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Complementary Approach and Mixed Assessments – INNOAGON's Basic Research Methods

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ABSTRACT

Every complementary approach is at the same time interdisciplinary, but not vice versa. This elementary methodological rule at INNOAGON (an acronym for the new applied science 'innovative agonology') is crucial because it applies whenever the word 'struggle' (or its synonyms) emphasises the extremity of the phenomenon under study The aim of this work is to highlight the two basic methods of INNOAGON in the most general terms. If one accepts the most general definition of method as 'a means of achieving an end', it is clear that in the field of research methodology the cognitive layer dominates over the applied one. Science is a human activity, so it is not surprising that also in this area there is room for 'fashionable lines of research', as well as crushes on 'fashionable theories'. The simplest definition of the word 'everything' – 'without exception', intuitively raises doubts: when it comes to 'theory of everything', is it really about the capabilities (competences) of science? At the core of the complementary approach is the awareness of the already available valuable knowledge about the explored phenomenon, the knowledge about the hypotheses and new questions posed by the experts studying this phenomenon, but also the awareness of the necessity to face the unknown. More in the text.

Keywords: Innovative agonology, Mythology, Religions, Methodology of science, Self-defence

INTRODUCTION

Every complementary approach is at the same time interdisciplinary, but not vice versa. This elementary methodological rule at INNOAGON (an acronym for the new applied science 'innovative agonology') is crucial because it applies whenever the word 'struggle' (or its synonyms) emphasises the extremity of the phenomenon under study (Kalina, 2023a; Kalina and Bagińska, 2023; Kalina and Kruszewski, 2023). This 'extremity' is not always rightly associated with circumstances that are closely related to the highest level of risk to health or life (of an individual or even very large communities of people) or emotional experience. The same external circumstances (e.g. two participants tandem parachuting) generally arouse extreme euphoria in the novice, but not in the instructor. In circumstances where the only possibility of evacuation is to swim even a distance of several metres, the task will not be difficult especially for an excellent swimmer. However, a person who does not know how to swim and who is deprived of the possibility of assistance

from other people, in such a situation is at immediate risk of drowning, and extreme fear will be an additional destructive factor. Both examples expose the factor of specific motor skills as an indispensable condition for survival.

However, there is an extensive group of circumstances in which performance evaluations (effectively ÷ ineffectively) of an individual's or team's actions are insufficient (failure to act is one extreme case of ineffectiveness). Prominent examples are necessary defence and sport fighting within so-called contact sports (every combat sport and part of the games). Exceeding the rules (and such acts are always also subject to ethical evaluations) implies specific sanctions. In addition, in sport it often deflects the chance of victory. The aim of this work is to highlight the two basic methods of INNOAGON in the most general terms.

PRESUMPTION THAT SHOULD STIMULATE THE IMAGINATION WITHOUT LOSING THE SERIOUSNESS OF SCIENCE

The Apparent Absurdity of Similarities Between Mythology and General Methodology of Sciences

Whatever the known typologies of myths, they can be interpreted in more or less meaningful connotations with various aspects of science, art, religion, health promotion and prevention, therapy, etc., as well as with immediate or far-reaching social effects. Thus, the division of the pantheon of gods according to their influence on particular areas of reality (sun, seas, fire and smithing, forest areas, wisdom, war, etc.) is similar to the principle of classifying the sciences. However, science, unlike many mythologies (Greek, Roman, Nicean, Germanic, Celtic, Mayan, Chinese, Japanese, Egyptian, etc.) is not divided, for example, into the physics or mathematics of Europe, Asia, Africa, etc. Science is one, though very many disciplines, sub-disciplines and specialities. Mythologies are many (Willis, 2000) and it is not surprising that the influence, for example, of one Sun was to be influenced by gods variously named. Examples of pairs of Greek and Roman deities who wielded the powers of the Sun were Helios and Sol; while wars were made up of Ares and Mars, and wisdom was attributed to Athena and Minerva. In Japanese mythology, respectively: Sun goddess Amaterasu; war to the god Hachiman; and Tenjin was worshipped as the god of science, poetry and calligraphy.

