

A PHILOSOPHIZING HUMAN MEANS ASKING ABOUT THE MEANING OF BEING

The article is devoted to the study philosophizing as questioning. It is substantiated that in terms of content, it is, firstly, an ideological questioning about the world and the place of human in it; secondly, conceptual questioning, which is realized in a developed philosophical theory; thirdly, metaphysical questioning, the purpose of which is the knowledge of being as such; fourth, transcending questioning, expanding and complicating the spheres of knowledge and practice; fifth, projective questioning aimed at creating and implementing possible models of a person; sixth, personal questioning, which forms the consciousness of a particular individual. Various types of philosophizing in ancient, medieval, modern European and modern thought are analyzed in the article. It is emphasized that the definition of the main issue of philosophy as the question of the relationship of thinking to being, spirit to nature makes sense only within the framework of classical thought. In post-non-classical philosophy, interrogation is carried out within disparate semantic «clusters», through which it is difficult to comprehend the being as such, to cognize the world whole. The author concludes that the purpose of a philosopher is to address being with questions, since being itself through a person has the ability to question, find and clarify the meanings of human existence.

Key words: human; philosophizing; questioning; being; meaning; metaphysics; transcendent; immanent; transcendence; transcending

Ancient Greek thinkers considered the source of philosophy to be divine amazement, *wonderment*. Thus, in the dialogue «Teetetus», Plato notes that wonderment is the «mother of wisdom». «For it is just a philosopher who tends to experience such amazement, – Socrates says to his interlocutor Theetetus. – It is the beginning of philosophy...» [13, vol. 2, p. 208]. Aristotle also thought about this. «...And now, and before, surprise encourages people to philosophize» [1, p. 69], – he wrote in the treatise «Metaphysics». Several centuries later, these thoughts were commented on by the Neoplatonist Olympiodorus: «...The beginning of all philosophy is wonderment. Wondering because we go from “what” to “why”. To philosophize means to be aware of the causes of things, if only philosophy is the knowledge of things or things themselves» [12, vol. 2, p. 480].

Wonderment is not just an empirical curiosity, but an inherent in humans *ability to question*, through which they move from what directly causes amazement to something more meaningful, strive to find out the origin and structure of the Universe, and then comprehend existence for the sake of understanding, and not for the sake of any benefit.

Of course, philosophical problems cannot be solved unequivocally, once and for all to give correct answers to them. This was the opinion of Socrates, who asked his interlocutors many questions that made it possible to find and clarify the truth. The transition from one question to another, said the Athenian thinker, brings us closer to understanding the essence of things.

The emergence of conceptual reflection, i. e. the ability of consciousness to move away from traditional religious and mythological forms and find in itself a worldview point of support, has led to fundamental changes in the intellectual life of people. The formation of philosophy (together with the formation of science) led to the appearance in culture of the first forms of theoretical thought, where the world is presented as a problem that presupposes the incomprehensible. When a problem is formulated and this incomprehensible is fixed, then it becomes necessary to study it, ask about it.

Between 800 and 200 BC, which Karl Jaspers called «axial time» [7, p. 32–50, 76–78], in the ancient societies of India, China and Greece, a rational-theoretical method

of spiritual mastery of the world appears and a new type of human is formed as *a creature capable of inquiring about the meaning of his being*.

Even ancient thinkers distinguished philosophizing and philosophy. The first is a special spiritual practice to which we turn when we go beyond the framework of everyday situations, the second is a conceptually formulated theory that seeks to comprehend existence as such. It includes a certain «technique of understanding», a set of limiting paths of thought [10, p. 25–26, 53, 140–151]. Indeed, in life we meet living philosophizing, and academic philosophy, and the teaching of philosophical disciplines. For example, some people strive to comprehend being and clarify its meanings, while others spread the truths learned from the sages.

Philosophizing expresses the very essence of philosophy [3, № 6, p. 23–25]. This «reprimanding to the last clarity», «the last dispute of a human», capturing him entirely and constantly, «something aimed at the whole and the utmost» [6, p. 27–28]. Its result is the comprehension of the world, as well as self-awareness and self-creation of human as an intelligent, active and free being.

By its content, philosophizing is *a worldview questioning* about the world and the place of human in it, about the essence of the universe and the purpose of the human asking about it. To one degree or another, it occurs in various forms of worldview, synthesizing in themselves rational-intellectual abstractions and sensual images.

