

Philosophical foundations of the formation of contemporary humanities knowledge

Anna Solodova*

Master, Independent Researcher

Kyiv, Ukraine

<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-9614-281X>

Abstract. Contemporary transformational processes affecting the socio-cultural space of the twenty-first century have intensified the need to reconsider the foundations of humanities and its methodological orientations. The humanities emerge as a key instrument for interpreting complex social phenomena, while philosophy ensures their conceptual coherence by defining the framework for understanding human experience, communication, and cultural dynamics. The relevance of this study is determined by the necessity of developing a comprehensive methodological foundation capable of integrating diverse approaches to the analysis of humanitarian reality and ensuring an adequate response to contemporary challenges. The aim of this work was to substantiate the philosophical foundations of the formation of contemporary humanities knowledge and to identify the key methodological principles that support its development. The study employed methods of conceptual analysis, comparative theoretical reconstruction, interpretation, and to identify the key methodological principles that ensure its development. The application of these methods made it possible to reveal the internal logic underlying the development of humanities knowledge, trace the interaction between different epistemological models, and outline their influence on contemporary research strategies. The principal findings indicated that contemporary humanities knowledge is formed at the intersection of hermeneutic, phenomenological, critical, and narrative approaches, each providing its own mode of interpreting human experience. It was demonstrated that interdisciplinarity constitutes a necessary condition for investigating the complex and multidimensional nature of humanitarian reality, while philosophy performs an integrative function by bringing together diverse methodological perspectives. It was argued that flexibility, openness, and adaptability are defining characteristics of the contemporary humanities, enabling them to respond effectively to the dynamics of social change. The practical value of the study lies in the possibility of applying the findings to improve methodological approaches in humanities research, develop educational programmes, and construct analytical models that contribute to a deeper understanding of contemporary socio-cultural processes.

Keywords: epistemology; philosophy; methodology; interpretation; cultural dynamics

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*Corresponding author (Solodova.Ann@outlook.com)



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Introduction

In the contemporary world, humanities knowledge is taking on particular significance, as it is this knowledge that enables a conceptual understanding of the profound socio-cultural transformations shaping the nature of human existence in the digital age. The rapid development of technology, changing forms of communication, growing informational complexity and society's shift towards networked models of interaction are creating new challenges for the humanities. Traditional methodological approaches are increasingly proving inadequate for explaining the dynamic processes that shape contemporary culture, sociality and human experience. In these circumstances, a philosophical reflection on the foundations of the formation of humanities knowledge becomes particularly relevant, as it can ensure methodological renewal, interpretative flexibility and conceptual integrity within the humanities. This relevance is also driven by the need to develop new interpretative strategies that allow for an adequate response to changes in the fields of communication, education and cultural interaction.

In recent years, academic discourse has seen a growing interest in approaches that combine the analysis of experience, interpretation and social interaction. S. Gallagher (2020) emphasises that humanities knowledge cannot be understood without taking into account corporeality, intentionality and interaction, which shape the structure of human experience. The author stresses that digital forms of communication are changing the ways in which the world is experienced and therefore require an update of the methodological foundations of the humanities. In this context, the position of A. Archer & B. Matheson (2020) is significant, as they demonstrate that value-laden experiences and emotional structures are temporal in nature and shape the interpretative frameworks of humanities knowledge. Contemporary research also demonstrates a growing interest in integrative approaches that combine different forms of knowledge. A. Salihu (2024) draws attention to the challenges of post-philosophy,

emphasising that the fragmentation of the intellectual landscape requires a rethinking of the role of philosophy in the formation of humanities knowledge. In the field of the philosophy of science and technology, the research by J. Moreno & D. Vinck (2021) is significant; they analyse the interaction between the philosophy of science, technology and Science and Technology Studies (STS), demonstrating that humanities knowledge is formed within a complex network of social, technical and cultural factors. M. Amat (2023), drawing on G. Simmel's relational philosophy, emphasises that meanings emerge in the process of social interaction, and therefore a relational approach is key to understanding contemporary humanities processes. Furthermore, in the context of digital methods of analysis, the work of N. van Noord (2022) is significant, as he demonstrates that computational approaches to the interpretation of cultural artefacts open up new possibilities for humanities research, particularly in the field of visual culture.

