

## CERTAIN METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS OF CONTEMPORARY ECONOMIC SCIENCE\*

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**Abstract.** *The paper presents certain methodological problems and tasks of contemporary economic science. The connection between empirical and exact, analogy between biological beings and social achievements, collectivism, etc. represent only in part the interests of modern economy that has for a task to shape the unshaped, to make path where there is not any and to offer help to economy and society in the labyrinth of socio-economic reality. Economy is a multi-disciplinary science. Connection to the insights of sociology, psychology, philosophy, mathematics and the like, enables contemporary economic science to explore and examine human as a rational, spiritual and moral being. Mathematics and econometrics are useful disciplines, but lack the ability to translate the analysis of the deepest riddles of human life into their own language. Economists should help in building the institutions that protect and advance human freedom.*

**Key Words:** *Empirical laws, exact laws, methodological holism, methodological individualism, freedom.*

### INTRODUCTION

It is a long-standing issue whether economics is a science. In search of the answer, two extreme poles can be identified. Some thinkers deny economics the status of science. To them, the assumption that economics is science sounds odd since economists do not work with test-tubes and telescopes. The essence of science is not in scientific experimenting, but in scientific method - continual putting forward and testing of hypothesis and theories on the functioning of the world. Scientific method is applicable to the examination of the economy of a country to the same extent as is to the examination of the gravity or evolution of species. Albert Einstein once said: "The whole of science is nothing more than a refinement of everyday thinking." [10, p.20].

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Until the early 1960s, methodological research had been primarily directed towards the examination of the structure of scientific knowledge, and since then towards the examination of its development. Some methodologists think that two concepts, *cumulativistic and anti-cumulativistic* can be identified in the examination of the process of growth and development of scientific knowledge. According to this approach, science presumes the system of proved truths, i.e. stable knowledge that gets broadened, while old knowledge gets improved and accumulated, and new knowledge upgraded. By contrast, *anti-cumulativistic* approach presents science as a system that constantly changes itself with the change of scientific paradigms.

For logical empirism, the development of science is a strictly cumulative process. The system of knowledge is continuously changing and developing through adding new scientific insights, which reveals its cumulative character. In order to be accepted, a new theory must be more general than the previous one, which does not agree with the facts of the development of science, which point to the continuous replacement of old, poor, less truthful theories with new, better and more truthful ones. Nevertheless, the history of economic thought represents the change of different theories that existed in different time epochs. Classical economic thought has been replaced by neoclassical paradigm. Productive production lies at the foundation of the "classical", while market exchange lies at the foundation of the "neoclassical". In classical version, human work (abstract), which is objectively related to the sphere of material production and productivity, lies at the foundation of commodity value. For the neoclassical theory, value (price) is deduced from exchange relations and subjective valuations of economic subjects. The behavior of economic subjects and their choice has a central place in the neoclassical economic analysis and research. However, we do not speak of a simple shift from the sphere of production to the sphere of consumption, from the pattern of offering formation to pattern of demand, but we speak of a shift to a new system and structure of the economics world, a new system of scientific categories that has been built upon starting principles and cause-effect relations between them.

#### 1. MISCONCEPTIONS THAT GENERATE FROM THE RELATION OF REALISTIC-EMPIRIC ORIENTATION OF THEORETICAL RESEARCH AND EXACT ORIENTATION OF THEORETICAL RESEARCH

Science approaches the world of phenomena from two standpoints. The first standpoint is directed towards the cognition of the concrete, and the other, towards the cognition of the general in the world of phenomena. The results of the application of the first standpoint in search of knowledge comprise the class of individual knowledge. On the other hand, the results of application of the other approach form the structure of general scientific knowledge. The interest that drives human spirit to observe individual phenomena and the importance of that observation for practical life are self-evident.

Concrete reality has its phenomenal forms. Certain manifestations of an individual phenomenon that reemerge when the conditions for that are fulfilled represent the phenomenal form of observed phenomenon or type. The relationships between concrete phenomena that more or less regularly reappear are called type relationships or type relations. Theoretical understanding of phenomena reveals that certain regularities in the co-exis-

tence of phenomena are such that they exclude exceptions, while other regularities permit variations about some middle value. The first regularities are defined as natural and the other as empirical laws. There are not many natural sciences that encompass only the rigid laws. This is not a reason to bring into question the value and importance of the disciplines that include only empirical laws. On the contrary, less rigid theories represent powerful means in understanding and mastering phenomena.