In a philosophical worldview, the purpose of which is to comprehend being and a human in it, interrogation is carried out through concepts, judgments and inferences, categories, ideal models and concepts. Therefore, philosophizing presupposes a certain logic and a set of research and presentation methods. This is *a conceptual questioning* that is always realized in a developed philosophical theory. In the course of it, the subject not only comprehends, but also creates the world.

Along with philosophy, conceptual questioning is also carried out in science. However, here it is directed not at being as a whole, but at the arrangement of specific spheres of being (natural science) and people united in communities of various levels (social and humanitarian knowledge).

Science is a complex phenomenon, its goal is to obtain true knowledge about nature and society, material and spiritual processes. Science is not a form of worldview, like art or religion; worldview intentions are brought into it by philosophy, and natural science, social science and human science provide material for this. In principle, the attitude of man to the world and the world to man is not of interest to science. Her efforts are aimed at studying specific causes and laws operating in various areas of the universe. In other forms of worldview, for example, in religion, art or everyday consciousness, questioning is not of a systemic and theoretical nature.

In philosophy, the «problem field» is not limited to the world immanent for people, but extends to all being, projecting itself beyond the limits of existing existence. In this regard, philosophizing is *metaphysical questioning* – it is extra-natural and over-natural, more precisely, it is supernatural. Its purpose is the cognition of being as such, and not the study of the structure of its individual areas, levels or fragments. It is an attempt by a finite being to understand the infinite world.

Initial questions of questioning are first formulated in metaphysics as the «core» of philosophy, and then in other parts of it. As a doctrine of the ultimate foundations of the world, metaphysics reaches the existential essence of the universe, substantiating the conditions and principles of philosophizing.

Historically, metaphysics has always sought to comprehend the absolute, existent as such. The horizon of questioning in it is being itself. «Metaphysics is a questioning in which we try to embrace with our questions the aggregate whole of existence and ask about it in such a way that the questioners themselves are called into question» [6, p. 33], – writes Martin Heidegger. The categories of metaphysics are designed to comprehend the world in its universal and universal interconnection.

Metaphysics touches on the ontic horizon, the inner-world being, considering it in the structure of the ultimate foundations of the universe. But it does not take us beyond the bounds of experience, but only explains it, defining the principles and conditions of pre-experience knowledge. In theory, it includes such reasoning about the world that asserts and describes in experience something that is empirically unobservable. In methodology, it proceeds from a certain super-experienced speculative principle, which in its deployment assumes the world and its totality, systemic integrity. In the meaningful integrity of the Universe, in the change of its events, forms and phenomena, metaphysics seeks universal connection and deep constancy.

M. K. Mamardashvili called metaphysical statements «ontological», since they contain such kind of existential reasoning [10, p. 120–121]. Being is that which gives rise to separate forms and manifestations of being, which has *a cause in itself*. Ontological statements about being and the world are ways of organizing and structuring our experience. In principle, they cannot be deduced from empiricism, since they themselves are axioms, postulates of experience. Metaphysical statements interpret the conditions and prerequisites for how a person in general can have any experience or something to think about it, which leads to thinking about transcendence, transcendent and transcending.

Transcendence is comprehended by us when the world appears not as consisting of itself, but as a «transition» from the «external» sphere of being for us into the sphere where we live [8, p. 112]. By the category of the transcendent, philosophers designate an area of being «beyond» for experience, as if «located» on the other side of our life. Ontologically, the transcendent cannot be reduced to a special «otherworldly» reality or «empty» nothing; it is the prerequisite and source of that «layer» of the world, which forms the basis of our existence. In the epistemological plane, the transcendent is a metaphysical noumenal concept, using which philosophers try to gain knowledge about the ultimate foundations of being, cognition and practice. In praxeological terms, the transcendent is the basis of people's activities to transform the surrounding reality and themselves.

The subject posits the transcendent as the boundary of the object, the limit for acts of cognition and activity. Therefore, for us, the transcendent has not real, but only potential existence due to its inadequacy to the currently available means and conditions for transforming and comprehending the world [9, p. 9]. The actual being of the transcendent is revealed in the course of transcending, when people *question* the transcendent as the source and boundary of their existence.

The concept of the immanent denotes the totality of the experiences of people of specific socio-historical eras that exist in the socio-cultural forms of modernity, which in their interconnection form an infinitely expanding «field» of cognition, goal-setting and practice [2, № 8, p. 10–13].

