

Between *Philosophia Perennis* and Contemporary Research

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The overview of this issue of *Philosophy/Sociology* presents the main themes through the lens of basic introduction to philosophy: metaphysics, epistemology and practical philosophy. The interrelationship between the three is shown. In this issue, among other themes, John Dewey's concept of experience of nature is presented, some topics of skepticism and ethical aspects of war, progress of technology and business are discussed.

Keywords: metaphysics, experience, skepticism, ethics of technology

INTRODUCTION

Philosophy is a discipline where basic introduction to it is always relevant and never becomes trivial. In a sense, introduction is most important as it leads to and reminds about the core sources and problems of philosophy, the essential and proper content of the subject. Thus the old Latin notion of *philosophia perennis*, or eternal philosophy, signifies the constantly emerging attempts to articulate the same fundamental reality (cf. Jaspers 1964: 16). This issue of the journal and three sections therein remind about and exemplify three main traditional branches of philosophy: metaphysics, epistemology and practical philosophy.

OVERVIEW

Traditionally the main branch of philosophy is metaphysics arising from awe and wonder at the very fact of the existence of cosmos. Corresponding to metaphysics there is also ontology as an attempt to describe the essential characteristics of different spheres of reality or existence. So the first section is called *Metaphysics and Ontology*. In the first article of this section and issue, Chenbing Wang presents John Dewey's concept of experience of nature, which is also connected to what is sometimes called Dewey's 'naturalistic metaphysics'. The themes of experience and animality (as part of naturality), inter alia, are those which further connect to Justina Šumilova's article in which she mainly relies on the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Further in the section, John F. X. Knasas and Nerijus Stasiulis in their articles discuss the relationship of philosophy of Martin Heidegger to, respectively, Thomas Aquinas and Henri Bergson. Lastly in the section, Sherman Xie inquires into nature of causality between realms of ontology and epistemology.

Correspondingly to metaphysical quest to articulate reality as a whole there is epistemological reflection about possibility and limits of the latter inquiry. Thus the second section of this issue is *Epistemology and Philosophy of Science*. The first article in the section by Andrew Nessler discusses the epistemological stance of skepticism in few contemporary facets. Lei Chen and Woxuan Zhou engages in discussion about G. Ryle's regress argument.

Closely connected to epistemology is philosophy of science as inquiry into nature and scope of scientific practice and knowledge. Olexander Martynenko and Bohdana Manchul discuss the communicative dimension of (philosophy of) science. The communication theme, albeit not so much in science, but rather in politics (echoing Aristotelian reflection on the role of rhetoric in politics), is further elaborated in the article by Eric Mark Kramer and Kyle A. Hammonds.

With the last article of the second section we already touch the theme of the third section – *Practical Philosophy*, which encompasses ethics and political philosophy. Some philosophers, such as Emmanuel Levinas, argue that it is practical philosophy – ethics – that is primary in rank (1985: viii). However, such stance is rare. Yet pragmatically it could be argued that indeed practical philosophy is in a sense primary even from the metaphysical point of view – there is a fundamental practical need to preserve human civilisation ('ontological imperative' (Jonas 1976: 94)), without which simply there would not be to whom to contemplate metaphysically. In the context of today's industrialised military conflicts the necessity of stoic or Kantian ideas of cosmopolitanism shows itself, ideas, which in essence also connect to the universalist aspect of the aforementioned concept of *philosophia perennis*. In this issue, Olha Honcharenko ponders on the philosophical meaning and ethical aspect of contemporary Russian attack on Ukraine. Connected to this is Inna Kovalenko's et al. article about the concepts of victim and trauma in the context of biopolitics.

Another important and influential trend in contemporary world is progress of technology. Because of its power on societies and novel, unexpected consequences it requires a detailed philosophical examination and reflection. Egidijus Mardosas, Emilija Patalauskaitė and Dalia Štreimikienė et al. discuss, respectively, the ethical aspects of automation and media technologies as well as business practices. The section and issue ends with Seungbae Park's article where the relevance of J. Rawls' theory of justice for affirmative action in science is discussed.

CONCLUSIONS

As we have seen, metaphysical quest and ambition are made more modest by epistemological reflection. The latter is relevant as well to practical philosophy – especially in representative democracy one must question how the knowledge which is required for political decisions is acquired. Yet, even practical sphere might have essential consequences for metaphysical inquiry.

References

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Tarp *philosophia perennis* ir šiuolaikinių tyrinėjimų

Santrauka

Šio žurnalo „Filosofija. Sociologija“ numerio apžvalgoje pamatinio filosofijos įvado kontekste pristatomos pagrindinės temos: metafizika, epistemologija ir praktinė filosofija. Parodomas šių temų susietumas. Be kita ko, numeryje aktualizuojama Johno Dewey gamtos patirties samprata, aptariama skepticizmo problematika bei karo, technologinės pažangos ir verslo etiniai aspektai.

Raktažodžiai: metafizika, patirtis, skepticizmas, technikos etika