



Hermeneutic Foundations of The Socio-Ethical Views of Thinkers of The Timurid Era

Mustayev Ruslan Damirovich

Independent Researcher, Fergana State University

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*Correspondence: Mustayev Ruslan Damirovich

Email: mustayevRuslan11@gmail.com

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Abstract: This article presents the opinions of our country and foreign scholars on the hermeneutic foundations of the socio-ethical views of the thinkers of the Timurid era. The article examines the theoretical and methodological foundations of studying the socio-ethical views of thinkers from the Timurid era, as well as the hermeneutic basis of their socio-ethical perspectives. It also explores the educational significance of these views in the context of New Uzbekistan. Additionally, the hermeneutic foundations of the socio-ethical views of Timurid-era thinkers are analyzed.

Keywords: Timurid Era, Socio-Cultural Conditions, Social Environment, Social-Ethical Views, Philosophy, Justice, Scientific-Methodological Basis, Education, Activity, Hermeneutic Basis, Historical-Philosophical Analysis.

Introduction

During the later stage of the Renaissance period in the socio-economic and cultural-spiritual life of the peoples of Central Asia, prominent thinkers such as Abdurahman Jami, Alisher Navoi, Husayn Vaiz Koshifi, Jalaluddin Davani, and Ibn Khaldun emerged during the Timurid era. They created profound works and put forward ideas that embodied high social and moral ideals, which have been valued for centuries. Under the influence of the socio-political and cultural-spiritual conditions in which they emerged, they uniquely interpreted the ideas of their predecessors regarding the origins of human communities. They argued that for society to prosper, it is essential to eliminate inter-state and inter-ethnic wars and massacres, religious conflicts, and human disputes. Instead, they emphasized that mutual cooperation, solidarity, trust, and compromise should become the dominant goals (Mohamed, 2021).

Methodology

Research on the scientific and spiritual heritage of the Timurid era and the social significance of the socio-philosophical views of prominent thinkers has been conducted by scholars such as A. Arberry, A. Kraft, Charles Schefer, V. Perch, O. Omer, M. Rajabov, A. Afsahzod, A. Mukhammedkhodjayev, Ye. E. Bertels, A. N. Boldyrev, A. D. Knish, H. Aliqulov, Y. Jumaboyev, Sh. Mamidova, R. Mahmudov, N. Komilov, and A. Madraimov. Additionally, scholars such as B. Valikhojayev, I. Haqqul, Sh. Sirojiddinov, S. Sayfulloh, M. Kenjabek, M. N. Boltayev, R. Nosirov, G. Navro'zova, S. Karimov, R. Shodiyev, A. Huseynova, and J. Kholmuminov have explored the Timurid era in their monographic studies (Aykut, 2024).

Result and Discussion

Thinkers such as Abdurahman Jami, Alisher Navoi, and Husayn Vaiz Koshifi, who lived during the Timurid era, expressed their social and moral views through vivid artistic imagery and symbols. They envisioned an ideal society based on mutual understanding, free from interethnic and interreligious conflicts, and founded on social justice. Such views are vividly reflected in Abdurahman Jami's "*Hirodnoma-i Iskandar*" and Alisher Navoi's "*Saddi Iskandariy*" epics. For example, in Jami's work, the protagonist, Iskandar, arrives in a city where all inhabitants are equal in rights, living in harmony and cooperation. They have no concept of war, especially wars arising from religious hostility. In the works of Jami and Navoi, the main virtue of Iskandar, the ruler of this idealized country, is not his religious devotion and faith but rather his wisdom, enlightenment, and commitment to justice (Golshani, 2019). Considering that these thinkers were devoted followers of Islamic beliefs, it is not difficult to recognize the immense ideological significance of their ideas, both for the medieval period and for our present time.

In Navoi's work, the protagonist Iskandar does not rely on religious leaders and clerics as his main advisors and trusted aides in governing the country. Instead, he primarily depends on scholars and thinkers with deep knowledge in various fields of science. He makes decisions based on their counsel (consultation). This group of scholars and intellectuals is led by Aristotle, who is regarded as a symbol of wisdom in the history of philosophical thought among the peoples of the Near and Middle East. Iskandar seeks guidance from philosophers and sages, particularly Aristotle, on matters of state governance. Aristotle, in turn, provides him with knowledge about people's way of life, governance, and his own experiences (Fazal, 2020). The prominent Orientalist scholar Ye. E. Bertels emphasized that the association of the names Iskandar and Aristotle in Eastern countries allows for the merging of political, military, and administrative issues with the ontological, epistemological, and ethical aspects of philosophy.

