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**Professional Culture of the Specialist of the Future**

**COMING INTO BEING OF PHILOSOPHICAL EDUCATION  
(PARMENIDES, SOCRATES AND “DISCIPLES”)**

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*Abstract*

The subject of the research contained in the article is to describe the process of specification of philosophical knowledge. The article presents a variety of approaches towards understanding the nature of philosophy as a subject of analysis and as a phenomena research method. It studies the range of problems related to gradually developing rational culture, from natural philosophers to Socrates, who laid the foundations of ethical rationality. The treatises of the first Greek philosophers put forward the problem of sameness as a universal characteristic of the general beginning of the world. By applying the principle of sameness between being and thinking, Parmenides gave a new direction to the development of the Greek philosophical tradition. This line was carried on by Plato and Aristotle as the theory of ideas and the critical understanding of the ontological status of this concept. By drawing on the sophists experience, Socrates elaborated his own way to analyze philosophical problems. He combined the roles of a moral teacher who believed that knowledge remains empty and useless without moral aspects; a maieutic who understood that knowledge cannot be transferred “ready”; a dialectician whose consistent reasoning combined diverse and contradictory characteristics of being; an ironist who did not deny any perspective that was alien to him, rather examined it in an unbiased manner. Thanks to Socrates, the idea of truth as a movement to understanding that has an individual value related to the knowledge of phenomena, was reinforced, while philosophy is presented as a process of continuous reflection.

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## 1. Introduction

Education is an integral and most essential part of the culture, in which a person is engaged during in the process of their educational, scientific, and, finally, practical “enculturation”. “Cultivation”, “processing” and “veneration” — these are the meanings that have paramount importance of all the etymological connotations around the word “culture”. As Pavel Florensky (1990), the Russian theologian and philosopher, put it, culture is an environment that nurtures and nourishes a personality (p. 346). In the educational context, philosophy is intended to provide examples of rational culture.

Aleksandr Leonidovich Kazin (2004) phrases a paradoxical relation of philosophy towards reality as “the capability of life to go without philosophy”: “the subject of philosophy — let us conventionally call it the meaning of life at this point — is given to each person and humanity as a whole in the form of an inescapable mental task, while the world has just the very few people who are professionally (consciously) engaged in this problem.” (p. 4).

## 2. Problem Statement

As long as Aristotle formulated the functional differences when dealing with the problem of philosophical knowledge specification. He divided philosophy into theoretical (that gives knowledge for the sake of knowledge), practical (that serves as a guidance for any activities) and poetical (that clarifies the basics of creative human participation in the reality). Thus, neither pragmatic, nor abstractly theoretical answer regarding the purpose of philosophy in question does not exhaust the problem. The meaning of philosophy is reduced neither to abstractly theoretical maxims, nor to its interpretation as a kind of “high literature”, both aimless and masterful system creation and semi-literary essay writing.

Meanwhile, disputes around the purpose of philosophical knowledge have been going on for centuries. This is reflected in the discussions on its place in the rational knowledge system in general. The practical pretensions of philosophy are most often called into question. René Descartes, Arthur Schopenhauer and Martin Heidegger understood the meaning of philosophy as “selfless pursuit of truth”. However, Immanuel Kant, Edmund Husserl, positivist-oriented and Marxist philosophers held opposite opinions.

The radical revision of the meaning of philosophy results in two traditions to understand the purpose of philosophy. The one is rationalistically pragmatic and positivist (neo-positivism, structuralism and phenomenology), while the other stands on the life-purpose foundation of philosophical knowledge (philosophy of life, existentialism and religious philosophy). Antisthenes, a Greek philosopher and a follower of Socrates, claimed: to live with the gods one needs philosophy, to live with men — only rhetoric (Diogenes Laertius, VI, 1-19, Mensch version).

