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The Significance of Zakariya al-Razi's Ideas in the Harmonious Upbringing of Youth

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the ethical and philosophical views of the great thinker, physician, and philosopher Abu Bakr al-Razi, and examines their significance in educating contemporary youth. Drawing upon the scholar's prominent work "Al-Tibb al-Ruhani", the author reveals the negative consequences of spiritual and physical vices such as arrogance, selfishness, envy, anger, dishonesty, and gluttony. The paper systemizes al-Razi's methods for restraining the nafs (desires), relying on intellect, and moderating human behavior. The findings of the study serve to substantiate the practical relevance of the thinker's heritage in shaping an intellectually and spiritually mature generation in New Uzbekistan.

Keywords:

Zakariya al-Razi, moral philosophy, harmoniously developed generation, nafs, arrogance, selfishness, envy, intellectual education, spirituality, moderation.

Закарийё Розий ғояларининг ёшларни баркамол қилиб тарбиялашдаги аҳамияти

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Аннотация: Ушбу мақолада буюк мутафаккир, табиб ва файласуф Абу Бакр ар-Розийнинг ахлоқий-фалсафий қарашлари ҳамда уларнинг замон ёшлари тарбиясидаги ўрни таҳлил қилинган. Муаллиф алломанинг "Тибби руҳоний" асари асосида кибр, худбинлик, ҳасад, ғазаб, ёлғончилик ва очкўзлик каби маънавий ва жисмоний иллатларнинг салбий оқибатларини очиқ беради. Мақолада Розий томонидан тақлиф этилган нафси жиловлаш, ақлга таяниш ва хулқ-атвори мўътадиллаштириш усуллари тизимлаштирилган. Тадқиқот хулосалари бугунги кунда Янги Ўзбекистонда интеллектуал ва маънавий баркамол авлодни шакллантиришда мутафаккир меросининг амалий аҳамиятини асослашга хизмат қилади.

Калит сўзлар: Закарийё Розий, ахлоқ фалсафаси, баркамол авлод, нафс, кибр, худбинлик, ҳасад, ақлий тарбия, маънавият, мўътадиллик.

Значение идей Закарии ар-Рази в гармоничном воспитании молодежи

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Аннотация: В данной статье анализируются этико-философские взгляды великого мыслителя, врача и философа Абу Бакра ар-Рази, а также их роль в воспитании современной молодежи. На основе труда учёного «Тибби-рухани» автор раскрывает негативные последствия таких духовных и физических пороков, как высокомерие, эгоизм, зависть, гнев, лживость и чревоугодие. В статье систематизированы предложенные ар-Рази методы обуздания нафса (страстей), опоры на разум и гармонизации человеческого поведения. Выводы исследования служат обоснованию практической значимости наследия мыслителя в формировании интеллектуально и духовно развитого поколения в Новом Узбекистане.

Ключевые слова: Закария ар-Рази, философия морали, гармонично развитое поколение, нафс, высокомерие, эгоизм, зависть, умственное воспитание, духовность, умеренность.

In his philosophical reflections, Zakariya al-Razi vehemently condemns human vices such as self-righteousness, envy, greed, malicious intent, hostility, boastfulness, anger, arrogance, pride, egoism, hatred, deceit, impatience, drunkenness, and other negative traits. According to al-Razi, such unworthy qualities degrade an individual, diminish their prestige, and deprive them of respect. This demonstrates that the thinker's ideas retain profound relevance in the comprehensive and harmonious upbringing of youth in the contemporary era.

Discussing moral vices, the scholar identifies arrogance and egoism as among the most detrimental traits of human character. He writes: "Every individual is a lover of their own self. Sometimes in life, one loves oneself more than is necessary and admires oneself excessively. Consequently, one fails to perceive the foul deeds of one's own soul as evil. A person constantly observes both the reprehensible and commendable actions of others, yet remains oblivious to their own flaws. If a human being has not yet experienced the states of friendship and enmity, they cannot accurately

conceptualize the true nature of these two states"¹. In other words, every person is naturally inclined toward self-love. Occasionally, an individual loves themselves excessively and becomes overly infatuated with their own persona. As a result, they become blind to the wrongdoings of their own heart, failing to recognize them as evil. An individual constantly scrutinizes the negative and positive actions of others, yet completely overlooks their own.

