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Contingency in Philosophical Anthropological Knowledge

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Abstract. The study of contingency within a philosophical-anthropological framework is increasingly relevant due to contemporary societal and scientific advancements, particularly in digital technology and artificial intelligence. This research examines the phenomenon of contingency as perceived and interpreted through philosophical-anthropological thought, focusing on its role and significance in human self-understanding and development. The study employs various research methods, including phenomenological, hermeneutic, and comparative analyses of philosophical traditions. Drawing on historical and contemporary works by Western and Eastern philosophers, such as J.P. Sartre, N. Kitarō, and Q. Meillassoux, the research explores how contingency relates to key concepts like subjectivity, identity, and the human relationship with time and space. The findings suggest that human identity and culture are not static but evolve through the influence of new knowledge and experiences, emphasizing the importance of flexibility and adaptability. Contingency, characterized by randomness and the absence of logical necessity, contrasts with determinism and necessity, highlighting the potential for continuous growth and transformation in personal and cultural contexts. Contingency can be defined as the necessity of realizing one of several possibilities. This underscores the need for a dynamic understanding of human self-realization and identity in the 21st century.

Keywords: randomness, necessity, possibility, reality, unforeseen circumstances

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Контингентность в философско-антропологическом познании

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Аннотация. Исследование контингентности в рамках философско-антропологической парадигмы приобретает все большую актуальность благодаря современным общественным и научным достижениям, особенно в области цифровых технологий и искусственного интеллекта. Данное исследование рассматривает феномен контингентности через призму философско-антропологической мысли, акцентируя внимание на его роли и значении в понимании человеком самого себя и в его развитии. В работе применяются различные методы исследования, включая феноменологический, герменевтический и сравнительный анализ философских традиций. Опираясь на исторические и современные труды западных и восточных философов, таких как Ж.-П. Сартр, Н. Китаро и К. Мейясу, исследуется соотношение контингентности с ключевыми концепциями, такими как субъективность, идентичность и человеческие взаимоотношения во времени и пространстве. Результаты показывают, что человеческая идентичность и культура не являются статичными, но развиваются под влиянием новых знаний и опыта, подчеркивая важность гибкости и адаптируемости. Контингентность, характеризующаяся случайностью и отсутствием логической необходимости, противопоставляется детерминизму и необходимости, что подчеркивает возможность постоянного роста и трансформации в личностном и культурном контексте. Контингентность может быть определена как необходимость реализации одной из нескольких возможностей. Это подчеркивает важность динамичного понимания самореализации и идентичности человека в XXI веке.

Ключевые слова: случайность, необходимость, возможность, реальность, непредвиденные обстоятельства

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Introduction

Modern trends in the development of society and science determine the relevance of studying contingency in the context of a philosophical-anthropological approach. For humanity, positioned in a world of digital technologies and artificial intelligence, this topic becomes increasingly significant due to the need to understand what it means to be human and our place in this world. Human perceptions of contingency are fundamentally changing in contemporary culture. Consequently, there is a need to consider the category of contingency in

philosophical-anthropological cognition. The object of the study is the phenomenon of contingency as an element of reality, perceived and interpreted within the framework of philosophical-anthropological thought. The subject of the study is certain aspects of the perception and interpretation of contingency in a philosophical-anthropological context. This research aims to define the significance and role of the category of contingency in philosophical-anthropological knowledge. The methods include philosophical-anthropological, logical-philosophical, phenomenological analysis, hermeneutic, and comparative analysis of philosophical traditions. The theoretical foundation is based on a historical review of the works of Western and Eastern philosophers who examine contingency in a philosophical-anthropological context. The analysis includes works by J.P. Sartre and Q. Meillassoux on applying contingency to human experience and existence in the context of choice, freedom, and the meaning of life. The study also explores the connection of contingency with other key concepts of philosophical anthropology, such as subjectivity, identity, and the relationship of humans to time and space.

The genesis of the concept of contingency in European philosophy

Humans steadily advance in their development, overcoming emerging difficulties. At crossroads or when faced with unexpected obstacles, they choose the most convenient direction, sometimes turning right, other times left. Looking back, they see only the most recent segment of their journey. But they discover a dramatically changed landscape behind them when the road leads upward, ascending ever higher. A view opens not only of the path left behind but numerous other roads forming an extensive network stretching to the horizon. Some trails lead in the same direction as theirs, while others veer off. Previously unnoticed paths now appear shorter and more convenient from above. What once seemed like a straightforward route now appears as a complex labyrinth with many unexplored possibilities.