Not only is there a misconception about valuation of science with larger or lesser amount of empirical laws, but there is also a controversy regarding the attitude (of every methodologist) that only one orientation of theoretical research should be applied in the examination of the world of phenomena. For example, the opponents to empirism think that only observing the phenomena in their full complexity leads to the truth. Thus, empirical and realistic orientation of theoretical research represents the adequate way of understanding reality. However, scientific insights go beyond immediate experience that can be perceived with the bare eye, which makes the given standpoint of the advocates of empirism one-sided and unacceptable.

There are certain disagreements among economists whether empirical laws are more valuable than the exact ones, since they are based on observation of real phenomena. They think that in the case of their disagreement, exact laws should be aligned with the results of empirical research. The idea that the laws based on larger experience offer, at the same time, higher guarantee of their truth, represents methodological nonsense and testifies to the misunderstanding of bases, assumptions and objectives of the exact research. Finding exact knowledge that would agree with full empirical reality or establishment of empirical knowledge characterized by features of exact knowledge is wished for but unattainable objective of scientific research. For better understanding of the relationship between exact and realistic research, we have used one example.

In the price theory, exact law exists under the assumption that the increase in demand generates the increase in prices. The assumptions of the mentioned law are the following: 1) individuals actors strive to completely satisfy their economic needs; 2) individuals as cognitively perfect beings possess developed skills of establishing economic objectives and means for their implementation; 3) there are no exogenic influences that might reduce economic freedom of the individual; 4) in the standard economic model, individuals know well the economic state of affair, because market constrains are supposed to be unchangeable. Under such conditions, preferences are given in advance, are consistent and firm. Or, let us take, for example, the law of maximizing rationality that is considered, in economic science, as an exact regularity.

Despite the fact that the law of maximizing rationality is a permanent part of economic reality, more and more behaviorist evidence against rational superiority of economic factors emerges [9, p. 448]. By using psychology, behavioral economics has defined the behavior in making choices as a process of making decisions that proceeds under the influence of preferences, beliefs, attitudes, motives and perceptions. The influence of all the previously mentioned psychological phenomena proves that individuals do not only follow the demand of fully satisfying their own economic interests, in the process of decision-making. Cognitive illusions (biases) in decision making lead individuals to misinterpret their own interests and true wishes [6, p. 510].

The critique of the exact model of the law shows that the increase in demand will generate the increase in prices, but under certain circumstances there will be no increase. The

essence of the misconception is not in the belief that it is impossible to check the law against the experience, but in the incorrect observing of the exact law. It should be observed as a relation between phenomena that is valid for all people and all times. This universality is a proof of the importance of the exact law for theoretical research of the phenomenal world.

## 2. ON THE REASONS OF INTELLECTUAL DISPUTES AND PRINCIPLED DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN PEOPLE THAT FUNCTION UNDER THE SAME RULES OF FORMAL LOGIC

The task of a theoretician in social sciences is to analyze categories and laws and to consider and explain the anatomy of the contemporary society in time and space. This can be achieved if we become more critical to ourselves, i.e. to our orientations, attitudes and achievements. We can understand critical analysis of the reality as a conscious humanist action that is undertaken with the intention of setting new objectives and opening new perspectives [2, p.5]. In relation to this, there appears one of the most delicate issues of human communication and the history of the whole spirituality. How is it possible that among people, especially those thinking ones, exist so many and so deep differences? How is it possible that totally opposite conclusions could be made although the same logic rules and the same factual materials are used? Why do human brains that function according to the same rules of formal logic produce opposite attitudes?

The first reason of possible disagreement are logic errors. This source of opposite attitudes about one and the same problem is trivial because it is the consequence of weakness in human thinking. Since the errors in reasoning and proving are common, it is natural that people, under the same conditions, arrive at different conclusions. Other cause of the differences in scientific perspectives is differentiation in terms of the achieved maturity level of science in different environments and with different subjects. The third reason is related to the fact that different value systems generate different analyses, findings and perspectives. In every research we begin with some apriori attitudes. However, the variety of apriorisms creates intellectual disputes and principled disagreements among thinkers that function under the same rules." Only by accident, the same conclusions can be derived from different sets of axioms" [11,p. 244].

