

ARAB-MUSLIM PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract

The tradition of philosophical reflection, which arose and developed during the era of the dominance of the Islamic worldview in a predominantly Arabic-speaking civilization and has undergone a significant transformation in our days under the influence of Western civilization and philosophy.

Keywords: Philosophy, civilization, classical, Muslim, Western, term, history, medieval, Arabic-speaking, religion, society, traditions, problem, thought.

Introduction

The tradition of philosophical reflection, which arose and developed during the era of the dominance of the Islamic worldview in a predominantly Arabic-speaking civilization and has undergone a significant transformation in our days under the influence of Western civilization and philosophy. The history of Arab-Muslim philosophy includes three main stages: classical or medieval (8th-15th centuries); the late Middle Ages (16th-19th centuries); modernity (2nd half of the 19th-20th centuries). In the classical period, five main philosophical trends and schools emerged and developed, an eclectic approach is typical for the late Medieval stage, modernity is characterized by the search for ways to preserve the civilizational foundations of classical society in new conditions.

Despite the fact that the terms "classical" and "medieval" are used by Arab-Islamic, Western and Russian historians of philosophy, they can hardly be recognized as more than markers of a certain historical and philosophical epoch due to the fundamental difficulty of revealing their content in relation to a tradition other than the Western one. The classical period begins about a hundred years after the emergence of Islam, which took time for the new worldview associated with the monotheistic religion to fully take hold of the minds. During this time, the Islamic state spread over vast territories of the Near and Middle East and North Africa, including in its orbit numerous peoples who had already been significantly influenced by the philosophical heritage of antiquity and professed Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Gnosticism. Although these factors influenced the emergence of theoretical reflection and, in particular, philosophical thought in the Arab-Islamic world, the latter cannot be reduced to the sum of external influences and borrowings. It is an independent historical and philosophical phenomenon characterized by its own way of defining a problem field and rational criteria for assessing the acceptability of setting tasks within its limits and the correctness of their resolution. On this basis, a block of issues has been formed that is common to all trends of classical Arab-Muslim philosophy and has served as a subject of discussion in it. It includes

issues of metaphysics (origin and its relation to the multiple world, modes of existence-non-existence and the relationship between them, causality), theory of knowledge (truth, typology of knowledge, intuitive and discursive cognition), the doctrine of man (man as endowed with the ability of action and cognition, practical-contemplative attitude of man to the world and initially).

This issue is of a system-forming nature for the philosophical teachings of the five main movements and schools represented in this period of Kalam, Arabic, peripatetism (Falsafa), Ismailism, Ishrakism (philosophy of enlightenment) and Sufism. With the exception of Arabic-language peripatetism, none of these terms denotes only a philosophical trend. At the first, Mu'tazilite stage of the development of Kalam (8th-10th centuries), questions were raised that, although they were implied by philosophical issues, went far beyond its limits, and at the second, Asharite stage, dogmatization of the doctrine occurred, when significant restrictions were imposed on freedom of reasoning, depriving theorizing of a philosophical character. In addition, the Mu'tazilites actively dealt with issues of Fiqh (religious and legal thought) and philology in their connection with philosophical issues. Islamism is an active religious and political doctrine that has survived to this day; Ishraqism has absorbed many elements of traditional Iranian culture, primarily Zoroastrianism; Sufism, or Islamic mysticism, is a powerful phenomenon of spiritual life that influences modern thought. At the same time, each of these trends has developed a type of reflection that should be classified as philosophical. It can be defined as an attempt to comprehend in finite forms what goes beyond the finite, while checking each step of such comprehension for compliance with the principle of reasonable justification. This is a reflection on the foundations of the universe, clarifying the possibility and conditions of its coverage in thought.

