

Philosophical method and science

TOMAS SAULIUS

Department of Health, Physical and Social Education, Lithuanian Sports University, 6 Sporto Street, LT-44221 Kaunas
E-mail tomas.saulius@lsu.lt

The paper deals with an issue of philosophical methodology, taking into account Wittgenstein's critical remark that philosophy (metaphysics), in its *modus operandi*, imitates science. The thesis of the paper is that such approach is wrong because the peculiarity of philosophical thinking cannot be adequately conceptualized in terms of formal logic. This is shown by the analysis of three cases (Plato, Aristotle and Descartes), i. e. three classical metaphysical projects dedicated to the discovery of "the first principles".

Key words: metaphilosophy, method, syllogism, synoptic view, descriptive philosophy

INTRODUCTION

In the *Blue Book* Ludwig Wittgenstein writes: "Philosophers constantly see the method of science before their eyes, and are irresistibly tempted to ask and answer questions in the way science does. This tendency is the real source of metaphysics, and leads the philosopher into complete darkness" (Wittgenstein 1998: 18). Since the beginning of the XXth century, philosophers debate whether the discipline they represent is to be treated as a science, in view of the evident progress of natural sciences and mathematics and the obvious fact that there is no such progress in the field of philosophy. The question whether the progress of sciences is due to the specific, clearly defined "scientific method" ignites equally vigorous discussions. In the paper, these controversial questions are set aside. Its aim is to find out whether philosophy (ontology) really suffers from the disease that was diagnosed by Wittgenstein. His criticism could mean that philosophy is a methodical enterprise as far as it imitates natural science and mathematics. Following this line of thought, it is easy to conclude that philosophy *volens volens* concedes its immaturity or inferiority and, on the other hand, acknowledges supremacy of other disciplines. Aiming at the external standards of rationality, philosophy ceases to be an authentic worldview. In the paper, we defend the thesis that philosophy is methodical in a narrow sense of the word – in the sense that cannot be grasped in the technical terminology of formal logic. For example, Alfred Ayer stresses that "It is by its methods rather than its subject matter that philosophy is to be distinguished from other arts or sciences", and continues by pointing out that philosophical arguments are "of a very peculiar character"; in other words, they are in stark contrast to the ones presented by mathematicians and representatives of natural sciences (Ayer 2004: 23). Of course, the task of exposing the above-mentioned peculiarity of philosophical reasoning – the task nowadays attributed to the so-called "metaphilosophy" – is not the easiest one.

Wittgenstein's criticism seems plausible, given certain episodes of the history of philosophy. Seemingly, say, well-known passages from Plato, Aristotle and Descartes are conscious attempts to deal with philosophical problems *more geometrico*. Let's look at them in more detail.

PLATO: PHILOSOPHY AS SYNOPSIS

Attitudes toward Plato's heritage may differ. On the one hand, there is a widely cited and not always properly understood dictum of Alfred Whitehead that, in essence, philosophical tradition can be characterized as "a series of footnotes to Plato" (Whitehead 1979: 39). On the other hand, in the technical language of contemporary philosophy the term "Platonism" has a rather negative flavour and is often used as a charge of philosophical incompetence (Overgaard et al. 2013: 33). Regardless of the attitude we adopt, there is a strong and inevitable implication that we more or less understand what in his time "the divine Plato" called *philosophia*.

