

UZBEK PHILOSOPHY - THE FOUNDATION OF THE SOCIAL THINKING OF TURKIC PEOPLES

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Introduction. Philosophy, like humanity itself, has an ancient and rich history, addressing the fundamental and universal questions of human existence. In both the distant and recent past, every nation that established a distinct civilization and achieved progress in science and wisdom has also earned recognition for its national school of philosophy. Many such schools, shaped by these achievements, have become integral parts of world philosophy.

Among them, the existence of Uzbek philosophy—forming the core of a unique intellectual phenomenon historically referred to as the philosophical traditions of Turan, Turkestan, and Transoxiana—is undoubtedly a historical reality.

The term “Uzbek philosophy” began to be actively used in academic and scholarly discourse during the years of national independence, and it is now recognized as an integral part of universal human thought.

Today, in-depth exploration of its true essence, the processes of its formation and development, its distinctive theoretical and practical dimensions, as well as its mutual interactions with the intellectual traditions of the world and Turkic peoples, has become a matter of significant scholarly importance.

Findings. As a result of the study, the following reflections and conclusions have been formed.

Firstly, in the present day, we are accustomed to terms such as Greek philosophy, Chinese philosophy, Indian philosophy, Arab philosophy, English philosophy, French philosophy, and German philosophy. Each of these philosophical traditions, identified by such names, not only offers a distinct approach to human civilization but also deeply reflects the unique national character, values, traditions, mentality, and spiritual essence of the people who produced them. It is precisely for this reason that they have earned widespread recognition and respect.

Years of scholarly observation and research clearly indicate that in a land with a glorious history, great thinkers, and an abundance of material and spiritual heritage, it is only natural that a highly developed philosophical tradition, a distinct worldview, and progressive intellectual thought would emerge.

Accordingly, we have every reason to affirm that there exists a national philosophical tradition—rightfully recognized within global philosophy and considered an essential part of it—known as Uzbek philosophy. It has now become a pressing necessity to open new horizons for its further development.

In this regard, Uzbek philosophy can be seen as a unique intellectual and spiritual phenomenon: a form of ethnic worldview that has evolved alongside our people over millennia, rooted in a long and rich cultural history. Nourished by the global system of thought, it has developed in harmony with it across centuries, enriched through various socio-political processes, and continuously renewed and refined over time.



Secondly, it is essential to emphasize that the concept of Uzbek philosophy is now widely employed within academic and scholarly circles—undoubtedly as a result of the period following our nation's attainment of independence, and more specifically, the ongoing reforms being implemented in the current era.

At the same time, it is with a sense of regret that we must acknowledge the scarcity of comprehensive scholarly studies that thoroughly examine, from a theoretical perspective, the stages of formation and development of this philosophical tradition—from the distant era of the Avesta to the present day.

When considering the decisive historical and social factors that played a pivotal role in shaping our national philosophy—which holds great significance for the development of modern Uzbek thought—it is appropriate to highlight several key aspects.

Thirdly, the temperate climate of our land—situated in the ancient and fertile region between the Syr Darya and Amu Darya rivers, one of the oldest inhabited areas and a major center of Turkic peoples—has had a profound influence on the worldview and consciousness of its inhabitants.

The full expression of all four seasons, the development of agricultural culture, and the predominance of a sedentary lifestyle have shaped a unique way of life and system of thought among the people living in this region.

On this basis, qualities such as devotion to the native land, deep patriotism, mutual compassion, calm and thoughtful communication, generosity, and hospitality emerged and, over time, became core philosophical values deeply embedded in the national identity of the Turkic peoples.

Fourthly, the territory of present-day Uzbekistan has, since ancient times, been situated along major caravan routes. Most notably, it occupied a central crossroads of the Great Silk Road, whose origins trace back thousands of years. This geographic advantage provided our people with broad access to diverse cultures, value systems, and achievements in science and knowledge.

Most importantly, this historical context cultivated within the hearts and minds of the local population a deep respect for the lifestyles, ways of thinking, art, literature, customs, and traditions of other nations—particularly those of fellow Turkic peoples. It fostered qualities such as tolerance, openness to dialogue, friendship, and a spirit of nobility.

