

PL: Philipa Kitchera koncepcja nauki

EN: Philip Kitcher's Concept of Science

The current situation in the philosophy of science can be defined by a seemingly trivial remark about the combination of novelty and continuation. This combination is in line with Fernand Braudel's idea of "long duration" (*longue durée*) proper for the spirit of contemporary historiography. Investigations that are continued find their source in the formal analyses of scientific structures (confirmation/justification of beliefs, explanation, demarcation) and meta-scientific reflection oriented on the rational reconstruction of learned knowledge determined by its historical development (change and progress, nature of scientific discovery, research conduct as human activity). At present, however, the dominating tendency stems from "the historical turn" (Thomas S. Kuhn). It is against this backdrop that one should interpret Philip Stuart Kitcher's views (b. 1947). Kitcher belongs to a group of currently most influential philosophers of science (at least on the American ground) still alive. We mean especially his reflection on the nature of science, its role in social life, and its significance for a concrete human existence.

The present work is devoted to this philosopher's writings. It is the first work of this kind in Polish with a purpose to give a more synthetic rather than analytic or comparative reconstruction of the most principal and characteristic elements of Kitcher's concept of science. Therefore the emphasis is laid on its essential elements and only secondarily on the evolution of the author's views. The influence of other thinkers notwithstanding, Kitcher's thought has been shown as a critical enrichment

of the accomplishments that belong to the legacy of the neo-positivism of analytic philosophy, dominating not only in Anglo-Saxon philosophical culture. Thus we have here the impact of pragmatism (W. James, J. Dewey), discursive/deliberative democracy (M. Foucault, J. Habermas) or liberal thought (A. Smith, J.S. Mill, J. Rawls). All the issues concerning the character of science in Kitcher's approach have been ordered with a view to problems.

This dissertation that discusses Kitcher's concept of science consists of three chapters. Chapter one, the broadest one, addresses epistemological and methodological issues, showing science as a form of cognition and knowledge. Focus is made on Kitcher's epistemological position (naturalized epistemology) and the concept of science that stems therefrom. It has been stressed that although Kitcher pays attention to historical, functional, and personal (psychological) conditions of science, his vision of science does not lead to skepticism or relativism. Furthermore, it can remain in agreement with a certain scientific rationality, or even realism.

Chapter two discusses the issue of the temporality of science. An attempt has been made to reconstruct its development, indicating the criteria of choice among competitive theories. It has been noted that it is not so much rules of the approval of scientific structures that enable explanation of the dynamism of science, but also factors external to science that must be taken into account, e.g. the cognitive capacities of the scholars or social conditions. These considerations are provided in discussing Kitcher's category of change, a category that corresponds to Kuhn's paradigm (*resp.* disciplinary matrix), namely the commonly accepted *consensus*

*practice*. The chapter is crowned with the question of the progress of science in which it is marked the assimilation of the solutions proper to pragmatism.

Chapter three, the last one, exposes the social dimension of science, the dimension related to the existential dimension of the knowing subjects, the dimension based on Kitcher's idea of a well-ordered science. In line with this idea both the selection of problems and the application of their solutions are subject to social management. The functioning of science cannot take place without valuation that determines the selections of goals and the course of scientific research, therefore the issues related to the axiology of science have also been discussed here.