

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHICAL RATIONALIST THOUGHTS IN ANCIENT ATHENS

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Abstract

In this article, we can see the philosophical rationalist ideas that began to emerge in ancient Athens. We will get acquainted with the views of scientists who were engaged in philosophy in the early period, the processes of trying to rationally understand the world. In addition, we will learn about the efforts to rationally understand man.

Keywords: Rational thoughts, Anaxagoras, Plato, Socrates, thing, feeling, atom, love, quarrel..

Introduction

The earliest of the philosophers living in Athens is Anaxagoras of Clazomenae. The remaining fragments report that questions related to the cosmological epistemology of phenomena occupy a special place, but they seem to have a vague idea that behind the veil of sensory perception lies a truth that many do not understand. This truth is that, regardless of perceived changes, there is no change in the real world. The Greeks say: "It is wrong to think that there is a coming into being and a passing away." For nothing comes into being and a passing away. But there is both a mixture and a separation of existing things. Here he agrees with Empedocles. "Therefore, this state of affairs continues in him. Coming into being and passing away are rightly called separation." Due to the weakness of the senses, we cannot see the truth.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

But, like many of his contemporaries, he is interested in the problem of how things came to be. In other words, he not only analyzes the world epistemologically, but also adopts a historical perspective. Epistemologically, the world is divided between what our senses perceive and what we know to be the cause. Our senses are too fragile to grasp the mixture of qualities that are present in everything. Thus, today an artist can point out that if we look at its bottom through a magnifying glass, we should see yellow and small grains. In places where it looks green to the naked eye, there is blue pigment. Then he could say, if it served his purpose, that the area of the area is really covered with yellow and blue grains, but it appears green. This, as you can see, would involve an explanation. The explanation for why the area in question appears green is based on the laws of perceptual psychology. Similarly, one could say that the world we experience is really made up of molecules or atoms or things believed to be inside atoms, and perhaps one could develop explanations for how and why this is not the case. But such a statement would not be historical, because it would give us a chronological account of how subatomic particles that were once floating around in empty space later came together to form



atoms¹.

How atoms then formed molecules, which finally combined to build macroscopic objects. Such an account is logically independent of epistemological analysis, because while it assumes the chronological priority of elementary particles, it can also assume their chronological succession. For we have no revelation that anything analytically simple came first in time.

But according to Anaxagoras, an account of reality must include an explanation of the origin of the things we find. Since there is no such thing as creation and destruction, he concluded that at the beginning of the world all qualities were mixed together. The process of cosmic history is the separation of the various things that we perceive. But before these things were separated from each other, when everything was together, not even color was visible, because the mixture of everything, both wet and dry, and hot and cold, and light and darkness, and a great deal of earth in it, and an infinite mass of things that are in no way similar to each other. For none of the other things - "which are probably certain qualities - are similar to anything else. And since these are so, we must believe that everything is inherent in one whole." How then did the separation occur? Here Anaxagoras also assumes, like Empedocles, that nothing changes "of its own accord"²

But while Empedocles presents two agents of love and strife to attract and repel, Anaxagoras assumes the existence of only one agent, "which he calls Nous or Consciousness. Now Nous is both infinite and self-governing, and does not mix with anything, but is itself and alone in itself. It has none of the seeds of things, but is the power that arranges them." Although he uses physical terms to describe it, calling it the lightest and purest of all things, he also attributes to it the mental powers. He speaks of it as "having all knowledge and the greatest power, though it be all things. Moreover, it governs all living things, both great and small."

In this Nous led the whole revolution, so that the "Revolution" which he began at the beginning began on a small scale and then spread over wider and wider areas, until now the heavenly bodies are moving around it. Due to this revolution which Nous initiated, the elemental qualities were separated. Therefore, the agent of change is in itself a mental thing of nature, and change is a separation and, perhaps, a recombination. The introduction of physical terms in the description of Nous is not unlike the Stoics' use of material matter, Pneuma or Spirit, as the active force. Pneuma was a material being, but it behaved as something divine.

The introduction of a mental agent, completely separate from all other inert things, incapable of initiating any change, was seen by the ancients as something new in philosophy. Plato reminds Socrates of the influence of Pericles in this thesis and mentions it. Once, having heard someone reading from a book, Anaxagoras said: "It is said that Nous is the cause of all things, as well as the orderer, he was very happy and explained the word "cause" in this way. Cause means the purpose of all changes. If he had shown him that the earth was flat or round, he would have shown why this was true, and he would not have required any other cause and effect. But he could not do this, and his Nous was better than any other cause. Aristotle also says in his famous work "Metaphysics" that when the man he called Anaxagoras said that reason (Nous) is present in all things as the cause of the cosmos and its order, he seemed to be a sober man unlike others"³.

¹Rationalism in Green philosophy George Boas Johns Hopkins University Press Published. – Baltimore: 2019 – P 159.

²Copleston F. A History of Philosophy. – Vol. 1-8. – N.Y.: London: 2003-2004. – 471 p.

³Russell B. A The History of Western Philosophy. – New York: America book-stratford press, 2010. – 458 p.



CONCLUSION

In short, rationalism is based on three main claims. In order for people to consider themselves rationalists, they must accept at least one of these three claims: the thesis of sensory deduction, the thesis of innate knowledge, or the thesis of innate conception. In addition, a rationalist can accept the thesis of the separation of reason or the thesis of the superiority of reason, although it is possible to be a rationalist without accepting both theses. Many philosophical movements, including rationalism, originate from the philosophy of the ancient Greek thinker Socrates, who believed that people must know themselves before they can know the world. He saw the only way to do this in rational thinking. The Greeks believed that man consists of a body and a soul, and the soul, in turn, is divided into an irrational part (emotions and desires) and a rational part that constitutes only the human personality. In everyday reality, the irrational spirit enters the physical body, creates desires in it, and thus interferes with it, limiting the perception of the world through the senses. The rational spirit remains outside the mind, but sometimes communicates with it through images, dreams, and other means.

References

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