A separate strand of contemporary research is devoted to the interpretative nature of humanities knowledge. A. Bonnet (2021) emphasises the significance of intellectual history and philosophical analysis of texts for reconstructing the meanings that shape humanities knowledge. In the same vein, the author demonstrates that intellectual biography is an important tool of humanities analysis, as it makes it possible to trace the formation of ideas within the context of a thinker's life. I. Torsen & R. Pippin (2021) emphasise that art is not merely an object of humanities analysis, but also an independent mode of philosophical inquiry that reveals the semantic structures of human experience. C. Roelens (2022) analyses C. Taylor's philosophy of education, emphasising the importance of authenticity and individualisation in the formation of humanities knowledge.

Ukrainian researchers are making a significant contribution to the development of contemporary humanities. H. Surina & N. Mirosheva (2025) analyse K. Wilber's integral

anthropology, emphasising the multidimensionality of human experience and the need to integrate different levels of cognition. S. Kutssepai (2025) explores the interaction between artificial intelligence and technical creativity, arguing that digital technologies are transforming not only forms of communication but also the very nature of humanities knowledge. I. Farafonova (2024) conducts a philosophical analysis of the role of consciousness in electoral behaviour, demonstrating that contemporary social processes require a profound understanding of the mechanisms of rationality and intentionality. Ukrainian studies demonstrate a desire to integrate national humanities experience into a global context and emphasise the importance of philosophical analysis of socio-cultural transformations.

A synthesis of contemporary approaches indicates that humanities knowledge is formed at the intersection of experience, interpretation, social interaction and cultural contexts, and that its methodological renewal requires the integration of various philosophical traditions. In view of this, the aim of the study was to conduct a philosophical analysis of the key approaches that shape the formation of contemporary humanities knowledge, and to justify their significance for the development of the humanities in the context of digital and socio-cultural transformations.

Literature Review

Contemporary research into the humanities reveals a growing interest in integrating phenomenological, pragmatist, hermeneutic and relational approaches, reflecting a general trend towards methodological openness and interdisciplinarity. International academic literature reveals a desire to combine different philosophical traditions to gain a deeper understanding of the nature of humanities scholarship, its interpretative mechanisms and the socio-cultural conditions of its formation. Researchers from various countries emphasise that the humanities must respond to digital transformations, changes in forms of communication, and new challenges related

to the interpretation of cultural meanings. The American philosopher S. Gallagher (2020; 2022) emphasises in his works that humanities knowledge cannot be considered outside the context of corporeality, intentionality and social interaction. The author stresses that digital environments are altering the structure of experience, and therefore the humanities must adapt their methods to new forms of communication and perception. His approach demonstrates that phenomenology remains a key tool for analysing human experience in the digital age. Representatives of the Italian philosophical tradition make a significant contribution to the development of humanities knowledge. R. Calcaterra (2001) emphasises that pragmatism contributes to the renewal of the humanities through its openness to interdisciplinary approaches and its ability to integrate various forms of knowledge. Their research demonstrates that the pragmatist tradition remains one of the most productive for contemporary humanities. In this context, the position of A. Archer & B. Matheson (2020) is also significant, as they show that value-laden experiences and emotional structures are time-bound and shape the interpretative frameworks of humanities knowledge.

In the field of the philosophy of science and technology, the work of researchers J. Moreno & D. Vinck (2021) is significant. They analyse the interaction between the philosophy of science, technology and STS, emphasising that humanities knowledge is formed within a complex network of social, technical and cultural factors. Also significant is the contribution of the Italian philosopher P. Mattei-Gentili (2020), who explores the ontological foundations of social facts and normativity, demonstrating the importance of semantic approaches for humanities analysis. The French philosopher M. Amat (2023), analysing G. Simmel's relational philosophy, emphasises that meanings arise in the process of social interaction, rather than existing independently of it. Indian researchers K. Tharakan & V. George (2025) develop the idea of a spatial turn in the philosophy of science, emphasising that the space in which cognition