For example, in the *Republic*, in the passage best known as "The Analogy of the Divided Line", the concept of philosophy is defined in its relation to other forms of intellectual activity – "pure" mathematics, investigation of the visible Universe, and craft/art (*technē*). According to Plato, philosophy is superior to other activities because it reveals a true nature of things or, to put it otherwise, an ontological structure of the Universe (e. g. Plato 1997a: 1132). But even if Plato quite convincingly demonstrates advantages of philosophical education (*paideia*) against the sophistic training program of the political elite, he scarcely explains how philosophers get closer to the reality, how they manage to accomplish their honourable mission. Usually he confines himself to the uninformative remark that the search of wisdom (e. g. examination of moral issues) proceeds by using *noēsis* or "pure reason", following to the most common rendering of the term (ibid.). Therefore it seems that Plato represents philosophy as an essentially *formal discipline*. Referring to Plato's Academy, Aristotle even resents that "for the moderns, philosophy has become mathematics" (Aristotle 1998: 36). Of course, this implies not only Academy scholars' strong interest in mathematics (remember *Ageōmetrētos mēdeis eisitō*) but also a certain method of philosophizing. In other words: if in the examination of ideal (immaterial) triangles, circles, and so on, the axiomatic-deductive method can be applied successfully, so why should we refrain from applying the same method in the exploration of other immaterial objects, such as "justice itself", "beauty itself", and so on? Seemingly, the basic ontological characteristics can be grasped in certain self-evident principles (special kind of propositions), and numerous descriptive propositions about various kinds of beings can be directly or indirectly deduced from them. That would be metaphysics *more geometrico*. After all, it seems that already Parmenides of Elea outlined the project of deductive metaphysics (Barnes 1982: 139–140). Unfortunately (or fortunately), in Plato's case, things are much more complicated.

The *Republic* Book VII presents an intriguing passage: "And as for the rest, I mean geometry and the subjects that follow it, we described them as to some extent grasping what is, for we saw that, while they do dream about what is, they are unable to command a waking view of it as long as they make use of hypotheses that they leave untouched and that they cannot give any account of" (Plato 1997a: 1148–1149). In contrast, dialectics, the only reliable method of philosophy, "is the only inquiry that travels this road, doing away with hypotheses and proceeding to the first principle itself, so as to be secure" (ibid.). What is important here is that Plato draws a clear distinction between the mathematical and philosophical reasoning. Have not woken from "dogmatic dream", mathematicians naively believe that their propositions, which they accept without a proof (i. e. axioms, postulates, definitions etc.), adequately

describe the ideal mathematical space – in other words, they state what cannot be otherwise. Meanwhile, the philosophers are conscious that their propositions do not represent the main characteristics of Being adequately. They use these propositions only as a “working hypothesis” that in the course of the speculative thought may be adjusted or discarded. Socrates’ “elenctic” practice revealed quite frustrating truth that in the discussion of the theoretical (in general, moral) issues it is simply *impossible* to give definite answers to “What is X?” (*ti esti...*) type questions. Judging by the clues in the *Republic* and other “mature” dialogues, Plato did not treat it as a tragic finale of the ambitious (or even “hybristic”) intellectual enterprise. On the contrary, it is a new point of departure for him. Philosophical activity is meaningful despite (or perhaps even thanks to) the fact that the fundamental reality, the most distant ontological region is, in a sense, *illogical* – it is incommensurable to otherwise handful categories of everyday language (*logos*) and thinking (*logos, logismos*) (Oniščik 2006: 173). In other words, the fundamental reality never determines our ontological axioms and theorems, never rules out alternative ways of expression and interpretation. Of course, we can confine ourselves to the quiet contemplation of reality. However, for a man, as a being that can reach his substantial realization only in a “linguistic space” or “existential narrative” (Kačerauskas 2007: 49), such position is too cramped. So the possibility of changing “ways of speaking” or “language games” is especially relevant to philosophy, even if it implies that things we can *directly* refer to in accordance with the rules of the “language game” never constitute the fundamental reality (cf. Oniščik 2010: 39).

