



Aptenodytes forsteri



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Truth

Ends of philosophy

I

What we have today is not only the end of philosophy, there are even two ends of philosophy.

On the one hand, the first death of philosophy is what we find today in so-called theories of everything in physics. We are gradually approaching a scientific answer to big questions which were till now considered metaphysical questions. Does our universe have a beginning or an end? Does it have a limit in time or space? Do we humans have a free will? Today, at least the predominant approach is that our awareness of our freedom is, as it is put in the introduction to a cognitive sciences book, “a simple user’s illusion”. Even the big metaphysical questions, questions of natural causality or spatial and temporal connections, are now decided by experiments. Free will is treated as a question to be decided by brain sciences. This is why at the beginning of his late book *The Grand Design* Stephen Hawking triumphantly proclaims that philosophy is dead. With the latest advances in quantum physics and cosmology the so-called experimental metaphysics enters the scene.

Metaphysical questions about the origin of the universe can now be answered through experimental science and in this way decided.

II

On the other hand, we have a persisting transcendental approach. The hermeneutic, transcendental answer is that there is not one way things are in themselves and that every historical epoch defines the very difference between appearance and things in themselves in its own way.

According to Jürgen Habermas the point is that in order to approach reality science already presupposes a certain conceptual apparatus of scientific thinking and rational argumentation. The hermeneutic horizon of science is already here.

In a different way Martin Heidegger says the same thing. He