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Philosophy Concepts in the Contemporary World

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The article is devoted to the analysis of the different coexisting concepts of philosophy. The aim of the article is to emphasize the most significant concepts in philosophy: metaphysical, scientific and anthropological ones, and to define the theoretical motives, which change these concepts, its character and methodology. The need for the new, differential ontology – heterology, which would radically transform the very nature of philosophy, is asserted in this article.

Keywords: philosophy, metaphysics, philosophy of science, anthropology, heterology.

Philosophy as Metaphysics

The meaning of such notions as «metaphysics» or «metaphysical» is very much dependent on the context and the goals of enunciation: it varies according to a series of comparisons and contrasts in which these notions are used. Yet, it is possible to say that metaphysics is the constant and unchanging topic in the history of Western philosophy. Although metaphysics is never a problem in itself, once philosophy as a discipline is considered a problem, metaphysics – regardless of the forms it might take – becomes a key issue.

In Aristotle's fourth volume of «Metaphysics» the philosopher defines «being» as something common to all things and devotes a specific field of philosophy to it: the philosophy of «being» as being. Aristotle contrasts this science of being as being with the sciences that study only parts of being. Indeed, this contrast Aristotle draws is justifiable as the science of being is never

limited to a certain region of being. Contrariwise, it explores the nature of being as being comprehensively. Hereby, just as we attempt to comprehend the source and the cause in every science, we have to seek for the source of being and its causes. This very search for the origins of being will be later called metaphysics. «There is a science which investigates being as being and its features. Now this is not the same as any of the so-called special sciences; for none of these others treats universally being as being. They take a part of being and investigate some features of this part; this is what the mathematical sciences do» (Aristotel, 1975, p. 119). The expression “as being” is crucial, and is indeed the condition of possibility of the overall affirmation insofar as Aristotle rejects the possibility of a single, all-encompassing science for all beings, as well as the attribution to all beings of properties that belong to a being by virtue of its own nature. Also, by

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the virtue of the expression “as being” Aristotle excludes the possibility of a science of being as a science that would explore certain regions of being. Aristotle understands the science of being exactly in the following way: «There is a science which investigates being as being». That is, for Aristotle the science of being is a science that would explore being only insofar as it is in itself. The possibility of studying beings with respect to their being or to their becoming – this is what Aristotle seeks to explore. Not all beings or beings as whole, but beings in its own being, any beings in its becoming – this is what Aristotle’s science of being is concerned with. The expression “as being” points exactly to being intrinsic to all beings.

Aristotle – as Plato – call this fact of being *ousia*: «Indeed the question which was raised long ago, is still and always will be, and which always baffles us – “What is being?” – is, in other words, “What is *ousia*?” For it is this that some assert to be one, others more than one, and that some assert to be limited in number, others unlimited. And so, we must consider chiefly and primarily and almost exclusively what that is which is in this sense» (Aristotel, 1975, p. 188). If *ousia* is something intrinsic to absolutely everything, it is because it underlies and upholds beings as a whole. It is a common sub-strat or substance that expresses essence of beings. Everything that is, exists on the basis of *ousia* as a reason, foundation or beginning. Thus, the meaning of being equates with the meaning of existence. It states that the science of being as being – is, in other words, the science of the foundation which beings is constituted upon. Ontology is primarily the science of the essence of being. From the whole plurality of meanings of being, *ousia* is the most fundamental one. Indeed, among different meanings of being, only *ousia* has an independent status. Any beings contain it and only through *ousia* we can comprehend existing anything.

In «Physics» Aristotle defines *ousia* as *upokeimenon* (Aristotel, 1983, p. 83). This gesture of equating *ousia* with *upokeimenon* has the double meaning: first, *ousia* and *upokeimenon* – as equivalents – denote something that is present, that lays-before-us, second, they denote something that lays-before-what-is-present, something that founds what lays-before-us. In the first meaning of these terms *ousia* and *upokeimenon* are equal as equivalent and interchangeable – Aristotle use them both to define what lays-before-us. According to this first meaning, everything that comes to being is a substance. As a preliminary inference of the first way to understand *ousia* it is possible to put forward the following statement: *ousia* as beingness describes both the sublunary world and divine being in such a way that it characterizes beings in its presence or, with some reservations, in its being. *Ousia*, thus, describes both what exists in a perspective since the very moment its beings became actual and beings in the state of becoming or at birth. The first understanding of being can be equally referred to both physics and metaphysics, although these two fields dictate slightly different modalities and functions of the one and the same concept.

