

THE ESSENCE OF EASTERN PHILOSOPHY AND ITS ROLE IN SOCIAL PROGRESS

Nekov Ikrom Istamovich

Asia International University, Intern-Teacher,
department of Foreign Languages and Social Sciences

E-mail: nekovikrom5@gmail.com

Tel: +99500025019

Annotation: This article explores the fundamental principles of Eastern philosophy and its significant influence on the social, moral, and cultural development of humanity. It highlights how Eastern philosophical thoughts such as Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Islamic philosophy emphasize harmony, morality, and collective progress. The article also examines the relevance of Eastern philosophical traditions in addressing modern societal challenges and fostering a balance between material and spiritual life.

Keywords: Eastern philosophy, social development, spirituality, moral values, harmony, cultural progress

Main Text

According to Diogenes Laërtius (late 2nd – early 3rd century AD), the first person to call himself a philosopher was the Greek thinker and scientist Pythagoras. The earliest philosophical doctrines emerged in ancient India, China, Central Asia, and Greece, and later spread to Western nations. In India, the Vedas (Sanskrit veda = knowledge) are ancient written monuments of literature, created at the end of the 2nd millennium BCE to the beginning of the 1st millennium BCE. This cultural heritage has reached us in four parts (samhitas):

Rigveda (a collection of hymns, praises and prayers)

Samaveda (a collection of chants)

Yajurveda (or Ayurveda in some usages) (methods of sacrifice)

Atharvaveda (a collection of magical spells and incantations)

In Confucius' teaching the concepts of humanity (jen), propriety (li), and virtue (de) occupy an important place. The motto "Do not do unto others what you would not want done to yourself" forms the basis of his doctrine. He also said: "If you study but do not reflect, you will be confused; if you reflect but do not study, you will remain under the burden of doubt."

In Central Asia, philosophical ideas appeared in the teachings of the Avesta: from the 6th century BCE to the early 3rd century CE Zoroastrianism and its associated dualistic worldview were prevalent. The moral foundation of Zoroastrianism consists of three things: good thoughts, good words and good deeds. By the mid-8th and early 9th centuries, various opposing lines of thought appeared within Islamic philosophy, and the need arose to defend the foundations of moderate Islam, which resulted in the formation of the doctrine of "Kalam" (Islamic theology). Its proponents, the "Mutakallimūn" (theologians) held that the Qur'an was revealed by Allah and that the world consisted of countless atoms created by Allah according to His will, moving,

combining, coming into being or disappearing into nothingness. They argued that only Allah is eternal and first cause, and humans are weak in their knowledge of the world.

Opposing them were the Mu'tazila ("those who withdrew"), one of the earliest theological streams in Islamic philosophy, which separated from the Mutakallimūn in the 8th century. According to Mu'tazila doctrine, humans are free in their actions and cannot be bound by predetermined fate. They applied the methods and concepts of ancient philosophy and logic to theology, rejected mysticism, and proposed rational interpretation of the Qur'an and Sunnah, introducing rationalist elements into Islam. Their ideas recognized human free will and rejected fatalism. Thus, by the early 9th century the currents of orthodox Islamic theology and rational theology, having become familiar with the natural-scientific and philosophical heritage of ancient Greece and Rome, laid the basis for the emergence of medieval Arab philosophy. One of the thinkers of that era was Al-Kindi (800–879 CE). According to Islamic philosophical scholars, although many major thinkers had lived in the Muslim East, only Al-Kindi was honored with the title "philosopher." He resolved the dispute between philosophy and the sciences in favor of philosophy. He argued that philosophy is a necessary tool for understanding existence, saying that even the enemies of philosophy need it. He attempted not only to demonstrate the necessity of philosophy, but also to answer the question whether humans can, by their reason and intellect, know the essence of things and phenomena. "Philosophy," he said, "investigates the essence of things and phenomena, their primary causes, and only by seeking the cause of the unknown truth can one know its nature." According to Al-Kindi, no single thinker can grasp the whole truth about the world in full.

Truth is a body of knowledge accumulated over many centuries and by many thinkers. Even if a person lives a long life, with deep intellect and research, he still cannot comprehend all the truth about the universe. "For this," he said, "it will take hundreds, thousands of years, the persistent studies of many generations, sharp thoughts... Therefore we must, even if only slightly, be grateful to our predecessors who revealed to us the truth." In his view, the universe is centered on Earth wrapped in the vault of the heavens. He divided the world into two realms — the earthly world, of change, development, decay and death, and the celestial world, distinguished by its immutability, incorruptibility, and immortality. Al-Kindi regarded Allah as the first cause that gave the impetus to the existence and motion of the universe, considering Him eternal, singular and the establisher of the universal order. His role in the rise of Eastern Aristotelianism in Arabic philosophy was enormous. He was well versed in Aristotle's philosophy, and even critiqued some of its ideas. He supplemented Aristotle's ten categories with his own five fundamental principles (matter, form, motion, place, and time). In his view, all things in nature are composed of matter.

