

## THE NECESSITY OF PHILOSOPHY

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**Abstract:** The article considers the metaphilosophical problem of the need for philosophy for everyday life. Two types of philosophical reflection are considered: ontological and deontic. The author analyzes the difference and similarities of these types of reflections in terms of goals of philosophizing. At the same time, the author explores the process of implementing philosophy through the prism of historical development. The thesis that philosophy implemented in deontic reflection is vital for an ordinary person is argued. The wide historical context of the foundations of philosophy in the Western tradition is investigated. Also author considers various methods and forms of its implementation.

**Keywords:** metaphilosophy, philosophy, reflection, the Being, the Good, Parmenides, Socrates, history, ordinary life.

### 1 Introduction

When a teacher of philosophy is in a situation of a student audience of “non-philosophers”, the most important and frequent question that he has to answer with his entire 72-hour course is: “Why do you need this, philosophy?” Philosophers endlessly pursued by this question often get tired of the constant need for self-justification, which is sometimes expressed in irritated answers. So, for example, following the thought of A.M. Pyatigorsky, you can answer: “For nothing, it’s just interesting!”. Indeed, even Aristotle noted the practical inappropriateness of philosophy in the maxim worn out by the teaching languages that there is no more useless science, but you will not find it better. However, students are not brought to the audience by any interest in philosophy, but rather by the compulsory curriculum, which is the bondage and compulsion to philosophize, contrary to the freedom of real interest. Therefore M.K. Mamardashvili said that “the nature of philosophy is such that it is impossible and, moreover, compulsory teaching of philosophy to future chemists, physicists, and engineers in higher education institutions should be prohibited” (Mamardashvili, 2018). Nevertheless, a real teacher has to proceed from this as a given and accept as a fact the condition of loyalty of the student audience.

Such a repressive situation puts the philosopher in front of the inevitability of the answer to the question of the need for philosophy. And the matter is not even student misunderstanding, the problem here is not limited to the pedagogical aspect. Students only reproduce that perplexity, which is dissolved in the public consciousness. The curriculum dictatorship and audience represent a context in which speaking and reflection on this issue becomes inevitable.

The idea of the futility of philosophy stems largely from the fact that the entire subject field of knowledge is divided between special areas of scientific knowledge. Whatever subject we touch on — language, politics, society, consciousness, etc. — an instant private discipline is found that has privatized its right to study it. The universality of philosophy, in this situation, looks more like an amateurish superficiality and the absence of strict certainty. A similar philosophical approach is suitable at the beginning of the study, when in a free understanding of the object the first approximate ideas are acquired, often formulated in the form of a question or paradox. Actually, historically, all private-scientific disciplines formed within philosophy. However, with the development of scientific forms of cognition, philosophy, less and less space remains. Occupying a position in the gap between the boundaries of various sciences, philosophy seems to fill the void of uncertainty between them. Hence the definition of philosophy given by B. Russell as “no man’s land” (Russell, 2018). Nevertheless, this special state of “between” is ignored, and they try to present philosophy as “one of” in the

general series of sciences, presenting similar requirements to it. Thus, within philosophy, disciplines are first formed, which are subsequently considered as a model for philosophy itself. It is not surprising that it could not always and in all respects meet such requirements.

In such a crisis state of philosophy, it is foolish to blame the growth and development of scientific knowledge, just as it is not worth exposing the nature of philosophy. The real reason for the position of philosophy is not philosophy itself, but the way we understand it. What we have now is a consequence of the rootedness of a certain understanding (and implementation) of philosophizing, which originates from the moment the Western philosophical tradition appeared. Therefore, the crisis of “futility” can be overcome by a different understanding of philosophizing, which can also be found in the history of Western philosophy.

