



A TELEOLOGICAL EXPLANATION OF RADHAKRISHAN'S PHILOSOPHY

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According to Radhakrishnan there are three types of idealism which emerge from the three approaches which philosophers take towards their subject matter: the epistemological, the ontological and the axiological. The idealism which grows out of the epistemological approach may be called subjective idealism or mentalist, or subjectivism. The idealism which grows out the ontological approach may be called objectives idealism or spiritualism: this type may appear either in pluralistic forms such as panpsychism or personal's or in monistic or absolutistic forms. The idealism which grows out of the axiological approach is the type which may most appropriately be called idealism: the other two should properly be called idealism. However the broader use of the term has been fixed, so the three may be designed as three type of idealism: subjective and valuable.

Subjective idealism emphasizes the subjective aspect of the knowing relationship, 'Whatever is real in the universe is such stuff as ideas are made An 'ideas' is taken as a particular mental image peculiar to each individual' A thing is 'a particular image'. This type of idealism leads to solipsism, that is, the elimination of any shareable realities.

Objective idealism emphasizes the spiritual character of reality. In this form of idealism also, whatever is real in the universe is such stuff as ideas are made of; but here an idea is 'a quality of the existent which is shareable by other existents and knowable by other minds.' The word 'extents beyond the given datum 'which is presented to individual minds' 'Mind is imminent in all cognitive experience as an active process which gives objective form to knowledge. It does not stand in a transcendent relation to an extraneous object which is passively contemplates.' A thing is 'a general relation'.' Some time leads to this type of idealism is illusionism, that is, the elimination of all material reality.

Valuational idealism emphasizes the worth of things rather than the know ability of things or the nature of the things; indeed in this type of idealism a thing is a 'meaning' or a 'purpose'. An idea in valuational idealism is an 'operative creative force' 'the principle involved' in a thing and the 'purpose' of the being of a thing. This metaphysical system is idealism because it finds the world to be teleological: 'the world is intelligible only as a system of the ends'. An idealist of this type is one who holds that universe is purposive. The rejections of this idealism mark it off from their subjective and objective forms; 'Such a view has little to do with the problem whether a thing is only a particular image of a general relation. The question of the independence of the knower and the known is hardly relevant to it. Nor is it committetf to the doctrine that the world is made of mind an infinite mind or a society of minds. It is an answer to the problem of the idea, the meaning or the purpose of it all. It has nothing in common with the view that makes reality an irrational blind striving of an irremediably miserable blunder. It finds life significant and purposeful. It endows men with a destiny that is not limited to the sensible world. This type of idealism seems to be utopianism that is the elimination of 'an ultimate connection of value and reality.'

The reason for much of the confusion regarding Radhakrishnan's idealism is that whereas idealists have generally regarded the core of idealism to be either the mind-dependent nature of reality or the internality of relations, Radhakrishnan holds that he who interprets idea as ideals or values is an idealist. Idealism in Radhakrishnan sense asks, 'What are the ideas?'

The core and the weakness of Radhakrishnan metaphysical system is the basic claim that the universe is not a blind process, but a theological one, and that the course of evolution is not accidental, but in some way the expression of purpose.' The core is the teleological character-the world is a system of ends'-and the weakness is the difficulty in identifying and explaining the purposiveness of the world. Teleology is a topic upon which most philosophers of remain silent. It is more often assumed than established by the theist. In the word of Radhakrishnan, 'The case for theism forms their morals side is questioned. If we argue from our moral aspirations to their ultimate fulfillment, we assume as a premise what requires to be proved, viz. that the world is reasonable that it is teleological ordered and that is the very proposition we wish to prove.' The scientist usually gives teleology no more consideration than an observation that it is a primitive anthropomorphism. Whitehead is one of the few philosophers who have the wit to reply in kind to those who ridicule teleology: 'Scientists animated by the purpose of proving that they are purposeless constitute an interesting subject for study.'

Radhakrishnan is not opposed to scientific methodology. He believes that scientific knowledge can be trusted within limits, but he believes that the limits are defined to loosely by most scientists. Such knowledge is 'inadequate, partial, fragmentary, but not false...it is, however, an essential stage in the evolution of human consciousness. The trouble arises when scientists assume that the physical world is a closed system in which everything is determined. The physical world according to Rahaakrishnan has two striking features: continuity and change. Events have reference both to the past and the future and the 'prospective references' or the creative advance into the future' may be anticipated but it cannot be predicted. 'No event is complete. It seeks for its completion in an undetermined future. Throughout the process of nature we have creatively or the coming into being of the new which is not reducible to or reducible from the old. We cannot forecast on the basis of our knowledge of the present.' Radhakrishnan has an open-ended universe. Something new is always happening and each innovation is unpredictable. Events have caused and creative aspects. Determinism as a methodology is especially inadequate in the area of living organism and conscious process. Radhakrishnan ridicules those who regard man as an 'assembled organic machine ready to run' and thought as 'talking with canceled musculature.' In particular causality is unsatisfactory when controlling aims, which are the essential feature of organism. 'Life is a dynamic equilibrium which tends to maintain itself'. But an 'atom can neither mend itself nor reproduce itself.' If materialism is the answer to the question 'what is the ultimate stuff?' and if mechanism is bodies?' then living bodies are very odd mechanisms. They are the only mechanisms, which avoid their own destruction. The self-repair which takes place in a living body in the healing of a wound, is a very different sort of mechanical action that the self-destruction of the combustion engine which has lost an important bolt. To call entities that engage in self-repair and self-preservation mechanisms and also to call entities that does not engage in meaning to the word mechanism. To call the former teleological objective at least points out that they are bodies in which the end of survival is a determining factor in their activities.