## 3. Research Questions

The modern high school is currently undergoing deep reforms; to evaluate their goals, prospects, consequences and even causes and motives is a challenging task that has been studied by both humanitarian specialists and representatives of natural science and technical knowledge community (Almazova, Andreeva, & Khalyapina, 2018; Almazova, Baranova, & Khalyapina, 2019; Glukhov, &

Vasetskaya, 2017; Kogan, Gavrilova, & Nesterov, 2018; Rubtsova, & Almazova, 2018; Rudskoy, Borovkov, & Romanov, 2018; Rudskoy, Borovkov, Romanov, & Kolosova, 2018; 2019; Shipunova, Mureyko, Berezovskaya, Kolomeyzev, & Serkova, 2017).

The appeal to the origins of European education and to the works of Attic philosophers is not just a tribute to the philosophical tradition or a mark that signals the noble origin of our own theories and views. This heritage is the source and model of rational culture that determined the development vectors for European philosophical idea. According to Whitehead (1978), the whole history of European philosophy can be considered as a lengthy commentary on Timaeus (p. 142).

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The article aims to expose and analyze the problem nodes in ancient philosophy and forms of their resolution, without which rational knowledge cease to exist today. What kind of knowledge and in what way did ancient Greek philosophers develop? Philosophical schools emerged in Ancient Greece since its inception, starting with the 6th century BC. The first Greek philosophers had their pupils and followers, apart from the so-called sporadic philosophers (e.g. Heraclitus and Democritus), while the sophists started to systematize philosophy education and turned teaching into a profession. Having opened the prospect of ethical rationality, Socrates became the greatest moral teacher of philosophy. Plato's school transformed philosophy into a knowledge system. Aristotle consolidated the process with the disciplinary subject systematized knowledge.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The problem of sameness and otherness of diverse reality phenomena arises during understanding of the basic characteristics of being. The problem of sameness was brought forth in the treatises of the first Greek philosophers as a universal characteristic of the general beginning ("arche") of the world (Salamone, 2019). Water, air, "apeiron", "fire" and "homeomeria" turned out to be such a universal beginning for Thales, Anaximenes, Anaximander, Heraclitus and Anaxagoras respectively. The multidimensional and variable nature of phenomena was reflected, on the one hand, in this plurality of beginnings determined by ancient physicists, and, on the other, in the invention of such a beginning which both combined multiplicity and variability, as it was the case for, for example, Heraclitus and Anaxagoras (Avanesov, 2015; Lopez-Astorga, 2019).

5.1. The teachings of Parmenides, a representative of the Eleatic philosophy, summarized the general outcomes of the pre-Socratic philosophical tradition and introduced the predicate "same", i.e. unchanged and is always essentially coincident with its nature. According to Parmenides, such a complete coincidence with essence is possible only in the world of the gods, when an item does not change and opposes time, maintaining its absolute sameness, when there is no difference, and an item eternally coincides with itself: "in the world of gods, there is neither past, nor future, since neither one nor the other exists ["is not present now"]; one thing "no longer" exists, while the other" — not yet "since one thing has changed once and for all, and the other is constantly changing; meanwhile, this sort of [attributes] cannot be attributed to those that essentially exist and does not allow changes even in thought"

(Rozhansky, 1989, p. 281). For Parmenides, sameness on the essential basis is the main characteristic of absolute being, where the processes of change or movement have no force. The sameness is determined by the essential content, the main attribute of which is the manifestation of the unchanged inward nature. It would seem that the world of human existence is completely excluded from the sameness relationship as it is controlled by the processes of continuous change and movement. However, Parmenides exposed the area where this identity can be reproduced and thus enhance the changeable nature of things existing in time: this identity determines the relationship of being and thinking (“to think and be is the same” (Rozhansky, 1989, p. 287). Essentially intelligible things must be same to themselves. They have the feature to coincide with essence, so they are identical to the essence (Drobyshev, 2014). Parmenides’ merit was that he identified the essential subject correlation, some essential coincidence and fundamental sameness of things prevailing (existing outside thinking) and things thinkable. Moreover, Parmenides discovered the relationship of sameness between words (concepts) and essence expressed in these concepts. That is what I. Kant (2000) defined as the concept “categorical intuition” (p. 248), a connection established between words and essential content of objects (Husserl, 2005). Thus, Parmenides made a significant contribution to the establishment of the sameness theory, linking the being, a thinkable object and a concept. It necessarily affirms this threefold composition (being that asserts the same essential basis; thinking that asserts the connection with the essence; and the concept that brings them together under the sameness of truth).

