

Цитирование: Степанянц М.Т. (2018) Атлас рациональности: проблемы и методы реализации проекта // Философские науки. 2018. № 6. С. 33–51.

DOI: 10.30727/0235-1188-2018-6-33-51

Atlas of Rationality: Problems and Methods of Realization of the Project

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DOI: 10.30727/0235-1188-2018-6-33-51

Original research paper

Summary

The article considers the problem of rationality on the basis of two key texts by the prominent proponents of the new cartography for philosophy. These include *A Manifesto for Re:emergent Philosophy* by Jonardon Ganery (2016) and *Comparative Philosophy without Borders* edited by Arindam Chakrabarti and Ralf Weber (2016). The both mentioned texts are imbued with the fervor of the movement for liberation from colonial intellectual servitude and epistemological injustice that does not recognize a plurality of ways of thinking. They call for redefinition of the distinctive models of understanding as well as for justification of their rights to be acknowledged. A new cartography of philosophy presupposes a new atlas of rationality. The *Manifesto* by J. Ganery is compared with *The Manifesto for Philosophy* by A. Badiou. Both are calling for support for their global projects – “rebuilding of philosophy’s edifice” (Badiou) and “re:emergence of philosophy” (Ganeri). Badiou implies “an approach to the Philosophy” or “a return to the philosophy” by recognition of the four sources of the truth, which he regards as politics, love, art and science. Ganery speaks about “the plurality of ways of thinking”, about the movement for liberation from colonial intellectual dependence by applying the intercultural approach. The two philosophers acknowledge the plurality of cultural worlds. Badiou means “the philosophy of events,” while Ganery – “philosophy of a new cartography.” Badiou discovers different logics in disparate worlds that every time are submitted in specific forms, and thus he comes to the conclusion that single universal logic is impossible. Ganery is consistent and does not contradict himself by claiming plurality of rationalities, of logical systems, and thus advocates the promotion of the project for a new cartography of philosophy.

Keywords: comparativism, manifesto, intercultural philosophy, rationality, cartography, Eurocentrism, non-Western cultural traditions, post-comparativity.

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Citation: Stepanyants M.T. (2018) Atlas of Rationality: Problems and Methods of Realization of the Project. *Russian Journal of Philosophical Sciences = Filosofskie nauki*. 2018. No. 6, pp. 33-51.

DOI: 10.30727/0235-1188-2018-6-33-51

Введение

«Мы можем увидеть в будущем ярко выраженный плюралистический реализм в институциях академической философии по всему миру и новую картографию философии». Такими словами заключается Манифест движения за освобождение от колониального интеллектуального рабства. Точное название документа – «Манифест вновь нарождающейся философии» [Ganery 2016a, 134–143]. Его автор – Джонардон Ганери, профессор философии Нью-Йоркского Университета в Абу-Даби, входящего в Глобальный сетевой университет Нью-Йоркского университета (NYU's Global Network University). Речь идет о том, что Западная философия – лишь одна из философских традиций. Философия должна включать в себя традиции философий, существующих за пределами западного мира, чтобы обрести свой полноценный смысл. Иными словами, ей следует «вновь возникнуть», «вновь народиться».

Коммуникативные особенности жанра манифеста

Вспомним этимологию самого слова «манифест», происходящего от латинского *manifestus*, означающего «явный», и историю этого текстового жанра. Документы этого рода «оглашали», т.е. делали явным то, что уже имело место в жизни общества, хотя и не осознавалось его большинством. Изначально акты верховной власти выражались в форме торжественного обращения к народу в связи с каким-либо крупным политическим событием. Со временем манифестами стали именоваться обращения политических партий, общественных организаций, литературных и художественных групп.

В отличие от обращений деятелей искусства и литературы, обращение к жанру манифеста в среде философов – событие исключительное. На слуху, конечно, «Манифест философии» Алена Бадью. В изданных в 1988–1989 гг. масштабном труде «Бытие и событие» и сжатом в размер брошюры «Манифесте философии» (букв. – манифест за философию) Бадью заявил о своей философской программе.

Stewart 2016 – *Stewart G.* What's in a Name? In Support of a Manifesto for Re:emergent Philosophy // *Confluence. Journal of World Philosophies*. – Freiburg/Munich: Verlag Karl Alber. 2016. Vol. 4. P. 154–161.

The New Encyclopedia Britannica (1973–1974) – The New Encyclopedia Britannica in 30 vols. Vol. XIV. Macropedia, 1973–1974.

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Introduction

“We may look to a future when there will be a vibrant pluralistic realism in departments of academic philosophy around the globe, and a new cartography of philosophy.” These are concluding words of the Manifesto for liberation from colonial slavery. The precise name of the document is *A Manifesto for Re:emergent Philosophy* [Ganery 2016, 134–143]. Its author is Jonardon Ganeri, Global Network Professor in the College of Arts and Science, New York University.

