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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF VIEWS ON DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORKS OF ABU RAYHAN BERUNI IN COGNITION AND SOCIAL LIFE

Shokirov Murod Rustamovich

Teacher, Department of Legal and Social-Humanitarian Sciences, Bukhara
Academic Lyceum of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the
Republic of Uzbekistan

Abstract:

This article analyzes the extent to which the ideas found in Beruni's works correspond to the laws, principles, and categories of dialectics, that is, to the basic rules expressing the most general, necessary, and recurring connections of development in nature, society, and thinking; to the basic guiding rules in dialectical thinking and analysis; and to concepts expressing the most general aspects of dialectical thinking and the essential aspects of reality.

Keywords: development, comparison, science based on experience, thinking, possibility and reality, analogy, experimental method, “formation and destruction”, “Key to Astronomy”, critical analysis.

1. Introduction

The views on development found in the works of Abu Rayhan Beruni fully correspond to or serve the philosophical and dialectical analysis of the economic, socio-political, and cultural reforms being carried out in Uzbekistan today, the principles of the “Development Strategy” and the “Action Strategy” of New Uzbekistan put forward by the President, and the foundations for building the foundation of the “Third Renaissance” in Uzbekistan.



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As President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh.M. Mirziyoyev stated: “Today, we would not be mistaken if we say that the idea of ‘New Uzbekistan’, which has deeply occupied the hearts of our entire people and is gradually becoming a nationwide movement, also embodies the dreams, aspirations, and regrets of such great ancestors of ours, and, in general, the scholars who laid the foundations for the First and Second Renaissance periods in our national history. The history of humanity shows that the processes of spiritual awakening in the life of every nation lead to the awareness of national identity and raise the economic and cultural development of the country to a new level. It is clear to all of us that such a unique social phenomenon is called ‘Renaissance’ – awakening, restoration, and elevation” [1, p.52].

Based on these considerations, the article attempts to analyze the views of scholars on development and their significance in social life.

2. Literature Review and Methodology

According to the research of Academician J. Tulenov, “Beruni puts forward and proves important scientific and philosophical ideas about nature and the natural phenomena and processes that continuously occur in it. He puts forward natural-scientific and philosophical considerations about the fact that the changes occurring in the world, that is, formation and destruction, emergence and disappearance, have their own specific causes. He pays great attention to the issues of possibility and reality, essence and phenomenon, cause and effect, as well as heredity and variability occurring in natural processes. According to the scholar, the main reason for the differences of people in color, appearance, nature, and morality is not only the difference in lineage, but also the difference in natural-scientific environments – soil, water, air, and places” [4, p.47].



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The problems of dialectics occupy a large place in the works of Abu Rayhan Beruni. The interconnection of things and phenomena, the necessity of approaching them comprehensively in the process of scientific cognition, and the essence and significance of methods of observation and comparison were among the issues that remained at the center of Beruni's attention.

Beruni also expresses his view comprehensively about the eternity of existence and its constant change. In the work “Monuments of Ancient Peoples”, he says, “The world is eternal... the firmament is located in infinite space” [2, p.26].

Beruni also paid attention to the fact that changes in the climate and seasons on Earth depend on the movement of the Sun. In the work “Key to Astronomy”, Beruni rejects the old notions that the Earth does not rotate and says that the Earth rotates, and its movement is lawful and consistent with astronomical phenomena. According to Academician M. Khayrullayev, “the two opposing ideas manifested in Beruni's views, that is, on the one hand, the inability to deny the creation of the world, and on the other hand, considering nature as independent, show Beruni's tendency, to a certain extent, toward a deistic direction in understanding the world and nature as a natural scientist” [3, p.73].

3. Results

Beruni particularly notes that matter is constantly changing, moving, renewing itself, and taking different forms, and that material things and their movement are eternal. According to him, things develop in the world, and the endless emergence of things from hiddenness into existence is evidence of development.

In the thinker's work “Monuments of Ancient Peoples”, issues such as light and time, the movement of light and the movement of sound, light and heat, light and darkness, moonlight and sunlight are also described [2, p.27].



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According to Beruni, the firmament changes. Otherwise, it would be “a simple judgment not based on evidence”. If the firmament were said to have been the same in the past as it is now, “it would no longer be possible to provide evidence for both sides of the contradiction; rather, the evidence would belong to one side and reject the other” [2, p.26].

Beruni supports the idea that the source governing the world is the contradiction consisting of “formation and destruction”. Speaking about the unity of stillness and movement, he notes that Arabs and Iranians were opposite to each other regarding their sequence. The Arabs said that stillness came before movement and therefore was superior, while the Iranians accepted the opposite. The ancient Arabs thought that various disasters, such as earthquakes and storms, were formed as a result of the movement of the elements, while stillness was peace.

Beruni tries to compare opposing views and problems, and when studying different nations, religions, and cultures or analyzing a problem, he compares different points of view and clearly shows their commonalities and differences. This method demonstrates the principle of the struggle of opposites and the search for a single solution.