Plato, following Parmenides, used the concept of “τὸ αὐτό” (“identical”, “same” and “equivalent”) (Rozhansky, 1989, p. 284). He correlated the notional ability to see the sameness with the proclivity for philosophy. In his dialog “Republic”, he claimed that philosophers are “people who are able to comprehend things that are eternally identical (ταυτό) to themselves; others cannot do it and get stuck, wandering among the many different things; therefore they are no longer philosophers.” (Republic, 484b, Griffith, version).

Aristotle used the terms “τὸ αὐτό” and “ταυτότις” (“same”, “sameness”) (On the soul, III, 4, 430a, Smith version). In his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle pointed to the sameness of things which refers to single items (essence is one, while matter is different), and the otherness, where the essence and the matter are both different. He examined in detail and provided examples for different relations between common and different, same and other (*Metaphysics*, V, 10, Ross, version).

In his treatise “On the Soul”, Aristotle referred to Parmenides’ principle of the sameness between thinking and being, as it deals with the abilities of living beings to think. He introduced another term “like” (homoion) and reviewed the statement “like is known by like” (On the soul, I, 2). This was contrary to the views of Anaxagoras who believed that matter is “all in all”, i.e. contains “all” multiplicity in itself. Outside matter, there is only Nous (*Metaphysics*, I, 4; Robinson, 2010) or Mind that differs from matter only in that it is a simple, rather than a multiple entity. On this basis, matter and Mind form additional — complimentary relations. Aristotle consistently considered all aporias originating from the absolute distraction of matter and Mind (*Metaphysics*, I, 4, 1036a, 1046b). Without going into details of Aristotle’s theory of knowledge, we will note that it was Aristotle who summed up pre-Socratic philosophy and provisions considered by Plato in his dialogs, thus forming the dialectic of the general and singular, material and ideal, essence and phenomenon, within the Eidos theory. In this light, singular is the relation

of the sameness and difference within the boundaries of certain things; in cognition, it is manifested as a form of revealing their essential and accidental differences.

It is obvious that the anthropological basis for identification models was formed in ancient philosophy, even within the emerging naturalistic concept of sameness (as an analysis of the form and essence of what makes a person a person through understanding). This may be the cognitive activity of a human, as Plato and the sophists stated, or Socrates' ethical and moral basis of knowledge that regulates and limits the inner human "ego". Essence can be revealed as a value, in particular, as the value of life itself (in Kriton's speeches in Plato's dialog under the same name) (Crito, 44 c, Grube, version) or in the programs of the Epicureans and Cynics (Nahov, 1984). Also, there was a line of Protagoras, according to whom a unique individual "I" forms the identification basis under the sameness principle (Cratylus, 386a, Reeve version). All these basics of ancient identification matrices were not just abstract rules. They laid the foundations for the regulatory principles of life, thus governing it. In fact, it expressed the philosophical concept "ability to live", i.e. to obey the nature of things and the meanings of the world.

**5.2.** The other side of ancient philosophy was manifested by the emergence of the philosophical method to analyze phenomena and concepts. This was particularly evident in the philosophical method of Socrates. By the time Socrates entered the path of philosophy, Greek idea had become a part of the "history", a transcendental element of knowledge organization (Mamardashvili, 1994, p.18). In the light of established philosophical schools, directions and thinking styles, the courageous attempt of Socrates to start over ("I know that I know nothing") was a methodological feat in its nature. Philosophic science supposes not only philosophic creative work, but also critical examination of inherited provisions. And this means that the philosophical culture the brewing problem that concerns the relations between two qualitatively different forms of knowledge: cognition as repetition or reproduction of the already known (the area of Kant's "aesthetics": transcendental knowledge given by basic human abilities to understand the world), and cognition as the increment of knowledge, as a breakthrough into the unknown, disregard to the habitual and refusal of the outdated. Continued experience and paradoxical theoretical constructions that eliminate the possibility to experimentally confirm or dispose them of, the clash of competing theories and all ironic collisions arising in the process of cognition are reproduced at all stages of human history. Socrates revealed this philosophical tendency by setting up the "principle of ignorance": "I know that I know nothing". In this context, Socrates introduced the following problem into philosophical discourse: is philosophy intended to serve as the basis of life-arranging meanings? Moreover, Socrates practiced a new form to reveal these meanings that are possible in *the dialog* as a way to demonstrate completely different world-view, social, universal and individual mindsets. This made it possible to turn the process of their identification into a tense agon, a passionate and staunch dispute, a clash of opinions, with no possibility of agonists' rapprochement (Republic, 348 c), on the one hand. On the other, Socrates developed a formal basis which enabled agonists to keep track of the dispute subject, even in case of an absolute discrepancy between their opinions. This method was the ancient *dialectics* (Republic, 534 d).