Mythology and science (as we know it today) are separated by religion. Dating the origins of the great universalist religions is accurate in relation to Buddhism, Christianity, Islam. Yet at the core of mythology and science (but not religion) is a similar enthymematic assumption – since man is unable to grasp the mystery of reality as a whole, it must be done 'piece by piece'. The division of reality into smaller parts and some into even smaller elements has occurred since the dawn of mythology, and the effect of the continuation of this principle in science is the emergence of new disciplines, and within them, new specialities. In Greek and Roman mythologies, 'wisdom' (the powers of Athena and Minerva) is not further classified. In Japanese mythology, the phenomenon of 'wisdom', is not distinguished. This name will legitimately cover the three competences of the Japanese god Tenjin: science, poetry, calligraphy. Paradoxically, compartmentalisation and classification (today as the

basic categories of the methodology of the sciences) are, on the one hand, a testimony to the invariable humility of man *en bloc* (excluding tyrants, lesser dictators and individuals with the extreme seed of *toxic power syndrome*) before the unknown, and on the other, to an invariable curiosity, which is the chance that science, by providing answers to questions posed back in the days dominated by the mythologies of cultures that knew little about each other (or did not guess each other's existence), will fulfil its social mission and human civilisation will survive in a non-degenerate form.

Religions (by reducing human curiosity and striving to grasp the whole of reality with reason) suppress the possibility of inquiring into the truth by methods of repeated verification of the evidence made available (which is an attribute of science) with the desideratum 'faith requires no evidence'. However, there is no consensus among the population of believers regarding the existence of a sole creator of the universe. Since the presence of a multiplicity of gods is inherent in human existence, it is not surprising that mythology (as a whole) is also a compendium of knowledge about the battles (struggles) fought by gods among themselves or also involving humans. Among the Holy Books, the *Bhagawadgita* and the *Old Testament* are partly characterised by such a value. This simple argumentation makes it clear that in the case of the phenomenon of 'struggle' the impact of science on changing the social perception of this fragment of reality is little greater than the legacy of mythology and the Holy Books. Agonology (science about struggle) is still a deeply esoteric science (Kalina, 2016).

Vanity – Inappropriate Events in the Scientific Area

Science is a human activity (and there is no evidence that gods are either), so it is not surprising that in this area of human activity there is room for 'fashionable lines of research' and 'fashionable methods', as well as crushes on 'fashionable theories'. The holistic approach (or holistic method) and theory of everything are good examples of such a trend, but at the same time evidence of absurdity from certain points of view. The simplest definition of the word 'everything' – 'without exception', intuitively raises doubts as to whether science is meant when it comes to the holistic approach (without adjectives) and especially the *theory of everything*.

Without offending anyone's religious feelings, on the contrary, concerned with the fullness of this freedom and at the same time with the right and seriousness of analysing all phenomena on the basis of science, two key issues emerge. Firstly, a holistic approach could only be attributed to a god, the creator of the universe – but to whom? Second, therefore, a *theory of everything* could only be created by a god – so which one? – but not a human being.

The word combinations of 'holistic' with other terms are therefore not fortuitous. For example, 'holistic medicine', although defined (leaving aside the discussed dilemma of whether it is a method of treatment or a philosophy) does not stand up to criticism on the grounds of the general methodology of sciences. Since it is obvious that scientific discoveries concern only a small part of material reality and an even smaller part of mental reality, and since the human organism is constantly influenced by external phenomena, the

fashion for 'holistic medicine' is an expression of vanity, but not of the seriousness and responsibility of science.