The second meaning of equating *ousia* to *upokeimenon* makes us understand *ousia* as the substance of any thing, a constant core, owing to which a thing remains self-identical through all of its transformations. This second meaning of *ousia* Aristotle calls *arche*. Hence, the science of being in its presence is at the same time the science of *arche*-beginnings (*arche*-reasons). This second meaning of *ousia* is the decisive one for Aristotle: although being is said in many ways «obviously that which “is” primarily is the “what”, which indicates the substance of the thing. For when we say of what quality a thing is, we say that it is good or bad, not that it is three cubits long or that it is a man; but when we say what it is, we do not say “white” or “hot” or “three

cubits long”, but “a man” or “a god”. And all other things are said to be because they are, some of them, quantities of that which is in this primary sense, others qualities of it, others affections of it, and others some other determination of it» (Aristotel, 1975, p. 187). Under being we should understand that unreducible core of being to which we may prescribe certain features but which nonetheless remains self-identical and unchangeable. Properly speaking, the science of being in its just sense, deals with beings in relation to its own being.

This dichotomy of the Aristotle’s basic concept has served as the foundation of philosophy since its very birth. Philosophy – in Aristotle’s sense, at least, – is asserted as the science of being in its becoming and the science of being as it is, of being as being. In other words, Aristotle’s philosophy is both the science of nature and the science of arche-reasons, foundations and beginnings. Alternatively speaking, philosophy is asserted by Aristotle both as physics and metaphysics. The whole technical equivocation of metaphysics acquires its logical foundation now, in the light of the dichotomy described above: metaphysics refers not only to that which follows physics or is behind it, but that which is on the other side of physics. At the same time, this duality of physics-metaphysics is followed by yet another duality – on the one hand, philosophy is the science of beings in its presence (according to this understanding, philosophy explores being in both its earthly and heavenly presence), on the other hand, philosophy is the onto-theology, the science of beings in reference to its own being. Philosophy deals with essence of beings, a constant and invariable core, owing to which beings remains self-identical through all of its transformations. It follows that ontology anticipates and presupposes the science of divinity, or to theology. Or, if we look at the issue from another angle, theology is ontology right away, because theology refers to beings in

its being and raises a question about essence of being as it is.

Although, the philosophy of modernity develops the new concept of ousia, it still remains subordinated to the program of metaphysical explorations founded in antiquity. In modernity the question of being, which Aristotle thought to be the question of essence, transforms into the question of reflection. If metaphysics still holds the status of the «first philosophy», it is precisely due to the fact that it provides and guarantees ontological foundations for nature’s cognition. In modernity the locus of this guarantee, the substance which this foundation equates with, is the very human subjectivity or human nature. Thus, metaphysics gets restored in its rights in the philosophy of modernity, although it does so in a different locus – human nature. Moreover, «the first philosophy» further and fully regains its meaning in Hegel as a pinnacle and finalization of metaphysics of subjectivity: reason is not so much the human reason, but being itself, the substance of the material world. Reason as Spirit is both subjective and objective: «... Everything turns on grasping and expressing the True, not only as Substance, but equally as Subject (Hegel, 1992, p. 9)».

From now on philosophy is metaphysics as the science of a priori structures of the presence of beings. It turns its face to the foundations (reasons) and its endeavor becomes the search for this foundation independent of how it can be understood – as being, language, human being or sociality.

Philosophy as Philosophy of science

The concept of philosophy as the philosophy of science relates to the so-called neokantian interpretation of philosophy as transcendental epistemology. Such an interpretation substantiates the limits and abilities of strictly

scientific cognition and establishes conditions for the cognition of all possible objects of scientific exploration.