The next reason comprises different estimates that under conditions of turbulent ambience can be accepted as inevitability. Differences in estimates are the consequence of ignorance concerning certain natural and social phenomena. Example: because of the inefficient policy of currency and the wrong concept of economic reforms based on extreme neoliberalism, according to the concept of Milton Freedman, Serbia has suffered from the huge external debt. In relation to that perspective the following question emerges: whether the incentives of external debt are short term or long term. It is known, from the theory of public finance, that public debt represents total, direct indebtedness of the state to domestic and foreign creditors. On the other hand, foreign debt, besides the direct indebtedness of the state to international financial institutions, includes also the indebtedness of the state and private enterprises and banks. When the representatives of our Government speak of external indebtedness, they have in mind only the direct indebtedness of the state to foreign creditors. According to them, the external debt amounts to only 6, 8 billion dollars [21]. This practically means that current authorities expect that, in a few years,

import and foreign trade deficit will decrease rapidly. This expectation of the Government rests on the estimate that the incentives of huge external debt are short term. However, if it is estimated that the external debt is financed from the items whose long-term sustainability is problematic, then the estimate of the correctness of managing economic policy will be quite different.

"Various analysts or relevant subjects in particular social action will differ: 1) in terms of selection of dimensions and appropriate social criteria through which the given social situation is valued and 2) in terms of ponderers that are ascribed to certain dimensions i.e. criteria." [11, p. 244]. These differences produce different angles of some problematic constellation. As it is known, our people chose, in the 2009 elections, the storming turn from directed economy to market economy. This transformation, still in progress, carries some positive as well as negative economic implications. At the level of macroeconomic stability, the stability of exchange rate and low inflation has been realized. On the other hand, it is hard to talk about macroeconomic balance in the country where foreign trade deficit reaches unprecedented proportions and whose external debt is growing with worrying rapidity.[1, p. 41]. For some economists, the high rate of unemployment (current rate of unemployment in Serbia is approximately 16%) represents the most evident and the most dramatic evidence of the failure of the state in its proclaimed objectives.[19, p. 258]. "According to the results of the Republic Bureau of Statistics, the annual growth of GDP was between 2,5 and 8,4% for the 2001-2007 period, which is at the level of the average for transition countries".[1, p. 42]. This growth of GDP, according to the opinion of certain economists, is more than modest, if we do not forget the low starting basis and the fact that our statistics is founded in such a way to overestimate development results, thus expressing them rarely, if at all, realistically. Economists, who reduce the notion of macroeconomic stability to stable currency and low inflation, evaluate the past economic flows as favorable. Those who consider the macroeconomic balance to include not only the low inflation, but also economic growth, low unemployment and successful display of economy in the foreign market, have characterized this situation as a catastrophe [11, p. 124].

### 3. THE ANALOGY BETWEEN NATURAL ORGANISMS AND SOCIAL ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTROVERSY GENERATING FROM THIS ANALOGY

In economic theory, private egoism, i.e. self-gain is an axiom that plays an important role in revealing the exact laws in economy. On its correctness depends the possibility of the existence of rigid laws among the economic phenomena and thus, the possibility of theoretical science about these phenomena. On the other hand, the rejection of the dogma about self interest represents also a correct methodological approach in analyzing and interpreting evolution dynamics of social achievements. A theoretician in economics, who starts seriously to read evolutionist biology, will understand quickly that these are two related sciences. They actually have an important amount of relatedness, not only in terms of the issues they address and methods they use, but also in terms of the way they relate to the rest of the world.

Conventional economists have gone far beyond the limits of the general idea about intelligence and interaction. Since the publication of "The Fundamentals of Economic Analysis" by Paul Samuelson in 1947, the representatives of conventional economic the-

ory have begun to use more severe, extreme formulations in their models. Thus, for example, the assumption about individuals that are capable of choosing unmistakably the best among offered alternatives has been introduced for application. Under such conditions, individual balances emerge, in which each individual realizes the maximum of his/her own welfare [22]. Today, everyone examining the world knows that the mentioned statements represent extreme and unrealistic assumptions, hence, the question arises, if a hypothesis about private egoism is not correct, does its rejection have any importance in the theoretical examination of economy?