Justifications for such a radical stance are provided by philosophy and science itself. In synthetic terms, one sentence from 125 paragraphs accumulating some of Sri Ramana Maharishi's words suffices: *Neither the physical eyes nor the mind have any ability to perceive everything at once – the whol*e (Thus Spake Ramana, 1976). In analytical terms, an example is the statistical variance analysis used in numerous empirical sciences. The idea of a holistic method reduces its meaning to absurdity. If we correlate all the empirical variables that identify a phenomenon, with the empirical variables of the phenomena that are in relations of influence on that phenomenon, this statistical category disappears. The conclusion 'unexplained part of the variance' loses its raison d'être. To put it sarcastically – after all, the holistic approach (method) must be based on the enthymematic assumption that it is unacceptable to ignore anything that is part of everything. Correlations, according to J. Guilford's classification, should be nearly complete ($0.9<|r|<1$) or complete ($r = 1$).

COMPLEMENTARY APPROACH – THE MOST GENERAL NAME FOR THE MOST EFFECTIVE METHOD OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

If one accepts the most general definition of method as 'a means of achieving an end', it is clear that in the field of research methodology the cognitive layer dominates over the applied one. This remark is only to put the reasoning in order. It is not a suggestion that, among the already published scientific papers, there are fewer of those that deal with discoveries or empirically verified solutions and that are recommended for implementation within a certain scope. Since **the products of science are knowledge** (this bolding signals that more information is contained in the following paragraphs), so although the main goal of any research project is the prospect of putting the results into practice, there is always some cognitive aspect to such a publication (preceded by research). The reverse, in methodological terms, is impossible. There is a very large group of publications that have only cognitive value and this will continue to be the case.

The need to respect this elementary relationship when formally editing the aim in a scientific publication is unfortunately ignored by very many authors of empirical (original) papers. The simplest proof of such ignorance, but unfortunately also tolerated by the editors of even the most prestigious scientific journals, is the repeated formula 'the aim of this study was (is) investigation' or similar. After all, 'study' and 'investigation' are synonyms. The author could just as well have used the formula 'the aim of this study was study' or vice versa. Theoretical research (the study of documentation) is a basic method in the historical sciences, legal sciences and many others, but so are papers that qualify as review article and the specifics of the scientific discipline do not matter. In every original paper that meets the standards of methodological correctness, in the 'introduction', 'discussion' and 'conclusion' sections, the author provides evidence of realisation of the cognitive

goal of the conducted research – found and new knowledge of the studied phenomenon.

At the core of the complementary approach (a method based on complementary research methodology) is the awareness of the already available valuable knowledge about the explored phenomenon, the knowledge about the hypotheses and new questions posed by the experts studying this phenomenon, but also the awareness of the necessity to face the unknown (a positive effect may be the later scientific discoveries, especially of breakthrough importance) This does not sound elegant, but one should have limited trust in the authors of papers who do not see the absurdity of the formula 'the aim of this study was (is) investigation' and similar.

The Paradox of the 'Triad of Struggle': Popularity of the Term – Permanent Participation – Ignorance of Knowledge About Agonology

INNOAGON is an applied science dedicated to promotion, prevention and therapy related to all dimensions of health and regarding the optimization of activities that increase the ability to survive (from micro to macro scales). A key phenomenon both in identifying risks of loss of health and life and in overcoming these risks in practice is 'struggle' (Kalina, 2023a; Kalina and Kruszewski, 2023). This is seemingly so obvious because the collocations of 'struggle' (or synonyms) are used in a much wider sense: 'struggle against nature', 'struggle against the elements', 'fight against terrorism,' 'fighting cancer', etc. (Rudniański, 1989). In everyday language, many of these expressions have existed for hundreds of years and are still in use. It is also obvious to the rational mind that in order to make any struggle effective one must first answer the elementary question – is there science about struggle?