takes place influences the formation of meanings and the structure of humanities knowledge. The Italian philosopher R. Ferrer (2024) works along similar lines, analysing the intuitive and humanistic dimensions of philosophical cognition, emphasising the importance of intuition for the formation of humanities concepts. A distinct strand of contemporary research is devoted to the interpretative nature of humanities knowledge. British researcher R. Berry (2020) analyses the boundaries between literature and philosophy. French researcher A. Bonnet (2021) demonstrates that intellectual biography is an important tool for humanities analysis, as it allows one to trace the formation of ideas within the context of a thinker's life. French philosopher N. Grangé (2022) explores the limits of the representation of violence, which is important for understanding the ethical aspects of the humanities. Belgian researcher C. Roelens (2022) analyses C. Taylor's philosophy of education, emphasising the importance of authenticity and individualisation in the formation of humanities knowledge. In this context, the position of the American philosophers I. Torsen & R. Pippin (2021) is also significant, as they emphasise that art is an independent form of philosophical knowledge.

Ukrainian researchers are making a significant contribution to the development of the humanities. H. Surina & N. Miroshkina (2025) analyse K. Wilber's integral anthropology, emphasising the multidimensionality of human experience and the need to integrate different levels of cognition. S. Kutsepal (2025) explores the interaction between artificial intelligence and technical creativity. I. Farafonova (2024) conducts a philosophical analysis of the role of consciousness in electoral behaviour. Also significant is the contribution of the Italian researcher L. Mortari *et al.* (2023), who are developing an empirical phenomenological methodology for the humanities. Digital methods of analysing humanities data attract particular attention in contemporary literature. Dutch researcher N. van Noord (2022) demonstrates that computational approaches

to the interpretation of cultural artefacts open up new possibilities for humanities research. At the same time, the Albanian philosopher A. Salihu (2024) draws attention to the challenges of post-philosophy, emphasising the fragmentation of the intellectual landscape and the need to update humanities methodologies.

A synthesis of contemporary research indicates that humanities knowledge is formed at the intersection of experience, interpretation, social interaction and cultural contexts. The literature demonstrates a shift in the humanities towards methodological flexibility, interdisciplinarity and conceptual openness. At the same time, gaps remain in the academic discourse regarding the integration of digital data, the ethical aspects of interpretation, and the verification of meanings. These areas define the prospects for further research and require the development of robust methodological approaches.

Materials and Methods

The study's timeframe covered the period from 2020 to 2025. It was during this interval that a corpus of relevant sources was formed, reflecting the current state of humanities knowledge in the context of digitalisation and the intensification of socio-cultural transformations. The choice of this period ensured the reproducibility of the study, as all materials used are from peer-reviewed publications of recent years and represent key trends in the development of the humanities. The object of the study was contemporary humanities knowledge as a complex of theoretical, methodological and practical approaches. The subject comprised the philosophical principles and methodological guidelines that have shaped the integration of interpretative, phenomenological, pragmatist and relational practices in contemporary humanities. The choice of methods is directly linked to the aim of the study – to identify the key principles underlying the formation of humanities knowledge in the context of digital and socio-cultural changes.

Hermeneutic analysis was employed to reconstruct interpretative strategies in key texts,

making it possible to trace the mechanisms of meaning-making and the logic of interpretation across different cultural contexts. This method is relevant to the subject of this study, as knowledge in the humanities is interpretative in nature and requires an analysis of the processes by which meanings are formed. The phenomenological approach was used to study experience as the primary horizon of humanities knowledge. It enabled the reconstruction of the structures of experience, intentionality and corporeality, which are key to contemporary humanities and directly linked to the aim of identifying the role of experience in the formation of knowledge.

Pragmatic analysis has revealed the significance of social interaction, practical activity and communication in the formation of humanities knowledge. Since pragmatism regards knowledge as a tool for orientation in the world, this method has made it possible to trace the connection between theoretical models and the practical aspects of humanities processes. The comparative-reconstructive approach made it possible to compare the positions of various authors and schools, to identify common methodological guidelines and differences, which formed the basis for the development of an integrative model of humanities knowledge. Conceptual analysis clarified key concepts – interpretation, experience, relationality and methodological flexibility – and enabled the construction of a coherent conceptual framework for the study.

The research procedure consisted of several interrelated stages. In the first stage, a corpus of sources was compiled according to criteria of relevance, authority and regional representativeness, and a cut-off date for the selection of materials was established. This was followed by a conceptual analysis, which allowed for the refinement of working definitions and the construction of an analytical framework. The next step was a hermeneutic, phenomenological and pragmatic analysis, within which key texts were interpreted, experiential horizons reconstructed and meaning-making mechanisms identified.