Fifthly, since ancient times, not only Turkic peoples but also various nations and ethnic groups have coexisted peacefully in this land. The harmonious fusion of Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, and Islam has led to the formation of remarkable examples of humanism, compassion for children, family values, dedication to knowledge, and commitment to truth and justice, which are rarely found elsewhere.

Sixthly, the mutual development of religious and secular worldviews contributed to the rise of significant intellectual and cultural achievements in Central Asia. The emergence of the Avesta culture, Manichaeism, and Mazdakism, alongside the founding of major scientific centers such as the Khorezm Academy of Al-Ma'mun, the Ulugh Beg Academy, and the cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, Tashkent, Urgench, and Shakhrisabz, marked a golden age. This period, which can be compared to the First and Second Renaissance, laid the foundation for the development of science and the evolution of socio-philosophical thought in the region.

Naturally, these and many other factors played an essential role in the emergence of Uzbek philosophy as a cornerstone of world and Turkic philosophy—a multi-dimensional and



vast moral and intellectual system. Over time, this philosophy has profoundly influenced the hearts and minds of our people, becoming an inseparable part of our nation's spiritual and worldview heritage.

Seventhly, unfortunately, in the past century, a form of philosophy that was distant from the people and largely incomprehensible to the majority, consisting of complex categories and abstract concepts, was imposed upon our consciousness. The influence of this one-sided approach is still felt within the philosophical circles of our country, and it has led to the formation of misconceptions such as "philosophy is a completely incomprehensible field of knowledge" or, in some cases, "philosophy is an entirely unnecessary science," ideas which persist to this day.

In this regard, it has become an essential and urgent task of the present to approach the history and development of Uzbek philosophy with an entirely new methodology—one that sees it as an integral and consistent worldview that has evolved over millennia, as a unique form of national thought, and as a socio-spiritual phenomenon of our nation's life.

Conclusions. It is of utmost importance to give special attention to the following conclusions, which are based on a new methodology:

First Conclusion. There is a consistent law in the history of humankind associated with all invasions: the invaders continuously erase the cultural heritage, sacred sites, material and spiritual wealth, national values, customs, and traditions of the people they conquer.

The main objective in this process is to alter the historical memory of the conquered people, implant the invaders' ideas, principles, and values into their consciousness, and thus create a new, submissive generation that aligns with the conquerors' ways.

The second law in this regard is that the longer the period of invasion lasts, the more the invaders systematically eliminate the courageous, heroic, knowledgeable, and patriotic people of the subjugated nation, while simultaneously attempting to increase the influence of petty and opportunistic individuals motivated by personal gain and survival. These individuals gradually replace the true values of the nation, and through this, the invaders aim to infiltrate and multiply their influence in the nation's genetic and cultural heritage.

Such tasks were effectively carried out over many centuries of occupation against our people, so much so that those who deny the true authors of the cultural and spiritual heritage created by our people in the past—those who disregard our values, trust in invaders, and serve them—have only continued to grow in number.

Initially, the invasion of Alexander the Great from Macedonia, and subsequently the later conquests, left insufficient information about the true history and development of our people's life, from the era of the Avesta to the present day. In fact, one of the main goals of these invasions was precisely to erase the true historical heritage of our people. The invaders, especially Alexander, who burned a large portion of the Avesta and sent the remaining part to Greece, sought to destroy as much as they could of our people's heritage. Following his path, later invaders also ruthlessly eradicated artifacts, national values, and historical monuments that did not align with their own interests. Their main task was to erase these traces from the collective memory of the people and to alter the nation's historical consciousness fundamentally.

From this perspective, one of the ancient laws of human history is that when a nation, having endured long periods of despotism, finally gains independence, it is clear to experts that its thought process does not become fully independent overnight or in a single year.



In this sense, the fact that the thought process of a nation, once it has attained freedom and independence, will not immediately return to its roots, nor will it suddenly grasp the historical foundations of its philosophical life, is a significant reality. The process of complete renewal and a profound transformation of consciousness may take several years or, in some cases, even decades, as scholars are well aware.

