

## PHILOSOPHICAL VIEWS OF EASTERN THINKERS ON FAMILY

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It is well known that a small social group, bound together by moral responsibility based on marriage and close kinship, mutual respect, understanding, and shared love and affection, is called a family. The family differs from other types of small groups in several aspects:

First, a family exists for a long period, that is, for several decades or even many years.

Second, various types of interpersonal relationships are realized within the family. The initial concepts related to our national ideology are primarily instilled in the family environment, and this process is carried out through the teachings of grandfathers, the exemplary behavior of fathers, and the affection of mothers. Within family relationships, educational, psychological, emotional, financial, sexual, and other responsibilities are observed.

Third, all relationships within the family lead to either positive or negative consequences.

In other words, due to the influence of one family member on another, a person can either develop positively, reaching the level of a morally upright and well-rounded individual, or they can be brought up as someone with poor manners and difficult behavior.

Thus, the issues related to the interactions between parents and children, husbands and wives, and family members, which are of great importance to society, originate within the family itself. That is why, since ancient times, families and family relationships have been studied by the sages, scholars, and philosophers of every era, and their views have addressed these issues. By presenting these perspectives and thoughts to your attention, we emphasize that family and relationship issues have always been among the most important matters in our lives.

The issues of human beings and human relationships, as well as the development and perfection of an individual, have been among the primary concerns of the most progressive members of society, scholars, great intellectuals, and wise men for centuries.

Great thinkers of the East, such as Abu Nasr Al-Farabi, Abu Rayhan Al-Biruni, Abu Ali Ibn Sina (Avicenna), Yusuf Khass Hajib, Mahmud Kashgari, Kaykovus, Khatam Ibn Toy, Alisher Navoi, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, Rizouddin Ibn Fakhruddin, Muqimi, Furqat, Zavqi, Uvaysiy, Nodira, Abdurauf Fitrat, and Abdulla Avloni, have left behind valuable thoughts on these issues, which still hold significant social and ideological importance for modern science.

Their works pay particular attention to family and family relationships, which is why we analyze some of their pedagogical and psychological views to highlight to students the relevance and importance of these issues.

The fundamental idea that unites all Eastern thinkers is their recognition of the vital role of family and family upbringing in an individual's education and development. They particularly emphasized the role of the family in intellectual and moral perfection, highlighting the guiding and nurturing functions of parents and close relatives.

These thinkers considered the qualities that could only develop within a family—such as honesty, purity, courage, eloquence, kindness, and truthfulness—to be of the highest value. They also expressed the idea that noble qualities manifesting in human interactions are primarily passed from parents to children and have a positive impact on societal progress. Their philosophical, sociological, and psychological views contain valuable insights and practical guidelines regarding these aspects.

In the ancient Zoroastrian text, *Avesta*, the family is described as a sacred institution, emphasizing that both husband and wife share equal responsibility for the stability of the family and the upbringing of children. Regarding the conditions necessary for a peaceful and prosperous family, the text states:

*"A righteous person, upon building a home, allocates space for the fire, his family, his wife, and children. If his home is filled with blessings and abundance, and if his wife and children live in prosperity, if his home is filled with faith, steadfast fire, and abundant provisions, then that dwelling is honorable."*

In addition, everyone was required to adhere to the principles expressed in it regarding family and familial relationships. The most significant aspect is that it mandated that husbands and wives be mutually faithful, caring, and affectionate toward each other. Moreover, even in that era, the protection of women's rights was elevated to the level of law.

In general, from the Zoroastrian period itself, significant attention was given to family matters. This indicates that since ancient times, a strong foundation has been laid for solidifying the position and role of the family in society.

It is well known that in the sacred sources of Islam—the Quran and hadiths—extensive emphasis is placed on ethical values, the role and duties of women in marriage, the relationships between husbands and wives, child-rearing, family management, marriage, and love.

Below are several examples taken from collections of hadiths:

- "Among the servants of God, the best is the one who benefits his wife the most" (Hadith 18).
- "Among people, the most deserving of a woman's attention is her husband, and among men, the most deserving of respect is his mother" (Hadith 34).
- "Honor and respect your children while also improving their morals and manners" (Hadith 38).
- "When a husband looks at his wife, and the wife looks at her husband, God gazes upon them with mercy. And if they place their palms together, their sins fall away from between their fingers like scattered dust" (Hadith 44).
- "Each one of you is like a shepherd and is responsible for those under your care: the ruler is responsible for his people, a husband is responsible for his wife, a wife is responsible for her household, a servant is responsible for his master's property, and a child is responsible for his father's wealth. Thus, every one of you is accountable" (Hadith 116).
- "No father can leave a greater legacy to his child than good morals and manners" (Hadith 136).

