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## THE ONTOLOGY OF EXISTENCE: THE NEXT PARADIGM.

**A review of the book "THE IDEA OF THE WORLD: A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY ARGUMENT FOR THE MENTAL NATURE OF REALITY", by Bernardo Kastrup**

In recent decades, attempts to create and argue a new ontology of existence that could provide a robust alternative to the mainstream physicalist metaphysics have been made in science and philosophy. A new book by Bernardo Kastrup (2019, 312 p.), a well-known specialist in the field of philosophy of mind and neuroscience of consciousness, offers the author's conceptually clear and rigorous formulation of the philosophical system. The author proves that appearance and reality in ontology are fundamentally experiential. A universal phenomenal consciousness is the sole ontological primitive, which patterns of excitation constitute existence, and a human being is dissociated mental complexes of this universal consciousness, surrounded like islands by the ocean of its mentation. Kastrup's idea of the World has an idealist ontological underpinning. The author contrasts his vision of the world with the existing ideas of the world perception, such as physicalism, microexperientialism and cosmopsychism. The quality of the argument, which is given in the book, suggests the revival of the philosophy of idealism as the next paradigm, according to which a form of universal mind will be viewed as nature's sole fundamental entity.

*Keywords:* ontology; reality; man; universal phenomenal consciousness; philosophy of idealism; philosophy of mind

I first got acquainted with the research of Bernardo Kastrup having read his two articles *Making Sense of the Mental Universe* (Kastrup, 2017) and *The Next Paradigm* (Kastrup, 2018), as well as the article of Horokhov S. and Zhukova G. (2018) *Contemporary Cosmological Paradigms and Their Impact on Educational Research*, in which the authors appeal to the work of Kastrup. I was interested in his research. The articles were perceived as fragments of the author's large-scale intention to overcome the existing paradigm of the materialistic perception of the Universe. After a more deep analysis of the work of Bernardo Kastrup I found six books more having been published by Iff Books. Iff Books specializes in publishing books that augment our understanding of the human condition, society and civilization, and the world or universe in which we live. Dr. Kastrup has proven to be one of the most famous and compelling critics of the present-day materialist worldview. In his new book, Bernardo Kastrup *revives* the philosophy of idealism in fact, presents an analytic, rigorous articulation of ontology of idealism according to which reality is entirely mental. I have found out that in essence, Dr. Kastrup and me work on the same scientific problem. We constitute a new paradigm of world perception, in which rationalism and its derivatives humanism and metaphysics occupy an important, but not decisive place. However, if I consider a new paradigm, relying mainly on Neo-Platonism, philosophical anthropology and neurophilosophy (Bazaluk, 2015; Bazaluk, 2018), then Dr. Kastrup builds his argumentation based on the modern research in the field of philosophy of mind and neuroscience of consciousness. This approach makes the argument more modern, pointed and convincing.

Dr. Kastrup's new book consists of the 10 academic papers published previously in a relatively short period of time 2016-2018. The author uses an interdisciplinary approach that greatly enriches the description of the ontology of reality. With every read page of the text, the reader is convinced of the competence of the author, his free possession of knowledge and methods of philosophy of mind, neuroscience of consciousness, psychology and foundations of physics. We emphasize that each of the 10 papers was published in the leading scientific journals on the rele-

vant profiles: *Europe's Journal of Psychology* (EJOP); *Disputatio*; *Journal of Consciousness Exploration and Research*; *Philosophy and Cosmology*; *SAGE Open*. The publication in a reputable journal that uses the Peer-review process confirms the high professional level of the author.

The main idea of the book consists in description and protection of the ontology of reality, which according to the author "is fundamentally experiential" (Kastrup, 2019, p. 6). One of the key statements of the author is "A universal phenomenal consciousness is the sole ontological primitive, whose patterns of excitation constitute existence" (Kastrup, 2019, p. 6). This statement, in fact, is a continuation of the ideas of Plotinus (1952) and the Neo-Platonists about the Universal Soul and the Divine Intelligence. Pierre Hadot (2005), a well-known expert in the history of the philosophy of antiquity and the Middle Ages, formulated these ideas as follows: "the soul must rise from its individual level to the level of the Universal Soul or even the Divine Intelligence, in which the whole ideal system of the Universe is located" (p. 211). However, Bernardo Kastrup considers the fundamental heritage of Neoplatonism reinterpreting the foundational theoretical inferences of the clinical approach called "depth psychology". The author addresses an issue of great significance for philosophy of mind: whether there are indeed unconscious mental processes. In Chapter 9 the author argues his negative answer. Dr. Kastrup (2019) submit that «this is due to misinterpretation of the observations: the *subset* of consciousness called "meta-consciousness" in the literature is often mistaken for consciousness proper, thereby artificially creating space for an "unconscious"» (p. 151). The author suggests hypothesis, according to which "all mental processes may in fact be conscious, the *appearance* of unconsciousness arising from our dependence on self-reflective introspection for gauging awareness" (Kastrup, 2019, p. 151). The denial of the fact, that the human psyche comprises two main subdivisions: a conscious and an unconscious segment, allows the author to conclude "that all mental processes may be conscious, but that consciousness itself may be fundamental" (Kastrup, 2019, p. 170).

