

Renewal of Societal Ideosphere: An Analytical Study of Medieval Philosophical Thought

Turdiyev Bekhruz Sobirovich^{1*}

¹Associate Professor, Department of Jurisprudence and Socio-Political Sciences, Bukhara State University, Uzbekistan.
Corresponding Author (Turdiyev Bekhruz Sobirovich) Email: bekhruz0302@gmail.com*



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ABSTRACT

This article explores the evolution of philosophical ideas and perspectives that have significantly influenced the formation of democratic societies. It examines the genesis and dynamics of these ideas, focusing on how enlightenment and education have contributed to the renewal and advancement of societal ideologies and the acquisition of global knowledge. The analysis includes insights from medieval Eastern thinkers, who addressed the necessity of knowledge development for societal progress. These scholars employed scientific methods such as analysis, synthesis, comparative analysis, and generalization to advance their ideas. The philosophical concepts and teachings, which blend national and universal objectives, are highlighted for their role in promoting democratic development and are recognized as valuable contributions to philosophical heritage. The article underscores the importance of renewing the ideosphere within democratic development and acknowledges the objective laws governing societal progress. It provides a thorough examination of the scientific and philosophical perspectives of prominent thinkers, scholars, and public figures from the Middle Ages who contributed to this renewal. The research reveals that these historical insights are crucial for the intellectual and spiritual development of the younger generation. It argues that such philosophical and intellectual traditions foster a sense of initiative, responsibility, self-sacrifice, and engagement among youth, thereby supporting and advancing national development.

Keywords: Transformation; Ideosphere; Heritage; Nation; Faith; Peace and tranquility; Development; Society; Justice; Progress.

1. Introduction

The transformation of the societal ideosphere is a historical and philosophical process that involves objectively assessing the development of people's aspirations, cultural and spiritual heritage, and the importance of national and universal values, understanding it, using it intelligently, and enhancing it. In this process, if a nation remains unaware of its history, national culture, values, and spiritual heritage, it cannot have a clear understanding of the past or a specific strategic goal envisioned for the future, nor can it travel towards achieving noble goals through the path of unity. The people who have fallen into spiritual decline may not be able to emerge from it, quickly falling under the influence of other nations' cultures, losing their national mentality, sacrificing their uniqueness, and forgetting their worth and values.

In such situations, nations risk remaining on the sidelines of history as ethnic groups with weakened national mentality and spirituality. It is evident that the societal and national spiritual renewal processes are interconnected. Therefore, societal advancement in social, economic, and political realms is also difficult without shaping the ideosphere.

1.1. Study Objectives

Analyzing the Impact on Governance and Law: Explore how medieval philosophical ideas, such as natural law theory and theories of governance (e.g., divine right of kings), shaped legal systems and governance structures across Europe and the Islamic world.

Comparative Study of Ideospheres: Compare and contrast the ideological landscapes shaped by different medieval philosophical traditions, highlighting their impact on societal norms, values, and cultural practices.

Philosophy and Science Integration: Investigate the integration of medieval philosophical thought with scientific inquiry, examining contributions to fields such as astronomy, medicine, and natural philosophy, and exploring how these interactions influenced intellectual developments.

Legacy and Modern Relevance: Evaluate the enduring legacy of medieval philosophical thought in contemporary ethics, political theory, and religious studies, analyzing how these ideas continue to inform and influence societal values and debates.

2. Literature Analysis and Methods

In Central Asia, the advancement and development of social-philosophical ideas have ushered in a new era in the transformation of the ideosphere of world peoples, based on the sacred principles of Islam. The enlightenment goals of Islam are reflected in the Holy Quran and Hadith, among other sacred books, guiding humanity towards noble objectives.

In the Quran, generosity, hospitality, courage, patience, righteousness, loyalty, and faithfulness, which are considered unique criteria of faith, are given great attention. The Quran also provides instructions on improving interpersonal relationships. “It is stated that these are high-level human qualities achievable only by those with pure hearts. This quality brings peace and tranquility to society, which is why strengthening friendly relations between people is considered a requirement of Islam” [1.191].

Hadith Sharifs, the second holy book in the Islamic world, depict the spiritual maturity of a person, the breadth of his thinking, the expansiveness of his worldview, and the extent to which knowledge is acquired. It is said that a crucial factor in benefiting society and oneself is the necessity of acquiring knowledge, as ignorance leads society into darkness.