When the owner of a commodity gives it away to the benefit of some other commodity (money) that he/she does not indirectly need or own in a sufficient amount-then, it is a gesture that seriously disturbs the assumption about the individual as a being directed towards his/her own interests. In this situation, science has the task to explain the origin of money-the accidental result of historical development. As long as barter governs in a certain economic culture, the individual will always strive to exchange the surplus of commodity for the goods that he/she indirectly needs. However, under such conditions, the exchange is possible if there is someone, on the other side of the market, who needs what the observed individual offers and who, at the same time, offers what that individual needs. After a while, the actors of exchange realize that there is great demand in the market for certain variety of goods. Those entering the market with the commodity that is not wanted easily come after the wanted variety of products that they need [14, p. 144]. Under the impact of habit and rise of economic culture, from the set of dominant commodity, the commodities that are most practical and most efficient are selected for barter, in the particular market. Its permanence and practicality will be noticed first by one part of the subjects in economy. Through the operation of the exchange of his/her commodity for some wanted commodity, a merchant achieves advantage in the exchange process, because it makes him/her closer to the final consumer objective (directly needed product). When the other participants in the barter have seen economic benefit with the most clever and most diligent individuals that for a long time have exchanged their commodities for the most wanted, they will gladly accept the asset that can always be exchanged in the market. Thus, practice and habit have created the general equivalent in exchange i.e. social institution of organic origin that our ancestors named money.

Evolutionist economists speak of stable adaptation and of the local maximum as a particularly important feature of natural and social phenomena. During evolution, recessive features have gradually decreased, and only those that have to a certain extent been adapted to the conditions in the environment remain. Evolutionist economists reject the assumption about the perfectibility (global maximum) of natural and social organisms in totality and explain the local maximum through this example: "Dolphins may look like fish but still they surface to breathe" [22].

Undisputedly, there is the analogy between natural phenomena and social achievements in certain aspects. Namely, the functioning and development of the whole of a natural organism defines the functioning and development of its parts. On the other hand, the parts are in the service of normal functioning and development of the whole. It also holds true for the manifestation of certain social phenomena. Accordingly, certain social institutions represent spontaneous consequence of historical development and not the result of human calculation or positive legislature [14, p. 124].

The justification of the analogy between natural and social phenomena is not limited. Its unreserved acceptance generates threefold illusion. First, the analyst can forecast that only with one part of social phenomena there exists the analogy with natural organisms. Second, the analogy is limited to certain aspects; even in that respect is not completely precise. Third, the standpoint on the organic origin of all social phenomena is also wrong [14, p. 125].

Organic understanding of social phenomena is not of universal character because, in the evolution of social phenomena, there is mutual will as a factor of genesis. Agreements, positive legislature and the like represent the result of the striving of people who think, feel and act.[14, p. 126]. If social achievements were, in every respect, biological organisms, then the methods of social sciences (especially the methods of analysis and philosophy) would be, at the same time, the methods of social sciences in general. However, the method cannot be simply transferred from one area to the other. The method of social sciences must be social-scientific in the strict terms [14, p. 128].

For interpreting natural phenomena and social phenomena of organic origin, there are two schools of thought: realistic-empiricist and exact. Realistic-empiricist approach represents the description of organic phenomena in the totality. Exact approach relates to an atomistic interpretation of the organic world." There are many advocates, among contemporary authors of sociological literature, of the attitude that in the area of social phenomena, the organic or collectivistic understanding is the most justified one; that is, it is considered to be at the higher level than exact [14, p. 133]. The reason behind this lies in a deep illusion of those theoreticians that hold firmly to the theory on strong analogy between social phenomena and natural organisms. The opponents of the above theory use as a starting point the hypothesis that social achievements are indivisible wholes, thus they can be examined in their totality. Hence, the aspiration towards atomistic direction of research in the area of social sciences is founded on the misinterpretation of the uniqueness of a social being.

"We meet organisms as a whole, and see their functions as live manifestations of that wholeness; however, it does not follow that the exact approach is totally inadequate in the research related to the area of phenomena that we speak about or that only realistic-empiricist orientation is appropriate for the group of phenomena that are mentioned here".[14, p. 134] The importance of the exact interpretation of certain social phenomena is manifested in their aspiration to, by examining their building elements, explain the essence and way of functioning of the observed social phenomenon as a whole.

#### 4. METHODOLOGICAL HOLISM AND EXACT APPROACH OF THEORETICAL RESEARCH

Methodological holism represents the standpoint that all social achievements should be interpreted in the context of political, social and cultural changes. The attitude that the features of a system define the features of related elements makes the core of holistic procedure. The accountability of the usage of methodological holism in the research of the phenomenal world is connected to the fact that society represents special wholeness that is characterized by its own characteristics and laws of functioning.

The person that gave contribution to the application of methodological holism in interpretation of economic activities is surely John Maynard Keynes. His conception is in-

spired by the meager knowledge of economic actors in the moment of making important decisions. The solution to all the problems in economy Keynes sees in paternalism and not in self-sufficient market. Thus, its scientific orientation has gained the character of the dedication for the application of methodological holism.