Kalam develops an understanding of the origin as completely simple and unified. One of the main problems here is the problem of the self-identity of the principle, considered in its various relations to the "other" - the things of the world. This problem is formulated as a problem of divine attributes, and its solution involves pointing to the "self" of the principle and its "other" as the "meaning" of any relationship. Thus, the meaning of the relation of the beginning to the world as a "guide" is the "self" of the beginning and the "guided" things of the world themselves. Already here, the otherness of the things of the world dialectically transforms into the otherness of aspects of the relation of the beginning to the world among themselves and justifies the latter. Another condition for this decision is the actual meaninglessness of the so-developed concept of "self", which in this capacity approaches "oneness". The Kalama solution to the question of attributes as correlative and negative was accepted in Arabic-speaking peripatetism, Ishraqism, and Sufism. The understanding of things as approved before their existence, proposed by the Mu'tazilites, can be considered as an implicit denial of creation from nothing, although the co-eternity of the world to the creator is not explicitly stated here and is not understood in the sense of the constant presence of a material substratum of things. In Arabic-language peripatetism, the crucial interpretation of the original is its understanding as a source of "necessity", which it communicates to itself and further to the "possible" things of the world, which, having received existence, form a causal series. Here, the otherness of the original and other things is based on the difference between "joint necessity" and "joint

opportunity." This teaching, which follows from the distinction between self and existence, was developed by al-Farabi and Ibn Sina and criticized by Ibn Rushed. The understanding of the otherness of the original and the world reaches its extreme tension in Ismailism, where the function of the original is even split between God and the First Mind, since the thesis of the affirmation of the divine "oneness" allows us to describe the latter as absolutely different from everything else, including along the line of possession of existence (al-Kirmani). In Ishraqism, the principle concentrates all its effectiveness and perfection, which, due to the nominalist denial of the concept of "existence" in the early edition of this doctrine (as-Suhrawardi), means the absolutization of the principle in its relation to the world of things, which represent complete passivity and deprivation. Such different ways of posing and solving the question of the otherness of the beginning and the world are nevertheless similar in that they build a number of things as being outside the beginning and in no sense identical to it. The peculiarity of Sufi philosophy is determined by a radical restructuring of this strategy, in connection with which the concept of "otherness" is being rethought. The beginning and the world are based on the two sides of the "world order" (al-amr), eternity and time, which constitute the condition of each other's existence. The otherness of the beginning in relation to the world turns out to be possible here only as the otherness of everything in relation to the very beginning and in relation to any other thing in the world. Each thing appears in these two hypostases, as self-identical and as identical to any other, which implies a radical revision of the theory of causality: linear causation, recognized by all currents of Arab-Muslim philosophy, is transformed into a bidirectional mutual relationship between the eternal and temporal sides of the existence of the same thing, which generates paradoxes of indistinguishability of cause and effect, self - harm, etc. Thus, the evolution of the solution to the problem of the continualization of the relationship of the beginning to the world, carried out by classical Arab-Muslim philosophy, led to an understanding of their duality.

Since knowledge is a manifestation of "meanings" that can be achieved either discursively (thanks to "clarity") or directly, it is objective insofar as the same "meanings" are embodied in cognizable things. With the exception of the nominalist criticism that concepts such as "existence", "substantiality", "color", etc. were subjected to in Ishraqism, the objectivity of knowledge was not questioned. With the exception of early Islamic thought, Arab-Muslim philosophy recognized a person's ability to independently acquire knowledge, and different cognitive strategies were developed in different directions. The position of Sufism turned out to be special, in which the reliability of knowledge is not associated with its stability, but, on the contrary, with the "confusion" of the subject of knowledge, since the authenticity of knowledge consists in conforming to its subject, which is clearly defined as embodied in temporary existence, and indistinguishable from any other subject of knowledge due to that lack of fixity. differences in the semantic continuum that characterizes the eternal existence of the same subject. The ability to learn is one of the aspects of a person's ability to act. It is this ability in its two aspects, practical and contemplative, that is considered in classical Arab-Muslim philosophy as a distinctive feature of a person, distinguishing him from other things and bringing him closer to the original, although its different directions differ in the interpretation of details and the placement of accents. Only man and God are considered as true



