESULTS

### **Cognitive faith as a necessary modality of cognition**

On the basis of this interpretation of the process of cognition, it becomes possible to determine the role of cognitive faith as an attribute phenomenon of cognition.

The most important aspects of the process of the thinking activity of the cognizing subject are: (a) the presence in the consciousness of the subject of a certain *cognitive content* and (b) the attitude towards it, its *acceptance, approval, agreement* with it or, on the contrary, non-acceptance, disagreement, including different degrees of such relations, up to intermediate doubtful uncertainties. It is in this duality of thought activity that the nature of cognitive faith lies.

The presence of cognitive faith in the process of cognition is conditioned by the need for the subject to *accept* any cognitive content, mental constructs (cogitatio) in the mode of their truth (quia verus, "as true"), as those that are carried by the subject from the content of subjective reality (cogitatio, knowledge) into the content of objective reality (cogitatum, the being of the object). In this transfer of knowledge to the very existence of an object, the phenomenon of faith is affirmed as an act of cognition. As Dubrovsky (2002) points out, "in cognitive terms, we are talking not only about the truth and the ways of establishing it, but about the more general property of the subject to accept or reject some" content, "a particular case of which is the acceptance of something as true" .

Cognitive faith is an integral quality of the direction (intentionality) of the cognitive consciousness. According to M. Polanyi, "to believe in something means to exercise mental action", therefore, "to avoid belief, we must stop thinking" (Polani, 1985).

Faith is a "positive" modality of the available "cognitive content". If the act of "acceptance" ("consent") does not come, then there is no phenomenon of faith. The very act of acceptance is expressed in a subjectively represented display of the available "cognitive content" in the form of its positive evaluation, approval, a sense of correspondence of reality (truth); It is inherent in this or that degree of awareness.

Cognitive faith is not the knowledge of truth in thinking, but the "truthful" modality of thinking. Obviously, knowledge for the sake of the process itself, in isolation from the truth, is meaningless. So, too, faith for the very process of belief is meaningless, if not aimed at the final result, to receive true knowledge. That is why, cognitive faith characterizes the process of cognition, not from the position of possessing truth itself as "ready" knowledge, but the quality of "truth" as a special modality of cognition.

D.I. Dubrovsky (2002) believes that all knowledge bears in itself a belief modality, faith is an "act" of accepting a "certain" cognitive content, and the truth is a special, special kind of such "acceptance", or faith". "Faith," define V.R. Bukin and E.A. Erunov (1974), "is the inner acceptance by man of something as true and agreement with it".

Precisely because faith arises and develops as cognition, it never exists alongside knowledge. From the position of V.I. Nesmelov (1994), true knowledge and faith must be considered, "as the ideal and actual moments of the same cognitive process, faith is a process and a formation of knowledge".

Thus, cognitive faith in a general sense (in an epistemologically unreflected, implicit form) is an act of acceptance by the subject of some cognitive content (available knowledge) as true and is a necessary “truthful” modality of cognition realized in the thinking activity of the cognizing subject. In general, the formula of cognitive faith can be represented as “I accept what is conceivable as true” (or in another way, “ego cogito cogitatio quia verus cogitatum” - “I think what is thought as [it is] true about what is conceivable”).

At the same time, as D. I. Dubrovsky (2002) rightly notes, in theoretical knowledge “the well-refined epistemological forms of” acceptance “occupy” a central place. That is why when we turn to theoretical knowledge, which is characterized by the elaboration of specific, reflective structures in ourselves, the question arises about what exactly is a sufficient basis for recognizing knowledge as true.

## DISCUSSIONS

### **Cognitive faith in the context of epistemological reflection**

Indeed, the problem of truth (quia verus) or the correspondence of knowledge (cogitatio) of objective reality (cogitatum) is a central epistemological problem in the evaluation of knowledge, and hence its “verbal” modality (Gaydenko, 2003).

From the position of the mind, for a *critical, reflexive acceptance* of any knowledge as the true subject of cognition, sufficient grounds (criteria, reasons) for this acceptance are needed, *assessment of the legitimacy of the ongoing transfer of knowledge* from subjective reality to objective reality. Or: on what grounds is it possible to apply the truth predicate to the content of faith?

In the context of epistemological reflection, it becomes possible to distinguish between “faith” and “knowledge”. This difference is not *in content* (and in that and in the other case it is “acceptance of available knowledge as true”), but *in form*.

Knowledge presupposes a sufficient validity of the statement being made, faith can be more or less justified, but not enough. The lack of justification cannot be filled, otherwise faith would become knowledge. As it is noted by V.A. Lectorcky (2007), “a scientifically accepted assertion is simply not well founded. When it is sufficiently substantiated (although the question of what is sufficient may be the subject of discussion), it will turn into knowledge”. In the epistemological sense, faith is the position of a person who adheres to any representations without sufficient empirical or rational grounds.