It is likely that Plato’s quite shocking theory, which asserts existence of nonmaterial, unperceivable by our senses, essences or ideas, was introduced as a “working hypothesis” rather than the apodictic principle. In the *Phaedo* Socrates, the main character of the dialogue tells his interlocutors that at a certain point of his intellectual journey towards the Truth, he decided to abandon fruitless empirical research and determined to “take refuge in discussions and investigate the truth of things by means of words [*logoi*]” (Plato 1997b: 86). The main rule of proper philosophizing runs as follows: “<...> taking as my hypothesis in each case the theory that seemed to me the most compelling, I would consider as true, about cause and everything else, whatever agreed [*symphōnein*] with this, and as untrue whatever did not so agree” (ibid.). The seas of ink spilled in polemics about the meaning of the utterance “proposition *p* agrees with preliminary hypothesis *h*” in the context of the *Phaedo* (for more details, consult, for instance, Bailey 2005). According to one interpretation, it actually means “proposition *p* logically follows from (is a logical sequence of) *h*”, but this interpretation presents too strict and narrow criteria of truth: it is obvious that numerous propositions that we have no reason to doubt to be true (e. g. “ $2+2=4$ ”) actually do not follow from the platonic hypothesis. According to another interpretation, *symphōnein* could mean “proposition *p* does not contradict hypothesis *h*”, but the criterion of truth, which this interpretation implies, seems to be quite wide and generous: the narrative coherence of a text, as evidenced by Plato’s *mythoi*, does not guarantee that the whole body of the text or its parts represent something objective (something that has really occurred or is actually the case). To put it otherwise, the second interpretation of the *symphōnein* tends to ignore what today sometimes is called “Confirmation fallacy” (adducing only evidence that confirms a thesis) and “Narrative fallacy” (applying a story pattern to connect disconnected facts).

It seems that for Plato the most important standard of rational thought is not truth or correspondence to reality, but the explanatory power. It may be noted that he does not draw too much attention to the plain facts and usually uses them only as counterexamples to detect

fallacious definitions, but not as a primary material to construct the right ones. However, this does not mean that for Plato factual statements lack truth-value (see Vlastos 1981: 65–66). Second, “understatement of facts” may be related to their triviality, lack of explanatory power, but not to the rather radical conclusion that all factual statements are false. Therefore, we can assume that in the context of the *Phaedo* the verb *symphōnein* means a special connection between propositions: the proposition *p* alongside with the preliminary hypothesis *h* explain the phenomena *X*, which is under examination. In other words, conjunction of two or more propositions sparks a light of understanding in the soul of a truth-seeker (analogously conjunction of sounds can bring out a state of aesthetic satisfaction). Maybe the most curious passage of the *Seventh Letter* runs as follows: “Only when all of these things – names, definitions, and visual and other perceptions – have been rubbed against one another and tested, pupil and teacher asking and answering questions in good will and without envy – only then, when reason and knowledge are at the very extremity of human effort, can they illuminate the nature of any object” (Plato 1997c: 1661). What we have here is an explicit inclusion of a perceptual data in the process of philosophical reasoning. Consequently, we can conclude that the distinction “reason *versus* senses” is being attributed to Plato too hastily. How are we to interpret the metaphor of “rubbing” (*tribē*)? It scarcely admits rendering it into the technical language of traditional logic. Probably here Plato has in mind a feature of a true philosopher, which is mentioned in different dialogues, i. e. a synoptic view, “bring [things] together to form a unified vision of their kinship both with one another and with the nature of that which is” (Plato 1997a: 1152). It is, one might say, a comprehension of the heterogeneous content of the consciousness in a definite, but freely chosen perspective (of course, it is not necessary to believe that only one Perspective is available). Alfred Whitehead also uses the concept of the synoptic vision to describe the philosophical method (1978: 5). “In this description of philosophic method, the term ‘philosophic generalization’ has meant ‘the utilization of specific notions, applying to a restricted group of facts, for the divination of the generic notions which apply to all facts’” (*ibid.*).