The *Manifesto* claims Western philosophy to be just one of the philosophical traditions, while Philosophy should include all philosophic traditions beyond the borders of the Western world so that to obtain its full sense. In other worlds it needs to re:emerge.

Communicative features of the genre of manifesto

The etymology of the word of manifesto is commonly known. It descends from the Latin *manifestus*, meaning “clear”. Documents of this kind used to “proclaim”, i.e. made explicit, what had already occurred in the life of a society, although not comprehended by its majority. Initially, acts of a supreme power were expressed in the form of a solemn address to the nation in connection with a major political event. Over time, the programs of political parties, public organizations, literary and artistic groups were named as manifestos.

Unlike the arts and literature, the use of this genre by the philosophers has been an exclusive event. What easily comes to the mind is of course, Allain Badiou's *Manifeste pour la philosophie* which was first published in the large-scale volume *L'Être et l'Événement* (1988) and then, a year later, compressed in a size of a brochure in which a world known French philosopher proclaimed his program.

a. A call to support a specific project

There are some similarities between Jonardon Ganery's and Allein Badiou's manifestos. The both call support for their global projects. The both use in the titles of their manifestos the preposition “for”. Badiou

appeals for “rebuilding the edifice of philosophy,” which in his view is “a philosophy of events”. Ganery stands for “re:emergent philosophy,” meaning by that “philosophy of a new cartography” made not by a single participant but by all those who exist in this world.

Badiou sees the way to “approaching to the Philosophy” or “returning to the Philosophy” in recognition of the four sources of truth, which he regards as politics, love, art and science. Ganery speaks of “the plurality of ways of thinking,” above the movement for the liberation of intellectual dependence by applying an intercultural method. The two philosophers acknowledge the plurality of cultural worlds. Badiou discovers in disparate worlds their logical order, submitted in the specific form and comes to the conclusion that a single universal logic is impossible [Badiou 2009, 143]. But as rightly noted, “his pluralism looks like the flip side of anticholistic approach to the basic issues of ontology” [Gubman 2012, 21]. As to Ganery, he is consistent and not contradictory to himself in claiming plurality of rationality and logical systems.

b. Protest character

The two manifestos are the protests calling for actions in accord with a proposed program. In Ganery’s manifesto it is the protest against “the colonial use of reason” by giant philosophers of 18th–19th centuries” [Ganery 2016, 135]. Colonial rationalists are subjected to harsh criticism for false claim to neutrality: “Make your use of reason like ours, or admit that you are outside reason and not actually engaged in philosophy at all” [Ganery 2016, 136]. A history of epistemology in the West describes itself simply as the history of epistemology. The colonial power has philosophy, the rest of the world has only what is described as “culture” or, more condescendingly still, “wisdom tradition.” The colonizers’ claim that reason is a neutral tool had thus to be exposed as trickery, redressing of a blatant epistemic injustice [Ganery 2016, 136].

May I remind here a quotation from Martin Heidegger – one of “giant philosophers”: “The statement: ‘Philosophy is in its nature Greek’ say nothing else but that: the Occident and Europe, and only they, are originally philosophical in the course of their intrinsic history... The often heard expression ‘Western-European philosophy’ is in truth a tautology” [Heidegger 1963, 3]. Hence the question “What is philosophy?” might be asked only when we are in conversation with Greek rationality [Heidegger 1963, 13].

c. Announcement of a significant event

Ganery announces about entering a new age, which might be called the age of re:emergence. It poses the following key features: first, philosophies from every region of the world, locally grounded in lived experi-

ence and reflection upon it, are finding new autonomous and authentic forms of articulation. Second, the philosophical world is returning to a plural and diverse network of productive sites. Third, Europe and other colonial powers are no longer mandatory conversation partners or points of comparison but rather unprivileged participants in global dialogue [Ganery 2016, 137].

The Manifestos calls philosophers to retrieve and reinvent fashion a “distinctive understanding” of how it all hangs together, and why. When it is therefore asked “Can Asians and other non-Europeans think and reason?” the answer is “Yes, of course!” Must they think and reason as if they are Europeans? No, because the fundamental asymmetry that colonialism produced cannot simply be made to disappear in an act of collective amnesia of the sort intellectuals of former colonial powers seem so remarkably adept. The solidarity among formerly colonized peoples leads to revitalization in the understanding of various inherited pasts.

