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"Kutadgu Bilig" Ancient Roots of a Healthy, Enlightened Society

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A B S T R A C T
"Kutadgu bilig" is a work written in the XI century by Yusuf Khos-Hajib, based on a deep reflection on public administration, morality, justice and the structure of society. This work emphasizes that the strength of the state, the well-being of the people and the stability of public order in society depend on the conscious and active participation of people. That's what the article is about.

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INTRODUCTION.

Yusuf Khos Hajib's work "Kutadgu Bilig" is based on the comprehensive development of the socio-spiritual environment of his time, and the ideas it elucidates had a profound impact on the moral and social life of society at the time. The 11th century was a period of intellectual and political upsurge in the history of the Turkic peoples, during which not only states were formed, but science, literature, political thought, and spiritual life also developed at a high level.[1] In particular, issues of social activism were expressed in the works of thinkers of the time and in the experience of public administration. In the Middle Ages, issues of social activism were primarily expressed through public administration, the development of science, spirituality, and moral values, which played an important role in the political, social, and cultural life of the time. He lived and worked during this period. The work reflects issues of social activism, along with social justice, public administration, and moral principles.[2]

The work "Kutadgu Bilig" by Yusuf Hos Hacib, a prominent figure in 11th-century Turkish literature and philosophy, is not only a book of instructions on public administration but also a philosophical work rich in profound reflections on social life, morality, justice, and the role of the individual in society. It directly and indirectly expresses ideas of social activism. The work substantiates the need for each person to know their place and live an active life based on justice and fairness.[3]

METHOD.

Various research methods were used in the study of this topic, including data analysis, comparative analysis, synthesis, and analysis to clarify the significance of the knowledge presented in the work for humanity.[4]

RESULTS.

The interpretation of the concept of social activism in "Kutadgu Bilig" suggests that, although social activism is not presented in its modern form, its foundations are duty, responsibility, honesty, fairness, and hard work. The work emphasizes that every representative of a class—the king, minister, judge, and representative of the people—must be active in their social role, serving stability and justice in society.[5]

According to Yusuf Khos Hajib, if every person honestly fulfills their duties, the entire society will develop: "If everyone honestly performs their work, the state will be strong." [6] In this vein, social activity is expressed through responsibility and loyalty.

Activity and responsibility in public administration are emphasized by the symbolic images of the work's heroes—Kuntugdi (justice), Aitoldi (happiness), Ugdulmish (reason), and Uzgurmish (life purpose). Kuntugdi, as a ruler, must be fair and listen to the suffering of the people. Aitoldi, as a symbol of happiness and the state, is a force that supports the leader. Through these images, the author demonstrates that every part of the social system must be active and responsible. "If someone complains about you, listen to them; do not deny that you have harmed them." [7] In this sentence, the leader's activity—that is, their willingness to communicate with people and accept responsibility—is interpreted as a guarantee of social stability. Knowledge, intellect, and spirituality are the hallmarks of an active personality. In the work, one of the main conditions of social activity is the pursuit of knowledge and the use of reason. A knowledgeable, wise person is active in society, showing others the way. At the same time, they must be spiritually pure, restrain their ego, and live honestly, quoting these lines[8]

"If a person's strength lies in knowledge, then their activity is born from the heart." [9]

Thus, social activity is associated not only with external actions but also with spiritual and intellectual maturity. In the work "Activity through Work and Honesty," Yusuf Khos Hajib demonstrates diligence as one of the most important qualities in society. An active person is one who works, works, and contributes to society. Everyone must strengthen their position through work:

"People forget those who do not work, those who lie down;
Be hardworking—people will remember you with honor." [10]

These ideas indicate that an active life that benefits society is a source of social respect and prestige.

In Yusuf Khosa Hajib's "Kutadgu Bilig," issues of social activism are presented based on ideas relevant to the conditions of his time, but also relevant today. The author describes an active person as fair, honest, hardworking, knowledgeable, and responsible. Through these aspects, he promotes the active participation of every citizen as the main pillar of a strong and developing society. The work teaches us that social activism is not only an external action, but also an internal spiritual awakening and a sense of responsibility.

In the Middle Ages, specifically in the 11th century, the concept of social activism was interpreted more through the prism of "devotion to duty," "honesty," "pursuit of knowledge," and "justice between ruler and people." At

that time, every person who understood their place and honestly and selflessly fulfilled their duty to society was considered an active citizen. Today, the concept of social activism is understood as the active participation of citizens in public life, the demonstration of initiative, and the free expression of one's opinion. An active citizen is considered a mature individual who contributes to society and assumes responsibility. In the 11th century, rulers supported the development of science and personal growth. Scholars, thinkers, and poets gathered around them, and discussions took place. This contributed to the involvement of not only courtiers but also the general public in public life. Principles of justice, honesty, and social responsibility were promoted in public administration.