The enlightening ideas of Islam that advocate for enlightenment laid the foundation for the development of distinct Islamic sciences in the 9th century. Alongside disciplines like philosophy, mathematics, physics, and various other sciences inherited from Greek sources, Islamic sciences such as kalam (theology), hadith (prophetic traditions), and jurisprudence emerged. Islam in the East served not only as a religion but also contributed to the establishment of a comprehensive human culture and spirituality. Consequently, it paved the way for the advancement of global culture in fields such as science, philosophy, art, ethics, and politics.

“The 9th to 12th centuries are considered a period rich in socio-political, scientific, and cultural events in the lives of the peoples residing in Central Asia, including the territory of present-day Uzbekistan” [2.64]. Scholars such as Imam Bukhari, Imam Termizi, Ghazalli, Nizamulmuluk, who introduced the region’s fame to the world in the field of religious sciences. Also, in the field of secular science, Farabi, Beruni, Ibn Sina, and in the field of Sufism, Ahmad Yassavi, Ahmad Yugnaki, Yusuf Khos Hajib, Najmuddin Kubro, Bahauddin Naqshband and other great thinkers are noteworthy. Their views on the unique role of the ideosphere of society in the development of society made an incomparable contribution to the development of the world’s scientific and philosophical thinking.

Abu Nasr al-Farabi (873-950) is recognized as a renowned encyclopedist who earned the title “Aristotle of the East” (“Second Teacher”) in the history of global socio-philosophical thought. His socio-philosophical views

encompassed topics such as the paths of societal development, the formation of morality, the interaction between individuals and society, humanity, justice, progress, the ideal society, and the concept of the perfect man, all scientifically and theoretically researched.

According to the interpretation of Abu Nasr Farabi, "...a city that unites people who help each other in order to achieve true happiness is a virtuous city, a community of people united in order to achieve happiness is a virtuous community.

A nation that helps each other to achieve happiness is a virtuous nation. In this way, if all nations help each other to achieve happiness, the whole earth will be virtuous" [3.288].

Therefore, according to Farabi, mutual assistance among society and people, equal rights, and justice-oriented ideals contribute to the spiritual advancement of an excellent state.

Thus, Farabi concluded that societal progress and achieving happiness can be attained through intellectual and moral virtues, which can be achieved based on knowledge and wisdom.

Abu Rayhan Beruni (973-1048) is one of the great encyclopedic thinkers of the Renaissance.

According to Beruni's interpretation, the greatest happiness of a person is knowledge, because he has intelligence. Only when happiness is understood from this point of view will it bring peace and prosperity to the society. In his work "India" such a story is given: "A man and his disciples set out on a mission in the dark night, when they saw an unknown object standing on the road. The darkness of the night prevented him from knowing what it was. Then the man looked at his disciples and began to ask them one by one what that unknown thing was. The first disciple said, I don't know what it is. The second disciple said that I don't know what it is and I don't have the power to know. And the third disciple said that it is useless to know, because when the sun rises, that thing will be known. It is said that if there is something scary, it will disappear when the sun rises, if there is nothing scary, it will become clear to us what it is.

So, the enlightenment of his three disciples was lacking. The first one was due to his ignorance, the second one was due to his weakness and injury to his arms, and the third one was due to his procrastination and acquiescence in ignorance. But the fourth one does not answer without knowing for sure, when he went closer aiming at that unknown object, he saw a sheet of pumpkins tangled together. Then the disciple realized that a living and free-willed person does not remain where he is until that unknown thing is known, and he determined that the unknown is an inanimate thing. This student brought a clear message to his teacher, he gained enlightenment in the presence of his teacher" [4.77-78]. The above story illustrates that people are naturally curious about hidden aspects and details that are unknown. Beruniy emphasizes the crucial role and importance of labor, science, culture, and spirituality, highlighting the human element in the spiritual revitalization of society as unparalleled. The philosopher-scientist argues that society should progress through incremental changes, where justice, humanity, the eradication of oppression, peace, and harmony should be the primary criteria.