It is important to emphasize that Jami, Navoi, Koshifi, and other thinkers sought to express their views on justice and just governance in accordance with Islamic teachings and Sharia principles. However, in their worldview, the rulings of Sharia were not merely doctrinal concepts but were also connected to social life, to some extent reflecting real circumstances and representing the relationships and interactions among people. From this

perspective, the following thoughts of the prominent Islamic scholar Ye. A. Belyaev are noteworthy: "The uniqueness of Islam and Muslim law lies in the fact that they reflect the social reality of a specific historical period in a region inhabited by many civilized peoples. The economic and cultural interactions of these peoples, as well as the influence of past civilizations, were the main factors in the flourishing of medieval Arab culture and its immense significance in the cultural progress of humanity". At the same time, the thinkers, relying on the hadith "One hour of justice is better than sixty days of voluntary worship", promoted the principle that "A just non-Muslim ruler is better than a tyrannical Muslim ruler". In their works, they emphasized the importance of justice for all peoples and individuals, regardless of their religious beliefs.

It is also worth noting that although the principle of justice in governance in Muslim countries was implemented based on Sharia directives and rulings, in the history of Uzbek statehood, past legal norms and regulations that had developed in response to the needs of real-life circumstances were also taken into account. In this regard, A. Ziyov's following statement is well-founded: "Sharia in those times should be understood as a set of specific moral and legal norms within Muslim society. While the Quran and Sunnah form the foundation of Sharia, which literally means "the right path", in reality, it served as a general ideological, religious, and ethical source for fiqh (law and jurisprudence)". Thus, it can be concluded that in governing various aspects of societal life, both the traditional legal system ("tuzukchilik") and Islamic jurisprudence ("fiqh") were utilized.

The thinkers of this period, based on their ideas of justice, also presented several progressive views on the issue of war from the perspective of the historical and ideological context of their time. While remaining committed to their humanitarian and people-centered ideals, they were concerned not only with the well-being and peace of their own nation and homeland but also with the prosperity and stability of other peoples and their lands. For example, Navoi wrote about the "qora cherik" – the aggressive and invading army, which was responsible for bringing immense suffering and calamities to people – describing them as follows: "The black army in military campaigns is akin to the creatures called Yajuj and Majuj... Their work is to plunder whatever can be seized, to swarm foreign lands like locusts, devouring even grass and leaves. There is an irreconcilable contradiction between them and humanity, as well as a deep discord between them and Islam. They are devoid of understanding and entirely alien to virtues such as wisdom, reason, and fairness... In their lack of humanity, they surpass even beasts, for they possess more animalistic traits than human qualities... Mankind cannot punish them; let the Almighty Himself bring them to justice". Thus, another important conclusion that can be drawn from Navoi's words is that even if such military campaigns were conducted under the pretext of serving a religious cause, including Islam, in reality, they were, as the thinker puts it, "a contradiction within Islam itself". In other words, they were against the principles of Islam (Onebunne, 2022). Navoi's ideas remain politically and ideologically significant even in today's world on an international scale.

Another highly significant moral and ideological aspect of Central Asian thinkers' views on war during this period is that none of them, in their works, called for religious warfare or "jihad". In fact, they completely avoided this topic. For example, in the works of Jami and Navoi, Iskandar, who is portrayed as a just ruler, does not aim to forcibly impose any religion on other nations or subject people to a specific religious ideology. Instead, his goal is to eradicate oppression and violence, establish justice, ensure the prosperity of the country, and guarantee the well-being of its citizens.

These thinkers also expressed ideas about the futility of interreligious and sectarian wars, emphasizing that such conflicts contradict human nature and reason. For instance, Jami, who viewed such wars with contempt and strongly condemned them, wrote the following "rubai" (quatrain):

*Ey mug'bachai dahr, bideh jomi mayam,
Ki omad zi nizoi sunniyu shiaqayam
Go'yandki, Jomiyo, chi mazhab dori?
Sad shukrki, sag sunniyu xor shia nayom.*

Translation: "Oh, cupbearer! Pour me wine, for I am sickened by the conflict between Sunnis and Shias. They ask, "Jami, which sect do you belong to?" A hundred thanks that I am neither a Sunni dog nor a Shia donkey". If we look at the history of the Uzbek people after Jami's death, we can see that his words were almost prophetic.