"If the ruler is just, the people will be active and peaceful." [11]

This principle reflects the historical roots of healthy social relations between the people and the leader, as well as active citizenship.

In work, social activism is expressed largely through the concepts of justice, responsibility, duty, and purpose. The conscientious work of each person in their place, a sense of responsibility for others, is an ancient interpretation of active citizenship. Yusuf Khos Hajib says:

"Act justly, be interested in the people's situation,
listen to them, empathize with their pain." [12]

These thoughts indicate that interaction between government leaders, officials, and the people must be based on activism.

The foundation that makes social activism truly strong and sustainable is spirituality. A person's conscience, moral views, commitment to honesty and justice, and a spirit of selflessness—all this provides impetus for their activity in society. A highly spiritual person understands their responsibility to society and considers it their life's duty.

Therefore, in the ancient Eastern educational system, especially in the works of our great ancestors—Imam Bukhari, Alisher Navoi, and Ahmad Yasawi—achieving spiritual perfection is interpreted as the foundation of social progress.

Yusuf Khos Hajib noted that the stability of society and the just structure of the state depend, above all, on the spiritual perfection of the individual. He believed that a person must first educate himself and be spiritually mature:

"Let a person first correct himself, and then society will be right" [13].

This idea demonstrates the inextricable connection between the individual and society in the thinker's philosophical approach. He emphasizes that reason and knowledge are the foundation of spirituality.

In his work, reason and knowledge play a central role in human spiritual development. In "Kutadgu Bilig," reason is described as light, and ignorance as darkness. According to the author, knowledge and thinking guide a person on the right path:

"Reason is light; with it, a person finds his way." [14]

Reason is interpreted as the primary tool leading a person to spiritual values in life.

Moral education is seen as a sign of a perfect person; Yusuf Khos Hajib considers morality to be the highest human quality. In his opinion, it is not enough to limit oneself to reason and knowledge—they must be in harmony with morality. He considers such qualities as patience, correctness, modesty, justice, and honesty essential for human development:

"He who has morality is like light; he who does not have it—his face is dark."

DISCUSSION.

During the Karakhanids, social activity manifested itself primarily in the religious, economic, and cultural spheres. During this period, contacts between different social classes intensified, and public life became particularly vibrant in city centers. Mosques, madrassas, and shrines were the centers of public life. These places served not only as places of worship but also as venues for learning, the exchange of ideas, and discussion. In addition to government officials, imams, mudarris, qazis, and other religious leaders also exerted a significant influence on public thought.

In the Middle Ages, the works of Yusuf Khos Hajib "Kutadgu Bilig" and Mahmud Kashgari "Devonu Lugotit Turk" represent the product of the scientific and intellectual activity of this period.

Scholars and poets actively participated in public life, presenting their knowledge in the palaces of rulers, madrassas, and public spaces.

These works indicate that women were primarily active in the home, but educated and literate women also existed in wealthy families and among the nobility.

"Although a woman's place is at home, her upbringing determines the future of society." [15]

Social activism during the Karakhanid era was broad, encompassing all strata of society through religious, economic, scientific, and cultural activities. Through this activity, it played an important role in the formation and strengthening of Turkic Muslim society. During the Karakhanid era, youth became. The pursuit of knowledge and participation in cultural and religious life had a profound impact on the development of society. Young people assumed responsibility for the education and socialization of not only their own generation but also future generations.

During this period, youth activity in scientific, religious, cultural, and economic spheres strengthened their position in society. During the Karakhanid period, youth played an important socio-cultural role in society. The role of youth during this period was primarily associated with the acquisition of knowledge, labor, and the development of culture. During the Karakhanid period, youth activity developed in two main areas: scientific and cultural activity, and social and labor activity.

CONCLUSION.

In the 11th century, ideas of social activism were widely expressed in the political, scientific, and spiritual environments of the time. During this period, an active citizen was considered to be someone who honestly fulfilled their duties, pursued knowledge, promoted justice, and contributed to the development of society. The works of thinkers such as Yusuf Khos Hajib and Mahmud Kashgari show us how active, responsible, and spiritually mature people were at that time. These ideas continue to inform our thinking today.

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