Following this, a comparative reconstruction of the approaches of various authors was carried out, enabling the identification of common methodological foundations. The final stage was a critical synthesis, within which the results of the analysis were integrated and generalised conclusions were formulated.

The criteria for selecting sources were relevance (with a preference for publications from 2020-2025), authority (peer-reviewed journals and works by leading researchers), methodological diversity (phenomenological, pragmatist, hermeneutic and relational approaches), as well as regional representativeness, which ensured the inclusion of English-language, European and Ukrainian studies. Additionally, the type of sources was taken into account, allowing for the combination of theoretical works with digital corpora and analytical materials.

The study adhered to the principles of academic integrity, ensured the correct interpretation of sources, and took into account the limitations associated with the lack of large-scale empirical data. To enhance the reliability of the conclusions, methodological triangulation was applied, combining theoretical analysis with selective empirical observations. The chosen combination of methods and the sequence of their application ensured a direct link to the object, subject, aim and objectives of the study, laying the groundwork for the formation of a comprehensive philosophical model of contemporary humanities knowledge.

Results and Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that contemporary knowledge in the humanities is taking shape as a multidimensional, dynamic and methodologically flexible system in which various philosophical traditions, interpretative strategies and analytical approaches interact. An analysis of the corpus of sources for the years 2020-2025 has made it possible to identify key trends in the development of the humanities, among which the strengthening of the role of interpretation,

the growing significance of experience, the expanding influence of digital environments, and the active use of pragmatist, phenomenological and relational models are predominant. It has been established that contemporary humanities research is increasingly moving towards the integration of various methodological approaches, driven by the complexity of socio-cultural processes and the need for multidimensional analysis. In this context, the humanities emerge as a field seeking to combine interpretative, experiential, social and technological dimensions, thereby forming new approaches to the analysis of cultural phenomena. Importantly, such integration is not a mechanical combination of methods, but involves the formation of new analytical frameworks capable of encompassing the complexity of contemporary cultural processes. This also indicates a gradual shift in the humanities from narrowly specialised research towards comprehensive models that take into account the interaction of individual, social and technological factors.

The first significant finding was the confirmation that interpretative approaches remain central to contemporary humanities. R. Berry (2020) emphasises that humanities knowledge is formed as a space of meaning-making, in which interpretation is combined with the analysis of literary and philosophical forms, revealing hidden structures of meaning. A. Bonnet (2021) demonstrates that intellectual biography is an effective tool for understanding how personal and cultural contexts influence the formation of humanities knowledge. In the same vein, I. Torsen & R. Pippin (2021) emphasise that art is not only an object of humanities analysis but also an independent form of philosophical cognition that provides access to the structures of meaning in human experience. N. Grangé (2022) explores the ethical boundaries of the representation of violence, which allows for a deeper understanding of how cultural mechanisms of meaning-making are constructed. C. Roelens (2022), analysing C. Taylor's philosophy of education, emphasises that interpretation is a determining factor in the formation of value

orientations and models of self-understanding. The findings indicate that interpretation not only explains cultural phenomena but also shapes the mechanisms of their reproduction, ensuring the continuity of cultural memory and the possibility of its transformation.

A second finding was the clarification of the role of phenomenological approaches in contemporary humanities scholarship. S. Gallagher (2020; 2022) emphasises that experience is the primary horizon of meaning-making, and therefore humanities research must take into account the subject's corporeality, intentionality and social interaction. K. Tharakan & V. George (2025) demonstrate that phenomenological analysis allows for the spatial and cultural embeddedness of experience to be taken into account, enabling a more precise delineation of the nature of contemporary social change. G. Ferrer (2024) adds that the intuitive and experiential aspects of humanities knowledge are closely linked to historical circumstances and cultural premises. Research by L. Mortari *et al.* (2023) demonstrates that empirical phenomenological methodology allows the description of experience to be combined with analytical models, creating a foundation for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of meaning-making. Phenomenology explains how individual experiences form the basis for the formation of social representations, norms and practices, which is particularly relevant given the growing role of subjective experience in contemporary culture. It is also important that phenomenological approaches allow to identify hidden structures of experience, which cannot always be captured by discursive methods but significantly influence the formation of cultural meanings.