### 2 Results and Discussion

#### 2.1 Parmenides’ form of philosophy (ontological reflection).

The two poles of Western philosophical tradition are laid by the very structure of Parmenides’ poem “On Nature” (Lebedev, 1989). The first part describes the true knowledge of being, which can be summarized in three interconnected theses. First, being is, but non-being is not. Secondly, being is one, indivisible, eternal and unchanging. Thirdly, being and thinking are identical. And the second part Parmenides devotes to the presentation of knowledge based on the opinions of mortals, born of a mixture of “being and non-being.” Let us examine successively how these two parts form the general picture of philosophical thought.

As already mentioned, the first part boils down to three theses of true knowledge. The first thesis is the most problematic and at the same time key: being is. The external simplicity of understanding this statement is fraught with the danger that it can be “slipped” as completely clear and left without due attention. This is not a simple tautology at the language level, when “being” is first defined as what is, and then the existence of being is analytically asserted from the definition itself, due to the fact that the predicate “to be” is already laid down in the content of the concept of being. If we draw an argument from a later period in the history of philosophy, then, following the idea of D. Hume, which is later adopted by I. Kant, “to be” is not a specific predicate at all, since “to be” always means to be something, i.e. it is impossible to simply be and not possess some definitive predicate: “... although every impression and every idea that we only remember is considered to exist, the idea of existence does not come from any separate impression. <...> Just thinking about a thing and thinking about it as an existing thing is exactly the same thing” (Hume, 1996). Therefore, being should be considered as a possibility of prediction, i.e. as an opportunity to be something. Actually, the Parmenides’ statement should be taken as establishing or fixing the evidence of the possibility of being something. In the thesis of Parmenides, the tautological predicate of existence is not attributed to being, but the obviousness of the possibility of such an ontological predication, in other words, the evidence that something exists, is affirmed. For Parmenides, the idea that being is, or something really exists, is a self-evident intuition that overcomes any radical doubt.

This can be demonstrated “on the contrary”. Indeed, why not doubt that something even exists? Like Descartes, one can imagine an omnipotent demon who misleads us (Descartes, 1994). All that we took for the reality of a truly existing one, now we imagine as an illusion of demonic influence. However, even in such a situation of total illusoriness, a self-evident true statement is possible, which cannot be discarded - something exists. If we imagine ourselves initially to be in the absoluteness of an illusion that cuts off even the hypothetical opportunity to

know something true, then we still know for sure that something is real. Let this be completely not what we see, feel and imagine, let all the knowledge about the existing be just a trick of the demon, but there must be something outside of the fraud that creates it, because the demon itself must exist in order to mislead us. The nature of the illusion is such that it cannot have a self-sufficient existence, i.e. it is possible only when there is something real that gives rise to it for its own concealment. Illusoriness must be supported by reality, deception is possible only if there is a deceiver hiding behind a veil of falsehood. On the other hand, if an illusion had self-restraint, then it would not be an illusion, it would itself be a reality.

Thus, the Parmenides' statement "being is" is a fixation of the ontological intellectual intuition that something is. This formulation is significantly different from the famous Cartesian maxim: *cogito ergo sum* (Descartes, 1989), since it does not introduce the subject of thought. The evidence for the existence of the thinking "I," put forward by Descartes, is completely unclear. This can be argued with the help of a complicated version of the Cartesian experiment, known as "brains in a vat" (Putnam, 2018). In this version, the deceiver demon is replaced by a supercomputer, the purpose of which is to produce the illusion of reality in the brain connected to it. The important point here is that a fundamental transformation of the thinking person is imagined: "I think" becomes just "thought", since the computer produces not only the illusion of external reality, but also the illusion of the thinking self. This demonstrates the ambiguity of the construction of "I", because the real subject of thought may be something completely different, for example, a hypothetical computer. Therefore, if Cartesian intuition reveals elements of ambiguity in itself under the conditions of a new thought experiment, then Parmenides retains its obviousness.