Philosophy of Kant is the theory of experience. Yet, as experience is given in mathematics and natural science, it follows that Kantian interpretation transforms philosophy into the study of conditional capabilities of mathematics and natural science. Herewith, experience is considered as a system of a priori knowledge exclusively. Undoubtedly, the rapidly developing mathematics in general and its rapidly developing role in natural science in particular had pushed neokantianism to the aforesaid interpretation of experience. That is, the goal of the critical philosophy of Kant is to establish the principles of the systematic cognition of the physique-mathematical world – principles of cognition, but not laws on nature. “Criticism is not a research of cognitive capabilities – it can be understood as Psychology, but it is a study if a science, pure sense as pure science. Philosophy is not a doctrine but it is criticism, it does not create a science about subjects of nature but it teaches hoe to reveal these delusions and helps to define the limits of cognition as no science can exist without it. As Philosophy does not claim to be a doctrine it deserves to be called “censor” and it realizes the notion experience possibility” (Cohen, 2006, p. 151). Thus, critical philosophy can be called transcendental precisely because it is turned not to the objects of cognition but to the methods of cognition. “In Kant theory priori bearers are space and time and as categories they shall be understood as methods and not as spiritual forms. This perception is a consequence of transcendental method and transcendental priori. In transcendental sense priori has only cognitive value but it is realized and confirmed by scientific means. That is why as a method there are two kinds of priori – contemplation and thinking. That is method of pure contemplation

method is a mathematic method and thinking method is a mechanic method” (Cohen, 2006, 160).

The benchmark of the transcendental epistemology is seen in the “transcendental method.” Why is this transcendental justification so necessary? This requirement consists of two parts. Paul Natorp explains it in the following way, “The first one is correct information for the actual, historically justified facts of science, ethics, art, religion. As Philosophy cannot exist in the area of pure thought where pure sense might deal only with the ideas” (Natorp, 2006, p124). So Philosophy tries to go beyond Metaphysics and deals with experience, and creation of different objects. “But Law is a creative basis for any such work and the initial law will be clear to us if we call it logos, sense, ratio. And here lies the second requirement of transcendental method. Along with the facts there must be some justification of possibility and the lawful basis. It means that it is required to show and form pure lawful basis, the unity of logos, ratio in any creative work. So the method of Philosophy aims to perform creative work but at the same time learns this work in its pure lawful form and justifies it in this cognition. And due to it the method is raised above this work and makes it transcendental in this pure methodical sense” (Natorp, 2006, 124-125).

Yet, this demand – principal for the Marburg school – remains fully dependent on the situation of science itself. It follows that when in natural science there emerge new objects and objectives of study which are no more subordinated to the laws of classical mechanics, the philosophic and methodological systems of Marburg schools appear to be refuted. Hence, antisubstantialism emerges – the rejection of the search for the invariable and common substances of being and the logical method of extracting them mechanically from the contingent things and processes. Antisubstantialism is followed by the

further antimetaphysical principle of construction of a world picture. Logos gets dispersed in different concepts of logic and language. In classical ontology to think meant to express and define (in a specific sense) things and substances in accordance to their genetic differences. Now, in accordance with the mathematized nature to think means to calculate. Calculating, in turn, relates to the ability to establish relations of dependence – functions. That is, categories get substituted by mathematical functions. The logic of mathematical function gets brought against the logic of genetic concept of to the concept of substance.

As a result of this, philosophy becomes the philosophy of science – epistemology in the sense that is the self-reflection of science, the science of concepts, principles and methods, owing to which science organizes its activity. Philosophy ceases to be «the science of all sciences» and turns into the empirical derivation of natural science. Rather, and in what constitutes its extreme thematization, best expressed by the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle, single goal of philosophy from now on is the logical and semiotic analysis of «language» of science. In other words, it analyzes the concepts science employs in its diverse forms, sentences and combinations of sentences and blocks traditional metaphysical aspirations. Philosophy is now sanctioned by science – as a form of ontological and logical foundation of the cognition – to be its philosophy and its methodology. From «the science of sciences» philosophy becomes «an under-labourer to science, solely concerned with the logical clarification of the propositions and method of empirical science» (Critchley, 2001, p. 95).