Ganery refers to some concrete examples of different logics. Since he studied for years logical theories in India, he refers to a fundamental contrast between Western and Indian styles of reasoning, that of formal deduction and that of particular case-based. The latter model most especially developed in early Nyāya logic into a general theory of ethical and normative reasoning. The basic idea is that an object is inferred to have one, unobserved, property on the grounds that it has another, observed, one. The early Indian thinkers presented an important style of thinking, yet one that is not understood if we think of all good reasoning as involving subsumption to general rule. There can be diversity in reasoning-and-evaluating practice without incommensurability. From variation in reasoning practice it does not follow that the idea of reason itself is context-sensitive, though the uses to which it is put may well be: it implies only that there is a variation in the base-sets of exemplars and in the kinds of background information that inform similarity judgments. Case-based norms are trans-sectarian but dialogue-specific. The model provides for the kind of immersed rational practice that Ganery regards as essential in the evaluation, development and criticism of values, using cognitive resources available to a group in order to provide authentic forms of justification [Ganery 2016, 139].

The reemergence of Philosophy

A Manifesto for Re:emergent Philosophy is concluded by Ganery’s definition of Philosophy. “The conception of philosophy,” he says, “embodies a type of pluralistic realism, a commitment to the claim that there are many ways to investigate a reality whose existence is independent of human inquirers, a plurality of ways of thinking that cannot be reduced

to any single mode of interrogation (least of all to the colonial use of reason)” [Ganery 2016, 141].

Understood in this way philosophy should overcome the reductionism inherent to universalism. Pluralism assumes different connotations for different levels of discussion: the political, scientific, religious, and philosophical. But regardless of whether it is in terms of relativism or diversification it always rejects claims to neutrality by the colonial use of rationality. The *Manifesto* is aimed at promotion of the project of the new cartography of philosophy [Ganery 2016, 142].

The definition of philosophy

To become a Program that can mobilize the like-minded people this Manifesto still requires to be critically reviewed. First of all, it should obtain to clarify what could be called “philosophy”? The claims of the existence of New Zealand Maori’s [Stewart 2016] or African peoples’ philosophies [Chimakonam 2015] may sound politically attractive – correct, yet they are poorly justified. A broad meaning of the concept philosophy needs much better arguments for justification.

The New Russian Philosophic Encyclopedia shares the definition commonly accepted in the West: “it is a deep reflection in a rational, methodological, and systematic way upon those aspect of experience that are of the greatest concern to the human” [The New Encyclopedia Britannica 1973–1974, 14, 248]. With such a definition seems valid “excommunication” non-Western cultures from philosophy because there it is assumed that rationality is not the only method of cognition. Imposed by the Greeks the concept of philosophy is not directly related to rationality: its original meaning is “love for wisdom.” Comprehension or rather approaching wisdom is achievable not only by reason. Without denying the tremendous possibilities of the mind, Blaise Pascal emphasized cognitive role of “heart,” which constantly discovers nothingness of reason in the face of endless universe and incomprehensible God.

Logic in India

From the above definition of philosophy follows that to create a new mapping is feasible on the basis of philosophy of the new cartography of rationality. Ganery cites the example of one of Indian logical systems. He does that not only because of his Hindu origin but mostly because the particularity of logical systems in India is accepted more than in other cultural areals. In fact, logic has been highly developed by classical Brahman schools (*darshans*), first of all by Nyaya, in Buddhism and Jain philosophy.

But what should we do with Chinese, Islamic, African, Latino-American philosophic traditions concerning whose rationality there is minimum consensus.

The specificity of Chinese rationalism

Let us take for example China. While speaking about knowledge it is traditionally used a term *zhi* that is translated as “wisdom” if it is in a form of a noun or as “to know” in case it is a verb. This character is used in *Analects of Confucius* 113 times. That as much more than *Dao* or *ren*.

In modern philosophy “knowledge” commonly means the knowledge about facts, which make the world as it is, or the knowledge about the scientific laws and theories, which explain those facts. However in *Analects* the above mentioned types of knowledge are not discussed. What *zhi* appears in its most philosophically usages by Confucius is something like “a sense of what it is more fitting to do in our interactions, understanding why, doing them, and achieving a sense of contentment from so doing” [Rosemont 2011, 18]. The Confucian approach transcends the epistemological realm of truth, and enters the realm of moral goodness” [Ni 2011, 45].

It is noteworthy that considering knowledge in conjunction with the action the Chinese were inclined to acknowledge the highest recognition of the significance of the action. The normative formula of the relation between “knowledge” and “action” has been given by Zhu Xi (1130–1200): “Speaking about the preceding and the following, knowledge is preceding. Speaking about the insignificant and significant, action is significant” [Kobzev 2011, 27]. However at times there had been deviations from the traditionally dominant position. Thus, Wang Yang-ming (1472–1529) put forward a proposition about “coinciding unity of knowledge and action” [Kobzev 2011, 27]. Inspired by the progress of Western sciences, Tan Sitong (1805–1898), the ideologue of reforms, formulated the thesis about the priority of “knowledge”: “I appreciate knowledge and scorn action; knowledge is a matter of spiritual heavenly souls while action is a matter of bodily low souls... True knowledge necessarily implies the ability for action” [Kobzev 2011, 27].