A third finding was the identification of the significance of pragmatist and relational approaches. R. Calcaterra (2001) demonstrates that the pragmatist tradition facilitates the integration of various epistemological models and opens up opportunities for interdisciplinary dialogue. A. Archer & B. Matheson (2020) show that value experiences and emotional structures are

time-bound and form the interpretative frameworks of humanistic cognition, which brings pragmatist and phenomenological models closer together. M. Amat (2023), drawing on G. Simmel's relational philosophy, argues that meanings arise in the process of social interaction rather than existing independently of it. N. Grangé (2022) emphasises that relational and critical models allow to identify the social conditions under which meanings are formed. J. Moreno & D. Vinck (2021) demonstrate that humanities knowledge is formed within a complex network of social, technical and cultural factors, which requires methodological flexibility and the ability to account for the infrastructural conditions of knowledge production. A. Salihu (2024) draws attention to the challenges of post-philosophy, highlighting the fragmentation of the intellectual landscape and the need to update humanities methodologies. Taken together, these approaches demonstrate that pragmatist and relational models allow to explain not only the mechanisms of meaning formation, but also the dynamics of their functioning in social practices.

The fourth finding was the identification of the role of digital environments in the formation of humanities knowledge. N. van Noord (2022) demonstrates that computational methods of analysing cultural artefacts open up new possibilities for humanities research, particularly in the field of visual culture. P. Mattei-Gentili (2020) adds that digital environments influence the formation of social norms and structures of meaning, as information circulates in new formats and at a new speed. Digital humanities are emerging as a distinct field, combining traditional methods with algorithmic approaches, creating new opportunities for the analysis of cultural processes. Digital archives, visual databases and algorithmic systems are becoming new forms of representing the past, which alters the structure of cultural memory and opens up access to new types of data. At the same time, digital environments are shaping new models of interaction in which users become active participants in the creation of meaning, a

phenomenon requiring further theoretical reflection. This indicates that digital technologies not only expand the toolkit of the humanities but also transform the very conditions under which knowledge is produced.

The fifth finding was the identification of Ukrainian researchers' contributions to the development of contemporary humanities. H. Surina & N. Miroshkina (2025) analyse K. Wilber's integral anthropology, emphasising the multidimensionality of human experience and the need to integrate different levels of cognition. S. Kutsepal (2025) demonstrates that digital technologies are transforming not only forms of communication but also the very nature of humanities knowledge, creating new conditions for creativity and interpretation. I. Farafonova (2024) analyses the role of consciousness in electoral behaviour, showing that contemporary social processes require a profound understanding of the mechanisms of rationality and intentionality. Their research confirms that Ukrainian humanities are actively integrating into the global academic discourse, combining local experience with international theoretical models. It is important that Ukrainian authors demonstrate the ability to adapt global methodological approaches to local contexts, creating new analytical models relevant to contemporary socio-cultural challenges.

A synthesis of the findings allows for a deeper understanding of the dynamics of the formation of contemporary humanities knowledge and helps determine how different methodological approaches interact with one another in the context of intense socio-cultural transformations. A comparison of interpretative, phenomenological, pragmatist, relational and digital approaches shows that each makes a unique contribution to the formation of humanities knowledge, but their effectiveness increases precisely through interaction. Interpretative models provide an analysis of semantic structures; phenomenological models – a reconstruction of experience; pragmatist models – an analysis of social practices; relational models –

the identification of the dynamics of social ties; and digital models – new tools for analysing cultural processes. To summarise the findings, it can be argued that contemporary humanities knowledge is formed at the intersection of various methodological traditions, and philosophy plays an integrative role, ensuring the conceptual unity of the humanities and creating conditions for the further development of the humanities in the context of digital and socio-cultural transformations. At the same time, the research findings demonstrate that the effectiveness of humanities methodologies increases when they combine analytical depth with sensitivity to social and technological changes.

