

**RATIONALISM AND IRRATIONALISM – CHARACTERISTICS OF
ANTIQUITY AND THE MIDDLE AGES**

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Abstract : *The article examines the views of ancient Greek philosophers and examines how they shifted their focus from rationalism to irrationalist issues.*

Keywords: *rational, irrational, mind, consciousness, mysticism. .*

Studying the problem of rationality and irrationality, we see that after Aristotle, Ancient Greek philosophy changed its direction. Now it is very interested in the problem of the subject - Epicurus, Stoics, then Neoplatonism. They develop a doctrine about the concept of the “primordial singularity” that is above the cosmos, the universal mind, the soul. The doctrine of Neoplatonism, developed by Plotinus, is “about the sensual-material cosmic body, which moves with its own soul, forms itself with the help of mental concepts or reason in general, and finally, has the qualities of unity, singularity, indivisible and above logic, that is, it is the ultimate owner of all forms in the cosmos. In other words, now the turn has come for the dialectic of myth, because myth is the identity of body and soul, given as a single living being, first of all, in the form of a living being acting in a goal-oriented manner ¹⁶. ” Ancient philosophy is the dialectic of myth and logos, in other words, the dialectic of irrationality and rationality. Philosophy did not fight mythology, but rather used myth as the basis for its development, rationalizing mythology.

In the final period of the development of ancient Greek philosophy, the views of thinkers, based on Neoplatonism, approach Christian theology and take on a tinge of irrationalism. In their teachings, the sensual-material cosmos is replaced by an absolute being who is above the cosmos, creates it, and governs it.

From the above, we can conclude the following: the development of ancient philosophy from the point of view of the balance of rationality and irrationality can be likened to Hegel's dialectical triad - thesis-antithesis-synthesis. Irrationality is myth, mythology; rationality is philosophy; rationality-irrationality is religious philosophy, theosophy.

Another aspect should be noted. Wilhelm Windelband in his “History of Philosophy” (1892) emphasizes: “The monotheism of the soul is the ripe fruit of Greek philosophy.”¹⁷ This idea refers to Aristotle’s doctrine of entelechy, the first impulse to action. As we

¹⁶Losev A.F. Ancient philosophy of history. - M.: CheRo, 1998, C. 182.

¹⁷Windelband V. Philosophy of history. - Per. s nem.- Kyiv: Nika-Center, 1997 . C. 127.

have noted above, Aristotle deifies thought, and Neoplatonism introduces the concept of the first unity (pervoedinoe) into philosophy (Plotinus). The following conclusion follows from this: philosophy itself creates the idea of a single god (monotheism or Islamic monotheism). And we should dwell on another aspect: the mixing and merging of rationality and irrationality in philosophy gives impetus to the development of philosophy and, at the same time, allows the emergence and development of purely irrational teachings such as mysticism, hermeticism, and gnosticism.

Thus, the philosophical-historical analysis of the problem allows us to determine the changes in the contents of the concepts under study depending on the world view prevailing in a particular historical period, the existing worldview. For example, in the Middle Ages, religion was the dominant form of social consciousness, and the remaining forms of social consciousness took on a religious character and were under the rule of religion. However, it should be noted that the influence of philosophical thought on the dominant religious worldview was associated with the recognition of the importance of rational thinking as a necessary condition for the self-improvement of religious consciousness.

Rationality and irrationality was clearly, openly, globally manifested in the Middle Ages, when religion occupied a dominant place in the social consciousness. The dynamically developing science strives to become independent. It is at this time that the contradiction between religion and science (religious faith and knowledge) becomes clearly manifested. At this time, the problem was not only a problem of a way of thinking, but also a problem of a way of life, since each individual was faced with a complex of religious problems that determined his worldview.

In the process of studying the medieval state of the problem (both in the East and in the West), the following is observed. Two camps emerge in the religious-intellectual framework of society - the camp of those who accept the Truth proclaimed by religion unconditionally, without reflection, and the camp of those who demand a critical understanding of the beliefs that must be believed, based on intellectual evidence. These were methodological guidelines aimed at opposing goals that influenced the development of philosophy and science ¹⁸.

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¹⁸See Murdagey N.S. Rational and irrational - a philosophical problem (quoted by A. Schopenhauer) // *Voprosy filosofii*. - 1994. - №9. - 27.

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