ARISTOTLE: PHILOSOPHY AS *EPAGŌGĒ*

As is known, Aristotle, maybe the brightest alumnus of Plato’s Academy, eventually became the most ruthless opponent of platonic philosophy. He insists that by adding the extension “as-such” to a concept, we do not add any further substantial information. To put it otherwise, the platonic opposition between “human being” and “human being-as-such” is, in modern terms, a distinction without any difference (see Aristotle 2011: 9). How does Aristotle deal with the issue of the philosophical method?

In Book IV of the *Metaphysics*, he distinguishes theoretical, practical and technical disciplines (*dianoia*) (Aristotle 1998: 154). The theoretical branch (*philosophiai theōrētikai*) encompasses mathematics, physics and “the first philosophy” (*ibid.*: 155–156). Aristotle provides us with, in a sense, the paradigmatic definition of “the first philosophy”: “There is a kind of science whose remit is being qua being and the things pertaining to that which is per se. This science is not the same as any of the departmental disciplines. For none of these latter engages in this general speculation about that which is qua that which is.” (*ibid.*: 79). Thus, from other disciplines philosophy primarily and principally differs in speculating about everything that exists. Its scope or subject matter is not confined to a particular kind of being as in the case of mathematics, which “delimits some section of what is and study its accidental features” (*ibid.*). Specification “qua being” clearly indicates a certain approach or a perspective adopted by philosophy.

However, Aristotle emphasizes another no less important point: philosophy is a form of “scientific knowledge” (*epistēmē*), and the latter is “demonstrative” (*apodeiktikē*) (Ackrill 1994: 146–147). In other words, to have “scientific knowledge” means having a logically structured body of truths. In the *Prior Analytics*, Aristotle, seemingly following the example of mathematics (Smith 1999: 47), formulated the main norms of valid deductive reasoning (*sylogismos*). In this context, there is a strong suspicion that Aristotle is making the double-standard fallacy: on the one hand, he denounces Academics’ attempts to “mathematize” philosophy; on the other hand, according to him, philosophy as a theoretical discipline must conform to quite narrow restrictions implied by an axiomatic-deductive paradigm. However, again, it should be noted that the matter is more difficult than it may seem.

The *Metaphysics* itself scarcely embodies the Aristotelian ideal of *apodeiktikē epistēmē*. Instead of making deductions, he mainly focuses on what, in his own words, “is said in numerous ways” (*legesthai pollachōs*). He draws attention to more or less subtle semantical nuances of the most general ontological categories, such as “being”, “change”, “principle”, “cause”, etc. On the basis of these linguistic insights, he reports the doctrines of his predecessors, exposes their fallacies, i. e. cases when they get lost in the ambiguous natural language or no less problematic technical terminology. Therefore, scholars make a quite fair conclusion that syllogistic has no significant “normative” effect on Aristotelian scientific tradition (Smith 1999: 28; Hintikka 2004: 71). It can be satisfactorily explained from the standpoint of Aristotle’s epistemology.

First, he explicitly states that if we understand both premises of a syllogism, a conclusion is evident to us (Aristotle 1989: 95–96). Rather, the problem is that we do not always understand assumptions (not all terms of a syllogism are clear to us). Therefore, syllogism construction rules presented in the *Analytics* do not constitute a *discovery* method. Jonathan Barnes (1969) has quite forcibly shown that syllogistic was initially devised as a didactic and rhetorical tool. At this point, we should not forget that Aristotle ascribes a special status to the laws of logic: for him these laws are of the same category as the laws of nature, in other words, they constitute an “absolute necessity”. In contrast, nowadays the laws of logic are only licenses (permissions) for particular forms of inference – “Rules of inference do not tell you what they must do, they tell you what you may do” (Hintikka 2004: 58). Therefore, we can doubt a value of “scientific knowledge”, if it is acquired only by deducing evident conclusions from undisputed truths.

