

Article

# The Emergence and Development of Dialectical Views in the Avesta

Shokirov Murod Rustamovich\*<sup>1</sup>

1. Senior teacher of the Department of "Legal and Socio-Humanitarian Sciences" of the Bukhara Academic Lyceum of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan

**Abstract:** In this article, reference is made to the Avesta—the most ancient source of our people, invaluable in its educational significance, enriching thought with the truths of life and an attempt is made to show its importance in developing philosophical knowledge about the universe. The value of the Avesta from a philosophical point of view lies in the fact that it attempts to explain all things, phenomena, and processes in the world dialectically.

**Keywords:** Dialectics, Philosophical Thought, Dualism, Good and Evil, Worldview, Moral Philosophy, Spiritual Values, Development, Ontology, Ethics, Ancient Philosophy.

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## 1. Introduction

In front of New Uzbekistan lies the mission of educating people who possess high culture and spirituality, have a broad worldview, know and value their history well, love their homeland, and live freely and happily. For this purpose, the "Enlightened Society of New Uzbekistan" concept and its national implementation program has been developed [1]. The main task of this program is, based on the study of our historical, spiritual, and moral values, to enrich and develop the consciousness of young people and all layers of society in accordance with the demands of life, thereby achieving the cultural and educational progress of society. This plays a very important role in forming a new worldview among members of society and teaching them to take an active life position [2].

The systematic organization of work in this direction and the increase in the effectiveness of the measures being implemented are the main conditions for establishing a free and prosperous life. "In this, especially raising the intellectual potential and worldview of the population, particularly the youth, and educating a mature generation living with a feeling of patriotism, love, and devotion to the people is our highest goal," says Sh. Mirziyoyev [3].

## 2. Materials and Methods

This study is based on historical, philosophical, and comparative analysis methods. The ideas presented in the Avesta were examined through analytical observation and comparison with other ancient philosophical traditions. Special attention was given to the dialectical understanding of development, the struggle of opposites, and moral values reflected in Zoroastrian teachings [4].

The research follows the principles of objectivity, historicism, and systematic analysis. The Avesta was studied as an important philosophical and spiritual source that explains the universe, society, and human life through the interaction of opposing forces such as good and evil, light and darkness, and life and death. The study also used textual analysis of scholarly literature and philosophical sources related to Zoroastrianism and ancient Eastern thought in order to better understand the emergence and development of dialectical ideas [5].

### 3. Results and Discussion

Such a responsible task is accomplished through love for, study of, and respect for history. Therefore, today, looking back at the past of our people, evaluating philosophical, moral, and religious values, and using them in our daily lives remain among the most urgent issues [6].

The Avesta is at the same time a historical document that testifies to the existence of a great state, great spirituality, and great culture in this ancient land, which no one can deny [7].

The Avesta has special significance as an important historical document for obtaining valuable information about the dialectical philosophical ideas of our ancestors who lived in Central Asia [8].

The Avesta can be called a great encyclopedia that shows nature, society, man, his spirituality, his psychology, the tasks he sets for himself, and the ways to achieve them. "Virtuous thought, Virtuous word, Virtuous deed" is the main principle of Zoroastrianism. It is explained that a person continues to live only if he follows this rule.

This principle is not simply a requirement that operates during human activity and forms the basis of his freedom and development, but a demand that functions as an unbreakable law. "Virtuous thought, virtuous word, virtuous deed" in the Avesta is not only connected with human activity but is accepted as a universal, positive principle that applies to the entire world, forming the basis of movement and development [9].

Avesto is considered one of the oldest written sources reflecting valuable ideas about the universe, its existence, structure, and development.

From the point of view of time, it ranks after the ancient philosophical teachings of China and India.

The ideas reflected in the Avesto differ from them not only in depth and scope but also can equal them in terms of value.

This can be clearly seen when they are compared.

In Avesto, to see the ideas about development and evaluate their practical significance, it is necessary to answer the questions of what development itself is, what characteristics it has, and what range of its functioning includes.

In Avesto, as the source of movement, change, and development, two opposing forces – Ahura Mazda and Ahriman – are mentioned as main figures.

All processes take place in the form of a relationship between these two forces – good and evil.

According to N. Jo'rayev, "The philosophy of Avesto is a philosophy that harmonizes the relations between nature, society, and man through spiritual, moral, and ethical criteria, calling on man to study the surrounding world, the factors of its development, and to understand the meaning of life" [10].

