

THE PEDAGOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF MORAL EDUCATION IN YUSUF KHOS HAJIB'S WORK "KUTADGU BILIG"

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Abstract

This article explores Yusuf Khos Hajib's Kutadgu Bilig, highlighting its insights into educational and moral perspectives. The work examines the role of moral and pedagogical principles in fostering students' moral development.

Keywords: “Kutadgu bilig”, pandnoma, ethics, perfect human education, educational significance, science.

Introduction

In recent years, among the numerous reforms implemented in our republic, particular emphasis has been placed on establishing a strong system for the development of education and the upbringing of youth. A crucial aspect of this effort is laying a solid moral foundation to nurture a well-rounded and virtuous younger generation. In fulfilling these significant tasks, moral and literary works play a vital role, as they embody the values and wisdom passed down by our ancestors. One such invaluable work is Kutadgu Bilig by Yusuf Khos Hajib.

The title Kutadgu Bilig translates to "knowledge and education leading to happiness," immediately signifying its didactic nature. This profound literary piece serves as a timeless guide to personal and moral development, maintaining its relevance in shaping the educational growth of young individuals. The work extensively explores the highest standards of human conduct, emphasizing respect in interpersonal relationships.

Through discussions on various aspects of life, Yusuf Khos Hajib sheds light on ethical behavior across different societal roles—ranging from high-ranking officials who shape the destiny of a nation to family members in their everyday interactions. He delves into the dynamics between seniors and juniors, officials and their subordinates, social groups, and family members, presenting a comprehensive view of human relationships and cultural values. Yusuf Khos Hajib's work provides valuable insights into child-rearing, emphasizing the importance of teaching behavioral norms from birth, selecting a knowledgeable and virtuous teacher, and maintaining consistent oversight of children's conduct. When discussing etiquette between elders and children, he stresses the significance of modesty, proper greetings, and adherence to established social norms.

Particularly noteworthy are his teachings on the ethics of government officials, which remain relevant today. His practical advice outlines the expected conduct of various state figures,

including beks, hajibs, ministers, courtiers, ambassadors, military commanders, treasurers, and scribes. According to his guidance, an ideal official should possess qualities such as eloquence, intelligence, diligence, generosity, resourcefulness, wisdom, and bravery. Additionally, he should be well-versed in literature, capable of composing poetry, proficient in multiple languages, and skilled in various intellectual and strategic games like chess and backgammon. Furthermore, Yusuf Khos Hajib warns against destructive traits that hinder both personal growth and societal progress. He advises officials to be free from vices such as ambition, resentment, enmity, corruption, immorality, greed, arrogance, betrayal, and selfishness, as these negative qualities weaken the state and disrupt social harmony. By avoiding these moral failings, individuals can cultivate inner integrity and contribute to the prosperity of society.

As evident from the discussion above, Kutadgu Bilig serves as a guide to all virtues that lead a person to true happiness. It stands as the first and most significant textbook in the history of education due to its detailed descriptions of various teaching methods and approaches. This masterpiece by Yusuf Khos Hajib is a remarkable educational and moral epic, where every aspect of human development is artistically expressed.

According to Yusuf Khos Hajib, both wisdom and obedience hold great value. He asserts that intelligence elevates a person, and education grants individuals greatness, placing knowledgeable people at the forefront of society. He emphasizes that all good deeds stem from knowledge, even stating that "knowledge opens the way to heaven." He explains that throughout history, only the educated have contributed to justice and righteousness, using their wisdom to cleanse society of evil.

Furthermore, he highlights that if a country is governed with intelligence and knowledge, its people will experience prosperity, peace, and fulfillment. While acknowledging the importance of strength and weaponry, he firmly places them as secondary to intellect and wisdom in ensuring a nation's success.

Sechu (that is, the god known everywhere) created man, chose him,
He gave him skills, knowledge and education.

He gave him a heart (i.e. a mind), made his tongue fluent,
He gave me a wonderful attitude, behavior and character.

He gave knowledge, (thanks to this) man has become great today.

Read, then (due to this closed) nodes were written.

Yusuf Khos Hajib emphasizes the importance of valuing knowledgeable and enlightened individuals, as they serve as guiding lights, illuminating the right path and helping us differentiate between good and bad. He stresses the need to respect scholars and holds educated individuals in high regard, while viewing the uneducated as ignorant. He warns that when ignorant individuals hold positions of power or influence, they may misuse their roles for personal gain. According to him, true success and greatness in life can only be achieved through knowledge and intelligence.

If a scientist does not care about his knowledge,
Zia did not disseminate knowledge anywhere.

Knowledge and intelligence are very good strength,
If you find it, use it and fly into the blue.



Yusuf Khos Hajib notes that only those who are wise and intelligent themselves can truly appreciate knowledge and intellect, whereas ignorant and foolish individuals lack the ability to do so. He laments that many societal mistakes stem from ignorance and a lack of knowledge, expressing concern over the growing number of uneducated individuals.

He categorizes rulers into two groups: those who govern the country and those who guide the people. While politicians lead the nation, scholars provide intellectual and educational direction.

The scholar likens knowledge to intellect, describing it as an invaluable jewel that elevates a person and unveils the mysteries of the world. He emphasizes that all human achievements have been made possible through knowledge. Unlike material wealth, knowledge cannot be stolen; instead, he portrays it as a sacred companion, a supportive relative, and even as essential as clothing and food.

Knowledge lies below like a pearl.

A pearl is not taken out of the sea,

There is no need for this, it is a pearl, like a river stone.

Golden black earth without enough lust,

If it comes out, the beggars will die.

Even if a scientist does not follow his knowledge,

Zia did not disseminate knowledge anywhere.

Knowledge and wisdom are a very noble power,

If you find it, use it and jump into the blue.

Yusuf Khos Hajib not only advocates for the pursuit of knowledge but also emphasizes the importance of applying it in everyday life. He compares useless knowledge to a pearl lying untouched at the bottom of the sea, serving no purpose. Similarly, he likens unutilized wisdom to gold buried underground—when brought to the surface, it can become a crown even for beggars, encouraging people to use their knowledge for meaningful and beneficial purposes.

Reflecting on the consequences of knowledge and ignorance, he urges people to engage in lifelong learning. He argues that an uneducated and ignorant person is likely to commit wrongful acts, whereas a knowledgeable, wise, and intelligent individual will contribute positively to society.

Through logical and persuasive reasoning, Yusuf Khos Hajib asserts that a nation's socio-political, material, and spiritual progress, as well as the prosperity of its people, depend on the advancement of science and enlightenment. He dedicated himself tirelessly to spreading this idea.

The thinker also explores moral and social relations, grounding his ethical views in real-life practices. His work presents moral principles, expectations, and ideals through the interactions of its characters. He examines the responsibilities of rulers (Elig or khan) and their representatives, the dynamics between different social groups, and the ethical standards of various professions, offering a comprehensive portrayal of societal customs and behaviors.

To conclude, Yusuf Khos Hajib initially interprets the source of all good deeds as good, and the basis of bad deeds as infinity. He says that a person either leaves a good name or acquires a bad name by what he does in life. He says that the beginning of all good is linguistic etiquette,

and the work is dedicated to its benefits and harm. So, this work by Yusuf Khos Hajib is a great educational and moral work to bring a person to perfection in all aspects. That is why this work has retained its scientific, educational and educational value to this day. An important necessity is the full use of the possibilities of this work in the development of the spiritual and moral education of students and the development of human qualities.

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