This is also the process of developing the organic world on Earth, full of dead ends, exits, and forks. The evolution of humans and their ancestors is just part of this complex labyrinth. People, accustomed to considering themselves the “crown of creation”, often depict their evolutionary history as a journey along the only possible path to a predetermined outcome. However, it represents a series of choices at each stage of development, where our long path is strewn with numerous rejected alternatives. Only now, with the expansion of our knowledge base, do we begin to understand that the path we have traveled was not the only possible one and many turns on it were determined by random circumstances.

The term “contingency” comes from the Latin word “contingents”, meaning “accidental”, “possible”, but not necessary. In philosophy, this concept describes events or states that might not have occurred or could be otherwise, unlike events considered inevitable or necessary. Contingency can be defined as the necessity of

realizing one of several possibilities. It should also be noted that translating this term into different languages without losing its core meaning is challenging. In Aristotelian rhetoric, contingency indicates the absence of logical necessity and the absence of organized meaning. Understood as randomness, contingency became equivalent to chaos and unpredictability. In some cases, contingency is considered as unforeseen circumstances. This term has a significant interpretation in connection with the problem of being thanks to metaphysics.

The notion of randomness first arose within ancient religions and ancient art, where randomness was understood as a blind force reigning everywhere, lurking at every step, a natural social element, the power of forces that stand above man and suppress him. As social relations developed and changes in human consciousness occurred during the “Axial Age”, there was an increasing need to explain the source of changes in the environment and the human being himself, the relationship between man and chance, and the possibility of resisting what happens beyond human will.

One of the first thinkers to consider the problem of randomness was Anaxagoras, who believed that randomness results from the interaction of cosmos and chaos. He thought that each new event in the world is ordered through reason, although this did not mean that random events always obey a necessary course of events. Anaxagoras rejected divine providence, asserting that “all human affairs happen by chance”. This understanding of randomness as an original force associated with chaos reflects the movement from random to necessary. Anaxagoras would argue that the formation of the Milky Way, which appears random, results from a chaotic mix of matter ordered by nous (mind or reason) [1].

Following Anaxagoras, Democritus further refines the concept of randomness by introducing atomism. While Anaxagoras sees randomness as an interplay of chaos and reason, Democritus suggests that what appears random is governed by underlying laws. Democritus applied his understanding of atomism and cosmology to develop ideas about necessity and randomness. He uses the metaphor of a “whirlwind” to describe the initial chaotic movement of atoms, which gradually leads to order and the formation of the world. This concept emphasizes that what we may perceive as laws of necessity govern randomness and result from preceding conditions. Democritus asserts that randomness does not exist as an absolute concept independent of the observer. In his philosophy, randomness is more a manifestation of the limits of human knowledge. From a human perspective, certain events may seem random, but they have their causes in the universal laws of nature. This epistemological concept of randomness implies that “randomness” is merely our incomplete interpretation of reality. It may seem random if a person suddenly finds treasure in his garden. However, according to Democritus, this event was the inevitable result of many preceding factors, such as where the treasure was buried and when the person decided to dig [2].

Transitioning to the social and intellectual climate of the fifth century BC, we enter the “Age of Pericles”, when Greece experienced a period of flourishing

democracy. This was a time when the political and cultural life of Athens reached a high level of development. This period also marked a shift from mythological to rational views of the world, leading to the appearance of the Sophists and philosopher-teachers who traveled to cities and offered education for a fee. Protagoras, one of the first and most famous Sophists from Abdera, was famous for saying that “man is the measure of all things”. This statement emphasizes the relativistic approach to knowledge and experience, asserting that truth or reality differs for each person. This radical view challenged traditional notions of absolute truths, previously associated with myths and religion. Protagoras and other Sophists actively developed ideas that moral and ethical norms are not universal and can change depending on circumstances. Thus, they proposed a new view of laws and rules that were often considered given and imposed by divine will [3].