agents in Mutazilism, and the question of the autonomy of human action turns out to be one of the central problems of metaphysics and ethics here. Although it is still difficult to talk about the terminological separation of practical and theoretical aspects of human activity in Mu'tazilism (both are expressed by the term "fi'l" – action, although later the former was assigned more to "amal" – deed, and the latter to "nazar" – speculation), their consideration is nevertheless clearly present in their theories, stating man's ability to know the supreme truth independently of divine revelation and the independence of his actions from the will of God, which was, in fact, the most fundamental affirmation of the autonomy of human action in both its aspects. In Arabic-speaking peripatetism, there is a reorientation towards the contemplative aspect in understanding human perfection. The ability to learn is one of the aspects of a person's ability to act. It is this ability in its two aspects, practical and contemplative, that is considered in classical Arab-Muslim philosophy as a distinctive feature of a person, distinguishing him from other things and bringing him closer to the original, although its different directions differ in the interpretation of details and the placement of accents. Only man and God are considered as true agents in Mutazilism, and the question of the autonomy of human action turns out to be one of the central problems of metaphysics and ethics here. Although it is still difficult to talk about the terminological separation of practical and theoretical aspects of human activity in Mu'tazilism (both are expressed by the term "fi'l" – action, although later the former was assigned more to "amal" – deed, and the latter to "nazar" – speculation), their consideration is nevertheless clearly present in their theories, stating man's ability to know the supreme truth independently of divine revelation and the independence of his actions from the will of God, which was, in fact, the most fundamental affirmation of the autonomy of human action in both its aspects. In Arabic-speaking peripatetism, there is a reorientation towards the contemplative aspect in understanding human perfection.

During this period, there were no new original trends and schools, and philosophical thought developed in an eclectic way. On the one hand, this is the systematization of Sufi ideas and their combination with the teachings of Arabic-speaking peripatetics, carried out by later Sufi thinkers, on the other hand, the evolution of Ishraqism towards the inclusion of Sufi ideas and the rejection of nominalist criticism of the concept of "existence". Even in the classical period, there was a convergence of the faith with the early (Mu'tazilite) Kalam, the decisive influence of which, for example. In terms of the theory of freedom of action, the pseudo-Abu Hanifa can be traced in the "Great Fiqh". The tendency to include the ideas of the Mutakallim already in the Asharite edition in the corpus of doctrinal texts continued in the future. The socio-political and religious-ideological trends that emerged during this period appeal either to a similar doctrinal legacy, as was the case with Wahhabism, or to Sufi-Ishraqite ideas, reworked into what was later called "Islamic philosophy," as the founders of Babism and Baha'iism do. The period of scholastic-eclectic development ended in most countries of the Muslim world in the Middle Ages. The 19th century, although on its outskirts, for example, in some regions of Russia, also captured the beginning of the 20th century, when it was interrupted by the Bolshevik revolution. During this period, there were no new original trends and schools, and philosophical thought developed in an eclectic way. On the one hand, this is the systematization of Sufi ideas and their combination with the teachings of Arabic-speaking peripatetics, carried



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The 19th and 20th centuries occupy a special place in the history of Muslim philosophical thought, as well as other spiritual traditions of the East as a whole, the development of which in the previous period was highly isolated from the outside world. In fact, for the first time, peoples who belonged to different civilizations, and therefore had previously developed each in accordance with the logic of the evolution of their own traditions, found themselves in a situation in which their destinies became inextricably linked, and the nature of social trends was largely identical. Two factors were decisive. Internal, manifested in the crisis of traditional systems, mainly feudal monarchies, and external – unprecedented expansion from the West.

19 – beginning - the 20th century is often characterized as the era of the "awakening of Asia," referring to the widespread activation of social thought here. Intellectual efforts were aimed at solving crucial problems, which together represented a search for both a way out of stagnation caused by the burden of outdated traditions and overcoming age-old backwardness without losing national independence and cultural identity. In short, social thought eventually worked to formulate a dominant one for the 19th and 20th centuries. In the East, the ideology of nationalism has ensured the unity of people of the same cultural tradition around the idea of fighting for independence, for self-government, and for the creation of a perfect state in order to realize public welfare. Awareness of the need for such unity could only be ensured by educating the people as "the basis of their cultural progress" (Ahmad Riza). Supporters of educational ideas believed that the national language and native literature should become the main instrument of education. In the absence of social sciences (in the modern sense, i.e. as objective knowledge, independent of religious teachings), it was poets and writers who were often the first to express ideas, which in the near future formed social concepts and theories that seized the minds of compatriots. Such figures include, for example, the Iranian poet Abu Nasr Fathullah Sheibani, one of the ideological leaders of the secret political organization "Society of the New Ottomans", the writer Namik Kemal, the Egyptian writer Kasim Amin, and others.

