

Exploring the Ideosphere: A Comprehensive Examination of Eastern Philosophical Perspectives and Their Societal Reflections

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.46431/MEJAST.2024.7315>

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Article Received: 07 July 2024

Article Accepted: 15 September 2024

Article Published: 22 September 2024

ABSTRACT

The intellectual heritage of Central Asia during the 9th to 12th centuries represents a golden age of scientific and philosophical achievement, deeply influencing the trajectory of global knowledge. This article delves into the profound contributions of eminent figures from the Eastern Renaissance, including al-Farabi, Abu Rayhan al-Beruni, Abu Ali ibn Sina, Yusuf Khos Hajib, and Nizamulmulk. These scholars not only advanced various scientific disciplines but also profoundly shaped political and philosophical thought. Through a detailed analysis of their works, the article highlights how these thinkers articulated visions for an ideal state that prioritized human dignity and well-being. Their philosophies underscored the importance of justice, the rule of law, and the moral imperative of governance that serves the common good. By examining their emphasis on creating equitable and enlightened societies, the study sheds light on their enduring impact on both regional and global conceptions of statecraft and societal progress. The article further explores how these scholars' ideas on governance and societal development resonate with contemporary discussions on justice and human rights, offering timeless insights into the role of philosophy in shaping humane and effective political systems. Their legacy, deeply rooted in the cultural and intellectual milieu of their time, continues to inspire modern thought and policy-making.

Keywords: Development; Society; Community; Philosophy; Society; Humanity; Equality; Democracy; Freedom; Social justice; Solidarity.

1. Introduction

In the 9th-12th centuries, developments in Central Asia made a significant contribution to the advancement of philosophy, history, culture, and political institutions. According to the President of our country Shavkat Mirziyoyev, “The Central Asian region was renowned worldwide as one of the major centers of the Eastern Renaissance. When discussing this, we should first and foremost honor the names of our great compatriots: Al-Khwarizmi, the founder of algorithms, Al-Farghani, the encyclopedic scholar, Abu Rayhan Biruni, who made significant contributions to the development of geodesy and mineralogy, Ibn Sina, known in the West as Avicenna and Mirzo Ulugbek, the statesman and great astronomer” [1].

1.1. Study Objectives

This study employs a comprehensive methodology to explore the philosophical contributions of Central Asian scholars from the 9th to 12th centuries, focusing on their impact on global science and their ideas on governance and societal development. The methodology integrates historical research, philosophical analysis, and comparative studies to provide a nuanced understanding of the intellectual legacy of figures such as al-Farabi, Abu Rayhan al-Beruni, Abu Ali ibn Sina, Yusuf Khos Hajib, and Nizamulmulk.

2. Research Methodology

Indeed, the changes in the complex situation in Central Asia during the 9th to 12th centuries, along with social and economic developments, provided the impetus for the subsequent progress of political processes in these regions. During this period, scholars such as Abu Nasr Farabi, Abu Ali ibn Sina, Abu Rayhan Beruni, Abu Abdullah Khorazmi, Mahmud Zamakhshari, Muhammad Narshahi, Rudaki, and Abul Qasim Firdawsi emerged, making

significant contributions to the advancement of global science. These renowned Central Asian scholars greatly influenced the development of philosophical doctrines in world culture. Specifically, they developed their ideas on just governance, the rule of law, and the concept of a fair society. Their work aimed to create a vision of a just society and a just ruler by adhering to principles of humanism, tolerance, and peace.

3. Results and Discussion

The philosophical views of Abu Nasr al-Farabi (873-950) on virtuous society and its governance are a prominent example from the Eastern Renaissance period. In works such as “On Achieving Happiness” (“Baxt-saodatga erishuv haqida”), “The Opinions of the Inhabitants of the Virtuous City” (“Fozil shahar aholilarining fikrlari”), “The Treatise on the Ways to Achieve Happiness” (“Baxt-saodatga erishuv yo’llari haqida risola”), “The Sayings of Great Men” (“Buyuk kishilarning naqllari”) and “Civil Policy” (“Fuqarolik siyosati”), the philosopher explores issues concerning society, its just governance, and the virtues of a just ruler and the inhabitants of a virtuous city. In addressing these matters from a philosophical perspective, he adhered to principles of humanism, legality, the supremacy of citizens’ rights and freedoms, and the importance of openness, transparency, and cooperation between the state and its citizens.

One of the most notable aspects of al-Farabi’s philosophical views is that he was among the first thinkers in the Near and Middle East to develop a philosophical theory on the origin, goals, and functions of society. In this theory, he linked the origin of society to the principles of natural law. Al-Farabi stated: “Every human being, by their nature, is structured in such a way that they need many things to live and achieve a high level of development, they cannot obtain these things alone and therefore need a community of people to acquire them... The activities of such a community provide each of its members with the necessities for living and achieving development as a whole. Therefore, human individuals multiplied and settled in the habitable parts of the earth” [2.4]. Thus, from his view, it is clear that al-Farabi considered the origin of cities to be the result of people organizing into a specific community. According to him, this unification occurred due to natural human needs, which led to the formation of the community.