The key idea of the book consists in the statement that men are "dissociated mental complexes of universal consciousness, surrounded like islands by the ocean of its mentation" (Kastrup, 2019, p. 6); that "the inanimate universe we see around us is the extrinsic appearance of a possibly instinctual but certainly elaborate universal thought, much like a living brain is the extrinsic appearance of a person's conscious inner life" (Kastrup, 2019, p. 6). In fifteen chapters of the book, Bernardo Kastrup reinforces a conceptual exposition with metaphors, trying to evoke in his readers a felt sense of the world he was describing.

Personally, I was convinced by Kastrup's ontology of existence. I was especially impressed with Dr. Kastrup's intention. While reading the book, I found that the article *Making Sense of the Mental Universe*, which I had read earlier, turned out to be Chapter 6, and perhaps the key chapter of the book. That is, the author foresaw the end result of his work. He turned the idea of his book into a transformer, which is disassembled into 10 academic papers easily and folded into the finished book. This allowed him to arouse interest in his *Idea of the World* among specialists who represent various scientific fields: psychologists, philosophers, cosmologists, etc. To those scientists, who were interested in the proposed idea of the world, the author proposed the whole book, the assembled structure in which the philosophy of idealism was presented in a new, revived state.

As a wish for the future, I would like to say what exactly was not enough for me after reading *The Idea of the World*. Martin Heidegger wrote that according to Plato, the founder of the philosophy of idealism, the "image" for the idea of all ideas is "ἡ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἰδέα" or "the idea of the good"; the ascent to the vision of the highest idea is *paideia* (education), which forms "the

## АНТРОПОЛОГІЧНА ПРОБЛЕМАТИКА В ІСТОРІЇ ФІЛОСОФІЇ

correctness of the gaze" (Heidegger, 1998). Bernardo Kastrup showed that for him the "image" for the idea of all ideas is cosmic consciousness. However, what does this image of a higher idea give people: an idealist ontology, The Next Paradigm? And that's all? Pierre Hadot distinguished fundamentally between "doing philosophy and producing discourse about philosophy" (Hadot, 2005). Heidegger attributed the philosophers who built and mastered in their grandiose speculative constructions to *das Man*, or to not true presence. I consider it is very important that Bernardo Kastrup would explain the path to the ascent to the vision the highest idea, i.e. open the philosophy of idealism as a way of life in his subsequent books.

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АНТРОПОЛОГІЧНА ПРОБЛЕМАТИКА В ІСТОРІЇ ФІЛОСОФІЇ

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В останні десятиліття в науці та філософії були спроби створити і затвердити нову онтологію існування, яка могла б стати надійною альтернативою існуючій фізикалістській метафізики. Нова книга Бернарда Каструпа (2019, 312 с.), відомого фахівця в галузі філософії розуму і неврології свідомості, пропонує концептуально чітке і строге формулювання філософської системи автора. Автор доводить, що прояви і реальність в онтології принципово експериментальні. Універсальна феноменальна свідомість є єдиною онтологічною основою, яка визначає спрямованість існування, а людина – це дисоційовані ментальні комплекси цієї універсальної свідомості, що оточені, подібно до островів, океаном цієї ментальності. Ідея Каструпа про світ має ідеалістичну онтологічну основу. Автор протиставляє своє бачення світу існуючим ідеям світосприйняття, таким як фізикалізм, мікроемпіризм і космопсихізм. Якість наведеної в книзі аргументації дозволяє говорити про відродження філософії ідеалізму як наступної парадигми, згідно з якою універсальний розум стане розглядатися як єдина фундаментальна сутність природи.

*Ключові слова:* онтологія; реальність; людина; універсальна феноменальна свідомість; філософія ідеалізму; філософія розуму

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В последние десятилетия в науке и философии осуществлялись попытки создать и утвердить новую онтологию существования, которая могла бы стать надежной альтернативой существующей физикалистской метафизике. Новая книга Бернарда Каструпа (2019, 312 с.), известного специалиста в области философии разума и неврологии сознания, предлагает концептуально четкую и строгую формулировку философской системы автора. Автор доказывает, что проявления и реальность в онтологии принципиально экспериментальны. Универсальное феноменальное сознание является единственной онтологической основой, которая определяет направленность существования, а человек – это диссоциированные ментальные комплексы этого универсального сознания, окруженные, подобно островам, океаном этой ментальности. Идея Каструпа о мире имеет идеалистическую онтологическую основу. Автор противопоставляет свое видение мира существующим идеям мировосприятия, таким как физикализм, микроэмпиризм и космопсихизм. Качество приведенной в книге аргументации, позволяет говорить о возрождении философии идеализма как следующей парадигмы, согласно которой универсальный разум станет рассматриваться как единственная фундаментальная сущность природы.

*Ключевые слова:* онтология; реальность; человек; универсальное феноменальное сознание; философия идеализма; философия разума

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