In relation to this scientific concept of the world what classical metaphysics had to offer becomes pointless – it cannot offer any cognitive content to science. «The development of modern

logic has made it possible to give a new and sharper answer to the question of the validity and justification of metaphysics. The researches of applied logic or the theory of knowledge, which aim at clarifying the cognitive content of scientific statements and thereby the meanings of the terms that occur in the statements, by means of logical analysis, lead to a positive and to a negative result. The positive result is worked out in the domain of empirical science; the various concepts of the various branches of science are clarified; their formal-logical and epistemological connections are made explicit. In the domain of metaphysics, including all philosophy of value and normative theory, logical analysis yields the negative result that the alleged statements in this domain are entirely meaningless. Therewith a radical elimination of metaphysics is attained, which was not yet possible from the earlier antimetaphysical standpoints... In the strict sense, however, a sequence of words is meaningless if it does not, within a specified language, constitute a statement. It may happen that such a sequence of words looks like a statement at first glance; in that case we call it a pseudostatement. Our thesis, now, is that logical analysis reveals the alleged statements of metaphysics to be pseudostatements» (Carnap, 1998, p. 70).

Moreover, metaphysics itself becomes meaningless: «Indeed, the results we have obtained so far might give rise to view that there are many dangers of falling into nonsense, and that one must accordingly endeavour to avoid these traps with great care if one wants to do metaphysics. But actually the situation is that meaningful metaphysical statements are impossible. This follows from the task which metaphysics sets itself: to discover and formulate a kind of knowledge which is not accessible to empirical science» (Carnap, 1998, p. 87). Traditional philosophy is best for expressing “an attitude toward life”, not amenable to the rational

analysis. The most adequate way to express “an attitude toward life” is considered to be art. Philosophy is nothing else but the substitute of art.

Philosophy as Anthropology

Anthropological concept of philosophy is precisely the reaction to natural science’s reductionism of thought. Philosophy now transforms to refer to a human being not only as an onto-theoretical foundation of cognition of the world, but also its mean of production and reproduction. From now on philosophy becomes anthropocentric. Contrary to the cosmological and theological doctrines, philosophy as anthropology constructs the world in according to an image and likeness of a man.

Kantian moment is paradigmatic even if transcendental subjectivity is not seen as an appropriate basis of the constancy of the world. In Modern Age metaphysical representation guaranteed the reality of the real and its objectivity. Representation erected itself in its own space of existence and employed this space as the measure for the essence’s being and the being of truth. It follows that a man in such a concept was represented exclusively as the subject of being for two reasons. First, truth was the guarantee of representation – in other words, authenticity. Second, being was representation in the sense of authenticity. In such a set up the role of a man could be nothing else but to be a subject of this fundamental representation. The area of this reigning subjectivity could be consequently characterized by the following: being was not the created being anymore, but the objective, authentic and represented being. Anthropology, thus, becomes necessary at the very moment when the autonomy of representation is denounced and it is in need of another support – be it transcendental, subjective, logical or philosophical one. The major questions of Kantian metaphysics – «what

am I able to know?», «what do I have to do?», «what should I rely on?» – converge in the fourth question – which serves as the basis for the first three – «What is a man?» Metaphysics, ethics and religion, thus, converge in anthropology. Hence, a man can be seen now as a universal synthesis of empirical and transcendental. The question «what is a man?» cannot be regarded exclusively abstractive, as a man is a tenement of actual existence and definite reality – a man acts and creates as a practical active being. It follows that, because all being refers to a man (and, thus, to anthropology), this science becomes comprehensive. This is how anthropological quadrangle is formed.

Henceforth, anthropology ceases to be just another philosophical discipline. Contrariwise, it emerges as key configuration of philosophy. All philosophical problems can be now reduced to the question of the essence of man and his place in the cosmos. Science provides a number of different conceptions of the human being which are all too narrow to encompass the whole human being. They treat the human being as a thing but he is not a thing. Philosophy’s task, according to Scheler, was to liberate itself from the bonds of scientific method. Philosophy must no more be the mere servant of the sciences than the servant of religious faith. In fact, rather than following the sciences, Scheler argues that a philosophical anthropology must precede the sciences. “If there is a philosophical task that must be solved in our time that it is the creation of Philosophical anthropology. I mean a fundamental science about human being and its structure, about its relation to nature (minerals, plants, animals) and to the essence of all things, about his metaphysical source and his physical, mental and spiritual emergence in the world, about forces and powers that he is driven with and that he drives, about main directions and laws of his mental, spiritual and historical and social development. And here

also comes the psychophysical problem of body and soul, and noetically-vital problem. Only such an anthropology can furnish an ultimate philosophical basis, as well as definite aims of research, to all sciences concerned with the object “man”, to the natural, medical, archeological, ethnological, historical, and social sciences...» (Sheler, 1994, p. 70). All forms of being are dependent on human’s being. Thus, only the explanation of the human essence – which is the goal of the «philosophical anthropology» – can become the basis for the understanding of truth about all other things.