Science, according to Radhakrishnan is 'a system of second causes which cannot describe the world adequately, much less account for it.' The naturalists in so far as he bases his metaphysical system on scientific determinism, confused' a descriptive method for the creative cause.' Radhakrishnan accuses scientific of concluding that the world is non-teleological because they have used non-teleological methods to study the world. But methodology must not determine metaphysics, rather methodology should be determined both by the nature of the subject matter and the nature of the results which the scientist wishes to secure Science the scientist wishes to get knowledge which is inter subjectively verifiable quantitatively

measurable and linguistically expressible, he selects methods of knowing which will give him these results. But when he contends that reality is exactly as he grasps it through his methods he forgets that his methods were determined by the subject matter as well as by the sort of knowledge he seeks. That which scientific causality cannot handle is an end. And the world is 'a system of ends. However we should add to Radhakrishnan treatment of teleology to observations that causality is not contradictory to teleology. Indeed teleology implies causality in the sense that teleology is dependent upon causality. Causality is an asymmetrical or one-way relationship between two events. If X is the cause of Y, Y cannot also be the cause of X. Teleology is a symmetrical relationship. At least there is a sense in which events teleological related may be reversible. The teleological; relationship is best described as a means-end relationship, rather than a cause-effect relationship but if there were no cause-effect relationship there could be no means-end relationships. Teleology may be defined as any means-end situation in which the end partially determines the means.

In spite of Radhakrishnan's confidence that the world is 'a system of ends' He is not very explicit as to what sort of ends? Are they immanent or transcendent? Are they purposive or non-purposive? Statements like the following reveal the teleological; nature of his worldview, but they are tantalizingly frustrating as clues to the nature of his teleology: 'The physical world is not a futile play of senseless atoms engaged in a deadly conflict.... The earth and its contents prepared for life.... In spite of the little ups and downs of change there seems to be a compelling drift towards better things... There is a universal tendency discernible in every state from its origin to its present condition.'

A distinction can also be named between immanent teleology and transcendent teleology. In the former the end is internal to the process. Aristotle's teleology is clearly immanent. For him the end of each individual within a species is to actualize fully the potentiality of the species. The end of an acorn is to become all that an acorn is supposed to become, viz, a good specimen of oak tree. Teleology is transcendent when the end is external to the process. When considering transcendent teleology of the whole, we how to make a further distinction, that is between an external agent which uses make a further distinction, that is, between an external agent such uses the world as means to the realization of its own ends.

A third distinction is that between purposive and non-purposive teleology. Teleology is purposive when the end is consciously closed by a mind. A man picks up a hammer because he intends to drive a nail. He reads a book in order to learn about a subject. There are some philosophers who claim that the notion of a teleology, which is not the purpose of any mind, is unsatisfactory but others recognize the possibility of an end which is not consciously chosen by a mind. Aristotle's teleology was non-purposive. According to Aristotle the acorn does not consciously purpose to become an oak tree, yet the form of the oak tree does act as an end in the proceeds by which acorns become oak trees.

When these dichotomous divisions are thrown together we have eight theoretically possible types of teleology-

- 1- Parts, transcendent, non-purposive
- 2- Parts, transcendent, purposive
- 3- Parts, immanent, non-purposive
- 4- Parts, immanent, purposive
- 5- Whole, transcendent, non-purposive
- 6- Whole, transcendent, purposive
- 7- Whole, immanent, non-purposive
- 8- Whole, immanent, purposive

Which type of teleology does Radhakrishnan present in his idealism? In his Hibbert Lectures of 1929 Radhakrishnan stated his belief in cosmic teleology and denied that the end of the cosmic process could be life: 'Life which is such a merely local and superficial peculiarity, cannot be the end of the universe as some is inclined to believe. There must be a relevant relation between purpose and output end and means. The stars in their courses are plainly about some other business.' In the volume in the Library of living philosopher's series he writes in the autobiographical introduction, call 'fragments of a Confession', that the meaning of cosmic history is 'to make all men prophets, to establish a kingdom of free spirits.

Spiritual freedom is both the 'highest product' and 'hidden principle'. Spirit works in complementary opposition to matter. Matter is a relative non-being which when guided by Spirit has the patiently of becoming revelatory of being. The work of the Spirit is not a purposing. In another connection Radhakrishnan says that the living organisms engage in self repair, nutrition and reproduction without intelligence, that is they engage in actions which when engaged in by humans are describes as due to foresight. Radhakrishnan will not accept a vital force in his system. He does refer to teleology of the parts but he constantly comes back to the Upanisadic views of Spirit which is at the work at all levels of existence. The 'Prospective adaptations' of individual organisms are in the final analysis manifestations of Spirit. So we may conclude that Radhakrishnan teleology is of the whole and that it is non-purposive. It is imminent or transcendent? The answer seems to be that it is neither-or both. In his open ended view of cosmic history the emphasis is on specific forms not yet realized. Spirit is both the terminus a quo and the terminus ad qualem: 'Spirit is working in matter that matter may serve the spirit. Yet the spirit is not a fixed telos. What is of the 'Spirit is always in evolution: The purpose of the world is not mere unfolding of what is contained in the beginning. It is not a question of mere reformations. The end of the world is not contained in the beginning such that God might retire from the process altogether.' Herein is the joy, the ananda of Radhakrishnan's professional philosophy and manifestation of itself, Self-realization of the Spirit is the end of the cosmic evolution.

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