



**THE PROBLEM OF TRUTH IN ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY**

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A B S T R A C T	K E Y W O R D S
<p>The article analyzes the views on truth of ancient Western philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Democritus, Heraclitus and Zeno, and discusses the importance of dogmatic and skeptical ideas in revealing the content and concept of truth.</p>	<p>Ancient period, truth, problem of truth, concept of truth, practice, dogmatism, rationalism, empiricism, skepticism</p>

**Introduction**

The man looked at the grass and said, "The grass is green." He does not think if he is speaking the truth or not. And if he thinks about his words and begins to analyze why he called the grass green, and not yellow or blue, he will say: "I see that the grass is green, and therefore it will correspond to the truth if I say that the grass is green." As soon as he uttered the magic the word "truth", a problem arises that has not been ignored by any major thinker of the past and present.

A skeptic philosopher approaches our imaginary person who has paid attention to the green grass and asks: "How can you prove that in front of you there is really grass and it is green? What you said is a judgment, but is it identical with objective reality? You say that you see green grass, but color is a property determined by the peculiarities of your visual apparatus. How do you prove that your experience is identical with the reality that stimulated it? And what was really behind your feeling that caused it, if you rely only on these sensations? You will answer that all people in your place would see the same thing, but, firstly, this is not so, because there are sick and color-blind people, and secondly, even if everyone sees the same, where is the guarantee that this is not a consequence the sameness of the visual apparatus in all people, and creatures with a different structure will see something different. You have already thought and are ready to agree that the grass, perhaps, by itself and not green, as we see it; perhaps all other properties of it are determined by the characteristics of our senses, but the very existence of the source of our sensations is not to be doubted. Let it be some kind of material formation, let it be something ideal, but this something exists. Okay, but then what is left of the truth? Something exists. Of course, something exists, because you understand that you exist yourself. However, isn't this not enough for the truth? To say so is to say nothing.

Our man in the street is defeated in thought, but the ancient philosophers-dogmatists rush to his aid and vying with each other begin to offer their views on truth. Some (Cyrenaics) say that the question of the truthfulness of the content of sensations should not be considered at all. Truth is "not what is in

it, not the content of sensation, but it itself as sensation." We feel that the grass is green, and this very feeling is the truth. No, say others (the Eleatics), the sensations deceive us. They are unable to keep up with the eternally flowing being, and only thinking is able to penetrate into the unchanging true essence of phenomena.

We must trust our thinking, and if, for example, movement is inconceivable (it is contradictory from the point of view of thinking, because the body cannot simultaneously be and not be at a given point), then, in fact, movement does not exist and being is one and motionless ... Democritus enters into the dispute as true, only that which lies at the basis of things, which is the cause of phenomena, can be recognized. A phenomenon depends on the perceiving apparatus of a person, but the essence of phenomena is independent of a person and his senses, and therefore it can be called objective truth. "The fact is that there is no warm and cold in nature, but the form (atom), changing its motion, also makes changes in us" [1].

It is not things that are true, not something corporeal, always in motion and becoming, but the eternal immovable ideas of things, Plato argues. They are the perfect patterns with which things fit. But that means, Theophrastus continues, the more each thing corresponds to its nature, the closer it is to the truth. "For, of course, the best true worst and healthiest state of the body is the true patient. Indeed, a healthy state is more in line with nature" [2]. Plato's understanding of truth is difficult to fit into the framework of the classical concept of correspondence (the correspondence concept of truth). Rather, we are dealing here with a concept of truth as an ideal (ideal concept of truth). In agreement with other authors (in particular, H. Patnam), we consider Aristotle to be the founder of the correspondence concept.