It is well known that besides Confucianism other directions of thought existed in China. The most significant of them is Daoism. The Daoists consider knowledge as a “harmful habit.” The Daoist sage knows like an infant, or like an animal, in a very anti-Aristotelian way. The sage does not venture out on a never-ending journey of intellectual discoveries but remains at his place and masters the art of intellectual reduction – for the sake of perfecting the natural abilities and instincts. If one refrains from the seductions of knowledge, one will be able to act in perfect harmony with what is naturally so. More knowledge only leads to more interference, to more artificial infringements on what is natural [Moeller 2011, 63].

Any philosophical tradition, in varying degrees, is focused on knowledge. But there are differences in emphasis and how they relate to the *theoretical* knowledge. Since the Chinese tradition gives a vital importance to pragmatic knowledge, it can be assumed that the desire for this type of knowledge has not actually motivated the development of the general theory of knowledge. This is evident by the very fact that ancient Chinese philosophers did not leave after itself treatises on logic.

The specificity of Chinese rationalism raises tough confrontation of viewpoints in the philosophical community. In Russia it is most clearly demonstrated by Artem Kobzev and Andrey Krushinsky. Philosopher and sinologist A. Kobzev insists on the complete foreignness of formal logic to the Chinese scientific and philosophical tradition due to the dominance of philosophical naturalism, undeveloped idealism and logical representations of idealization and abstraction.

A. Kobzev has developed the theory of universal methodological opposition: logic versus numerology, whereby in the West the former prevailed over the latter, and in China the latter over the former. For him, it is obvious that the *I Ching* did not formulate any logical or mathematical theory. The “characters and numbers” used in traditional Chinese science are nothing more than special character descriptions to classify the world (classification schemes), owned by the correlative, associative, categorical thinking [Kobzev 1994].

A. Krushinsky adheres to the opposite position. He argues that China is “the only civilization in the world, which formed a system of relevant logic-methodological views on the linguistic foundation, which is fundamentally different than in other civilizations. The most significant feature of this difference is the gap between phonetic and ideographic writing systems, which separates the Indo-European from the Chinese. Moreover, he sees in the ancient Chinese logic a variant of modern mathematical logic [Krushinsky 1983].

The differences of opinions and evaluations concerning the logical systems (and even the very possibility of their existence), which underlie the rationalism that is different from what is considered to be established in Western history of philosophy, require continued research efforts. Here we mean all the researchers, irrespective of their affiliation to the national culture, all those who are interested in a specified range of issues. The exclusion of the Western philosophers from that endeavor is reckless. It is absolutely not justified to accuse all of them of “colonial thinking.” Their role should be evaluated with fairness, i.e., not just by criticizing what was already fully implemented by tough condemnation of *Orientalism* by Edward Said [Said 2006], but by recognizing their achievements in overcoming Eurocentrism.

Conclusion: Has the time come for post-comparativism?

The *Manifesto* of Jonardon Ganery displays the growing radicalism in the Western philosophical community. Radicalism is always accompanied by rush in desire to achieve the goal. Ganery welcomes the advent of post-comparative philosophy, which, according to him, is proclaimed by another kind of a manifesto – “Preface” and “Conclusion” to the volume *Comparative Philosophy without Borders* by Arindam Chakrabarti and Ralf Weber [Chakrabarti & Weber 2016]. Philosophy without borders means crossing geographic zones, cultural areas and time periods that have brought to discovery of concepts, arguments and propositions, produced as a result of years of cross-fertilization of ideas learned from different cultures, historical periods, texts and disciplines [Chakrabarti & Weber 2016, 22].

The authors of the two mentioned Manifestos demonstrate the revolutionary fervor for radical changes: “Once we have climbed up to the level playing field of global combative cooperative critical creative philosophy from the fetid wells of centuries of unacknowledged epistemic inequalities, we can, it is hoped, throw away the ladder of comparison” [Chakrabarti & Weber (eds.) 2016, 238]. Ganery fully supports this spirit which, as he says, “constitutes a brilliant call-to-arms” [Ganery 2016a, 164].

To what extent such a call is justified? Is a philosophy without borders at all possible? Does not that lead to a homogenization of differences, resulting in the emergence of a global philosophy? Is not it too premature to waiver from comparative philosophy, which has not yet exhausted its capacities and remained necessary in the formation of the new cartography of philosophy that is in its turn impossible without a carefully formatted atlas of rationality?

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