Ibn Sina (980-1037) is a prominent exponent of socio-philosophical thought worldwide, renowned in the East as "Sheikh ur-Rais" (chief of scientists), and an encyclopedic thinker [5.59]. Ibn Sina is renowned in human history

not only as a physician but also as a great philosopher of his time – a profound sage who significantly advanced science and culture in his era. His life’s journey exemplifies the achievements of global civilization, earning him the recognition of his invaluable intellectual legacy across almost all fields of science and culture worldwide.

One of the unique aspects of Ibn Sina’s views on the spiritual renewal of society was his ability to articulate many advanced concepts of his time. He contributed to the development of these views by drawing from scientific traditions, recognizing that spiritual transformations were crucial for societal advancement, as posited by the great philosophers and scientists before him. In this regard, the thinker advanced several ideas.

Ibn Sina emphasized that the primary foundation for both society and individuals to achieve maturity is the acquisition of knowledge. Science, he argued, unveils the fundamental laws of existence and humanity, offering a path towards clarity and progress. He stressed that those pursuing knowledge and enlightenment must be prepared to overcome obstacles and difficulties along the way. With his scientific legacy, Ibn Sina advised people to continually pursue knowledge as a means to lead a happy and prosperous life: “O brethren! The heroes of humanity do not fear hardship. The one who refuses to mature is the most cowardly of individuals” [6.15]. Therefore, a knowledgeable person regards someone who is strong, unafraid of death, and acts only for the perfection of society and humanity.

Thus, Ibn Sina’s ideas in his scientific and spiritual legacy not only contributed to the advancement of human knowledge and thought but also served the development of society and the state. These scientific and philosophical ideas continue to serve society’s spiritual development today.

The interdependence of a just state and a virtuous society, as well as issues of political power, are also addressed in **Ghazali’s** work. Imam Ghazali’s work “*Kimyoi Saadat*” expresses the idea that the head of the state is the heart of the society, and that it is in accordance with the will of Allah that people unite around a wise and pious leader.

Malik Shah’s name has remained in history thanks to the wise and fair administration of **Nizamulmulk (1018-1092)**. He was a great architect of justice and fairness. His book “*Siyasatnama*” (“The Book of Government”) primarily aimed to advise the king and rulers on governance based on justice, compassion, peace, and kindness. Nizam al-Mulk emphasized the importance of managing the state wisely by establishing strict rules and order, and encouraged officials to be conscientious, pure, lawful, and faithful. He advocated for the prosperity, integrity, peace, and stability of the kingdom.

“One of the requirements of state administration is to dig canals and bring water from abroad, to dig big ditches for the improvement of villages and fields, to build castles, to build cities, to build beautiful buildings and wide streets and roads. It is also necessary to open madrasahs for those seeking knowledge, because in this the name of the king will remain forever, and as a result of his merits, his property will have peace and prosperity” or “...the state and good habits are like a bright candle. And people find their way out of the darkness in this light” [7.20-21].

In Nizam al-Mulk’s socio-political views on the spiritual development of society, it is important to educate the mature generation in the spirit of honesty and integrity, fostering creativity and enlightenment in matters concerning the state and society.

3. Results and Discussion

Central Asia, especially during the period of the Eastern Renaissance, recognized Amir Timur and the Timurid era as the second stage of its spiritual development. This period has left an indelible mark on the historical progress of our country.

During this era of advancement, luminaries such as Bahauddin Naqshband, Khwaja Ahrar Vali, Abdurahman Jami, Alisher Navoi, Mirzo Ulugh Beg, Ali Qushchi, and hundreds of other scholars and virtuosos emerged, propelling the region's culture and knowledge to new stages.

The main reason for this is Amir Timur's consistent policy of reforming the state and society and his focus on fostering creativity. This period, considered a golden age of spiritual renewal for our people, made a significant contribution to the development and sustainable progress of our national culture.

The philosopher and scientist Qiyamiddin Nazarov observed the following about the history of Timur and the Timurid dynasty:

“The era of Timur and the Timurid dynasty can be appropriately depicted by harmonizing the philosophy of history and the history of philosophy. Amir Timur's life, his activities, the cultural processes during the Timurid period, and topics such as the advancement of science have been extensively covered in numerous philosophical works and studies” [8.46].