Secondly, Aristotle introduces a relevant distinction between “the arguments that proceed from the principles and those that proceed to the principles” (Aristotle 2011: 5). He maintains that metaphysics belongs to the second type of arguments – it is “knowledge having to do with certain principles and causes” (Aristotle 1998: 6–7). In other words, dealing with the “eternal” ontological questions, a philosopher cannot deduce anything, unless he has reliable first premises (“principles”, *archai*) at hand. His life and work is mainly dedicated to the discovery of such premises. *In principio* he needs to find out “what is being qua being”, also “the things pertaining to that which is per se”, and only then to attempt to elaborate a coherent metaphysical system.

What method can be applied at the “pre-systemic” level of ontology? Aristotle discusses this question quite vaguely: “Some principles are observed by means of induction [*epagōgēi*], some by perception [*aisthēsei*], some by a certain habituation, and others in other ways. One ought to try to go in search of each in turn in the manner natural to them and to be serious about their being nobly defined.” (Aristotle 2011: 14). It is worth noting that the noun

epagōgē, “induction”, which appears in the cited passage, on the other occasion, is used to denote the essential feature of the Socratic philosophy (Aristotle 1998: 23–24). In modern usage, the term “induction” usually means transition from singular propositions to universal ones (from particular facts to generalizations). Seemingly, it is not what Aristotle means by *epagōgē*, therefore, the so-called “Hume’s problem” bears little significance, if any, in this case. According to Jaakko Hintikka, in the Aristotelian terminology *epagōgē* denotes transition from narrower generalizations to more inclusive ones, and, at the same time, it is a process of the formulation of the concepts that have greater explanatory power (Hintikka 2004: 63, 67). Aristotle maintains that even at the level of sense experience the world is *conceptually* structured: “<...> although you perceive particulars, perception is of universals, – e. g. of man, not of Callias the man” (Aristotle 2002: 74). He continues by noting: “Thus it is plain that we must get to know the primitives by induction; for it is the way in which perception instils universals” (ibid.). Bearing in mind Socrates’ elenctic practice, we may assume that “induction” proceeds as follows: one should start by formulating a preliminary definition on the basis of which various cases of the concept application can be comprehended in a single view; then, if any counterexamples appear, it is necessary to formulate another definition, and so on. Quite possibly, it is the same procedure that Plato identifies as “rubbing” (*tribē*) and Whitehead – as “philosophical generalization”. Of course, Aristotle does not consider ontological categories as constructs of subjective consciousness, only convenient instruments of theoretical explanation; on the contrary, according to him, they constitute the objective datum. In this context, a search of “the first principles” is a progress towards more accurate *description* of the reality, of the ontological structure of the world. Along these lines, Whitehead writes: “The primary method of mathematics is deduction; the primary method of philosophy is descriptive generalization.” (Whitehead 1978: 10). The same idea, although in a different context, is echoed by Wittgenstein: “Philosophy really is ‘purely descriptive’” (Wittgenstein 1998: 18).

DESCARTES: *INVENIENDA METHODUS*

In this chapter we proceed to the René Descartes’s insights concerning philosophical methodology. The systemic unity of all genuine sciences is, of course, among the major themes of Cartesian philosophy. This leitmotiv runs through the introduction of the *Rules for the Direction of the Mind* and the final considerations of the *Discourse on the Method*. Descartes insists that isolated scientific theories should comprise what today is called “super-theory” or “theory of everything”. According to him, the realization of this idea is impossible without a solid basis of undoubtable truths. Therefore, philosophy as a fundamental discipline plays an indispensable role in the scientific reform: “<...> observing that the principles of these sciences must all be derived from philosophy <...> I thought that, first of all, I had to try to establish some certain principles in philosophy” (Descartes 1999: 121–122). Conforming to the intellectual mainstream of the XVII century (Kisner 2005: 142), he emphasizes the futility of Aristotelian syllogistics and demands the new methodology, namely, the method of discovery (*invenienda methodus*) (see Descartes 1985: 119 ff.).

