

UDC 001.8:179.7 (043.2)

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ETHICAL ASPECTS OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

At all times it has been obvious that science, despite its primary goal, is the mover of the human progress and development. But not once the mankind has faced the catastrophic and sad consequences and in its history there are numerous examples. So this is the place where the concept of «moral responsibility of a scientist» (MRS) comes. It is the problem of ethics, sociology and philosophy, which involves: a) culture of relations in a scientific team; b) estimation of scientific activity in terms of benefit/harm to humanity. Great contributions to the investigation of this problem were made by such foreign scientists as K. Popper, L. Mikeshina, V. Styopin. Among the other scientists there may be distinguished such ones as R. Merton and E. Agazzi. The first one developed four imperatives, which, by his consideration, should form a scientific Ethos. The imperatives are: communism, universalism, disinterestedness and organized skepticism. E. Agazzi worked on moral measurement of science (practical and «pure») and stated that estimation objectives, means, conditions and consequences of researches should be taken into consideration. He also dealt with the problem of influence of science on ethics and tried to give the precise description of problems of science moral regulation and offered ways of that regulation. The famous Ukrainian theorists who investigated the problem were: V. Vernadsky (who laid the foundations of ecological ethics), V. Lukianets (who described possible ways of evolution of moral views and evaluation) and V. Olkhovsky.

According to recent studies, opinions of modern scientists on the problem of MRS split into two camps. The proponents of «pure» science believe that science itself has no responsibility for the way of usage of its discoveries and inventions (Teller, Cohen). Other scientists (Einstein, Born, Schweitzer) were well aware of the moral responsibility for their discovery and for the opportunity to use them to harm people, but they saw no real means to remedy the situation, and their thoughts on this subject were quite pessimistic. There is also the third group of people who believe in absoluteness of a human mind and in the solution of the MRS problem in future. As for the solution of the problem at present – it is not yet possible because of several factors: inability to predict all results of researches, a time gap between a discovery and its usage etc.

However, some certain measures can be accepted: UN international laws, international protocols, different organizations. In Ukraine and Poland independently there were developed the projects, which can make notable difference in solution of the MRS problem. The main terms of this projects include: usage of science only for benefit of humanity; support of international character of science; striving for maximal objectivity in scientific papers and opposition to distortion scientific knowledge; showing and considering every aspect of scientific knowledge and others. It may make sense to consider these projects at the state level as a supplement to the law on science in order to protect it from some unexpected results. Unfortunately, at this stage of human development the scientists' self-awareness (and governments that will undertake the regulation of moral aspects of science) is the only thing we can rely on.

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