The answer to this seemingly simple question leads to the discovery of the paradox of the triad named in the title of this section. Daily media reports provide a variety of combinations of the word 'struggle' with events (only a few of which I cite above) that are primarily of marketing value to publishers. There are no grounds for concluding that this form of media, with the simultaneous popularity of the subject of violence and aggression broadcasted for entertainment by the same media, is the right area for making people aware of how important the phenomenon of struggle is in the life of individuals, national societies and the global civilisation of the future. Every day man is not only a consumer of this category of messages. He is embroiled in numerous struggles and, therefore, knowledge of struggle should be one of the priorities of modern, responsible education. This implication, however, remains even beyond the perception of the majority representing the community of scholars. If it were otherwise, there would be no basis for discussing the 'paradox of the triad of struggle', as the element of *ignorance of knowledge about agonology* would be missing.

'Agon', after all, means 'struggle' in Greek, among other things. A good exemplification of the thesis articulated above is the empirically proven fact that in the titles of nearly 1,600 articles (evaluated by Web of Science), published from 1902 to March 2023, the authors used the word 'self-defence'.

Self-defence is a particular case of defence combat, and is used in even the most extreme categories of scientific disciplines covered by the classification of not only WoS, abstracting from the science about struggle. The leader of the WoS Categories classification, based on the number of published works and total citations, is LAW (245 works and 3189 citations). Further ran king positions (RP) include: RP5 ETHICS, respectively: 44 & 1235; RP11 IMMUNOLOGY, 22 & 674; RP18 CELL BIOLOGY, 11 & 210; RP20 RELIGION, 9 & 29 (Kruszewski and Gasienica-Walczak, 2023).

THE USE OF MIXED ASSESSMENTS IN RESEARCH ON THE SELF-DEFENCE PHENOMENON

If in self-defence verification of actions is based solely on efficiency assessments (effective – ineffective), and although effectiveness is gradable, it is not sufficient for the simple reason that necessary defence can be easily exceeded. Thus, each defensive act and the individual sequences of countering aggression or violence should (from the perspective of universal humanistic values) be assessed together, i.e. also from an ethical point of view (Kałużny and Kondzior, 2019; Kalina, 2023b).

There are four possible compilations of mixed assessment efficiency-ethical): effective and commendable' action; 'effective but disgraceful' action; 'ineffective but commendable' action (e.g. failure to resuscitate despite respecting the highest medical standards); 'ineffective and disgraceful' action (e.g. not undertaking resuscitation). The methodological dilemma stems from the semantic (in fact, praxeological) category of 'counterproductive' (the perpetrator, rather than the goal, achieves its negation) and applies to almost every area of human activity. Awareness of this category of activities is a prerequisite for complementary (apart from the phenomenon of the unreliability of the tools used) inquiry into the causes caused by the human factor (Kalina, 2023b). The contractual boundaries of the continuum delineate: 'human error ÷ extreme bravado'. However, it is enough to stick to this simplest classification of mixed assessment to see how much modern civilisation is determined by efficiency while ignoring the ethical factor. Success (whomever it may be) overwhelms the opportunity to narrate the virtues of a sporting spectacle that was intended to provide examples of healthy competition, and in reality proves couterproductiveness. Attention to the success of an athlete or team is supposed to be captured by headlines: 'X demolished Y', Z on his knees', 'V's Massacre at M', etc. It is futile to look for titles that reflect on the beauty of the spectacle created by the athletes of both sides, as they fought in the spirit of fair play. Paradoxically, this spirit (or fair play rule, if you prefer) does not permeate other spheres of human activity from the micro to the macro scale, but is displaced by the ideology of success 'at all costs' also in sport.

CONCLUSION

The methodology of complementary research (in the sense of being able to publish a compact work), which is only emerging from several separate

publications (Kalina, 2023b), opens up the prospect of applications also outside the area of exploration proper to INNOAGON. Mixed assessment can concern the combination of different categories of phenomena in relation to performance as an overriding value. An example is that the assessments used in the Polish music education system for the promotion exam and the final exam are based on a 25-point scale. In reality, these are mixed assessment, as the components of the assessment are specific motor competences (mainly coordination) and artistic effect. This does not change the fact that the primary verification tool is the ear of the individual committee members.

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