

## REVIEW OF THE MONOGRAPH

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**Author's collective. *Philosophy in the Border Zone*. 2015. Orkana Akademisk.**

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 2015 the presentation of the book “Philosophy in the Border Zone”, published in one of the leading Norwegian publishing houses “Orkana Akademisk”, took place at the Institute of Philosophy of Saint-Petersburg State University in advance of the traditional Philosophy Days in Saint-Petersburg. The book became the result of the long-term cooperation of philosophers from Murmansk State Humanities University and Nordland University (Bodø, Norway).

Since 2007 researchers from Murmansk and Bodø have had regular meetings the outcome of which became the Joint Master's Degree Programme in Practical Knowledge (Borderology). At the same time this educational project became a unique research platform which allowed focusing intellectual efforts of philosophers from 2 countries on understanding the border phenomenon in different aspects. Later on researchers from Saint-Petersburg and Helsinki joined the project and at the present time it is planned to broaden scientific and educational cooperation by involving Lithuanian researchers from Vilnius and Klaipeda given that a strong school of borderland research has developed in Lithuania and its experience may help the project in Borderology move to a totally new level.

“Philosophy in the Border Zone” is not a usual collection of articles but a whole collective monograph consisting of thirteen chapters, seven of which are written by Russian authors, five – by Norwegian participants, and one chapter issues from the Finnish Philosopher Thomas Wallgren's pen. One can say that the book represents the experience of crossborder philosophic dialogue devoted to the topic of the border. The co-editors of the monograph were MSHU (at present – MASU) rector Professor Andrey Sergeev, who had written the introduction to the book, from the Russian side, and Professor of Nordland University Viggo Rossvør who contributed with his conceptual reflections on the book in the afterword. The introduction and the afterword in this case are a sort of mutually reflecting intellectual mirrors in which their authors try to catch the image of the Other.

As Professor V. Rossvør mentioned, the central problem of the book is the question “Do we know the Other?”, provided that the content of this question is mainly related to Philosophy of Culture and not to Politics. The attempt to understand the Other, being who you are, is what unites all the authors of the monograph.

Professor A. Sergeev writes that the border “should be seen not only as something that separates and distinguishes one thing from

another, but also as a real place and intellectual *topos* for conjoining what is different, one where the experience of the Other first becomes a relevant and important, and then even a necessary moment of your own, personal experience". Thus, the border on which interaction with the Other takes place, becomes also the instrument of self-understanding.

The content of the monograph is characterized by the thematic diversity in which the basic conceptual orientation on the dialogue and interdisciplinary character is implemented. It is no coincidence that ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin were the unifying methodology both for the Russian and Norwegian philosophers, moreover, the Norwegian researchers were the first who suggested orientation on Bakhtin's idea. One can say that the Russian participants paradoxically met "the Norwegian philosopher" Bakhtin who came to them through the border and made them look at themselves as at the Other.

Among the Chapters of the monograph directly connected with Bakhtin's ideas one can mention the reflections of Ruslan Loshakov on Bakhtin's *prima philosophia*, Thomas Wallgren's reflections fitting Bakhtin in the wide historic and philosophic perspective from Socrates to Wittgenstein and von Wright, Aleksandr Sautkin's text about the living dead as liminal figure and the chapter on self-consciousness, dialogue and thought experiment, written by Johan Arnt Myrstad.

The topics of other chapters are not based on the notions of Bakhtin but they still express the common aspiration for dialogue and

polyphony of reflections on the border. Andrey Sergeev analyses the problem of the internal, the external and one's own, Andrey Kopylov reflects on the linguistics borders from the point of view of Linguistic Philosophy, Boris Sokolov focuses on the meta-position of the philosopher using the figures of Cheat and Smuggler for its description, Andrey Vinogradov reflects on the border between individual persons and collective units, acting as historic process agents. Peter Vedal Utnes explores the problem of scientific knowledge development, addressing the Post-Positivist Concept of Thomas Kuhn, Andreas Lødemel analyses the creativity of Knut Hamsun in the context of the outstanding Norwegian writer's understanding the border between the culture and nature and the role of the Sami people image in the interpretation of this border, the pedagogical and educational aspect of the border is analyzed in the texts of Inna Ryzhkova on internationalization of higher education and Jan Selmer Methi on the border zone as an arena of exceeding oneself, and the final chapter of the monograph is Viggo Rossvær's meditations on Kant.

The thematic breadth of the monograph presupposes the stylistic diversity: some chapters are classically styled, the others reflect post-modernist interest in the intellectual game, in creation of the "conceptual personae" (in Gilles Deleuze's terms) and sudden philosophic and cultural allusions. The meeting of different types of thinking, different philosophic traditions gives rise to the polyphony where each voice is significant, entering into a continual dialogue with other free and equal voices.