According to the thinker's reflections, if an individual has never experienced the states of friendship and enmity, they are incapable of accurately conceptualizing them. Similarly, if their mind has not been subjected to the trials of love and intimacy, they remain, to a certain extent, deprived of understanding the profound pain and pleasure associated with these dual states. Consequently, if such an individual possesses even a minuscule virtue related to the aforementioned states, their ego will inevitably magnify this minor trait, perceiving it as an immense accomplishment. Such individuals constantly expect to receive lavish praise for a mere particle of virtue.

¹ Al-Razi, Zakariya. Selected Works [Muntakhabi osor]. — Dushanbe: Adib, 1989. — P. 75.

In essence, if such a psychological state easily fosters self-assurance within an individual, it will ultimately drag them into the abyss of arrogance. This is particularly true if the individual afflicted with this moral disease observes others praising them for a trivial virtue and perceiving them as pure. The most prominent and visible symptom of an egoist, Zakariya al-Razi asserts, is their tendency to find fault with all the actions of others; they view everything through a lens of selfishness and actively seek out flaws. An egoist categorically rejects the progressive or developmental ideas of others, as they solely validate their own opinions. If an egoist is fond of their own horse, they will refuse to exchange it even for a vastly superior one. In the egoist's distorted perception, nothing exists that is better than what they already possess.

According to the scholar, if an egoistical individual favors a particular endeavor, they categorically refuse to acknowledge the existence of any superior or more noble pursuit in that domain. Consequently, anyone harboring this vice without the desire to correct it will inevitably fall behind their relatives and peers. If their peers and inner circle do not tolerate or excuse this behavior, these flaws cannot thrive. Under such circumstances, an individual who has only recently been ensnared by egoism may, through environmental influence, break free from its bondage, strive forward, and continue their personal development.

Such individuals can reach a level of psychological maturity where their egoistic traits are entirely left behind. Otherwise, the egoist remains entrenched in their position, which severely hinders their potential for rapid growth. Expanding upon his views, al-Razi asserts that the primary remedy for excessive self-esteem is for the individual to listen to objective assessments of their positive and negative traits from others and to consciously acknowledge their own shortcomings. Furthermore, they must never compare their actions to the deeds of base individuals who lack any praiseworthy achievements. Another

critical factor is the environment; an egoist must avoid environments or societies that fail to cultivate noble moral qualities among their people, and actively distance themselves from such negative influences.

Consequently, if an individual successfully abstains from these two vices—namely, egoism and arrogance—they will reflectively recognize their daily shortcomings, reprimand their own nafs (carnal soul), and thereby safeguard themselves from the snares of vanity and hubris. Therefore, one must actively strive to ensure that the soul never yields to the intoxicating feeling of pride. One must not boast or utter self-praising words in the presence of others, nor seek unfounded superiority over them. Instead, an individual should look upon their peers and subordinates with benevolence and amity. By doing so and habituating the heart to such virtues, they will completely emancipate themselves from the shackles of egoism and pride. Ultimately, one must project their self-worth accurately, grounded in genuine merit.

Deliberating on the concept of envy (*hasad*), al-Razi characterizes it as a moral affliction that originates from the accumulation of avarice and deep-seated greed within the human heart². According to him, it is imperative to cure the hearts of malevolent individuals who derive perverse pleasure from causing grief to others. Such individuals secretly rejoice at the misfortunes or missteps of others, even when these people have neither harmed nor oppressed them. These individuals harbor a deep-seated hatred for humanity. In stark contrast, human nature inherently expects mutual benevolence and kindness. Furthermore, society expects every individual to be amicable and to contribute positively to the collective well-being.

According to Abu Bakr al-Razi's observations, one of the most fundamental pillars of envy is the cultivation of an avaricious character within the heart. A wretched individual never wishes for others to possess what they themselves lack, nor do they tolerate such a possibility. Furthermore, the envious person cannot endure

² Al-Razi, Zakariya. *Selected Works* [Muntakhabi osor]. — Dushanbe: Adib, 1989. — P. 75.

the success of others, even when they themselves have achieved certain milestones. Therefore, the scholar notes that envy is a profound psychological agony that inflicts incalculable harm.