The polar position expressed itself in a negative attitude towards tradition, sometimes even in a complete rejection of it as completely outdated and unsuitable in modern times (Ismail Mazhar). At the same time, there was an excessive idealization of Western ideals, values, and



institutions. Often the focus is on one thing or another. The trend of Western thought was characterized by selectivity due to the priority interests of Muslim philosophers. Their attention was attracted by ideas working to substantiate the patterns of the evolutionary process in nature and society. Hence the great interest in Ch.Darwin and H. Spencer. The opposition to abstract contemplation dictated an appeal to pragmatism. James and J.Dewey as a kind of program for the "reconstruction of philosophy" into a method of solving practical life problems. The recognition of man as a subject of social transformation and improvement was supported by A. Schopenhauer, A. Bergson, F. Nietzsche, philosophers who emphasized the creative and volitional nature of a human figure (Muhammad Iqbal and Gibran Khalil Gibran). Existentialism drew special attention to the problems of the individual and human freedom (A.R. Badawi and Ahmad Abd al-Hakim Atiyah in Egypt, Rene Habashi in Lebanon). Finally, the propensity for social egalitarianism and atheistic attitudes are best satisfied by turning to Marxism (Mahmoud Amin al-Alim, Hussein Muruvveh). However, no matter which direction of Western thought Muslim philosophers of an anti-traditionalist orientation leaned towards, the leitmotif of their work was an appeal to rationalism as the only way to overcome the backwardness of Muslim society and its entry into modern civilization. The rationalist position was most consistently carried out in the works of Kamal Yusuf al-Hajj, Shibli Shmael, Murad Wahba, adherents of logical positivism, Zaki Naguib Mahmoud, Fuad Zakaria, S.Saman, and others.

A nihilistic attitude towards one's own culture is fraught with serious danger – there is a loss of faith in one's own ideals, loss of life orientations. Hence the awareness of the preference to build a life on the foundation of national culture, not excluding, but, on the contrary, necessarily assuming the assimilation of valuable elements of Western civilization. The methods of assimilation can be different. In some cases, they are realized through a synthesis of Western and Islamic ideas. An authoritative thinker of the 20th century, under whose editorship the fundamental "History of Muslim Philosophy" was published, the founder of the Pakistani Philosophical Congress, Muhammad Mayan Sharif (born 1965), developed an ontological concept of the so-called "dialectical monadism". It is based on Kalam's atomistic constructions. At the same time, Sharif's monadology resembles Leibniz's in many ways, although he denies the principle of the impenetrability of monads, asserting their interaction and even interpenetration. He also "complements" Leibniz's principles with dialectics (borrowed from Fichte and Hegel). Monads are dialectical in nature, and the process of development in them proceeds in triads: the movement of the "I" through the "not-I" or rather "not-yet-I" to synthesize both into a more developed "I". Sharif's constructions are interesting because in them the ontological scheme of Kalam is expressed in Western philosophical terms and concepts, which makes it possible to present the Muslim tradition as fully fitting into what is considered to be world philosophical standards. Even more significant is the "dialectical" rethinking of Kalam's atomistic, which provides an ideological justification for the process of development in all its manifestations – natural and social. However, despite calls for synthesis, attempts to implement the latter have so far been limited to translating the philosophical ideas of the Muslim tradition into the language of Western philosophy.



Although the ideological processes in the countries of the Muslim world sometimes resemble those that took place in Europe at the turn of Modern times, they can hardly be considered reformation in the full sense of the word. In order for the reformation to take place here, it is also necessary to identify and use the internal impulses of development.

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