Skepticism and relativistic humanism of the Sophists contributed to the emergence of Socratic philosophy. Socratic philosophy was undoubtedly influenced by the Delphic oracle’s principle of “Know thyself”. This principle emphasized the importance of self-knowledge and self-reflection in achieving actual knowledge. Renowned for his dialectical method, Socrates argued that truth transcends subjective opinion, emerging instead from rigorous dialogue and critical examination of arguments. He saw randomness as an integral part of life, influencing both our knowledge and moral decisions. For Socrates, randomness was not merely an uncontrollable force but an element that could be understood and navigated through reasoned reflection. In his philosophy, randomness, and fate were not uncontrollable forces; he asserted that man could and should strive to understand and possibly manage these aspects of life through reason and moral choice. In one of Plato’s dialogues, Socrates discusses death and the soul’s immortality with Phaedo. Socrates argues that although death is a random event beyond our control, we can prepare for it through philosophical reflection and moral behavior, thereby managing our attitude toward inevitability [4].

Plato, Socrates’ student, expands on his mentor’s ideas in his early dialogues, where topics of randomness and fate are often addressed, giving them a new philosophical dimension. These topics permeate dialogues such as “Phaedo”, “Alcibiades II”, and “Menoxenias”, in which Plato explores how human freedom and choice interact with external forces and circumstances. These dialogues illustrate the ancient Greek view of the duality between fate and freedom, randomness and control. They emphasize that although certain aspects of life may be predetermined or beyond control, the human capacity for reflection, moral choice, and action allows for shaping one’s life and destiny. In “Menoxenias”, Plato describes Pericles’ political career. Although external circumstances, such as wars and political instability, were beyond his control, his personal decisions and moral qualities allowed him to become an outstanding leader [5].

Continuing this line of thought, Aristotle developed his unique concept of randomness and necessity, which is difficult to interpret in modern terms of determinism and probability. For Aristotle, randomness (τύχη) and spontaneity

(αὐτοματων) play important roles in his system of causality. However, they do not deny the possibility of a certain order or pattern in the world. Random and spontaneous events, in his view, occur not because they have no cause, but because their causes do not carry an intentional or purposeful character. Such events may arise due to coincidences of circumstances or actions not intended to achieve a specific result. This vision does not exclude determinism but suggests that some events happen without a specific purpose or intention, and these events can influence the course of events just as significantly as actions taken with a specific purpose [6].

In medieval European philosophy, which inherits and reinterprets the ideas of ancient thinkers, chance is considered in the context of addressing the problem of human life's predestination and free will. Ultimately, some thinkers view free will as a variant of divine predestination (St. Augustine). Augustine believed that while God predetermines everything that happens in the world, people still have the freedom to choose how to act within this predestination. For instance, a person can choose between good and evil, even though their fate is already known to God.

Machiavelli, a figure often associated with pragmatic and harsh realism in politics, also delves deeply into philosophical reflections on the nature of existence and the role of chance in history and human society. His views on chance and its interaction with necessity and human freedom are revealed in various works, including "Discourses on Livy". Epicurus's ideas on chance and free will may have influenced Machiavelli, particularly in the context of his understanding of temporal uncertainty as the basis for human freedom. Machiavelli held that studying history provides the key to understanding the present, as human nature remains constant through time. However, this understanding of "constancy" is problematized by his acknowledgment that the circumstances causing historical events are complex and variable. This vision emphasizes that historical development is not linear or predictable but rather the result of a complex interaction between human actions and random events. Linking cultural changes to random natural phenomena, Machiavelli highlights that external forces can radically transform, destroy, or create new forms of social organization [7].

Machiavelli also underscores that there is potential for human freedom in conditions of uncertainty and change. Regardless of the significance of chance, a person can always strive for conscious choice and action, using their knowledge and experience to navigate a constantly changing world. In his book "The Prince", Machiavelli advises the ruler to be flexible and adaptive to deal with unforeseen circumstances such as war or betrayal by allies. He emphasizes that a successful ruler must know how to maximize chances.

In the Modern era, classical determinism, which rejects the notion of chance in the objective world, has become prevalent in science and philosophy. Baruch Spinoza, a key figure in this school of thought, argues that what we perceive as "possibility" or "randomness" are just limitations of our understanding. He believes that everything in the world is subject to absolute logical necessity, denying the

existence of free will in the spiritual realm and chance in the physical world. Spinoza also equates chance with causelessness, believing that all events are predestined and could not happen otherwise. These views are rooted in the medieval tradition, where God is seen as the cause of causes, free from chance and the flaws of knowledge. However, modern science and philosophy are also characterized by mechanistic determinism, where necessity is equated with causality. This is evident in the deistic world of Isaac Newton, envisioned as a clock created by God and functioning according to the laws of mechanics and mathematics without further divine intervention.