These views have been passed down through centuries, from country to country, from people to people.

We can also see ideas about development in Chinese philosophy, Indian philosophy, and Greek philosophy.

Although they did not have a deep scientific basis, these ideas about development were derived from people's lives, everyday experiences, and simple observations.

However, they served as the foundation and motive for later knowledge about development.

Such ideas are especially reflected in the sacred book of Zoroastrianism — Avesto (Book of Counsel).

The view that the universe is a complex structure consisting of the unity of things and events reflecting opposite characteristics in itself was considered in Zoroastrianism as an important way of knowing and transforming the universe.

In it, all things and phenomena in the world are divided into opposing groups, and this opposition is considered the source of all development in the universe.

In Avesto, all virtues are glorified greatly, while evil is sharply condemned.

It says:

“I praise good thought, virtuous word, and virtuous deed with virtuous thought, good word, and good deed.

I dedicate myself to all virtuous thought, virtuous word, and virtuous deed, and I turn away from all evil thought, evil word, and evil deed” [11].

Furthermore, in Avesto, the struggle between life and death, light and darkness, good and evil, just and unjust laws is considered inherent to all nature and society.

In the book, it is stated that in the eternal struggle between good and evil, there is no middle way; therefore, every person is obliged to participate on one side or the other of this process.

Which of the opposing and conflicting forces a person stands with, it is emphasized, depends on the person's faith and belief.

According to academician Jondor Tulenov, the basis of moral values in Avesto is formed by the mutual struggle and renewal based on opposites.

While selfishness, envy, arrogance, intrigue, and corruption — which constitute the negative sides of opposites — are strongly condemned in Avesto, moral principles that should prevail among people such as keeping promises, faithfulness to pledges, sincerity, honesty, and mutual respect are glorified.

In Avesto, the world is explained as a testing ground for human beings [12].

Indeed, according to Zoroaster's advice, a blissful life should not be in a distant, unfamiliar, imaginary paradise, but in a living world close and familiar to man.

To reach this goal, people must go through many complex and serious trials.

In the teachings of Avesto, fire is considered a magical power that illuminates the universe and purifies people from sins, while earth and water are regarded as the sources of livelihood and life.

In the philosophical essence of Zoroastrianism, the complexities of the world, and the problems of understanding and explaining them, have found their expression.

According to the Zoroastrian religion, which is based on dualism — the recognition of the vitality of spirit and matter — the universe consists of the eternal and everlasting struggle between phenomena such as light and darkness, life and death, body and soul, good and evil, positive and negative, purity and impurity, freedom and dependence.

“I want to speak about two things that have existed since the beginning — the divine substance to Ahriman — the impure substance — so that he realizes that our thought, our teaching, our intention, our belief, our deep speech, our actions, our body, and our soul are completely opposed to one another” [13].

The philosophical essence of Zoroastrianism and Avesto is expressed in the following ontological and dialectical ideas:

firstly, the foundation of the world was created by Ahura Mazda, and its structure consists of both (material) and (spiritual) beings subordinate to His creative principle.

This principle requires the triumph of Ahura Mazda's creative ideas;

secondly, this victory is achieved through the struggle (dialectic) of two opposing spirits that represent creation and destruction;

thirdly, this struggle takes place within a specific time and space (the concept of time and space) and concludes with the victory of the moral principle – “good thought, good word, good deed” (ethics).

At the same time, the doctrine of dualism of Zoroastrianism (the struggle of two opposite forces) is distinguished by a certain stability. Until the forces penetrate into the sphere of activity of Ahura Mazda, movement does not occur in the world. After Anhra Mainyu attacked the world of Ahura Mazda with his evil, movement begins in the world. Spatial bodies begin to move, the sun shines warmer light to the world, rains fall, mountains appear, trees grow, stars adorn the universe and show the way to travelers. The moon spreads tranquility to the world and etc [14].

One of the most important philosophical ideas mentioned in "Avesto" is that people are called to work, to create material wealth with their own hands and to live a prosperous life. In Zoroastrianism, it is said that a person attains the grace of God only when he helps the increase of livestock and the flourishing of pastures and works tirelessly. When Zoroaster asked God Ahura Mazda where is the best place on earth, he answers that the place where a person builds a house for himself, provides space for his family (wife and children), and for his herds, where there is abundant fodder, his cattle and dogs live in plenty, his house is full of blessings, his wife and children live prosperously, his faith is firm, his fire is bright, and other things are plentiful – that place, that corner is great and honorable. In short, if a person's goal and thought are virtuous, his word is sincere and truthful, his actions and aspirations are consistent and determined, the result of every work will inevitably be good, it is interpreted as such.