According to Zakariya al-Razi's views, anyone who harbors malice toward another or wishes humanity ill is a wicked individual and is universally despised³. Even if the envious person ultimately achieves nothing tangible through their envy and fails to inflict severe harm upon others, they constantly strive to actualize their malicious desires and never refrain from committing malevolent deeds. The objective of an envious person is never to assist or support humanity. Consequently, this epitomizes the status of an envious individual who seeks to fulfill their malicious intent and finds their purpose solely among the envious. Ultimately, it is evident that an envious person directs their jealousy not at distant strangers, but primarily at their own relatives and close associates.

However, the thinker notes, the envious person sometimes also envies those who are distant. They imagine that these distant individuals live in absolute prosperity. In such a state, the envious person suffers profound psychological torment, even if reality dictates the complete opposite. According to the scholar, such delusions, sorrow, and jealousy exhibited by the envious person are considered sheer foolishness. First and foremost, an individual must abstain from envying their close associates. Even in scenarios where both near and distant acquaintances become angered by the envious person, actively hinder their goals, and cause detriment to all their personal affairs, one must still refrain from succumbing to envy. In such instances, to remedy this affliction, both relatives and strangers must demonstrate genuine empathy and care within their hearts.

In the scholar's view, if malevolence and harmful intentions merge with envy, they not only entrench the feeling of jealousy within the heart but also engender deep-seated hostility and enmity. Consequently, in life, such envious

individuals frequently emerge even among relatives, friends, and acquaintances. This psychological phenomenon is akin to a societal dynamic where, if a complete stranger becomes the ruler of a city, the citizens do not resent him; however, if one of their own fellow citizens ascends to leadership, the vast majority will envy him—even if the collective benefits derived from a local leader far exceed those provided by a foreigner. Nurturing an unfounded desire within people's hearts to be perpetually superior to others, and allowing this ambition to leave a permanent mark on the soul, gives rise to a specific pathology. As a result, unchecked self-love and egoism ultimately triumph.

According to the philosopher, only individuals who excessively cultivate self-love fall into the trap of envy. Consumed by immense egoism, such a person aspires to reach exalted heights that no one else has attained. Consequently, if someone else achieves a higher status, the envious become deeply aggrieved and psychologically disturbed⁴.

For this reason, al-Razi recommends relying on the rational intellect (Aql) and reflecting deeply upon one's path in life. In his view, despising envy and cultivating an active aversion toward it must be a constant endeavor for all individuals. Certainly, it is fundamentally unjust to envy a close associate or a person who has attained a high position. A person of high rank does not obstruct those of lower status from striving to achieve their own goals. Therefore, the status they have attained is not something that warrants jealousy. If an envious person reasons correctly in this manner, the elevation of another individual will never incite anger within them. Consequently, their anger must be understood as stemming from their own failure to strive for the position achieved by the successful individual.

Thus, the envious individual should direct their anger at themselves for exhibiting weakness and negligence in their own endeavors. The envious person must realize that if the successful individual is a brother, cousin,

³ Al-Razi, Zakariya. *Selected Works* [Muntakhabi osor]. — Dushanbe: Adib, 1989. — P. 76.

⁴ Al-Razi, Zakariya. *Selected Works* [Muntakhabi osor]. — Dushanbe: Adib, 1989. — P. 78.

relative, friend, or compatriot, their success is actually advantageous, as it may yield mutual benefits. Such individuals bear them no ill will, and a natural social bond exists between them. Furthermore, while genuine connections may exist among the populace, leaders, monarchs, and the wealthy, the envious person must not harbor unrealistic expectations or fantasies that the wealth of others will simply be transferred to them. Therefore, envying such figures is utterly futile, and casting a malevolent eye upon them is entirely senseless.