From these examples, it is evident that religious sources also emphasize the sanctity of the family, the responsibilities of both men and women towards the family, the duties of parents toward their children and vice versa, as well as the honor and respect a husband should show his wife. These are regarded as sacred values.

If folk epics and religious treatises were preserved through oral tradition, passed down from generation to generation, the most knowledgeable and wise individuals in society, as well as scholars, recorded their invaluable thoughts in written works based on cultural traditions, ensuring they were preserved for future generations. One such philosopher and scholar was Abu Nasr Al-Farabi.

His views on human perfection, happiness, education, upbringing, ethics, and religious beliefs are composed of general philosophical reflections and explanations that enrich moral theory. According to his teachings, true happiness is only achieved when people abandon envy and oppression toward one another. The sincere relationships and mutual kindness among family members contribute to the happiness of individuals within that family.

Furthermore, he emphasized that parents are the primary teachers and guides for their children. It is specifically they who shape the child's preparedness for education and upbringing, demonstrating how relevant and valuable his philosophical conclusions remain even today.

The great medieval scholar and polymath Abu Rayhan Al-Biruni (973–1048) was also influenced by Al-Farabi's views. As a wise thinker, he left a profound impact on various sciences.

In many of his works, he provided unique insights into human ethics and morality.

In his treatises "Mineralogy," "Geodesy," "India," and "Monuments of Past Generations," Al-Biruni analyzed the concepts of human personality, development, intellect, tranquility, pleasure, patience, humility, beauty, taste, purity, and selfishness, demonstrating his profound understanding of human psychology. He wrote:

"A person is compelled to unite with their relatives within society. The purpose of this is to support one another and to ensure that each person fulfills tasks necessary both for their own well-being and for the well-being of others." (*Mineralogy*, 1966, p. 10).

Al-Biruni asserted that "cleanliness and tidiness should be the essence of nobility." He discussed the connection between a person's external appearance and their moral character, stating:

"Brushing teeth, keeping the eyes and eyelids clean, applying kohl, dyeing the hair when necessary, trimming and polishing the nails—these are the foundations of physical health and spiritual purity."

These thoughts remain relevant even today, as the adherence of family members—husbands and wives—to such hygiene and etiquette contributes to family harmony.

A person of high ethical standards, first and foremost, serves as a role model through their conduct, communication culture, way of life, and commitment to family stability. Al-Biruni's views on family ethics provide valuable guidance.

He stated:

"A person has dominion over their own emotions and is capable of transforming negative traits into praiseworthy qualities. Through moral discipline and self-improvement, they can gradually eliminate vices using the methods outlined in books on ethics."

Thus, following in the footsteps of his predecessors, Al-Biruni made a significant contribution to the study of family psychology through his humanitarian and universal perspectives. He championed mutual understanding among individuals, equality, and justice in governance—principles that continue to hold great importance in contemporary society.

In the system of family relationships and the perspectives related to this field, one of the great Eastern thinkers—whose encyclopedic knowledge was also recognized by the people of Europe—was the renowned scholar Abu Ali Ibn Sina (Avicenna) (980–1037).

As a distinguished scientist, he sought to uncover the scientific essence of all phenomena.

Ibn Sina's pedagogical and psychological views were built on a social foundation. He strongly advocated for the application of universal humanistic principles in child-rearing and advised that, instead of using physical punishment, parents and educators should rely on personal example as the most effective method of upbringing.

The philosopher authored several major works, including *The Book of Knowledge (Danishnama)*, *Treatise on Love (Risalat al-Ishq)*, *The Canon of Medicine (Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb)*, and *Household Management (Tadbir al-Manzil)*. These treatises hold a significant place in the ethical, psychological, and medical traditions of Central Asian civilizations.

When addressing moral education, the scholar placed great emphasis on the role of the family. The subject of family and familial relationships was uniquely explored in his work *Tadbir al-Manzil (Household Management)*.

While discussing the various aspects of family relations, Ibn Sina, first and foremost, established a set of requirements for the head of the household. He wrote that the head of the family must thoroughly understand both the theoretical and practical aspects of upbringing within the family. If the leader of the household lacks experience, he will fail to educate his family members properly. As a result, he will not be able to achieve good and positive outcomes. Poor upbringing will not only affect the family itself but may also have a negative influence on neighbors and the entire community.

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