In addition, in his philosophical views, the thinker recognized a person’s life, freedom, honor, dignity and other inalienable rights as the highest values, and condemned any actions and wars that degrade human dignity. Therefore, he emphasized that a person should live in a democratic, open and fair society: “Regarding people, the primary basis that unites them is humanity, so people should live in peace with each other because they are part of the human race”.

In his philosophical views, he distinguished between virtuous and ignorant city-states, emphasized that a virtuous city should guide its people toward happiness and that its leader must be just, of high moral character, enlightened, and possess all noble virtues. The scholar believed that true happiness can be achieved through social cooperation, justice, and peace among people. For this reason, al-Farabi defined a virtuous community as one in which individuals help one another.

In his philosophical views, al-Farabi emphasized that the person who manages the state should be distinguished by his virtues and morals. He stressed that the head of such a state must be fair and wise, care for others, fully comply

with the laws, have the ability to create laws, and be capable of anticipating the future. For instance, in his work “The Opinions of the Inhabitants of the Virtuous City”, al-Farabi discussed the concept of the ideal person. He argued that the leader of the city (or state) must embody all human virtues and emphasized that a virtuous city leader should possess twelve qualities:

1. Healthy;
2. Perceptive;
3. With a strong memory;
4. Sharp-minded;
5. Eloquent;
6. Knowledgeable and enlightened;
7. Moderate in eating and drinking;
8. Loving truth and just, righteous people;
9. Noble, honorable, and respectable;
10. Disinterested in wealth, dinars, and dirhams;
11. Just, striving for goodness, and detesting oppression and injustice;
12. Resolute, courageous, and daring [2.43].

In his philosophical concept, al-Farabi also addressed the issue of justice. To him, justice is defined as a principle of equality between people, encompassing both material and spiritual dimensions. He explained that it is essential for people to adhere to the principles of justice in their actions and interactions with others.

Overall, al-Farabi’s political and philosophical views significantly contributed to the development of thought in both the East and the West. Today, his ideas continue to serve as a foundational basis for achieving human happiness, peace, stability, and the establishment of a just democratic state.

The views of the great medieval encyclopedist Abu Rayhan Beruni (973-1048) on just administration, international law, and peace are noteworthy. In particular, his works “India” and “Relics of Ancient People” present ideas about social justice, the rule of law, and the importance of peace both within a country and in international relations. He discussed state management and argued that a country should be governed by enlightened rulers rather than by absolute monarchs. Al-Biruni emphasized that the progress and development of an ideal state require principles such as social cooperation, people’s well-being and security, and harmonious relations. For example, he highlighted that implementing ideas of democracy, freedom, equality, social justice, and solidarity is essential for ensuring a decent life for the people and maintaining peace and harmony in the country.

Al-Beruni examined the emergence of society from a philosophical perspective and linked it to the theory of the “social contract”. According to him, individuals come to understand their needs and recognize the necessity of living with others who are similar to them. As a result, they enter into a “contract” based on mutual solidarity and

agreement. Through this contract, people establish social centers such as villages and cities that address their various needs. In his view, the intellect granted to humans by God facilitated their mutual unification.

Beruni recognized the priority of the people's interests in state administration and said that the society should not serve the king, but the king should serve the society: "The essence of administration and management is to protect the rights of those who have suffered from oppressors, to lose one's own peace for the sake of others' peace. It consists of the physical fatigue to protect and protect their family, their life and property" [3.31-32].

Thus, in the center of Beruni's philosophical views lies the idea that the state and laws should serve human happiness, and the state should be ruled by an enlightened king. Beruni believed that the most important factor that ensures the well-being of citizens in society is the observance of the principles of social justice.

Abu Ali ibn Sina (970-1037) integrated various traditions of ancient and Islamic scientific thought in his socio-political and philosophical views, developing his philosophical foundations on issues of family, society, and state management. In particular, Ibn Sina's views on human rights and freedoms, state protection, social justice, and fair governance are detailed in his work *Ash-Shifa*. In particular, in this work, the thinker emphasized the following points:

Firstly, he analyzed the issues of the state and law and discussed the role of religion and the prophet in establishing a legal society.

Secondly, he viewed the prophet as the embodiment of divine and traditional laws, serving as both the lawmaker who delivered these laws to the nation and the city.

Thirdly, he categorized the community living in the city into three hierarchical groups: managers, craftsmen, and soldiers [4].

Analyzing Ibn Sina's philosophical views, we find that the philosopher connects the existence of the state with the division of society, asserting that the main goal of the legislator in lawmaking and governance is to categorize society into three main groups: 1) rulers; 2) artisans; 3) soldiers. He emphasized that a legislator should appoint a leader for each group, with additional leaders appointed below this top leader to manage various aspects of governance, ultimately establishing a comprehensive administration.