According to Zakariya al-Razi, a wise individual must exercise absolute control over their anger, egoism, sensuality, and animalistic tendencies, thereby safeguarding their faculties from the insatiable thirst for pleasure and carnal desires. Reflecting on psychological harm, he explains that envy distracts the soul, draws it toward illusory desires, and alienates it from rational thought. Consequently, the situation deteriorates to the point where the envious individual, consumed by the jealousy of their carnal soul (*nafs*), neglects their physical health, becomes utterly oblivious to the emergence of harmful conditions, and remains blind to impending misfortunes. Ultimately, this leads them to suffer from chronic psychological depression and profound sorrow.

In al-Razi's view, the physical detriment of envy lies in its capacity to trigger psychological disturbances that lead to severe insomnia and a loss of appetite. As a result, the human body weakens, the facial complexion deteriorates, and overall physical health degenerates. If an individual grants unrestrained freedom to their carnal desires, they will obsessively pursue pleasures to such an extent that this excessive behavior inevitably results in exhaustion and physical harm. Conversely, by engaging the rational intellect, an individual possesses the capacity to eradicate these destructive impulses and detach from the transient pleasures engineered by the carnal soul.

Furthermore, a rational individual may choose not to dwell on this. Indeed, the physical body serves as the ultimate avenger of envy. The

physical form of an envious person is perpetually engulfed in distress, while their mind remains in a constant state of confusion. Consequently, this deep-seated envy renders the body weak and debilitated. Thus, the scholar posits that the optimal course of action is for individuals to entirely shun such foolish and detrimental behaviors. In his view, this is the only way to avoid descending into madness and to liberate oneself from futile suffering.

Reflecting on the necessity of abstaining from anger, the thinker writes: "The state of anger is fundamentally an animalistic characteristic, whereby a beast seeks revenge against its persecutor"⁵. However, for a human being, this condition constitutes a form of temporary insanity; if allowed to exceed reasonable limits and indulged, it drives an individual to the brink of madness. Consequently, in such circumstances, the psychological state of an enraged individual can inflict far more harm than the actual object of their anger. Therefore, a wise person must consistently recall the irrational condition of enraged individuals and its severe negative consequences, recognizing that, sooner or later, unbridled anger inevitably incites people to commit reprehensible acts.

Deliberating upon the act of lying, al-Razi categorizes it as another malignant phenomenon stemming from an unnatural psychological disposition⁶. If an individual lacks maturity and has not yet attained intellectual perfection, they inherently gravitate toward arrogance and vanity. Conversely, a truly self-assured individual genuinely aspires to acquire profound knowledge and experience, striving to excel among scholars. However, a wise individual must never grant unrestrained liberty to their carnal desires, as doing so inevitably culminates in pain, sorrow, and profound remorse. Hence, lying is a psychological disease that plunges its perpetrator into these very calamities. An individual habituated to deceit, who lies incessantly, inherently predisposes themselves to committing further malevolent deeds. Furthermore, as a consequence of their deceit,

⁵ Al-Razi, Zakariya. *Selected Works* [Muntakhabi osor]. — Dushanbe: Adib, 1989. — P. 81.

⁶ Ibid., p. 82.

they may falter due to errors or forgetfulness, articulating the same concept in contradictory ways—conveying one version of events to an individual initially, only to recount it completely differently later.

Examining the vice of miserliness (*bakhillik*), Abu Bakr al-Razi notes: "We cannot categorically classify the trait of miserliness among the absolute phenomena driven solely by carnal passions, because one may encounter individuals who tightly hoard their wealth simply out of a profound fear of poverty and the unpredictable vicissitudes of daily life"⁷. In other words, stinginess cannot be entirely attributed to the absolute dictates of the carnal soul (*nafs*), as some individuals become possessive of their property purely out of existential anxiety regarding destitution and life's uncertainties. Consequently, such individuals derive absolutely no pleasure from miserliness or its associated vices, such as avarice and insatiable greed. We may observe children who exhibit an inherent disposition toward generosity among their peers, yet within the same demographic, we also encounter inherently greedy children. For this reason, the scholar underscores that humanity is confronted with the perpetual necessity of combatting this unworthy character trait, which only partially originates from carnal desires.