To know the truth, Aristotle enters into a conversation (continuing the thoughts of Democritus about truth as the cause of phenomena, but presenting the finding of truth not as a separate one-time act, but as a process going into an indefinite distance), we must consistently delve into the study of the causes of phenomena. "The most true thing is that for the next there is a reason for its truth. Therefore, the beginning of the eternally existing must always be the most true: they are not true at times and the reason for their existence is not in something else, but, on the contrary, they are the reasons for the existence of everything else" [3]. Modern science is based on this understanding of the truth, striving to penetrate deeper and deeper into matter in the confidence that it will more fully cognize the truth. The comprehension of truth appears in Aristotle as a study, and he can rightfully be called one of the founders of the scientific way of thinking. Scientists can definitely put Aristotle in their camp. Aristotle continues: "To investigate the truth in one respect is difficult, in another it is easy. This can be seen from the fact that no one is able to achieve it properly, but does not fail, and everyone says something about nature and one by one, however, nothing or little adds to the truth, but when it adds up, it turns out a noticeable value" [4]. In general, each one carries a grain into the bag of absolute truth. Here the representative of dialectical materialism could not refrain from delight: Yes, here Aristotle expressed the idea of the possibility of collecting relative truths into absolute truth.

However, the ancient skeptic again intervenes in the dispute of philosophers and says: "Each of you, dogmatists, has his own concept of truth. But the very fact that you are arguing among yourself and cannot come to an agreement about what truth is, indicates that there is no objective truth. After all, if, as one of you, Protagoras, says, "man is the measure of all things," and everyone speaks differently, then where is the truth? Wouldn't it be better to accept the provisions put forward by Gorgias: "One (provision) - precisely the first - says that nothing exists; second - that if something exists, then it is

unknowable for a person, third - that if it is knowable, then at least it is inexpressible and inexplicable for a neighbor”[5]. The first position of Gorgias is based on the objective dialectic of Heraclitus (“you cannot enter the same river twice”). After all, if we recognize that everything flows and changes, then everything becomes and nothing exists as being. The absolutization of becoming in the Heraclitean dialectic served as the basis for ontological skepticism. The second position of Gorgias includes doubt about the ability to adequately reflect existing things with the help of feelings or reason.

The basis of this type of skepticism is also the objective dialectics, but in its cognitive aspect (epistemological skepticism). Being flows through human sensations, like water through fingers, and nothing lingers, therefore we cannot say that something is cognized by us, even if it exists objectively. It is impossible to cognize something that exists objectively and independently of a person in the form in which it exists, precisely because, by definition, it is independent of the subject of cognition. The third provision of Gorgias says that if a person can learn something, he is not able to adequately express and convey his knowledge to another, since the essence of language is not identical to the essence of what is known (linguistic skepticism).

Skeptics emphasized the relativity of knowledge, its coarsening and schematization of reality. Zeno's aporias and numerous paradoxes cited by the Sexta Empiricus (for example, the paradox of a grain and a heap: one grain does not make up a heap, two also, etc., the addition of each subsequent grain does not create a heap, which means that it cannot exist at all), demonstrate this very vividly. The dogmatists had one strong argument against the skeptics: “How can you make any judgments and claim the truth of your statements if you yourself think that there is no truth?

You say, "I know that I know nothing." But why are you sure of the truth of this position? How do you know that you know nothing? " The last ancient skeptic, Sextus Empiricus, was forced to agree with this position and summed up the ancient skepticism and, to some extent, all ancient philosophy, ending it with a doubt in his own views. "I don't know," he said, "whether I know something or not." Struggling against an indicative sign that clearly points to the implicit, skeptics actually fought against the possibility of theoretical knowledge. Sextus expressed the basic idea of a skeptical philosophy with which it seems many of its opponents will also agree, as probably with the following statement: "And to wish to imagine that phenomena not only appear, but also exist, is the business of people who are not satisfied with the necessary for needs, but trying to snatch the possible" [6]. The point is that people do not want to be satisfied with what is necessary in thinking, which by its nature is free, and this dissatisfaction is one of the powerful stimuli for the development of philosophy.

Strange as it may seem (in philosophy, however, we must get used to oddities), the most consistent skepticism opens the door to truth, even if only possible. If “I don’t know if I know something or not,” then maybe I still know something? It would seem that the sad result of ancient philosophy at the highest point of its skepticism unexpectedly gives hope.

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