The problem of the truth of the available knowledge (cogitatio) is solved not by contrasting “faith” and “knowledge” on the basis of *truth* (“the object of faith” and “the subject of knowledge” are equally attributed to the predicate of truth), but on the basis of *the degree of sufficient validity*, the proof of the predicate “truth”. For



the “object of faith” the insufficient degree of validity is recognized, and for the “subject of knowledge” - the sufficient degree.

In fact, we find that objective-true knowledge is not an expression of reality in the positions of thought, but only the faith of the subject of cognition in the agreement of the positions of his thought with the content of reality. Therefore, objectively true knowledge is actually a cognitive faith, but not in general faith, but cognitive faith in the highest degree of its solidity, provenance. True knowledge is nothing but a reliable (sufficiently substantiated, proven) position of thought about an object in which the subject cannot doubt. ”The problem of the truth of knowledge,” D. I. Dubrovsky (2002) believes, “coincides in its essence with the problem of the truth of faith”.

And here the question arises: who (or what) *assesses the degree of sufficiency* of justification of any available knowledge and *decides* what kind of “cognitive content” has the right to be “objective-true knowledge”, and which will only be the content of “faith.” We are interested in the problem of that “*authority*”, which *assesses the degree of sufficiency and inadequacy* of the evidence provided.

Obviously, an assessment of the validity of knowledge cannot proceed from the object of cognition: after all, the reasoning, the proof, is the *function of the subject*, and not the object, and therefore the *assessment of the sufficiency* of this justification is also a function of the subject.

Thus, the “truth-authority” should be sought in the thinking activity of the cognizing subject itself. To determine the required “authority” in the subject, let us turn to the definition of faith and knowledge in I. Kant: “If the recognition of the truth of a proposition has a sufficient basis from the subjective side, but at the same time is recognized as objectively insufficient, then it is called faith. Finally, both subjectively and objectively sufficient recognition of the truth of judgment is knowledge” (Kant, 1994).

What does “subjective sufficiency” mean? Obviously, it means “I have *quite enough* justifications, proofs for the recognition of the judgment to be true”, which in the subject’s thinking activity is equivalent to evaluating “*I do not doubt* that the judgment is true.” In other words, the subjectively sufficient degree of validity of knowledge is the certainty of their truth for the subject of cognition itself. The subject of evaluation (the “instance of truth”) is in this case the cognizing subject himself.

The difference between the estimates “I believe” and “I know” is not rooted in “subjective sufficiency,” but in the degree of “objective sufficiency.” What, then, do conscious assessments mean “objectively insufficient” (faith) and “objectively sufficient” (knowledge) in the subject’s thinking activity?

As we have already explained, the object itself cannot act as the subject of this evaluation. Or the individual subject (ego), also, cannot be the subject of evaluation, since he is critically aware that his sense of “satisfaction” cannot be *fully* recognized if it is possible that other subjects of cognition (alter-ego) may doubt in the truth of

judgment. Thus, the formula of the reflected cognitive faith: “*I do not doubt that the judgment is true, however, I doubt that others also recognize it as true.*”

To eliminate this doubt, the subject of cognition (ego) needs to take the position of an “over-individual subject”, or some *intersubjective* subject of cognition, called in the philosophical literature in different ways: “transcendental subject”, “collective subject”, “reasonable subject”, etc. It is from this position that he will be able to assess “objective sufficiency”, which essentially amounts to the fact that any person *will have to recognize* this judgment as true, since in this position he will have to recognize it as true: “objective sufficiency is called reliability (for *everyone*)” (Kant, 1994). Actually the formula of “objective-true” knowledge “*I do not doubt that the judgment is true, and I do not doubt that others also recognize it as true.*”

In general, the inter-subjective criterion “others may doubt the truth” is the watershed that separates the “faith” from the “objective-true knowledge” in the subject’s thinking activity. In view of this, we consider it more correct to call “objective validity” of the recognition of the truth of a proposition - “objective-inter-subjective validity”.

## CONCLUSION

Cognitive faith is a subjective-personal act of acceptance by a subject of cognition (ego) in his cognitive activity (cogito) of any knowledge, cognitive content (cogitatio) as true (quia verus), or as the corresponding objective reality (cogitatum).

In unconsciously-pre-reflexive form, cognitive faith is the acceptance of knowledge as true on the basis of only subjective sufficiency, without an assessment of their validity, proof.

In a consciously reflexive form, cognitive faith presupposes an assessment of the acceptance of knowledge as true in the mode of subjective sufficiency and objectively inter-subjective inadequacy of the grounds, evidence for their acceptance as true; in conditions of lack or absence of objectively inter-subjective justifications, evidence of their truth (Teplykh, 2014).

The phenomenon of cognitive faith is not only more or less compulsory “accompaniment” of rationally organized knowledge, but is its inalienable and important condition, acting as an attribute phenomenon of the cognitive process as a movement from ignorance to knowledge.

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