Karl Polanyi, the writer of "The Great Transformation", sees economy as an indivisible whole. When the market assimilates social relationships, then each dimension of production becomes a commodity. This process, named by Polanyi the commodification of society, weakens social cohesion and creates cultural degeneration [8, p. 333]. Polanyi often criticized Adam Smith and his idea of human as a predetermined being that participates in the barter. Mechanisms of coordination in terms of the relationships between individuals cannot lead to embeddedness of economy since individuals are characterized by reciprocal behavior. "Reciprocal behavior between individuals can integrate economy only in the case if there are symmetrically organized structures" [8, p. 332]. Placing "active society" in the position of the subject and emphasizing that human possibilities are limited by the self-understanding of society clearly indicates that Polanyi's methodological orientation is holistic.

Thinkers, such as Keynes and Polanyi, who interpret economic phenomena in the context of cultural and social changes, question the validity of the results of exact research. There is no doubt that historians fail to explain the development of economy, for example, on the basis of economic egoism of the members of one people because the only way to understand the history of economy is within the total framework of the life of a people and a state. Therefore, from the perspective of the advocates of historical method, the exact approach to understanding the reality has no place in science. However, Karl Menger notes: "There is no exact science that encompasses universal theoretical understanding of the smallest part of reality even-it only teaches us about the comprehension of a special aspect of that regularity" [14, p.79]. It is understandable that no one criticizes chemistry, physics and other natural sciences for being one-sided because of that.

##### 5.METHODOLOGICAL HOLISM AND ECONOMIC HUMANISM

The shift from industrial to information society meant the abandonment of the principle of collectivism and freeing of individualism. However, under the conditions of the current global economic crisis, the demand for collectivism has for the consequence: enhancement of the role of the state in economy, development of entrepreneurship and suppression of the importance of ownership. In this way, the conditions for ending the domination of methodological individualism and the beginning of methodological holism in theory and practice are spontaneously created.

If the period from 1814 to 1924 was undoubtedly the period of liberalism and characterized by the domination of methodological individualism in science, the modern state seriously examines its reality and economists their method of economic analysis. Vilhelm Reopke in his book "The Splendor and Misery of Capitalism" puts forward the thesis that the sickness of capitalistic society comes from within. The system that was developed in the mentioned period had raised the standard of living and advanced the production, which conditioned significantly the increase of consumption. Human has become homo sapiens consumes, that is a unified anonymous consumer. In such a hierarchy, people represent only a set of depersonalized and socially disintegrated individuals [18, p. 482].



Serbia, under the impact of neoliberal philosophy, addresses the transition in terms of stability, privatization and imitative modernization. Egoism, personal benefit, love of profit and profit at any price, disloyal competition, self-destructive competing and the like threaten to lead society to the model of anachronistic primitive capitalism. The lack of information about the shift from socialist to capitalist economy and the lack of theoretical models, made economic science unready to answer the question how does economic, political, cultural and spiritual and moral modeling lead to the increase in economic efficiency and the reduction of inequality. Lacking the knowledge, our country imitates the western model of economy and democracy in order to make connection to the world of capitalism as its peripheral part [2, p. 54]. Mere coping of formal institutions and disregarding of cultural and social heritage, leads to the increase in transactional costs and reduction of social usefulness and material wealth [20, p.13]. That is way Serbia needs assimilation, not imitation. Assimilation as a longstanding process of the introduction of market system and the creation of democratic order necessarily involves not only the "import" of technology, but also the "import" of economic and political institutions of developed countries. That, however, presumes knowing oneself and then knowing one's aspirations and how they could be "grown" in one's own "garden" [2, p.55]. One of the possible alternative choices in assimilation is the conception of an orthodox state (which represents favorable ground for the application of methodological holism).