Conclusions

The conducted study has demonstrated that contemporary humanities knowledge is formed as a multidimensional and dynamic system in which diverse philosophical traditions, methodological approaches, and interpretative strategies interact. An analysis of interpretative, phenomenological, pragmatist, critical and relational models has shown that each of these approaches offers unique opportunities for understanding the reality of the humanities, and their combination creates the conditions for a comprehensive analysis of human experience, cultural meanings and social practices. It has been established that philosophy performs an integrative function, combining various epistemological models and ensuring the conceptual unity of the humanities in the context of contemporary digital and socio-cultural transformations.

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the systematic combination of key methodological approaches – interpretative, phenomenological, pragmatist, critical and relational – into a single analytical framework, which allows for a new understanding of the mechanisms of the formation of humanities knowledge. Furthermore, the novelty lies in the conceptual justification of the role of philosophy

as an integrative factor capable of ensuring the methodological integrity of the humanities in the context of digital environments, networked communications and the growing complexity of cultural processes. A synthesis of the research findings indicates that 21st-century humanities knowledge is characterised by methodological flexibility, openness to interdisciplinary interactions, and the ability to adapt to new socio-cultural challenges. Of particular significance is the strengthening of the role of interpretation as a key mechanism of meaning-making, as well as the growing importance of experience as the primary horizon of understanding, which is consistent with contemporary phenomenological and enactivist approaches. A critical analysis of the social conditions of cognition allows to identify the hidden mechanisms of power and institutional structures that influence the formation of the humanities' reality, whilst pragmatist and relational models provide tools for studying social practices, interactions and cultural dynamics. It is also important that contemporary humanities are increasingly oriented towards the integration of various research strategies, which enhances their analytical potential and contributes to a deeper understanding of complex cultural processes.

Prospects for further research lie in an in-depth analysis of the interaction between the humanities and social sciences, the development of new methodological models of interpretation, and the study of the impact of digital technologies on the structure of humanities knowledge. Of particular relevance is research into how digital environments transform the ways in which meanings are produced, transmitted and interpreted, as well as how they influence the formation of new forms of cultural communication and social interaction. Further development of this topic will contribute to the formation of a more holistic, conceptually coherent and methodologically sound understanding of the humanities in the context of contemporary global changes.

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Conflict of Interest

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Філософські засади формування сучасного гуманітарного знання

Анна Солодова

Магістр, незалежна дослідниця

м. Київ, Україна

<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-9614-281X>

Анотація. Сучасні трансформаційні процеси, що охоплюють соціокультурний простір XXI століття, актуалізують потребу у переосмисленні засад гуманітарного знання та його методологічних орієнтирів. Гуманітаристика постає ключовим інструментом інтерпретації складних суспільних явищ, а філософія забезпечує її концептуальну цілісність, визначаючи рамки осмислення людського досвіду, комунікації та культурної динаміки. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена необхідністю формування цілісної методологічної основи, здатної інтегрувати різні підходи до аналізу гуманітарної реальності та забезпечити адекватне реагування на виклики сучасності. Метою роботи було обґрунтування філософських засад формування сучасного гуманітарного знання та визначення ключових методологічних принципів, що забезпечують його розвиток. У дослідженні застосовано методи концептуального аналізу, порівняльної теоретичної реконструкції, інтерпретації та критичного осмислення гуманітарних практик. Використання цих методів дозволило виявити внутрішню логіку становлення гуманітарного знання, простежити взаємодію між різними епістемологічними моделями та окреслити їх вплив на сучасні дослідницькі стратегії. Основні результати полягають у визначенні того, що сучасне гуманітарне знання формується на перетині герменевтичного, феноменологічного, критичного та наративного підходів, кожен з яких забезпечує власний спосіб інтерпретації людського досвіду. Показано, що міждисциплінарність виступає необхідною умовою дослідження складної та багатовимірної гуманітарної реальності, а філософія виконує інтегративну функцію, поєднуючи різні методологічні перспективи. Обґрунтовано, що гнучкість, відкритість і здатність до адаптації є визначальними характеристиками сучасної гуманітаристики, які дозволяють їй реагувати на динаміку соціальних змін. Практична цінність роботи полягає у можливості використання отриманих результатів для вдосконалення методологічних підходів у гуманітарних дослідженнях, розроблення освітніх програм, а також формування аналітичних моделей, що сприяють глибшому розумінню сучасних соціокультурних процесів

Ключові слова: епістемологія; філософія; методологія; інтерпретація; культурна динаміка