In the case of the Parmenides' ontological intuition, such a guarantor of meaningful truth is not observed. Therefore, the entire substantive side remains entirely in the field of opinion (*δόξα*), to which the second part of Parmenides' poem is devoted. This describes the second pole of this type of philosophical thinking. The second part of the poem, which describes the opinion of mortals, is not just a tribute to generally accepted ideas or an ironic ridicule of common misconceptions. Parmenides demonstrates that the described field of opinion is a necessary and inevitable part of cognition. True knowledge of the first part, summed up around ontological intuition, remains meaningfully unfulfilled. Ontological intuition (its meaningful certainty) is a kind of asymptote, to which the cognitive infinitely approaches, doing work in the field of opinion.

If the first part of the poem describes an intuitive belief in the existence of a final point of absolute truth, then the second part describes the movement to this point. Opinion and fallacy of judgments are inevitable when moving to a truth that a person does not know, but is sure that it is. Therefore, Parmenides describes being as an unchanging and eternal truth - ontological intuition, and opinion as the changing dynamics of human ideas about its content. In other words, in the first part about true knowledge, Parmenides demonstrates the obviousness of intuition that "something is", and in the second - describes the current understanding of the content of this intuition, that is, gives the answer to the question: "What exactly is there?"

According to Parmenides, opinion is generated by a mixture of being and non-being, which cannot be avoided. Since sensory perception is always limited, the idea of being, as it were, breaks up into its component parts. Instead of a single being in human perception, there are many separate existent objects. Nothingness penetrates into being as the boundary of objects, as a condition for the separation of integral being, according to differences in sensory perception. Nothingness is conditional boundaries segmenting being. Drawing these boundaries at the same time makes possible the appearance and destruction of objects, and, accordingly, the movement of human thought (in the field of opinion at the moment, a true thought can become false in the next, and vice versa). Therefore, objects and objects in the ontology of Parmenides have a special status, they are not being

and not non-being, they are being dissected by the introduction of conditional non-being. By virtue of this, Parmenides does not exist at all (therefore, Russell's critical argument does not succeed), but they are not illusory. There are no objects only because they arise, they appear and disappear in constant change and movement. The very possibility of changes is due to the fact that they are based on something unchanged. Thus, Parmenides describes the immanent region of a moving, changing mind, the driving force of which is the substantial vacuum of transcendental ontological intuition.

At the same time, Parmenides gives a general outline of philosophical thought, which applies both to the realm of the immanent and to the realm of the transcendent in various traditions. The absolute of knowledge here is represented by the scheme, or form, of ontological intuition, which is meaningfully empty. Opinion, the human idea of the content of ontological intuition, is the use of this intuition as a form for the meaningful definition of all that is according to the following scheme:

- "something (x)" is;
- nothing else is "something (x)".

This is a general pattern of naturalization characteristic of almost the entire Western philosophical tradition. On the basis of its implementation, both natural-philosophical and materialistic concepts are built, from which private sciences have developed, and idealistic views. The only difference between them is that the naturalistic scheme in the first case applies to the realm of the immanent, physical, and in the second to the realm of the transcendental, super-physical.

So, philosophical thought, implementing a naturalistic scheme, gave a powerful impetus to the development of private scientific disciplines. Specialized fields of scientific knowledge are the result of the development of a specific application of the naturalistic scheme of philosophical thought. Such philosophizing is a breeding ground or building material for special sciences. Therefore, the crisis of the "need" of philosophy can be considered as a natural result of the development of thought according to the naturalization scheme, which, in essence, is the whole (with some exceptions, about which later) the whole history of Western philosophy. After the entire observable subject field of knowledge was divided between specific disciplines, naturalized philosophical thought was expropriated at the forefront of individual scientific disciplines, while philosophy itself remained in a situation of crisis of its own scientific nature, which, in essence, means a crisis of specific objectivity. The situation of "uselessness" appeared not because philosophical thought no longer had a place in strict scientific knowledge, but because philosophy carried out according to a naturalistic scheme was stolen by private sciences. Therefore, when philosophy remained in the situation one among many, then the same requirements began to be presented to it as to other disciplines.