Francis Bacon, in turn, promotes the independence of objective reality from divine intervention, favoring the Democritean concept that the causes of individual phenomena lie in the necessity inherent in matter itself, without recourse to final causes. In the Modern era, alongside classical determinism, epistemological constructivism begins to develop, offering another perspective on the concept of chance. English philosophers such as John Locke, George Berkeley, and David Hume laid the foundations of this direction. Their ideas were further developed in the works of Immanuel Kant, whose epistemology was characterized by American philosopher Tom Rockmore as a “Copernican revolution”. Kant shifts the focus from the objective world to the subject of cognition, emphasizing that our consciousness constructs our understanding of the world.

In the mid-19th century, with the development of statistical physics, the understanding of chance as an ontological category associated with probability began to take shape. The theory of probabilities started to develop actively, studying how the degree of randomness influences events. This led to the formation of the probabilistic paradigm in science, particularly in physics, where it became clear that precise predictions about the future of a system are impossible due to random deviations. The emergence of quantum mechanics in the early 20th century demonstrated the importance of randomness in science. Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle showed that at the subatomic level, it is impossible to simultaneously predict a particle’s exact position and momentum, introducing an element of chance into physical processes.

The anthropological turn in philosophy, initiated by Socrates and continued by Kant, received new development in the 20th century thanks to the works of Max Scheler and his colleagues, who laid the foundations for philosophical anthropology as a distinct scientific-philosophical school. This period was marked by deep reflections on human nature, its boundaries and possibilities, self-realization, and self-identity. Two main problems are at the forefront of anthropological contemplation: the first is related to human awareness of the possibility of their own “non-being”, the loss of their nature, and the understanding of the boundaries of existence; the second is the revaluation of values, alienation from one’s own “self”, and the search for new forms of self-identity in conditions where traditional ways of existence no longer seem possible. These ideas reflect a profound reassessment of how a person can and should exist in the context of their creative possibilities and social roles.

Max Scheler's philosophical anthropology highlights contingency as a key element in understanding humans and their place in the world. Scheler views contingency as a fundamental characteristic of being important for human nature and philosophy. According to Scheler, the contingent, or random, is necessary for a complete awareness of a person's essence and the essence of the surrounding world.

In the context of Scheler's philosophy, a person must "discover" contingency as a fact of their existence. This awareness leads to an understanding of one's uniqueness and the "fortunate accident" of one's existence, which becomes the starting point for self-fulfillment and a deep understanding of the world and God. Scheler believes that such an approach allows a person to embrace being in its dynamic development and becoming and to reconcile with the world as history, making philosophical anthropology more adequate for understanding human nature compared to traditional metaphysics or religious anthropology.

Scheler also emphasizes that traditional metaphysics and 20th-century neo-Thomism give significant interpretation to contingency in the context of the general problem of being, especially concerning the principle of causality. Contingency is associated with finitude, temporality, and the "otherness" of being, which delineates the boundaries between absolute being and human being. This connection highlights that everything finite and existing in time is contingent, appearing and disappearing, reminding us of the mortality and limitations of human nature. Thus, contingency plays a central role in forming the philosophical understanding of humans in the context of their relationships with the world and themselves.

Imagine a person randomly choosing an unfamiliar book in a library and finding ideas within it that completely change their worldview and life goals. This event can be considered random, but it profoundly impacts the person's understanding of their essence and place in the world. This illustrates how contingency, while seemingly trivial, can lead to significant transformations in personal development and self-perception [8].

The problem of contingency should also be considered in the context of Japanese philosophy, specifically within the Kyoto School. This period was marked by deep reflections on human nature, its boundaries and possibilities, self-realization, and self-identity. Anthropological contemplation focuses on two main issues: the first is related to the human awareness of the possibility of their own 'non-being,' the loss of their nature, and the understanding of the boundaries of existence; the second is the revaluation of values, alienation from one's own 'self,' and the search for new forms of self-identity in conditions where traditional ways of existence no longer seem possible.