According to the thinker's philosophical reflections, because human temperaments naturally vary, individuals' attitudes toward specific habits are strictly individualized. Consequently, the depth of sorrow and grief experienced by each person is intrinsically linked to their cognitive capacity and psychological constitution. For instance, some individuals possess immense patience and fortitude; thus, sorrow and other adversities cannot inflict profound harm upon them. Conversely, there are those who lack the resilience to endure such hardships. Therefore, al-Razi advises that such vulnerable individuals must be psychologically treated before the state of impatience fully manifests⁸. This preventive approach is crucial because the habit of

impatience inherently exacerbates sorrow and magnifies other complications. In this context, actively seeking comfort and consciously cultivating joy and happiness not only mitigates the detrimental impacts of sorrow but also serves as a vital psychological mechanism for decisively vanquishing such emotional adversaries.

Reflecting on the liberation from sorrow and grief, Zakariya al-Razi writes: "At first glance, it is imagined that carnal desires are the beloved and pleasant emotions of humanity, but in reality, they are predominantly the source of sorrow and grief"⁹. That is to say, while the carnal soul (*nafs*) is conceptualized as an origin of favorite and pleasant human emotions, it is actually the primary source of sorrow. Consequently, it becomes evident that sorrow is, on one hand, a psychological state, and on the other hand, the direct byproduct of yielding to the carnal soul. Because sorrow is the cumulative result of long-term actions and specific life events, al-Razi asserts that it requires a profound philosophical explanation. He elucidates this as follows: human sorrow inflicts simultaneous agony upon the intellect, the soul, and the physical body. Therefore, we are obligated to eradicate sorrow as much as possible, or at the very least, to consciously mitigate the suffering it causes.

According to al-Razi, the material origin of sorrow consists of the very objects and desires that humanity loves. Naturally, it is impossible to completely eliminate all the beloved objects that people interact with and utilize. For this reason, a rational individual must exercise caution regarding attachments whose loss or defect will inevitably cause psychological distress. In the scholar's words, the existence of a beloved object is inherently aligned with nature, whereas its loss or deprivation is contrary to nature, thereby inducing grief.

In his philosophical reflections on moral vices, Zakariya al-Razi also specifically addresses the physiological and psychological detriments of overeating. Namely, gluttony and excessive consumption are negative traits that ultimately

⁷ Al-Razi, Zakariya. *Selected Works* [Muntakhabi osor]. — Dushanbe: Adib, 1989. — P. 85.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁹ Al-Razi, Zakariya. *Selected Works* [Muntakhabi osor]. — Dushanbe: Adib, 1989. — P. 88.

bring profound harm and misery to an individual. Gluttony and overeating not only destroy a person's reputation and prestige but also degrade them to an animalistic state in the eyes of society. Furthermore, the condition of gluttony directly leads to severe digestive and gastric diseases.

As a result, the scholar notes, the ensuing cardiac strain and palpitations transition into other systemic illnesses, leading to highly detrimental health consequences. In his view, this pathology is a condition that emerges directly under the influence of unchecked carnal desires. If an individual becomes habituated to this state, it blinds the rational soul (an-Nafs an-Natiqa) to the fundamental feelings of shame and modesty. This condition—essentially an absolute subjugation to base passions, lusts, and desires—plunges the individual into a state of physiological and moral decay.

It should be emphasized that in our country today, the scientific and spiritual heritage left by our ancestors plays a highly significant role. It is instrumental in the systematic organization of spiritual and educational initiatives, the elevation of the intellectual potential, cognitive awareness, and worldview of the youth, as well as in the cultivation of a comprehensively and harmoniously developed generation that lives with profound feelings of patriotism, love, and unwavering loyalty to the people.

In conclusion, Zakariya al-Razi's core philosophical ideas—that human superiority over all living things is rooted in the rational intellect (Aql); that education and upbringing play a transformative role in shaping human morality and the psyche; and that strict adherence to moderation in character formation is essential—are not merely historical concepts. Rather, they serve as fundamental factors and guiding principles in the contemporary harmonious upbringing of youth and their ultimate attainment of moral and intellectual perfection.

For Zakariya al-Razi, the fundamental pillars of ethics consist of rigorous education, proper moral upbringing, and the deliberate cultivation of individuals who are genuinely beneficial to society.

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