However, such an "inscription" of philosophy along with other scientific disciplines does not solve the problem of crisis, since the crisis is a natural consequence of the development of a naturalistic scheme of philosophizing and the associated scientific knowledge. What is required here is not a restriction of philosophy to the rigor of the scientific method, its ultimate naturalization, but a radical change in the implementation of philosophizing. The way out of the crisis is not the definition of philosophy within the framework of the naturalistic scheme, but the change of the philosophizing scheme itself. The possibility and necessity of such a change has already been brought to the attention of thinkers who dealt with the problem of philosophy as such. For example, D. B. Zilberman, developing his own modal methodology, wrote: "With regard to opportunity, perhaps, in the entire history of philosophy, the possibilities to make it an object of itself have never been so optimal as they are today. Precisely because philosophy has rightfully been supplanted from all subject areas, we can talk about "pure" philosophy without risking wandering back into empiricism, naturalism, sociologism, and ideology" (Gurko, 2007).

Therefore, in addition to the considered Parmenides' type, it is necessary to determine another possible way of philosophizing.

## 2.2 Socratic type of philosophizing (deontic reflection)

A fundamentally different type of philosophical thinking, realized not according to a naturalistic scheme, we find in the views of Socrates. His famous saying: "I know that I don't know anything" (Losev et al., 1990), on the one hand, demonstrates an ironic device and the image of learned ignorance, and on the other, more important for us, is a criticism of the sophists' relativism and a return to fundamental intellectual intuition.

In this Socratic statement, the contradictory absolutism of relativity is ironically noted. The essence of the contradiction is quite simple and ultimately boils down to the paradox of self-reference, or to the paradox of the liar. Take the statement T: "nothing can be known for certain." Does T itself fall under the rule that it claims? If T is reliable, then it itself must correspond to the condition being approved, i.e. be unreliable, and vice versa. Insoluble contradiction is obvious. Therefore, according to Socratic thought, if nothing is known for certain, it is possible to know for sure at least one, this same thought. Thus, in order not to conflict with the absolute relativism of knowledge, it is necessary to admit the presence of reliable knowledge, in any case, we can reliably assert that something reliable exists. In this sense, Socrates repeats the train of thought of Parmenides, establishing and fixing the evidence and certainty of some intellectual intuition. However, Socrates has a significant difference from the Parmenides' position. If Parmenides defines the discovered intellectual intuition that something is, as being, then Socrates - as a blessing, i.e. what should be. This, in fact, is the fundamental change in the philosophy of philosophizing - instead of naturalistic ontological thinking, we have a super-naturalistic deontic ("super-real" or "sur-real" in the terminology of D. Zilberman) (Gurko, 2007).

Such a shift in the focus of thought from being for good is no coincidence. In a situation where a person is a "measure of all things", according to the maxim of Protagoras, something is needed that would act as an absolute of virtue and perfection, in the broad sense, with which a person would compare his own "dimensions". At the same time, Socrates realizes that it is impossible to formulate a meaningful definition of this absolute. Just as being appears as an unattainable ideal of cognition in the realization of a naturalistic scheme, the good is also an asymptote of the Socratic type of philosophizing. Being and good are meaningfully empty intellectual intuitions, the evidence of which there is no doubt. Socratic intuition of good is an ontological intuition set in conditions of modality: necessity, chance and possibility, which are realized in the context of human responsibility, i.e. in categories of commitment, authorization and regulation. The Socratic type of philosophizing is the recognition of a person's responsibility as a "measure of things" for modifying life. Modalities are forms of a phenomenon for a person of a single being in his mobility, grasped in opinion, i.e. in an attempt to give content ontological intuition. At the same time, Socrates's deontic intuition seems to be "built up" over the ontology, hence its characteristic of "super-real." In other words, if the Parmenides' type of philosophical thought is an attempt to determine what exactly is, then Socratic is trying to answer the question of what should be. Therefore, good can be defined as intellectual intuition that, in addition to what is (what is defined as the content of ontological intuition), there can be something better, virtuous, perfect, etc.