The dialogical structure of thinking (individual statements as well as its expanded and complete form) is inherently ambivalent. On the one hand, it bears the conflict and antagonism of interlocutors' positions as the basis for the interaction. On the other hand, opponents constantly "sort things out" in

every sense; they are forced to reduce their judgments to a common denominator, listen to and take a close look at the meaning of what was said by themselves and their opponents], so that the conversation did not turn out a talk between two deaf individuals. Therefore, Socrates was constantly concerned “whether everything is consistent with each other or not” (Theaetetus, 242e, Levett version). There are serious philosophical problems behind every ironic outburst of Socrates, behind all these, at first glance, shallow philosophical tricks: dialog participants gradually (“spontaneously”) come to a certain method of philosophical research; the concept of “dialectics” appears in all mature dialogs of Plato for good reason. The very form of interaction between philosophers, i.e. the dialog itself, is understood as a dialectical process of “mutual intertwining of idea” (Sophist, 259, White, version). Socrates greatly mastered the art of interpreting other people’s thoughts. Trying to understand his opponent, he took the extraordinary step from the point of view of the traditional agon (a dispute competition): he tried to enhance the arguments of the opposite side. We find many examples of this: in Phaedrus, Socrates’ first speech more reasonably sets out the position of his opponent, the rhetorician Lysias (Phaedrus, 234d-237e, Nehamas, & Woodruff version), while in Theaetetus Socrates put a lot of effort to enhance the basic arguments of Protagoras (Theaetetus, 166a-168c). Parmenides generally puzzles its researchers, as consistently sets out criticism of the ideas theory (Gilyarov, 2011). The hidden composition of ironic philosophizing is always aimed at the consistent identification of all potential meanings and the derivation of all consequences set by the original statement.

Thus, Socrates and Plato extracted the very essence of the Eleatic philosophy — dialectic — giving an opportunity to comprehend the world in the unity of opposites, motion and rest, existence and nonexistence, existence and being, same and other. Socrates also refers to dialectical synthesis in Laches: “...the knowledge of anything is neither only the knowledge of the past, that is how anything happened, nor only of the present, that is how it happens, nor only of how things which has not yet happened could happen best, but all this is the same knowledge” (Laches, 198d – 199a, Sprague version). That is the reason why dialectics cannot be attributed to anyone else, “except those who philosophize sincerely and fairly” (Sophist, 253e).

This determined the complexity and even some sophistication of Socratic cognitive strategies. Ironist, inventor of maieutics, dialectician, sophist, moral philosopher and ethic teacher - all this belongs to only one man, Socrates. Socrates called himself a maieutic, having appropriated the craft of his mother Phaenarete, midwifery, and called himself a helper in the birth of the soul *burdened with* doubt and every kind of knowledge, odd and useful. He called himself a maieutic not only in relation to such young interlocutors as Theaetetus or Phaedrus. It extends to the famous philosophers: Parmenides, Protagoras and Gorgias. But if dialogs with pupils usually ended with the acceptance of the need to study philosophy and thereby overcome the limitations of everyday ideas about the world, a conversation with philosophers led to detection of the inconsistent nature of some philosophy concept. This explains the difference in the ironic strategy applied by Socrates when communicating with his interlocutors. In the first case, Socrates’ dialectical play with concepts aimed to disclose the claims of common sense to proclaim absolute truth. However, in the second case, Socrates strategic use of ironic means were more sophisticated: dialectics turned out to be both a criticism method and a subject of a careful consideration (as in the dialogs “Parmenides”, “Theaetetus”, “Sophist”, etc.) (Sophist, 259 e). Socrates ironically provoked the prevailing

