

MEDIEVAL EASTERN PHILOSOPHY AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RENAISSANCE

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Abstract: This article provides a comprehensive scientific exploration of the development and historical stages of philosophy, focusing on the differences between Eastern and Western philosophies and the influence of Eurocentrism. It examines the uniqueness of Eastern philosophy, its historical and cultural sources, and its contribution to world civilization. The reception and interpretation of medieval Eastern philosophy in the West are discussed. The article also emphasizes the need to re-evaluate Eastern philosophy from an objective and scientific perspective.

Keywords: History of philosophy, Eastern philosophy, Western philosophy, Eurocentrism, Middle Ages, Scientific-methodological principles, Renaissance, Islamic philosophy, Translation movement, Objective analysis.

In contemporary literature, the emergence of philosophy is often linked to the formation of slave societies based on Marxist class principles, considering its history to be three thousand years old. However, it is believed that elements of philosophical thinking and a rational, empirical approach to the world and its phenomena existed in ancient times. Explaining the development stages of the history of philosophy in connection with specific periods of social progress is also not entirely accurate, as these periods occurred differently in various regions. In many countries, slavery continued in various forms until the second half of the 19th century and never formed the basis of their economies.

Therefore, attention should be paid to the fact that the stages of philosophical development have unique characteristics in different regions. A universal stage for all regions can be identified as the period when mythological thinking began to fragment, giving rise to philosophical questions and answers. Another distinctive feature of the approach to the development of philosophical thought is the Eurocentric views that narrow the diversity of global historical-philosophical processes, artificially highlighting Western mentality. Eastern philosophy typically includes the philosophies specific to regions such as India, China, the Far East, the Muslim East, Iran, and Central Asia.

The unique cultural progress of the East, which has significantly contributed to world civilization, is recognized by scholars worldwide. It is essential to remember that our civilization has matured within the cradle of Eastern civilization, reflecting its values and profoundly influencing global culture. Philosophical ideas form under specific social conditions and based on historical-cultural sources.

In the East, philosophy often manifests in harmony with religion, usually indistinguishable from it. From a Eurocentric perspective, Eastern mystical philosophy may not be considered a philosophical system, yet Eastern thought initially developed precisely along mystical lines. Recognizing mystical philosophy would imply acknowledging that the history of philosophical development began in the East, necessitating a skeptical approach from the West. During the early medieval period, when the Renaissance was occurring in the East, the West was experiencing the "Dark Ages." Political stability in the East initially encouraged the translation of Greek, Persian, and Indian sources. Through translation, Arab-Islamic culture, enriched by a wide range of new knowledge, experienced a broad cultural renaissance. The philosophy developed in the Muslim East had unique characteristics. The characterizations given to Greek philosophy do not always apply here. Works written by scholars such as Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Ibn Rushd, using Greek philosophical terminology and style, were recognized in the West as Peripatetic (Mashshai) philosophy. In contrast, within Islam, they were viewed as promoting Greek philosophy. As Al-Farabi attempted to explain in his works, Greek philosophy was indeed nourished by sciences that already existed in the East. It is crucial to analyze the universal ideas of Eastern philosophy free from Eurocentric views, comparing religious-philosophical systems of Eastern peoples to observe the breadth of their influence.

Reevaluating Eastern philosophy critically, both epistemologically and methodologically, is essential because much of the research has been conducted within the framework of Eurocentric Orientalism.

Renaissance – The Renaissance was a period of distinct cultural and intellectual progress in Central Asia, Iran, China, and Western Europe. Initially referring to the cultural and spiritual revival in Italy, it was seen as a transition from medieval stagnation to a new era. Key features of the Renaissance include breaking through dogmatism, ignorance, and fanaticism in thought and creativity, glorifying human talent and intellectual potential, restoring and enriching ancient culture, escaping ecclesiastical scholasticism, and fervently celebrating worldly beauty and life in literature and art, and fighting for human freedom and free thought.

The Eastern Renaissance produced great scholars, encyclopedic thinkers, and renowned philosophers. Notable figures in the exact sciences include Muhammad al-Khwarizmi, Abu Bakr al-Razi, Abu Rayhan al-Biruni, Ahmad al-Farghani, Umar

Khayyam, and Mirzo Ulugbek, who made groundbreaking discoveries. Philosophers such as Abu Nasr al-Farabi, Abu Ali ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd, Muhammad al-Ghazali, and Nasafi Aziziddin enriched the treasure of thought with their works, exploring the world, humans, and society as a whole, discovering new laws, and expanding intellectual horizons. They deeply developed theories of an ideal society and a perfect human being. Poets like Abu Abdullah Rudaki, Abu al-Ala al-Ma'arri, Abu al-Qasim Ferdowsi, Jalal al-Din Rumi, Hafiz Shirazi, Nizami Ganjavi, Abdurrahman Jami, and Alisher Navoi created immortal works celebrating love, heroism, freedom, and goodness. Schools of miniature painting also emerged, with Kamal al-Din Behzad leading a new creative direction. Another Renaissance feature was the increase in exciting and adventurous literature, such as "One Thousand and One Nights," "Kalila and Dimna," "Forty Viziers," "Tutinama," "Sindbadnama," and "Jami' al-Hikayat," and the depiction of universal ideals filled with wisdom and philosophy in works like the "Khamsa."

Russian scholar G. Shaymuhambetova, who studied medieval philosophical heritage, noted that philosophical thought in the Near and Middle East developed independently of theological doctrines. However, this conclusion requires re-examination and clarification. The author also emphasizes evaluating this philosophy's novelty and originality, not only in relation to Aristotle but also considering historical interactions with Platonism, Neoplatonism, Stoicism, and ancient Greek natural philosophy, and later achievements.

In conclusion, studying the natural-scientific and socio-philosophical views of philosophers from each era requires specific conceptual, methodological, and factual principles. Although we have a vast database for researching and interpreting medieval philosophy, it is crucial to pay special attention to the methodology of systematizing information. The medieval Eastern philosophical heritage has attracted significant interest in both the East and West. Western scholars have tried to illuminate the legacy of Eastern philosophers from a factual perspective. Today, it is essential for the scientific community to re-evaluate previous biased and unscientific principles to objectively understand Eastern philosophical heritage.

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