The method introduced in the *Discourse* obviously represents a mathematical paradigm: following famous four rules, once we face a complex problem, we must start by reducing it to simpler questions – i. e. questions that can be answered by means of what Descartes calls “intuition” (*intuitus*); he maintains that the initial problem can be satisfactorily solved by deducing conclusions from intuitively given truths (“clear and distinct perceptions”) (Kisner 2005: 143). However, it should be noted that Descartes, like Aristotle, distinguishes between “arguments

from principles” and “arguments to principles” (Descartes 2005a: 110–109), therefore, even if the method of the *Discourse* is universal in the sense that it can be applied in various fields of scientific research, this does not mean that it is appropriate for philosophy as a fundamental discipline. Does Descartes initiate any changes in the philosophical methodology?

Intentions of the *Meditations on First Philosophy* are obvious: to advance contemporary science to a higher level (in comparison to the Aristotelean tradition) by discovering a new “Archimedean point” (*punctum Archimedis*) (Descartes 2005a: 16). In order to reach this aim, Descartes proposes a “working hypothesis” or, in other words, “thought experiment”. He assumes (for the sake of an argument) that all the knowledge we possess – a posteriori, as well as a priori truths – is false. At this point, it should be noted that the idea of “total” illusion (like Plato’s hypothesis of nonmaterial essences or, say, Kant’s “Copernican hypothesis”, the assumption of the possibility of transcendental enquiry) is not inductively or deductively inferred from any facts or self-evident axioms. In general, assuming that any sensory impression A is incorrect, we inevitably imply a different impression of the same object, impression B, which we consider as infallible and refer to as a criterion of falsification of impression A. On the other hand, if the “malicious demon” (*genius malignus*) really deceives us, even in the field of pure mathematics, every time we “add two and three or count the sides of a square” (ibid: 14), then, in accordance with this hypothesis, we cannot be sure concerning correctness of any our conclusion – including proposition “Everything is mere illusion”. The rationale of Descartes’ “total” illusion hypothesis can be explained as follows: scientific reasoning is based on preliminary “textbook” knowledge, but, as experience teaches us, this basis can incorporate false beliefs, which inevitably lead a scientist to false conclusions; because we cannot identify false basic beliefs in advance, perhaps it is better to suspend all them as doubtful. In this case, “better” means an optional, rather than in one or another way determined, thinking perspective. Here it is worth recalling Marjorie Grene’s insight that the most significant philosophical discoveries are made only by the exclusion of any epistemic reliability guarantees (Grene 1974: 64).

Calling into doubt a priori and a posteriori truths (the whole body of knowledge), only acts of subjective consciousness (*cogitationes*), including doubting, are what we are left with. They supposedly testify to the existence of *res cogitans*, something that is conscious, i. e. thinks, feels, perceives, etc. However, what about famous dictum *Cogito, ergo sum*? Does not it draw a philosophical method back to the domain of formal logic? Sometimes Descartes suggests that what we have here is a piece of deduction: he refers to the formula *Cogito, ergo sum* as “reasoning” (*rationium*), to expressing it – as “inference” (*inferre*), and to proposition “I exist” (*Ego sum*) – as “conclusion” (Hintikka 1974: 100). Seemingly, it is an enthymeme with the implicit premise “If I think, then I exist”. Nevertheless, this interpretation does not solve the main problem: How can we be sure that this premise is true? On the other occasions, however, Descartes suggests that the question about the logical form of *Cogito, ergo sum* is not relevant here. Answering to Pierre Gassendi’s remark that the same conclusion “I exist” can be inferred from different premise, say, “I walk” (*Ego ambulo*), he explicitly states that such substitution does not give the same result (Descartes 2005b: 243–244). Descartes’ “Archimedean point” seems unshakable insofar as its predicate before *ergo* is tied to the first-person perspective. Jaako Hintikka stresses this point and interprets formula *Cogito, ergo sum* as a “performative”, i. e. “act of thinking through which the sentence *I exist* may be said to verify itself” (Hintikka 1974: 108). What Hintikka has in mind is not a relation between a premise and a conclusion, but rather a relation between a process and its product: “The indubitability of my own existence results from my thinking of it almost as the sound of music results from playing it <...>” (ibid.). In Bertrand

