

Is philosophy a science in Whitehead's view?

"Philosophy is not a science" ("Mathematics and the Good": 681).

Elsewhere, however, Whitehead speaks of "the faith which forms the motive for the pursuit of all sciences alike, including metaphysics" and says that "metaphysics—and indeed every science—gains assurance from religion and passes over into religion"(PR: 67; cf. AI: 294).

How is the ostensible contradiction here to be resolved?

Philosophy (=metaphysics, cosmology) *is* a science in that it is an expression of "rationalism," the drive to understand in terms of general principles. On the other hand, it is *not* a science because its object is the strictly generic, as distinct from the specific, and, however apparently paradoxically, this means that it is more concrete, less abstract than any of the special sciences. It has to do with *the individual as such*—and therefore with that which is more concrete than the object of any special science, although, since philosophy deals with it *as such*, in its generic nature or ~~essence~~^{essence}, philosophical concepts are also, in a sense, the most abstract.