To think metaphysically means to try to know the world as a whole, to transcend its unity, to comprehend and keep the universal in it. Therefore, philosophizing is *a transcending questioning*, since it expands the scope of knowledge and practice and complicates their content.

The most important property of philosophy is projectivity – the ability of human consciousness to anticipate vision of being. In this sense, philosophizing is *a projective questioning*. By asking questions, philosophy is able to model the situation, marking the contours of the future. «The meaning of philosophy and philosophizing is rooted in a special, projective refraction of the personally existing philosopher and the promotion of his personal project (projects) into the public sphere...» [14, p. 162].

As a result of transcending, philosophical projectivity is fundamentally different from scientific projectivity, the purpose of which is to model specific properties that do not initially occur in nature and society. Philosophical questioning is aimed at harmonizing a person, creating possible models of his existence based on the ideals of Truth, Goodness and Beauty.

Realizing itself in the system of cultural ties and relations, philosophy acts as the guarantor of the integrity of the spiritual development of the individual. As a special form of spiritual practice, it clarifies and creates the meanings of individual and social existence. That is why philosophizing is always *a personal questioning*. This property is associated with its active and creative nature, organic involvement in the process of spiritual production, which forms the consciousness of specific individuals.

As Max Scheler notes, philosophical knowledge serves as educational knowledge, which is directly aimed at the formation of a personality and its spiritual development.

It is not reduced to the transmission of a certain amount of information, but is a form of human cognition of the world and a way of increasing his spirit. The main task in the solution of which philosophy is called upon to play a key role is the acquisition by the human soul of a personal form [15, p. 20–21, 32–33, 36–37].

The philosophy of each period of social history is the theoretical identity of the era, where its main features and characteristics are identified and analyzed. But if the «problem field» of conceptual reflection changes with the change of epochs that produce and form possible options for reasoning about existence, is it legitimate to talk about the main issue of philosophy, the same for all historical epochs and ideological intentions?

In our opinion, the definition formulated by Friedrich Engels – «the great fundamental question of all... philosophy is the question of the relationship of thinking to being» – makes sense only within the framework of classical thought. In modern philosophical teachings «the question of the relationship of thinking to being, spirit to nature» [4, vol. 21, p. 282–283], i. e. about what is primary – matter or consciousness – loses the meaning that it had in era of Modern times.

Theoretical reflection in ancient civilizations begins with the question: «Why does something exist at all, and not vice versa – nothing?» [5, p. 87–89, 91], which, in essence, is the initial, basic and ultimate question of philosophy. It marks the birth of the idea that, in contrast to nothing, chaos, there is a certain proportionality in the world, i. e. something organized and harmonious.

The main problem of philosophy and science at this stage of social development is the *problem of the one and the many*, the solution of which involves the search for a universal substrate of the universe – material or ideal. The ancient thinkers tried to reduce all the diversity of natural processes and social phenomena to a single basis. The first philosophers and scientists tried to establish from what objects and things arise, what they consist of and what they turn into in the course of their change and death.

Another problem is closely connected with the problem of the one and the many, which the ancient sages defined as follows: *by virtue of what from the original matter are all things formed?* The answer to this question led to the concept of internal regularity, which operates in the world and to which the process of the emergence and transformation of things and living beings is subject. The concept of *logos* appears as a law governing the change of all phenomena.

The first type of philosophizing, ensuring the production, accumulation and transmission of knowledge about being, arose in the depths of *the cosmological way of thinking*. Thus, in the religious and mythological worldview of Ancient India, from which its pre-philosophy was gradually formed, *the sacred oral transmission of knowledge from teacher to student* was considered the best way to assimilate the truth.

A similar form of the existence of philosophy is found in Ancient China, where traditional schools, as a rule, relied on the «will of Heaven», and in Ancient Greece, where the sayings of the first philosophers often took a sacred-authoritarian form. (Suffice it to recall the statement: «He said himself», widespread among the members of the Pythagorean Union, which appeals to the statements of Pythagoras himself).

In the classical and Hellenistic thought of antiquity, in the depths of cosmologism, *an anthropological type of thinking* was formed and a new form of philosophy was born. Conventionally, it can be called *a peripatetic way of philosophizing*, which is characterized by a personal and joint nature of discussing issues, although in those schools where it was widespread (the Academy of Plato, the Garden of Epicurus, Ancient Stoya, etc.), the organization of research, teaching and everyday life was very different from Lyceum of Aristotle.