Williams' terminology, the Cartesian formula is an "incorrigible proposition" – i. e. proposition that cannot be wrongly believed to be true (Williams 2005: 59). Another technical term, "self-verifying proposition" (a proposition that is true whenever it is uttered), applies to the formula as well (ibid.). It seems that, dealing with specific issues of contemporary science and general philosophical questions, Descartes followed the idea of absolute knowledge. He maintained that the concepts *cogitare* and *existere*, like the concepts *existere* and *Deus*, are closely interconnected, nevertheless, these conceptual links can be grasped only intuitively, in other words, they are inexplicable on a theoretical level (Gaukroger 2002: 128). Perhaps one could say that the Cartesian formula bring us back to the pre-reflective roots of rationality – to the domain where existence and transcendence are inseparable correlates of thinking (cf. Sodeika 2010: 59–60).

CONCLUSIONS

The first and perhaps the most important conclusion of the paper is that even if "essential tension" (in Kuhn's terms) is inherent to philosophical theorizing, it is the tension not between the first premises and their logical corollaries, but rather between the first premises (principles) and the dynamic, poly-dimensional world we inhabit. Precisely at this point the philosophical thinking reveals its uniqueness. This means that any attempts to bound the philosophical discourse to the standards of formal logic, in fact, violate the Principle of Charity, thus prevent adequate reception of the text. Of course, it would be an exaggeration to say that a philosopher never reasons deductively (it is enough to recall "the Eight deductions" of Plato's *Parmenides* or Spinoza's ethical treatise), nevertheless, it must be noted that "to search for truth" and "to demonstrate the truth" are different intensions. Even the etymological reflection associates *philosophia* with the first intension. "Philosophers do not provide proofs any more than tennis players score goals" (Ryle 2009: 332). On the other hand, it would be exaggeration to state that, in general, argumentation is irrelevant to the work of philosophers. However, once again, in order to argue convincingly, philosophers need to critically revise their premises. The second conclusion of the paper is that the nature of philosophy can be adequately defined by the term "descriptive discipline". As shown earlier, philosophy is not a fragmentary description, but a synoptic view of reality. Of course, every conception of philosophy (meta-philosophical stance) presupposes certain preferences and is not equally favourable to all epochs, schools and trends. Our proposed paradigm is maximally impartial because it excludes an unjustified assumption that there are privileged approaches to reality (cf. Overgaard et al. 2013: 21).

Received 12 May 2015

Accepted 17 December 2015

References

1. Ackrill, J. L. 1994. *Aristotelis*. Vertè M. Adomènas. Vilnius: Pradai.
2. Aristotle, 1989. *Prior Analytics*. Transl. by R. Smith. Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company.
3. Aristotle, 1998. *Metaphysics*. Transl. by H. Lawson-Tancred. London: Penguin Books.
4. Aristotle, 2002. *Posterior Analytics*. Transl. by J. Barnes. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
5. Aristotle, 2011. *Nicomachen Ethics*. Transl. by R. C. Bartlett and S. D. Collins. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
6. Ayer, A. 2004. "The Method of Philosophy", in *Philosophy: Basic Readings*, ed. N. Warburton. London and New York: Routledge, 21–23.
7. Bailey, D. T. J. 2005. "Logic and Music in Plato's *Phaedo*", *Phronesis* 50: 95–115.
8. Barnes, J. 1969. "Aristotle's Theory of Demonstration", *Phronesis* 14: 123–152.
9. Barnes, J. 1982. *The Presocratic Philosophers*. London and New York: Routledge.