In "Avesto", engaging in agriculture is considered preferable to praying ten thousand times and sacrificing hundreds of animals. It is said that sowing crops means eliminating the evils on the earth. When grain sprouts from the earth, – it is said in "Avesto" – demons tremble; when grain is harvested, demons cry out; when grain is ground into flour, they begin to flee; when dough is made, the demons are destroyed. The abundance of grain, as if hot iron were pressed to the lips of demons, drives them away. From this too, we see that in "Avesto" there exist a number of dialectical ideas, in particular, the thoughts expressed about the struggle of opposites.

From the ideas mentioned above, it is seen that the natural philosophy of Zoroastrianism as a whole originated from and relied on the mythology of ancient peoples. The results of understanding natural and social phenomena over many centuries, as well as the generalization of ideas that found their meaning in myths and legends, which in turn formed the basis of a complete religious-philosophical concept, were expressed in a mythological form. In this mythological concept, the creation of the world, the structure of the universe, the interaction of spatial bodies, the events taking place in nature and society, the place and role of man in this world, the destiny of mankind, and man's responsibility for the destiny of the whole world were explained.

From this it can be seen that Avesto and the ideas about the world and development in it have been serving for 3,000 years to teach great people the idea that everything is in motion, in change, and in development.

From what has been said about the emergence of Avesto, its significance in the development of awareness and worldview, the following conclusions can be drawn.

First of all, it is valuable in that at its center stand universal ideas such as man and his stability in faith and belief, an honest and pure way of life, responsibility for protecting and increasing goodness, active struggle against all forms of evil, and creative labor. The understanding of the essence of man in existence, the wide range of socio-political and religious-moral ideas indicate the life-giving, uplifting and humanistic character of Zoroastrian philosophy. The essence of this philosophy is that in the eternal struggle between two opposite forces, the victory of goodness is ensured by man's faith, belief, conscience, religion, and spirituality; as a result, based on man's free choice, goodness triumphs over evil, and the eternal golden age dreamed of by mankind returns and continues forever. This is the universality of the ideas of Avesto.

The uniqueness of the Avesta lies in the fact that, firstly, it established the necessary social and legal norms for a person to act freely in society; secondly, it called on humans to be determined in the pursuit of justice and truth; thirdly, it urged man not to be a mere observer of the struggle between Good and Evil, but to be an active supporter of Good in the triumph of humanity. It called on people to work in the creation of goodness, to increase wealth, to improve and purify their spirit, and thus to become spiritually closer to God.

The above-mentioned ideological issues of Zoroastrian moral philosophy do not aim to detach man from life, to asceticism or mysticism, but, on the contrary, to call upon him to enjoy all material blessings and riches in order to be happy, and also to benefit from these riches himself.

At the heart of Zoroastrian philosophical teaching lies the idea that the world surrounding man is the battlefield of two primordial forces—the creative and the destructive spirits. This signifies that nothing arises without cause and nothing perishes without consequence. Hence, the world is the result of the unity of the creator—God, natural and material things, and man, with man occupying a special place in it, because the very purpose of God's creation of the world is man [15].

As the unity of nature and man takes place within the infinite space of the universe, there is constant motion, development, and struggle between opposing forces. A person who takes the side of light and goodness attains spiritual and physical perfection, which, in turn, contributes to the prosperity of society and the surrounding nature, as well as to the realization of the ideas of Zoroastrianism.

According to the Avesta, the main moral and ethical criteria of human perfection are high morality, physical and spiritual purity, diligence, the increase of material wealth, and the unity of the fundamental moral principle—good thoughts, good words, and good deeds.

#### **4. Conclusion**

In order to understand the history and values of every nation, and to comprehend the spiritual treasures it has left within humanity, it is necessary to know its religion, worldview, artistic-aesthetic ideals, and spiritual experiences. As human society has developed, these spiritual treasures have also evolved according to the laws of universality and uniqueness, defining the historical position and worth of the nation and the country.

It is not by chance that the material and spiritual culture, artistic-aesthetic, and philosophical thought of the peoples of Central Asia, particularly the Uzbek people—whose culture, history, and destiny go back to ancient times—are closely connected with the religion of Zoroastrianism.

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