It is important to note, that anthropological configuration of philosophy does not necessarily imply anthropocentrism and can analyze a man in a different set up – in its relation to something transcendental, for instance (the Other, Death, God etc.). Yet, independent of its modality (religious, social, existential etc.), anthropology is always predefined by a metaphysical situation which a man is placed onto. Within the metaphysical tradition a human being, its place and its function were defined according to a certain archetype of order (Cosmos, God, Nature) that organized and guaranteed the unity of human nature. With the emergence of social sciences (beginning with XIX century and the formation of sociology as discipline of science) the function of such an archetype is transmitted to sociality – socially it becomes the metaphysical reality reigning over people and subordinating all other dimensions and possibilities of existence. These possibilities become seen just as private cases of social cosmos. A human gets hermetically sealed into the system of social coordinates. The same is witnessed with the anthropological configuration of philosophy – all different modalities of anthropology are predefined by the metaphysical set of the cognition of the world. «Anthropology is that interpretation of man that already knows fundamentally what man is and hence can never

ask who he may be. For with this question it would have to confess itself shaken and overcome. But how can this be expected of anthropology when the latter has expressly to achieve nothing less than the securing consequent upon the self-secureness of the subjectum?» (Heidegger, 1990, p. 61).

Philosophy as anthropology inevitably faces the logic of «double bind» and by the nature of things plunges into «anthropological sleep» – «The anthropological configuration of modern philosophy consists in doubling over dogmatism, in dividing it into two different levels each lending support to and limiting the other: the pre-critical analysis of what man is in his essence becomes the analytic of everything that can, in general, be presented to man’s experience» (Foucault, 1977, p. 437). On the one hand, it is derived from the readymade and constructed concept of a man and then, in history and in various types of historicity (obviously, history itself is considered readymade) it searches for forms and means of expressions of the already-constructed man. On the other hand, anthropology – in distrust with any transcendental speculative schemata – relies on history in its search for forms and means of expressions of a man. It seems like the second approach is more preferable. Yet, it is frequently accused in its relativism. Nevertheless, it is not the matter of relativism that discredits that approach but the following question: if we do not have even the smallest understanding of what is a man, what should we call «a man» in history? Moreover, the very fact that this approach relies on history is the direct evidence that it implicitly relies on a certain historical concept of a man. These two approaches – opposite at the first glance – really are the sides of the same coin – they are impossible without each other. Each one asserts its legitimacy through the discretization of the other. Moreover, each of them hunts for the resources of the other. On the one hand, the transcendental schemata

will search for the already-constructed concept of a man in history and nothing else. On the other hand, relativism will always found itself on the already-constructed concept of man. «In order to awaken thought from such a sleep – so deep that thought experiences it paradoxically as vigilance, ... in order to find a basis for itself within itself with the agility and anxiety of a radically philosophical thought – in order to recall it to the possibilities of its earliest dawning, there is no other way than to destroy the anthropological “quadrilateral” in its very foundations and start thinking in a space without a person» (Foucault, 1977, p. 437-438).

Philosophy as Heterology

Going beyond the limits of these definitions is connected with the justification of the premise of difference of being in its presence and the very event of the presence. This difference founds its own “object” of thought. It is important to note that this object should not be understood as a side or aspect of reality because reality, at least, in its actuality or materiality, is subordinated by the authority of the scientific thought. In a sense, reality is an object of science. Yet, this object, is precisely not an object; it is precisely that which cannot be turned into an object, or that which, in being turned into an object, ceases to be the object of thought. Alternatively speaking, in any object the very unobjectifiable is the object of thought. Due to this very unobjectifiability, thought escapes metaphysical representations. At the same time, because this object escapes representations, metaphysics thinks. The object of thought, hence, is what metaphysics does not think but what it founds its thinking on. What is then this un-thought which serves as the basis metaphysics thinks and represents upon? What is this un-thought that allows thought to go beyond the limits of metaphysics? Going beyond those limits is going from the