"The leading idea of orthodox society is mutual welfare and social justice" [17, p.32]. The pillars of orthodox economy are: private property, market competition, legal state and freedom. In orthodox society, freedom cannot level with self-will. It can be understood as a lack of illegitimate force and coercion, under the conditions of the presence of certain constraints. I speak here of institutionalized coerce that appears in the mode of law (abstract, universal rules that are applied equally to all subjects), of constraints that generate from the lack of resources, from weekly consumption income and the like. All these constraints represent information on objective characteristics of the ambient in which the individual performs his/her social function and realizes his/her objectives [13, p. 26]. Free market that acts in the context of certain institutional ambience generates economic development i.e. increases the amount of resources and raises technical and organizational level of economy. Consequently, the possibility of the transformation of political members and institutions by which economic development contributes to spreading of political freedoms and implicates the expansion of human rights is created.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The contemporary world faces a series of problems. I speak here of the problem of undeveloped state and debts from the so-called third world, the problem of environmental pollution, demographic problems, social problems etc. The objective of science, under such conditions, is not uncritical acceptance and explanation of practice since that leads to the transformation of science into vulgarization and propaganda. The coming out of crisis demands the development of science that would shape the unshaped, make path where there is not any and help in the labyrinth of social and economic reality, where the world economy and society resides [4, p. 4]. That science is, first of all, a modern economy that strives to explain, in critical and creative manner, the anatomy of human society in time and space.

The idea of spontaneous forming of the system of economic liaisons and relationships independent of the consciousness and will of people is partly the result of the aspirations of economic science to establish what is objective and legal i.e. genetic in economic development [5, p. 25]. Economic laws are relations that constantly repeat themselves among individual actors of economic process [7, p. 46]. The objectivity of economic laws that one comes to by applying the exact direction of theoretical research is validated in constant divergence of individual behavior from observed long-term tendencies.

It is not possible to develop economics by opposing Keynes to Marx, Galbright to Marshall and so on, but this can be done on the basis of critical synthesis of their theoretical systems. The demands of contemporary society are related to multidisciplinary and relatedness of economy with insights of sociology, psychology, philosophy, mathematics etc. Multidisciplinary and relatedness presume socially active economists who continually ask difficult questions and verbally conflict with the creators of myths and social demagogues with the aim of breaking the illusions and introducing thinking order when it comes to the issue of economic theory [18, p. 489]. In one word, economics should help in achieving economic freedom i.e. freedom of creation, initiative and entrepreneurship [20, p. 10].

Mathematical orientation of economic thought, today, is not that popular in the West as it was at the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century. "Namely, real society is not perfect, people are not inefficient and economy is far from being in the state of balance." [5, p. 13]. This is a crucial reason why the application of quantitative apparatus has not given the contribution in solving real economic problems. This, of course, does not involve total abandonment of quantitative methods. On the contrary, mathematics, statistics and econometrics represent useful means in qualitative economic analysis that on the basis of the research of the real practice and its results can indicate towards future orientations, alternative and cause-effect relations [2, p.5].

Economists, today, believe that economic activity is more than rational and egoistic behavior of individuals; hence, institutions, politics, ideology, culture, customs, habits and other factors affect production and distribution of assets in society. In order for contemporary economic science to be able to explain and solve contemporary economic and social problems, it must enrich the methodological apparatus with traditional contents of political economy. In the center of economic paradigm must lie: value systems, innovation, synergic effects, economies of scale and the like, that is, those factors that can not be quantified and whose understanding leads to the long term advance and permanent prosperity. New economic theory should not be built on the assumptions that have been chosen randomly, without theoretical basis. Wrong assumptions give wrong answers; by means of which, wrong questions are made and economic science is left without useful suggestions for solving problems such as starvation, poverty, alienation etc.

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## NEKI METODOLOŠKI PROBLEMI SAVREMENE EKONOMSKE NAUKE

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*U ovom radu predstavljani su neki metodološki problemi i zadaci savremene ekonomske nauke. Veza između empirijskog i egzaktnog, analogija između bioloških organizama i društvenih tvorevina, kolektivizam i tako redom, predstavljaju samo deo interesovanja moderne ekonomije koja ima zadatak da oblikuje neobikovano, da trasira netrasirano i da u bespuću društveno-ekonomske zbilje pruži pomoć privredi i društvu. Ekonomija je multidisciplinarna nauka. Povezanost sa saznanjima sociologije, psihologije, filozofije, matematike i sl., savremenoj ekonomskoj nauci omogućuje istraživanje i izučavanje čoveka kao racionalnog, duhovnog i moralnog bića. Matematika i ekonometrija jesu korisne discipline, ali nisu u stanju da na svoj jezik prenesu analizu najdubljih zagonetki ljudskog života. Ekonomisti bi trebalo da pomognu u izgradnji institucija koje štite i unapređuju ljudsku slobodu.*

Ključne reči: *empirijski zakoni, egzakti zakoni, metodološki holizam, metodološki individualizam, sloboda.*