In the Middle Ages, the sacred tradition of philosophical research and education grew stronger, while the peripatetic tradition weakened. As a servant of theology, Western European scholastic thought was able to provide only *a theological form of philosophizing*, in which the main problem was *questions about the creation of the world and human by God*.

It was believed that the highest truths are contained in Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition, therefore, less significant philosophical and scientific truths should not contradict them. Studies in philosophy, as well as studies in theology, in Western Europe at that time, as a rule, were carried out in monasteries, and then, under the supervision of the Church, began to take place in universities that appeared in a number of countries.

The type of worldview that was taking shape in the Modern Era, replacing the theologism of the Middle Ages, had a great influence on European philosophy and science, which led to a change in the methods of cognition of nature, society and man. In the 17th – 18th centuries in Western Europe, natural science, especially mechanics, became the leading paradigm of thinking, and human from the creation of God turned into an object among objects, a thing among things, a piece of great Nature.

Nevertheless, social life did not at all appear to the thinkers of that time as part of natural life or its modification. *Naturalistic anthropologism* became a model for explaining nature, society and the individual. In contrast to nature, society was presented as an «artificial» and not a «natural» body, which was created by the people themselves. The powerful state-Leviathan, the «mortal deity» – a product of the social contract of individuals was considered the same artificial formation. The powerful state-Leviathan, the «mortal deity» – a product of the social contract of individuals was considered the same artificial formation.

In *classical philosophy* of Modern Times epistemological issues come to the fore. The struggle between sensationism and rationalism led to the emergence of a *science-oriented and practice-oriented philosophizing*, one of the main tasks of which was the development of questions of logic and methodology of cognition. This led to the emergence and widespread dissemination of *institutionalized communities of philosophers and scientists*, where formalized rules of professional communication and the production of knowledge acquired great importance.

In the 19th century, a new stage of *non-classical philosophy* was formed in Western civilization, within the framework of which, against the background of the *sociological way of thinking*, the social and humanitarian sciences developed. In the «industrial society» a powerful technical and social (institutional) infrastructure for the acquisition of knowledge was created. In the «postindustrial society», and then in the «information society», the production and dissemination of knowledge and technologies created on its ba-

sis became the main and economically profitable occupation of industrialized nations. Spiritual production here is mainly associated with the natural and exact sciences, with their technical components, as a result of which philosophy gradually moves to the periphery of social and humanitarian cognition, and philosophizing loses its previously inherent peripate (i. e. directly personal) character.

Post-non-classical philosophy is forced to carry out questioning in conjunction with a technicized science or in the space and time of the «chronotopes» of literature and art. This weakens the heuristic power of philosophizing, the main goal of which is worldview comprehension and conceptual expression of the meanings of human existence.

Within the framework of the classical tradition, philosophy was mainly viewed as metaphysics – the doctrine of supersensible principles and the ultimate foundations of being and cognition, where the main themes of reflection were the problems of the existence of the universal, the essence of the world and man, universal methods of cognition, universal principles of history, etc. Non-classical, and then post-non-classical philosophy abandoned traditional metaphysics, the search for universals, showing interest in the singular and striving to recreate the completeness, versatility, uniqueness of individual forms and aspects of natural and human existence [11, p. 376–378].

In the classical tradition, reason was understood as the «rationality» of nature, history and human activity, which determine the epistemological «transparency» of being and practice. This is, first of all, the cognitive ability, which, as it was believed, has a super-experienced essence, not deduced from experience and not reducible to it. Postclassics significantly expanded the «problem field» of philosophizing, introduced new aspects into it (the themes of understanding, communication, everyday life, personal freedom, existence, etc.), which led to a significant transformation of the questioning process itself.

The rejection of the principle of monism, characteristic of classical thought, led to the erosion of the «problem field» of modern philosophy, where the formulation of the main question, the same for all times and teachings, loses all meaning. In post-non-classical philosophy, interrogation is carried out within disparate semantic «clusters», through which it is difficult to comprehend the being as such, to cognize the world whole.

Thus, philosophizing in its essence is a human's questioning about being, about the world as a whole, and thus a questioning about himself, his generic essence and a unique existence. The purpose of a philosopher is to address being with questions, since being through a person has the ability to question, i. e. find and clarify the meanings of human existence.

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