The problem of contingency in Eastern philosophical thought

The transformation of philosophical thought in Japan expressed through directions like the Kyoto School, reflects a transition from traditional approaches

to more dynamic and interdisciplinary methods. An example of such change is the work of Kuki Shūzō, especially in his “The Problem of Contingency”, where he combines European continental philosophy with Japanese intellectual traditions. Unlike other representatives of the Kyoto School, such as Nishida Kitarō and Tanabe Hajime, who focused on metaphysical questions through Japanese philosophy or the critique of Western philosophy, Kuki applied a broader spectrum of cultural and philosophical resources, offering a comprehensive view of change and its impact on metaphysics.

He accepts metaphysics but suggests rethinking it, considering human experience and the uncertainty of existence. Kuki uses the concept of unforeseen circumstances not merely as a topic for research but as a tool for rethinking philosophical practice, challenging traditional metaphysical dichotomies such as necessity and chance. Kuki’s approach implies that philosophy should not create order out of chaos but rather understand and articulate the order naturally arising from the chaotic nature of life. This approach expands the possibilities of metaphysics, calling for a more open and dynamic understanding of human freedom, moral responsibility, and the nature of knowledge. Kuki proposes a philosophy that dynamically interacts with the world, making it particularly relevant for understanding the constantly changing realities of life [9].

Continuing the theme of chance and its role in philosophy, it is worth mentioning the philosophical anthropology of Miki Kiyoshi, which offers a deep analysis of human nature and actions, enriching contemporary philosophical thinking with new ideas and perspectives. Miki Kiyoshi’s research in philosophical anthropology is a significant contribution to understanding human essence and actions in the context of the Kantian tradition and the author’s original views. Kiyoshi’s work emphasizes the concepts of singularity, chance, and poesis, which are key to understanding his approach to anthropology.

Kiyoshi defines the singularity of an event through the binary states of *ex ante facto* (before the event) and *ex post facto* (after the event). This division helps us understand how events can be perceived and evaluated differently before and after they occur. For example, in the context of philosophical reflection, an event may seem random and unpredictable before it happens, but it acquires meaning and explanation in retrospect. The randomness in Kiyoshi’s anthropology is emphasized through the idea of the absence of a sufficient basis within the event itself. This reflects a philosophical tradition in which human actions are seen as events not entirely determined by preceding causes, adding an element of unpredictability and freedom to human activity. Action, according to Kiyoshi, is poesis rather than praxis. This distinction is crucial: poesis mean creative production, not reducible to prior historical will or direct causal relationships. Unlike praxis, which is more related to practical, goal-oriented actions, poesis imply creating something new, unique, and unforeseen.

Kiyoshi’s ideas on singularity and chance have significant ethical implications, especially in the context of contemporary debates on human cloning and global

crises. Viewing actions through the lens of poesies highlights their unpredictability and uniqueness, which can contribute to a new understanding of ethical responsibility in the age of technology and global changes. Moving toward Western philosophers, the prominent existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre delves into the nature of human existence, emphasizing the concept of contingency. According to Sartre, human existence is essentially accidental, meaning no predetermination or external forces determine individuals' fates. People are free and responsible for creating their essence through choices and actions. The acute sense of the underlying randomness of the world is key to Sartre's version of existentialism and his creative vision as a novelist and playwright. This sense also fundamentally shaped Sartre's view on the meaning of life [10].

What does contingency mean in this context? Traditionally, in philosophy and the theology of monotheistic religions, chance is opposed to necessity, implying that the world's existence depends on God. However, in Sartre's atheistic existentialism, God is excluded from the equation, and with Him disappears necessity. As a result, only the randomness of a world unsupported by anything and without necessity remains. In such a world, human life can seem meaningless and devoid of logic, structure, or purpose. Unlike the world represented in art, here there is no conclusion or "happy ending". This radical view of contingency leads to a radical understanding of the writer's mission.

Although many researchers turn to "Being and Nothingness" as an introduction to existentialism, many of Sartre's ideas first manifested in his 1938 novel "Nausea". Written after the Spanish Civil War and before World War II, the novel touches on themes of angst and despair, anticipating the horrors of the twentieth century. Sartre uses the novel to show the absurdity of the existence of objects and people. "Nausea" became a symbol of existential dread and is one of Sartre's finest works. The novel explores the absurdity of the world, its randomness, and superfluity. Everything familiar and normal appears absurd.