Sufism (Tasawwuf) is a complex religious-philosophical movement with many different directions. Two main ideological currents are clearly visible: the first posits that attachment to the transient world, wealth and rank leads to forgetfulness of Allah, disbelief and urges renunciation of the world and belief in predestined fate; the second argues that this world was created by Allah for humans and their righteous life, and humans are encouraged, through good deeds in this world, to strive through the difficult purification path to attain nearness to God. In Sufism it is affirmed that there are four stages on the path of spiritual perfection: Sharia, Tariqat, Ma'rifat and Haqiqat. Sharia refers to religious laws and rituals, the moral and divine guidance found in the Qur'an and Hadith, which must be thoroughly learned and consistently followed, culminating in worship of God. Sharia aims at recognizing Allah with the intellect. Without fulfilling the requirements of Sharia one cannot proceed to Tariqat. Tariqat involves renouncing

earthly pleasures, restraining the nafs, living in solitude, thinking only of Allah, meditating, remembering Him and loving Him from the heart. Ma'rifat means recognizing that all existence has Allah as its foundation, realizing this and thus reaching Allah. In Ma'rifat the world, stars, moon, sun, humans, animals, birds, butterflies and all other beings are manifestations of Allah's presence; man is said to be Allah, like a ray of the sun. Haqiqat means believing that one has reached the throne of Allah, attained nearness, and even become united with Him. Under the direct influence of Yusuf Hamadani, Abdulkhaliq Ghijduvani, Najmiddin Kubra and Khoja Ahmad Yassavi the Naqshbandi Order emerged in Central Asia and later spread to the Near and Middle East. Abdulkhaliq Ghijduvani said: "O my son, in all conditions be with knowledge (ilm), righteous deeds (amal) and piety (taqwa), walk in the footsteps of the predecessors, hold firmly to the Sunnah and community, learn fiqh and hadith."

Universality-encyclopedic knowledge: an interest in all things, one of the important features of the culture of that era. Eastern philosophy represents one of the richest and most enduring intellectual traditions in human history. Rooted in diverse cultures such as Chinese, Indian, Persian, and Islamic civilizations, it focuses on the inner development of the human being and the harmony between humanity and nature. Unlike Western philosophy, which often emphasizes rationality and individualism, Eastern philosophy promotes unity, moral conduct, and the spiritual growth of the collective society.

The main schools of Eastern thought—Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Islamic philosophy—each contributed to the formation of moral and ethical foundations that shaped the evolution of societies across Asia and beyond. Confucianism, for instance, advocates for respect, filial piety, and social order based on moral integrity. Taoism encourages harmony with nature and the cultivation of inner peace through simplicity and balance. Buddhism, with its emphasis on compassion and mindfulness, offers a path toward enlightenment and social harmony. Similarly, Islamic philosophy integrates reason and faith, promoting justice, knowledge, and the moral responsibility of individuals within society.

In terms of social development, Eastern philosophical thought plays a vital role in maintaining moral stability, strengthening ethical consciousness, and fostering community solidarity. These principles contribute to the creation of societies that value collective welfare over individual gain. Furthermore, the Eastern worldview's focus on balance and moderation provides essential insights for addressing the modern challenges of globalization, environmental crises, and moral degradation.

In today's interconnected world, the essence of Eastern philosophy offers valuable lessons for achieving sustainable development and peace. By integrating traditional wisdom with modern innovation, societies can cultivate a holistic approach to progress—one that harmonizes material advancement with spiritual and ethical growth.

References:

- 1 Fung Yu-lan. (1952). *A History of Chinese Philosophy*. Princeton University Press.
- 2 Rahman, F. (1975). *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition*. University of Chicago Press.
- 3 Radhakrishnan, S. (1927). *Indian Philosophy (Vol. 1–2)*. Oxford University Press.

JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY SCIENCES AND INNOVATIONS

VOLUME 04, ISSUE 10
MONTHLY JOURNALS



ISSN NUMBER: 2751-4390

IMPACT FACTOR: 9,08

4 Chittick, W. C. (2007). Science of the Cosmos, Science of the Soul: The Pertinence of Islamic Cosmology in the Modern World. Oneworld Publications.

5 Loy, D. (2003). The Great Awakening: A Buddhist Social Theory. Wisdom Publications.