philosophical system: he carried the thesis to be proved to the point of absurdity, demonstrated a non-obviousness nature of the originally adopted bases for the dialog, thus checking its “soundness”, and measured the power of a philosophical statements, figuring out whether it could serve as an ideological basis, i.e. a real weal and support in life. This is the fundamental principles of how he checked the consistency of a philosophical system.

Socrates hardly had more staunch enemies than the sophists. However, his attitude towards them was not unambiguous. On many occasions, he spoke well of the senior sophists who, along with Thales and Parmenides, stroke “both reverence and horror” into his heart, as was said in “Theaetetus” just like in Homers works (Theaetetus, 183e). Socrates sometimes gave his pupils the sophist Prodicus (Theaetetus, 151 b). The defensive speech in “Theaetetus” was dedicated to the sophist Protagoras (Theaetetus, 166a-168c). Socrates repeatedly discussed important philosophical issues with the “father of sophism” Gorgias (Gorgias, 440a - 461b, Zeyl version). The sophists developed a taste for the concepts analysis. This was what gave them common ground with Socrates: Socrates was eager to spend long hours clarifying the meaning of some concept with anyone who would agree to it. Thanks to his teacher, Plato was also deeply interested in the study of meanings and concepts definitions. He introduced the term “idea” into philosophy as a measure and a threshold plan of meaning understanding; later, he hypostatized this concept into an independent essence.

Plato’s dialogs “Sophist”, “Gorgias”, “Protagoras”, “Theaetetus”, “Hippias Minor ”and “Hippias Major ”represent the sophists ’understanding of the nature and purpose of philosophy in the life of ancient society and, at the same time, Socrates ’criticism of these views. “What things can be taught by the sophists?” - that was the question to which the teachers of wisdom were constantly and publicly forced to give an answer while being in Socrates ’company. They were provoked by Socrates and always said more than they should have, as their frankness turns into self-revelation. (Husserl, 2014)

While communicating with the sophists of the “second generation”, brisk sellers of wisdom, Socrates often used rhetorical tricks. Having a strong sophistic background behind him, Socrates was able to give evasive answers, focus on dialectical details, logical paradoxes or tautologies and easily confuse his opponents. The pursuit of truth did not seem to be the aim of such dialogs. But relativism demonstrated by Socrates as a proof of the opposite revealed the futility of sophistic wisdom. In this regard, the dialog “Euthydemus ”where the sophist brothers demonstrate their skill to fool people is very remarkable. It seems that was the case when philosophy teaching is a private matter and gives the right to every “teacher of wisdom ”to follow his own path in philosophy and to use his own method. However, the situation becomes tense when the sophists, the teachers of wisdom, wink and with cynical frankness declare the truth to be only a competition in words and teach to refute everything that is said, “whether it be a lie, whether it be the truth ”(Phaedrus, 275 b, ). In this situation, a philosopher turns into a public speaker, able to convince people without being convinced himself. “In general”, as it is said in Phaedrus, “an orator has to seek credibility often saying “forgive ”to the truth” (Phaedrus, 273a). While freeing their pupils from one-sidedness, the sophists plunged them into ambiguity. Socrates described the essence of sophists studies as follows: “I call it a game because at least someone who has learned in this way a lot and even everything about the objects themselves and their position does not know anything, but will be able to mock at people, tripping them and turning them over various meanings of names, just like those

who snatch chairs from under those who want to sit down, and then have fun and laugh seeing them fall backwards”(Euthydemus, 278b, Sprague version).