10. Cooper, J. M.; Hutchinson, D. S. (eds.). 1997. *Plato. Complete Works*. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company.
11. Descartes, R. 1999. "Discourse and Essays", in *The Philosophical Writing of Descartes*, Vol. I, transl. by J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, D. Murdoch. Cambridge: University Press, 109–176.
12. Descartes, R. 2005a. "Meditations on First Philosophy", in *The Philosophical Writing of Descartes*, Vol. II, transl. by J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, D. Murdoch. Cambridge: University Press, 1–62.
13. Descartes, R. 2005b. "Objections and Replies", in *The Philosophical Writing of Descartes*, Vol. II, transl. by J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, D. Murdoch. Cambridge: University Press, 63–384.
14. Gaukroger, J. 2002. *Cartesian Logic*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
15. Grene, M. 1974. *The Knowledge and the Known*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
16. Hintikka, J. 1974. "Cogito, ergo Sum: Inference or Performance?", in *Knowledge and Known*. Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 98–125.
17. Hintikka, J. 2004. "Aristotle's Theory of Thinking and its Consequences for his Methodology", in *Analyses of Aristotle*. New York: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 45–75.
18. Kačerauskas, T. 2007. „Egzistencinė kalba ir kalbinė egzistencija“, *Santalka: filosofija, komunikacija* 15(3): 45–52.
19. Kisner, M. J. 2005. "Rationalism and Method", in *Companion to Rationalism*, ed. A. Nelson. Malden, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
20. Oniščik, M. 2006. „Apie ontologines kalbos ribas“, *Athena* 1: 164–175.
21. Oniščik, M. 2010. „Objektyvuojantis religinio patyrimo aprašymas: Ką Akviniečiui reiškia būti šikšnosparniu?“, *Religija ir kultūra* 7(1–2): 34–44.
22. Overgaard, S.; Gilbert, P.; Burwood, S. 2013. *An Introduction to Metaphilosophy*. Cambridge: University Press.
23. Plato. 1997a. "Republic", transl. by G. M. A. Grube, in *Plato: Complete Works*, eds. J. M. Cooper, D. S. Hutchinson, 971–1223.
24. Plato. 1997b. "Phaedo", transl. by G. M. A. Grube, in *Plato: Complete Works*, eds. J. M. Cooper, D. S. Hutchinson, 49–100.
25. Plato. 1997c. "Letters", transl. by G. R. Morrow, in *Plato: Complete Works*, eds. J. M. Cooper, D. S. Hutchinson, 1634–1776.
26. Ryle, G. 2009. "Proofs in Philosophy", in *Collected Papers*, Vol. 2. London and New York: Routledge, 332–338.
27. Smith, R. 1999. "Logic", in *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*, ed. J. Barnes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 27–65.
28. Sodeika, T. 2010. *Filosofija ir tekstas*. Kaunas: Technologija.
29. Vlastos, G. 1981. *Platonic Studies*. Princeton: University Press.
30. Williams, B. 2005. *Descartes: The Project of Pure Enquiry*. London and New York: Routledge.
31. Wittgenstein, L. 1998. *The Blue and Brown Books*. Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell.
32. Whitehead, A. N. 1979. *Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology*. New York: Free Press.

TOMAS SAULIUS

Filosofinis metodas ir mokslas

Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamas filosofinio metodo klausimas atsižvelgiant į L. Wittgensteino kritinę pastabą, kad filosofija (metafizika) savuoju *modus operandi* imituoja mokslą. Straipsnio tezė – teiginys, kad toks požiūris yra klaidingas, kadangi filosofinės mąstysenos išskirtinumas negali būti adekvačiai konceptualizuotas formalios logikos terminais. Tai parodoma analizuojant Platono, Aristotelio ir R. Descartes'o atvejus, t. y. tris klasikinius metafizinius projektus, skirtus „pirmųjų principų“ atradimui.

Raktažodžiai: metafilosofija, metodas, silogizmas, sinoptinė žiūra, aprašomoji filosofija