difference between being and essence to the difference between being and the becoming of being. Thinking takes place within beings and at the same time within that which is excessive in relation to beings. This very excessiveness is what lacks in being to reach its essence. In other words, it is a question of uncovering an excess proper to immanence itself, a residue or supplement within immanence. Nature in its immanence excludes any transcendence. It is, then, about the release of excessiveness peculiar to immanence itself. Being as becoming-event escapes any representation and is given in excessiveness of immanence. It is impossible to comprehend contemporary science without this excessiveness of being as becoming. Contemporary science is critical towards the very ontological premises of classical metaphysics and at the same time releases the possibility of a different ontology – differentiated ontology or heterology. It follows that ontology undergoes a double transformation here: first, ontology transforms into onto-genesis – the study of becoming of various systems and phenomena; second, ontology becomes heterogenesis – the study of becoming as becoming of difference, plurality and multiplicity.

Escape from the limits of metaphysics is only possible when being is understood as operation – in other words, when being transforms into presence as genetic and differentiated condition of a real experience instead of a possible one. In other words, the escape is only possible when difference is reformulated as difference-becoming of being and essence – as difference-becoming of pre-individual and individual, virtual and actual. The transformation of the status and meaning of ontological difference between being and essence – the moment when «to be» (as becoming) in its difference from essence is understood as genetic and differentiated condition of the actual

experience – is followed by the transformation of the concept of becoming itself. Becoming – being a non-linear process of transition from one actual to another actual – can be seen as a transition from the actual through the dynamic field of virtual tendencies to the actualization of this very field into the new actual. Becoming is understood here as the very difference insofar as it divides and separates actualizing virtual differences (Deleuze, 1998, p. 57-58).

The fact that the virtual is actual and forms an aspect of actual is of principal significance here. The actuality of the virtual is constituted upon differentiated elements, their inter-relations and the singular points correlative to them. It means that the virtual is fully defined and denotes genetic differentiated elements. Nevertheless, virtual, in spite of its definitiveness, is just an aspect of an object. Actuality constitutes another aspect. Between these two aspects of an object or of an actual, takes place a transition, a transposition, but not a mediation. Mediation takes place solely among readymade, already-constituted and individualized things, while becoming – is a movement of actualization from virtual to actual. Consequently, actualization – is another aspect of the process due to which a phenomena phenomenalizes. The question here is how virtual multiplicities realize as actualities. The relationship between these two sides is not the relationship of sameness and likeness, an authenticity and an image, a model and a copy. Insofar as virtual is repeated in actual, it is repetition-in-difference. And if virtual is repeated in actual, it is repetition through difference, the result of which is heterogeneity between repetition and the repeated.

The transformation of the ontological difference presupposed here itself presupposes the decisive turn from metaphysics of substance and essence. In heterological perspective, Being is no more equated with substance or essence, but is instead equated to an event. It is no more the foundation of being, but what being does not found itself upon. Heterology is neither not fundamental nor un-fundamental ontology. Contrariwise, it is the ontology of groundlessness. Ontology no more escapes from becoming as the only modality of being. Philosophy turns its face to this un-foundation as to the condition of becoming for the material systems and others and explores the time-space of actualization of these systems. Unlike substances and essence, multiplicities are definite and singular universalities: not generalities that subordinate private instances, but series of singularities-events due to which the actual processes form. In contrast to general essences, universality of multiplicities is dispersive: different realizations of multiplicities by no means are correlative to those multiplicities and there is no limit to the potential dispersive forms of that realization. These un-correlations are enhanced by the fact that multiplicities grant form to a process but not to a final product. Thus, results of processes that realize one and the same multiplicity are radically different from each other. Unlike essences as abstract generalities coexisting with each other and yet different from each other, definitive generalities exist in the form of network continuum. Any multiplicity exists as melange of multiplicities that forms continuous immanent space rather different from the space of archetypes and equally different from the spaces of organized and discrete elements.

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Концепции философии в современном мире

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Статья посвящена анализу различных сосуществующих концепций философии. Цель статьи – показать наиболее значимые концепции философии: метафизическую, научную и антропологическую, определить теоретические мотивы, меняющие их характер и методологию. В статье провозглашается необходимость новой, дифференциальной онтологии – гетерологии, радикально трансформирующей природу самой философии.

Ключевые слова: философия, метафизика, философия науки, антропология, гетерология.