Things develop in the world; the endless “emergence from hiddenness”, emergence into existence, is evidence of development. This idea expresses that the connection between essence and phenomenon is an endless process. The “transition from potentiality to actuality” indicates the relationship between possibility and reality.

The above ideas indicate that Beruni tries to explain phenomena in nature and society as interconnected and as processes of movement and development. The scholar considers the influence of the external environment, the laws of nature, and human activity to be interconnected.



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4. Discussion

He explains changes in nature through constant movement and a chain of causes and effects. According to him, no phenomenon arises by itself; rather, it develops from a previous state – and this is the main characteristic of dialectical thinking. The scholar reflects on the concepts of “need” and “necessity” and says, “Needs are diverse and countless. Only several people together can satisfy them. For this reason, the necessity of establishing cities arises among people” [2, p.27].

Beruni says that the joint life of people does not bring a person to true power or to the satisfaction of his needs; for this, it is also necessary to work. According to the scholar, reason, labor, and free choice determine a person's life and social condition. Beruni says that a person should always think about the happiness of other people and writes: “The necessity of performing certain tasks is the lifelong rule of human activity” [2, p.28].

The great thinker's philosophical teaching about the possibility of knowing the world, its specific characteristics, and experimental methods of knowing nature is also of great scientific and practical importance. According to Beruni's teaching, the process of knowing nature begins with sensations and rises to thinking, developing from the knowledge of known things toward the knowledge of unknown things and phenomena.

In the work “Monuments of Ancient Peoples”, the scholar says, “One of the reasons for moving from observation to calculation and generalization is to unite the people. For example, among the Arabs, the month begins with the crescent. In countries with a significant difference in geographical longitude, the crescent is seen at different times. This may cause disagreement. In addition, the calendar does not depend on climate or local conditions. Therefore, the creation of a calendar is required by social life. For this, it becomes necessary to move to abstraction, to ‘calculation’, and to generalization” [2, p.27].



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Beruni frequently uses the method of analogy: “analogy is used so as not to reject the previous idea about lifespan and body. Reports about lifespan and body are often encountered in different periods. Those who have not seen it consider it to be far from reason”. The scholar pays particular attention to the method of analogy in cognition. The scholar also attaches great importance to experiment and observation.

Beruni states that in knowing historical events and processes, a person should not rely on lies, false information, and superficial reports, but should know and study issues comprehensively and perfectly. In the preface to his work “India”, he emphasizes the following: “The statement of the person who says that information is not like seeing with one's own eyes is very true. For seeing consists of the eye of the observer encountering the thing seen while it is present and in its place. If lies had not been added to information, it would have held a higher position than seeing. For seeing and looking are limited to a part of the time when the thing exists..., writing is one of the types of information, and it may be considered more honorable than other types; if the eternal traces of the pen did not exist, how would we know the information of peoples?” [4, p.48]

In the work “Monuments of Ancient Peoples”, he says: “It is not enough to rely only on scientific concepts. ‘Then it is known by comparing with one another the words and beliefs they have brought as proof, after cleansing oneself from the bad morality that degrades the nature of most people and from factors that prevent one from seeing the truth’. This consideration expresses the logical stage of the cognition process. In Beruni's method of cognition, accepted hypotheses are distinguished from false ones by the criterion of truth. Sometimes false reports remain within the realm of possibility because there is insufficient proof. Beruni recognizes and clearly demonstrates the existence of a relationship between possibility and reality in knowing the truth, stating that some reports, when there



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is no other evidence of their falsity, remain within the limits of possibility and are treated as reports [2, p.22].

Beruni sees the development of society in the development of science and believes that science should serve people and humanity, and the peoples of countries, regardless of religious and territorial boundaries. The scholar wrote, “All my thought, my heart, is directed toward promoting knowledge, because I enjoyed the pleasure of acquiring knowledge, and I consider this a great happiness for myself” [4, p.49].

In his work “India”, Beruni discusses Indian philosophy, the emergence of the world, and concepts such as time and space. He compares and analyzes the views of Indian thinkers with his own views. He emphasizes the constant development of human thought and science. In “Monuments of Ancient Peoples”, Beruni explains historical events and processes from the perspective of a chain of cause and effect, social changes, and human development. In the works “Mineralogy” and “Astronomy”, he considers natural phenomena not as fixed, but as changing and moving processes. For example, dialectical relations are revealed in issues such as the rotation of the Earth and changes in units of time.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the dialectical views of Abu Rayhan Beruni are clearly manifested in his activities related to science, thinking, experience and theory, and the analysis of opposing views. His philosophy is based on the dialectical combination of experience and logic, history and nature, and religious and scientific views. In this respect, he is considered one of the greatest dialectical researchers in Eastern philosophy.

Beruni relied on critical analysis, comparison, experience, and scientific knowledge. He put forward ideas of ethical, cultural, and scientific solidarity in



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society. Today, his ideas remain relevant in the fields of innovation, education, medicine, ecology, and intercultural dialogue.

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