The novel's protagonist, Antoine Roquentin, is horrified by the existence of both objects and him, realizing that existence is random and has neither cause nor purpose. This leads him to the conviction that human existence is entirely accidental. Sartre uses this idea to criticize traditional philosophy, which asserts that human existence is a central aspect of rational reality. Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection, asserting that human evolution is not essential, paradoxically confirms Sartre's conclusions. Roquentin's realization of the contingency of existence is a key moment in his understanding of the purposelessness that constitutes being. Sartre's existentialism emphasizes the absence of inherent meaning or purpose in life, highlighting humans' need to create their values in response to the absurdity of existence [11].

Contingency is the necessity of realizing a possibility

The philosophical movement of New Realism, emphasizing the primacy of ontology, critiques anthropocentrism and humanism in contemporary philosophy.

However, this does not exclude the interest of philosophers in this trend in questions of human reality and essence. For example, representatives of so-called flat ontology, including Levi Bryant, Graham Harman, Manuel DeLanda, and Bruno Latour, do not see significant differences between humans and other entities. At the same time, Quentin Meillassoux, acknowledging the critique of anthropocentrism, proposes a concept of the uniqueness of human beings and does not deprive humans of “privileged access to reality”, which draws disapproval among speculative realists and new materialists. They strive to ontologically equalize humans with animals, ghosts, and inanimate objects. Meillassoux, however, asserts that humans can comprehend the eternal truth of the world and recognizes the Kantian correlation between the observer and the world as a factual rather than necessary reality.

In his 1997 dissertation “Divine Inexistence: An Essay on the Virtual God”, Meillassoux reflects on the possibility of discussing God beyond the traditional theological-metaphysical discourse. He develops “speculative materialism”, his ontology of contingency, which he calls “ethical factuality”, and emphasizes the capacity of the human mind to understand the world while rejecting correlations and subjectivism along with metaphysical assumptions of necessity. Meillassoux challenges the dominance of the principle of sufficient reason and causality, arguing that existence is contingent and that this contingency is the fundamental property of being [12].

Meillassoux’s approach opens a deeper understanding of human nature. The freedom of our thought process, liberated from preconceived limitations, allows us to embrace the uncertainty of all existence and reveals a world full of possibilities. In a world without absolute constraints, the ideals of justice, equality, freedom, autonomy, truth, and beauty can serve as unquestionable guides for human life and actions. Thinking liberated from metaphysical dogmas allows these ethical ideals not to be mere illusions or human inventions but to be realizable in our world. Faith, hope, and the capacity to expect the unforeseen, the “possible impossible”, form the basis that gives meaning to our freedom and defines the highest spirituality of humans.

Conclusion

Contingency, as a concept, implies that our understanding of ourselves and our place in the world is not fixed. This means that our self-determination and perception of surrounding reality can change under the influence of new knowledge and experience. When we encounter new facts or situations, our point of view and self-identification can adapt, reflecting these changes. Human identity is a process that is constantly evolving and transforming. Culture, in turn, does not remain static; it is shaped and reinterpreted in response to new circumstances and discoveries.

Contingency also plays a key role in our personal development. When we are open to new knowledge and experiences, we broaden our horizons and deepen our

understanding of ourselves and the world. This contributes to our growth as individuals and helps us adapt to changing conditions. In this context, contingency becomes a driving force for our self-improvement and development. Thus, contingency underscores the importance of flexibility and adaptability in our perception of the world and ourselves. It reminds us that nothing is final and that our beliefs and identity can change along with our understanding and experience. This opens possibilities for continuous growth and transformation on both personal and cultural levels.

Through analyzing the role and anthropological significance of contingency in the structure of contemporary philosophical knowledge, it has been established that contingency is a key element in forming human selfhood, serving as the foundation for individual activity in various aspects of existence and thought. Contingency, as a concept, emphasizes the possibility of various outcomes of events and the importance of random circumstances in human life, contrasting with ideas of necessity and determinism. This allows us to view human identity as a process that is constantly evolving and transforming under the influence of new knowledge and experiences. Contingency promotes flexibility and adaptability in our perception of the world and ourselves, opening possibilities for continuous growth and transformation. Thus, contingency occupies a unique place alongside the categories of necessity, possibility, and actuality, which is especially important for addressing the problems of self-realization and self-identification in the 21st century.

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