Ibn Sina outlined the following policies that the state should implement to ensure employment for its citizens:

- Guaranteeing that citizens engage in useful and remunerative work during their productive and healthy years;
- Establishing a system for skill development to ensure effective employment;
- Providing access to free and effective medical services during illness;
- Ensuring support for the basic needs of citizens who become disabled due to factors beyond their control, such as illness, widowhood, unemployment, old age, or minority [5].

Yusuf Khos Hajib has a special place in the work of issues related to fair state management. His epic "Kutadgu Bilig" is noteworthy for its philosophical and political teachings, which address the actions, rules, and philosophical-ethical relationships within the state and society. He categorized the types and qualities of public

administration and service according to these levels. The ideological content of the work also encompasses issues of state administration and its spiritual and moral environment.

The first character in the work is Adolat (Justice), who is depicted as the supreme ruler (named Kuntugdi) and as a hero who, like the sun, radiates light to everyone.

The second character is Davlat (State), symbolizing prosperity and blessing, represented as the prime minister (named Oytoldi). Prosperity and Blessing, or State, are interrelated concepts embodying meanings of wealth, blessing, fortune, happiness, and power. He is depicted as the ruler's support, serving as the chief advisor who bestows prosperity upon the ruler's domain. The third character in the work is Wisdom, O'gdulmish, the son of Oytoldi, who becomes the ruler's close advisor after his father's death. In the narrative, he is depicted as a symbol of wisdom and knowledge. Through the character of Oytoldi in the narrative, the philosopher has attempted to prove that success, happiness, and wealth are transient in life, and has also demonstrated that wisdom and knowledge can replace them. The fourth character in the work is Qanoat (Patience), whose name is O'zgurmish. He is described as a relative of Oytoldi, representing happiness and prosperity, and of O'gdulmish, representing wisdom and knowledge. Yusuf Khass Hajib, based on his philosophical views, focused on the moral values of rulers in state governance [6].

The scholar also noted that the head of state must possess important moral qualities and characteristics:

firstly, the ruler should treat all citizens as equals, upholding the law of social justice among them;

secondly, the ruler must be sensitive, alert, and sharp when passing judgment on issues;

thirdly, the ruler should administer justice impartially, without favoritism or complaints;

fourthly, the king should be spiritually and morally exemplary, avoiding all forms of corruption and deceit;

fifthly, it is essential to surround oneself with a council of intelligent, wise, resourceful, and skilled individuals, and to reward them based on their merits;

sixthly, the ruler should speak kindly and courteously to ordinary people.

Yusuf Khos Hajib emphasized both the qualities of the ruler and the responsibilities of citizens in state administration. He stated that citizens are responsible for:

firstly, respecting and unconditionally obeying the decrees issued by the ruler;

secondly, paying taxes promptly and without delay;

thirdly, being an enemy of the country's enemies and being prepared for defense.

Yusuf Khos Hajib expressed his philosophical and political views through the dialogues of the characters in his work. In these conversations, he specifically identified the main pillars of the state as religion, economy, and the army. Thus, the philosophical views presented by Yusuf Khos Hajib provide a solid foundation for the enhancement of contemporary democratic society.

The views of the medieval thinker and statesman Nizam al-Mulk (1017-1019), who left a significant scientific legacy in the creation of a just state governance and its theoretical foundations, are also noteworthy. Specifically,

his ideas in the “Siyasatnama” include selecting officials based on their moral virtues, not involving those who undermine justice and fairness in state affairs, managing the state based on councils, regularly monitoring the activities of officials, and principles related to obedience, execution, and qualities. In particular, Nizam al-Mulk’s assertion that “the action accepted by the majority is the most commendable and should be followed” reflects the great attention our ancestors paid to creating a just system of state governance [7].

4. Conclusion

The 9th to 12th centuries in Movarounnahr, a historical region that encompassed parts of Central Asia, represent a transformative era marked by profound advancements in science, culture, politics, and law. The scholars from this region-whose works spanned diverse fields including philosophy, astronomy, medicine, and jurisprudence-made lasting contributions to global intellectual heritage. Their pioneering ideas on natural law, human rights, equality, social justice, and solidarity laid foundational principles that continue to resonate in contemporary discussions on democracy and governance.

These scholars articulated visions of a just society that prioritize human dignity and equitable treatment, emphasizing the intrinsic value of individuals and advocating for systems that uphold justice and the rule of law. Their philosophical and scientific achievements not only enriched the medieval intellectual landscape but also provided timeless insights into the nature of human rights and societal development.

Their emphasis on human rights and social justice reflects an enduring relevance, offering valuable lessons for modern democratic societies. The principles articulated by these scholars can guide contemporary efforts to create inclusive and fair systems, reinforcing the universality of these ideas across cultures and epochs. By integrating these historical insights into current debates on governance and social justice, we can draw upon a rich legacy to address present-day challenges and advance the ideals of freedom and democracy.

Declarations

Source of Funding

This study did not receive any grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Competing Interests Statement

The author declares no competing financial, professional, or personal interests.

Consent for publication

The author declares that he consented to the publication of this study.

Authors' contributions

Author’s independent contribution.

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