Since deontic intuition is something that belongs to the field of transcendence, its meaningful definition is an infinitely approaching movement. It is precisely such dynamism and mobility that distinguishes philosophizing from, for example, ideology or dogma. Therefore, in Socrates, the main method for realizing this movement of thought is dialectics, in the sense of conducting a conversation, a conversation. This is a way of implementing thoughts in dynamics. Thought as an end result, as a formed "concept" of good, is constantly overcome in the dialectical movement of thought, since no result of thinking can exhaust the transcendental content of deontic intuition, it is only

possible to approach it endlessly (and sometimes even move away).

At the same time, dialectics also embraces intersubjectivity as a necessary element of the movement of thought to the definition of good. She acts as a way to overcome the dogmatism of individual thinking. The other, the interlocutor (or myself, who became alien to the result of my previous thoughts) is for the thinker not the object of persuading and spreading his own ideas, but the hope of overcoming the hidden shortcomings and the imaginary ideality of the formed ideas.

The Socratic type of philosophy represents the dynamics of unfolding thinking, the purpose of which is to approach the meaningful definition of deontic intuition about good. The deontic intuition itself is built up over the ontological, as the sphere of the super-real over the real. The Parmenides' type of philosophy, expropriated by science, establishes the real, that is, what is, while the Socratic type of philosophy tries to define the super-real - that which is not, but that which can be as an improved real. This form of deontic reflection over what should be, from the point of view of intuition about the absolute good, is a form of consciousness of a person's own responsibility for the real.

## 3 Summary

### 3.1 About the benefits of philosophy for everyone and the harm for a few

The Parmenides' type of philosophizing is aimed at the formation of knowledge, while the Socratic formulates the meaning of this knowledge. However, Plato is already returning Socratic teachings to the Parmenides' type of philosophizing. It is no coincidence that Aristotle notes that Platonic philosophy transforms Socrates's teaching on general concepts under the influence of "Italic" philosophy (Asmus, 1976). Actually eternally existing ideas are naturalized Socratic concepts that are transferred from the deontic to the ontological. Genuine being becomes the being of ideas, i.e. ideas as universal invariants of multiple things reflect, according to Plato's thought, the real content of ontological intuition. The super-real in Plato ceases to be the responsibility of the thinking person, but becomes a special, truly real, area of existence. The deontic super-real and ontological real in Plato becomes one, truly existing world of ideas, and the area of mobile opinion and changeable existence, fixed in the sensory perception of man, becomes an unauthentic otherness of material things. Thus, Plato identifies Socratic deonticity with true being, which Parmenides affirms. Thus, Plato took the content of the philosophy of Socrates and presented it in the Parmenidian type of philosophizing, as knowledge and doctrine of two worlds. Subsequently, in the philosophy of Aristotle, the line of the naturalistic scheme of philosophizing is strengthened, the deontic is finally naturalized in the modalities of the potential and the actual (*δύναμις καὶ ἐνέργεια*).

## 4 Conclusion

Thus, the answer to the question of the need for philosophy became, as it seems to us, quite obvious. Philosophy is vital. Especially its Socratic type. Without it, it is impossible to form a truly adult person who is aware of the meaning and responsibility for the reality in which he exists. This applies to all aspects: scientific, social, political, environmental, ethical, etc. Of course, the Parmenides' type of philosophizing, scientific and cognitive, remains extremely important because it forms the basis of knowledge about reality, without which further deontic modalization is impossible. However, without deontic philosophy, the threat of infantilization arises, which aggravates the need for external leadership, for who would perform the functions of a deontic source. Without philosophy as a practice of real thinking, neither genuine laws, nor genuine morality are possible, in general, no genuine meaningful action, in the sense that it would not be an external indication to which you obey, but the result of your own real thinking; not by learned

knowledge, but by reflection on deontic intuition about good. Therefore, is philosophical education necessary? Only as much as real thinking is needed. Is harm from philosophy possible? Only for those who, out of fear of death, are interested in the infantilization of society and future generations, replacing true philosophizing and real thinking with ideology and dogmas.

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