## 6. Findings

Socrates believed that gnosiology without any moral principles exposes a person to conventional and cultural pessimism and cynicism aimed at, first of all, the “fathers’ philosophy”. Therefore, philosophy in the Socratic sense assumes the consistency of ethics, gnoseology, axiology, aesthetics and ontology when constituting individual consciousness. Meanwhile, even a cursory glance reveals that such cognitive techniques of Socrates as irony, dialog and dialectics being a deconstructive way to represent meaning. For example, irony suggests such a strategy of relations between the interlocutors, when one thing is said, while the different is supposed. The ironic conjunction of “two realities” - the one that is ironically questioned and the one that is regarded by the ironist as true or concrete - speaks for a serious internal conflict in the understanding of the world. Irony enjoys a wide polemical context: it opposes the ironist’s opinion ironic to the other one, to which they formally conform for some uncertain reasons (Greater Hippias, 304 b-e, Nehamas & Woodruff, version). Paradoxical constructions are opposed to the common sense logic. The boundaries of ordinary knowledge were especially fully presented by Plato in those dialogs depicting Socrates’ trial and death (“Crito”, “Apology of Socrates”, “Meno”, “Phaedo”, etc.)

Overall, the essence of Socrates’ philosophical learning is the ability to communicate. That is why Hegel (1994) called Socrates “an example of Attic gentleness” (p. 42), and his irony - “a special way of treatment in a personal conversation” which gives us samples of fine communication culture (Hegel, 1994, p. 44). Indeed, the ironic method of Socrates embodies the fullness and intensity of philosophical ideas exchange and introduces the agonistic Greek tradition of philosophizing.

In this regard, it is particularly important to perceive the content standing behind the concept “irony of history” that expresses the meaning, measure and the very possibility of human influence on historical events. K. Marx’s (1975) Notebooks on Epicurean Philosophy contain an interesting consideration about irony as a universal philosophical method:

Socratic irony, as understood by Baur and as it must be understood with Hegel, namely as the dialectic trap through which human common sense is precipitated out of its motley ossification, not into self-complacent knowing-better, but into the truth immanent in human common sense itself, this irony is nothing but the form of philosophy in its subjective attitude to common consciousness. The fact that in Socrates it has the form of an ironical, wise man follows from the basic character of Greek philosophy and its attitude to reality. With us irony as a general immanent form, so to speak, as philosophy was taught by Fr. v. Schlegel. But objectively, so far as content is concerned, Heraclitus, who also not only despised, but hated human common sense, is just as much an ironist, so is even Thales, who taught that everything is water, though every Greek knew that no one could live on water, so is Fichte with his world-creating ego, despite which even Nicolai realized that he could not create any world, and so is any philosopher who asserts immanence in opposition to the empirical person. (p. 112).

An ironic judgment can be represented as an unfolding and developing judgment that in its very essence has a structure to expose any immutability, exhaustion and finality of truth. Both philosophical reflection and common sense, these two gnoseological agonists, appeal to some common original reality, but interpret its nature in a completely different ways. The effect the ironist produces by colliding “two realities” is based on the fact that common knowledge bears within itself tremendous complications (contradictions), which are impossible to be eliminate in the way the mind used to do it.

In his study of irony, J. Thomson (1927) argues that Socrates never furnished us with a discussion of the conversation method and an explanation of what irony actually is. Thomson explains this by saying that in every new dialog Socrates uses a new meaning of irony, on which he never stops and through which the discussion takes a new and, as it seems to him, a more exciting turn (p. 4). Aleksei Fedorovich Losev (2000) draws our attention to the fact that Socrates himself never called irony either his philosophical method or his manner to communicate with people (p. 84).

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, defining the specific features of philosophical understanding of reality, as opposed to religious and ideological, is a practical task of modern knowledge as too many consequences arise from the solution of this issue. The way to understand things in existence, offering no verification and “tests” needed for the scientific method of truth presentation, brings philosophy close to mythology, religion and art. The approach towards philosophy as “metaphysics”, i.e. the doctrine of the eternal and unchanging principles of all that exists, was supplemented by dialectics, the doctrine of movement and development, being an “auxiliary” discipline and a way to perceive these eternal principles.

Taking into account the challenging environment the modern education found itself in, it is very useful to know how the previous development stage of the humanities is evaluated, the revision of which is carried out without the usual abandonment the experience of the paternal generation and the complete denial of their theoretical “wealth”.

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