Second conclusion: One of the fundamental principles of philosophy is that time passes, but people remain, eras change, yet the influence of concepts from the previous age, embedded in the genetic makeup of the nation, endures. In other words, time and eras move forward with great speed, but the people, their consciousness, thought, and values persist. Certainly, in the minds of people, like many other criteria of the past, the philosophical categories, concepts, and principles introduced in later centuries will remain in place for a certain period. Returning to original principles, the renewal of thought and spirit requires a certain period of time.

In this process of change and renewal, the restoration of original historical pages, the reimagining of key events and their development, and the establishment of historical truths within their rightful places are all part of this complex transformation process.

During this process, the people recognize themselves and their essence. The connection between the gaps left by the past, and the continuity created by the invaders intentionally severing these links, will be re-established in the new era. The principle of continuity of historical events will be restored, and a new perspective on history will emerge.

Third Conclusion: For historians of Western philosophy, the philosophy of Christianity, apologetics, patristics, the ideas of realism and nominalism, and the views of renowned theologians such as Flavius Justin, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Aurelius Augustine, Anselm of Canterbury, and Thomas Aquinas have become a traditional part of the history of philosophy in their respective regions. It has become customary that whatever work or dissertation by a specialist representing the peoples of this region on Western or world philosophy is taken, this tradition continues. This historical tradition has been accepted by world philosophers and has spread widely to all regions of the modern world.

Thus, in our national philosophy, this very same tradition should be fully manifested, meaning that the legacy of our great ancestors, including those with various philosophical schools and perspectives, such as religious thinkers, should also be considered as an integral part of the history and development of Uzbek philosophy. From a philosophical point of view, it is necessary to study this heritage in a broader and more detailed way. Today, not only Zoroaster and Farabi, Khwarizmi and Farghani, Biruni and Ibn Sina, Ulugh Beg and Ali Qushji, but also the Bukharians, Termezians, Bujayrians, Ustrushanis, Zamakhshari and Kubrani, Yassawi and Ghijduvani, Naqshbandi and Porsali, Marginiy and Sadru-sh-shuaro, Kaffol Shoshi and Ahrar Vali, and hundreds of other religious scholars should be recognized as an essential part of our national philosophical heritage. It is our sacred duty to further study, promote, and advocate the rich legacy of these scholars from a philosophical methodological perspective.

Fourth Conclusion: The necessity of understanding this truth has already become a requirement of the times, and it is precisely this realization that allows us to free ourselves from the errors of the recent past and return to our true philosophy. Our genuine national philosophy is not a way of thinking distant from our language and soul, values and mentality, but rather a



system of concepts and principles that trace their origins back to our great scholars, particularly shaped under the influence of the science of Hikmat (Wisdom).

Such an approach enables us to perceive our eminent forefathers not just as representatives of various disciplines such as science, religion, or literature, but as true sons of our people, representatives of Hikmat, and architects of our unified spiritual-cultural wealth and ethnic philosophical heritage. They should be understood and interpreted as the People of Wisdom (Ahl al-Hikmat) who formed the essence of our philosophical legacy.

Fifth Conclusion: Today, this transformative process has become clearly evident in our country. This multifaceted and prosperous development is creating wide opportunities for a new perspective on history. A new generation of enlightened individuals—philosophers, historians, literary scholars—equipped with an independent mindset, is emerging. Interrupted links to our past are being restored, and the original truths about them are being revived.

As a result, the true roots of Uzbek values, ancient samples of folk oral creativity as the foundation of national thought, and classical artifacts—the Renaissance periods of our philosophy, the medieval and later stages, particularly the developments of the last century—are being rediscovered and reevaluated.

In this regard, eliminating the remnants of the painful legacy inherited from long-standing invasions, refreshing the national gene pool, and transforming our people's worldview into one of genuine intellectual independence remain among the most vital tasks of our time.

This, in turn, demands the further strengthening of spiritual and educational activities—especially rethinking the history and evolution of our national philosophy, clarifying its developmental stages, fostering fair-minded views among the public (particularly the youth), and adopting a new approach to philosophical education and upbringing.

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