After all, Amir Timur dedicated his entire life to the prosperity and development of the region's peoples and the stability of the homeland. He transformed cities, towns, and villages into centers of craftsmanship, scholarship, science, and culture. As Bo'ribov Ahmedov noted, can we not mention the magnificent architectural structures that Amir Timur erected in cities like Shahrisabz, Samarkand, Bukhara, and Yassi (Tashkent) through his efforts and initiatives?! [9.3]. Amir Timur made Samarqand the capital of his empire, turning it into a grand and awe-inspiring city, often referred to as the “jewel of the Earth”.

Amir Timur's “Codes of Timur” included the “Second Council on State Formation”, “Third Council on Establishing Authority”, “Ninth Council on Consolidating Authority”, “Tenth Council for Strengthening the State”, “Eleventh Council for Advancing the State” and in the “Regulations for Organizing and Elevating the State, Ensuring its Stability and Security”, he ensured strong order, discipline, and legal supremacy in the country.

In his “Codes of Timur”, he stated: “I conducted all my affairs with the advice of the council, taking correct measures to complete them. I did not engage in any matter without thinking through exit strategies. I achieved success with correct measures, firm determination, patience, and caution, ensuring stability without causing disorder” [10.16], indicating his adherence to the principle of “Strength in Justice” in the country and emphasizing special attention to spiritual and intellectual advancement.

Another great service of Timur was that he became famous as a patron of culture and science, gathering scholars and religious leaders in his court. Figures like Khoja Afzal, Jalal Khokhi, Maulana Khwarazmi, Maulana Munshi, and others were engaged in scholarly and literary creation at his court.

Thus, Amir Temur's views on spiritual renewal in the development of society are based on modern philosophical teachings. These principles are interconnected with the meaningful rise of Amir Temur's state, complementing each other in such a way that their interrelationship and coherence form a strong chain resembling a circle. This chain, based on universal phenomena, contributed to the spiritual advancement of Amir Temur's reign.

Muhammad Taragai Mirza Ulugbek (1394-1449) is one of the great figures of the Timurid dynasty whose name has been revered and honored not only in the Eastern world but also in the Western world for several centuries.

The era ruled by a great thinker and statesman will become a major scientific and cultural center of the East. It is not without reason that this period is described in modern scholarship as the final phase of the Central Asian Renaissance and as part of the global Renaissance.

The unequivocal consensus is that this scientific and cultural advancement is associated with the region between the two rivers of Central Asia, and it finds its inception in Ulugbek's scientific activities in Samarkand at the beginning of the 15th century. "This half-century period ultimately left a profound mark on the spiritual and material culture of the peoples of the Middle Ages and today remains the foundation of their cultural development. Therefore, the peoples of Central Asia are forever grateful to Ulugbek and his companions" [11.45].

In 1994, according to the UNESCO resolution of the United Nations, the celebration of the scholar's 600th anniversary marked Ulugbek's significant contributions in the global recognition of science, culture, and art.

The great Uzbek poet, great thinker, famous statesman Alisher Navoi (1441-1501) is a prolific artist, his works are rich in socio-philosophical, political, and moral thoughts, imbued with the spirit of humanitarianism [12].

His creative and humanitarian views have a special place in the development of spiritual and educational thought of Central Asia. More than forty examples of scholar's scientific heritage have served to shape our spirituality.

The thinker regards the essence of humanity to lie in social activity — engaging in a profession that benefits society, benefiting the people, and alleviating their burdens.

Navoi emphasized the necessity of renewing the societal ideological sphere, having directly passed through comprehensive human upbringing. According to the philosopher's thought, for a person to achieve completeness, they must first imprint noble human qualities on their heart, be knowledgeable about the arts and sciences of their time, not only in meaning but also in physical abilities, prioritize the interests of the country and nation over their own interests, and be a loyal child to their homeland and motherland [13].

4. Conclusion

In summary, the social-philosophical perspectives of medieval thinkers emphasize the critical importance of spiritual development for both individuals and society through the revitalization of the societal ideological sphere. Thus, in our ongoing efforts to renew and elevate this ideological sphere, engaging with the spiritual and intellectual legacies of distinguished scholars and intellectuals becomes essential. This study not only enriches the spiritual values of the younger generation but also broadens their worldviews, nurtures virtues such as kindness, and equips them to be worthy successors to their ancestral heritage.

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Competing Interests Statement

The author declares having no competing interest with any party concerned during this publication.

Consent for Publication

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

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