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# **NIEKLASYCZNA FILOZOFIA NAUKI**

## **IANA HACKINGA**

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## Summarize

The dissertation is devoted to the work of Canadian philosopher of science Ian Hacking and consists of four chapters.

The initial point of the paper is that contemporary philosophy of science, as a field with its distinct subject, methods and goals, has drained its creative potential and is in crisis. It is particularly evident against the background of alternative and competing currents that have been developing since the late 1960s and early 1970s, which I put under the collective term of science and technology studies. The philosophy of science appears in comparison with them as an abstract, sterile and hermetic field. The diagnosis of the current state of the philosophy of science is itself nothing new, and in recent years it has resounded in the works of an increasing number of authors. The question of pointing out its causes is completely different. When, at the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century, there was a flowering of fields whose subject matter was the historical, social and practical dimensions of science, philosophy was unreservedly oriented towards abstract analyses of the semantics and syntactic of the language of science. With the object of its research defined in this way, the philosophy of science was somehow immune to including the aforementioned dimensions of science within the perimeter of its reflection. Contrary to popular belief, what is referred to as post-positivism ultimately sealed the division between the philosophy of science, whose subject matter is logic and the language of science in an abstract sense, and STS, which analyzes science as a historically rooted social phenomenon.

The central thesis of this part of the work is that the current form of philosophy of science is largely the result of Cold War policies in the United States. At the time, we were faced with, on the one hand, a grassroots fear of philosophers engaging in normative and social issues, and on the other hand, funding from the government-military complex of the preferred formal methods of science research. The Cold War period left a lasting imprint on our understanding of what philosophy of science is and how and why to practice it.

In the following part of the paper I try to answer the question, what next for the philosophy of science? There is no shortage of proponents of the thesis that in our historicizing times, the philosophy of science with its abstract and ahistorical categories

should somehow dissolve into sociology and history of science, possibly remaining a niche and inbred field. This dissertation, however, is founded on the conviction that we should be a bit more ambitious and look for positive solutions. What we need today is not only new ideas but also role models and examples of how to do a strictly philosophical reflection on science.

In this chapter, I present and analyze the non-classical nature of Hacking's views, showing them in contrast to classically understood views on such issues as realism, epistemology, ontology and theoretical baggage of observation. As a starting point, I formulate the thesis that Hacking's originality still makes it difficult for many researchers to properly read his work. A clear example of this is that he is widely regarded as a representative of scientific realism. I show that not only did he not consider the issue of realism or anti-realism to be philosophically interesting, but he never even intended to take sides in this dispute.

In the next chapter, I analyze Hacking's concept of cognitive styles. I point out that it constitutes an original and, to some extent, competitive to (post)constructivist position proposal for philosophical reflection on science. For Hacking combines its reflections on historically and socially embodied science with, to some extent, a philosophically traditional view of cognition as the discovery of objective truths. In the last part, I present and analyze in detail the development and role of the probabilistic and statistical style of cognition.

In this chapter, I present Hacking's consideration of the sweep that has occurred since early modern in our understanding of the role of language in cognition and the very nature of knowledge. According to the Hacking, in modern times not only was the role of language downplayed, but it was even pointed out that it was something that interfered with the acquisition of knowledge. At the time, it was believed that the carrier of knowledge was not words, but ideas. Ideas are not only something to which we have direct access, but, above all, they are individual and private. According to leading modern thinkers, the role of language is to express the ideas that are inside us. Therefore, according to Hacking, it was common in modernity to believe that language is something essentially private. According to the

Canadian philosopher, there is no equivalent in the writings of modern authors to what we today call meaning i.e. the culturally fixed, public sense of certain words or sentences.

Finally, I present Hacking's view on how the classical notion of representation can be reinterpreted. According to the Canadian philosopher, a departure from, or at least a restriction of, the correspondence theory of truth, as well as an abandonment of classical realism, need not entail a rejection of the notion of representation.