From the early 16th century, for several decades, the bloody wars between the Shaybanid and Safavid dynasties in Mawarannahr and Khorasan were justified by their leaders and the religious authorities who issued fatwas, claiming that these conflicts were a form of jihad aimed at restoring the true Islam. The Shaybanid dynasty, as supporters of Sunnism, accused the Safavid rulers, who were proponents of Shiism, of deviating from the faith, and vice versa. In reality, the goal of both sides had nothing to do with concern for religion; rather, it was about establishing their dominance over a vast territory. It can be said that these bloody wars brought nothing but devastation to the country, immense suffering to the people, and strained relations (Nekroumi, 2023).

The great historical contribution of Abdurahman Jami, Alisher Navoi, and other thinkers of this era is that they artistically depicted the profound moral and ethical aspects of this issue through remarkable literary imagery. On the other hand, they also gave this issue a socio-political dimension by applying their ideas to state governance. It is well known that medieval Central Asian thinkers considered a just and enlightened monarchy as the key factor in realizing their vision of a prosperous society. In their works, they created the image of a just and enlightened ruler as an ideal model of governance. However, even in this matter, the great ideological and, to some extent, doctrinal significance of their ideas lies in their perspective on religious tolerance (Shabalala, 2024). They rejected theocratic rule – governance that subjugates the state to religion or operates under religious control. In summary, the fundamental principle of state governance is not religious prescriptions but rather enlightenment and justice. This raises an important question: Why did these thinkers, despite being devout Muslims who strictly adhered to the principles of Islam, advocate for such religious tolerance?

First, they believed that religion was not the sole means of solving all social, political, legal, cultural, and spiritual issues in society. Instead, these matters were interpreted in their works not directly based on religious and Sharia principles, but primarily in consideration of real-life circumstances.

Second, they believed that a ruler who governed not based on personal faith and piety, but rather on justice, would serve to strengthen goodwill, mutual trust, and friendly relations both among their own people and with the people of other nations. For instance, Navoi described such a just ruler as follows: "The people of foreign lands long for him, and the oppressed of other countries mention him in their prayers for his justice".

Third, the thinkers clearly understood that if religious fanaticism manifested itself at the level of state governance in the medieval period, it could turn into a disaster for the country's socio-political, economic, and cultural life. In some cases, they even witnessed such events. They observed that attempts to actively involve religion in politics and state affairs sometimes led to forms of political terrorism in the Middle Ages, such as assassination attempts against rulers. Numerous historical facts confirm this. For instance, in February 1427, a fanatic named Ahmad Lur, belonging to the militant Hurufi sect, attempted to assassinate Shahrukh. Historian Abdurazzaq Samarqandi provides the following account of the incident: "While he was still walking inside the mosque, suddenly, a man named Ahmad Lur, a disciple of Mavlana Fazlullah Astarabadi and dressed in felt clothing, approached him holding a piece of paper in his hand as if he were a petitioner. His Majesty signaled to one of his attendants, implying, "Listen to his request and present it". However, the reckless Ahmad Lur suddenly rushed forward and, like a drop of water (a glistening dagger), struck His Majesty in the stomach". Those who armed Ahmad Lur and sent him on the assassination mission were the notorious terrorists Azd and Astarabadi. In the autumn of 1446, Shahrukh's grandson, Muhammad Sultan, also rebelled under the direct instigation of a group of fanatical Khojas, using religion as a cover for their actions.

Conclusion

Thus, the belief of the Timurid-era thinkers that the active involvement of religion in state governance and political affairs – even attempts to exert a certain degree of control over the administrative system – could lead to negative consequences has been historically proven. A clear example of this is the growing political fragmentation within the Timurid Empire, which once united vast regions such as Transoxiana and Khorasan. This fragmentation led to economic and cultural decline, the devastation of the country, and the disruption of the peaceful and stable life of its people (Mahartini, 2024). The historical, political, and ideological significance of these thinkers' opposition to the theocratic form of governance lies precisely in this. These ideas remain relevant even today. Indeed, in the process of building a democratic state in the Republic of Uzbekistan, the determination of religion's role in society and the state, as well as the policy regarding religious values, to some extent, draws upon its historical and ideological roots. Thus, the fight against the hypocrisy and criminal actions of Wahhabis and various religious fundamentalist movements, who claim to pursue their ideals, holds great socio-political significance.

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