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PHILOSOPHICAL AND RELIGIOUS REFLECTION ON HEALTH AS THE HIGHEST VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE

Annotation

The article examines perspectives on health in various religious traditions, including Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. It emphasizes the importance of key principles such as moderation, purity, balance, and responsibility in shaping a healthy lifestyle. The study also demonstrates that many religious prescriptions have scientific justification and can be integrated into modern healthcare strategies.

Key words: Health, philosophy, religion, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, healthy lifestyle, harmony, spirituality.

SOG'LIQNI INSON HAYOTINING ENG OLIY QADRIYATI SIFATIDA FALSAFIY VA DINIY TAHLILI

Annotatsiya

Maqolada zardushtiylik, buddizm, islom va nasroniylik kabi turli diniy an'analardagi sog'liq haqidagi qarashlar tahlil qilinadi. Sog'lom turmush tarzini shakllantirishda me'yor, poklik, muvozanat va mas'uliyat kabi asosiy tamoyillarning ahamiyati ta'kidlangan. Tadqiqotda, shuningdek, ko'plab diniy ko'rsatmalar ilmiy asosga ega ekanligi va zamonaviy sog'liqni saqlash strategiyalariga integratsiya qilinishi mumkinligi ko'rsatilgan.

Kalit so'zlar: Sog'liq, falsafa, din, zardushtiylik, buddizm, islom, nasroniylik, sog'lom turmush tarzi, uyg'unlik, ma'naviyat.

ФИЛОСОФСКОЕ И РЕЛИГИОЗНОЕ ОСМЫСЛЕНИЕ ЗДОРОВЬЯ КАК ВЫСШЕЙ ЦЕННОСТИ ЧЕЛОВЕЧЕСКОЙ ЖИЗНИ

Аннотация

В статье рассматриваются взгляды на здоровье в различных религиозных традициях, включая зороастризм, буддизм, ислам и христианство. Подчеркивается значение ключевых принципов, таких как умеренность, чистота, баланс и ответственность, в формировании здорового образа жизни. В работе также показано, что многие религиозные предписания имеют научное обоснование и могут быть интегрированы в современные стратегии здравоохранения.

Ключевые слова: Здоровье, философия, религия, зороастризм, буддизм, ислам, христианство, здоровый образ жизни, гармония, духовность.

Introduction. In today's world, where health issues are becoming increasingly significant for society, the philosophical and religious understanding of health as one of the fundamental values of human life draws special attention. This understanding extends beyond purely medical aspects, encompassing a broader context that includes ethical, spiritual, and cultural dimensions.

Virtually all religious and philosophical teachings address, to varying degrees, questions of a healthy lifestyle and ways to achieve it in their reflections on humanity and the environment. In some cases, these principles are even integrated into their foundational doctrines. The most profound and meaningful ideas about healthy living are closely connected with the world's major religions, each of which offers a unique approach to maintaining a healthy lifestyle [1].

Health is viewed not merely as the physical condition of the body but as an integral characteristic reflecting the harmony between the body, mind, and spirit. Philosophers and theologians from various eras and traditions have emphasized the importance of maintaining this balance, asserting that health results from the interaction of different levels of existence.

Research Methodology. Historical analysis indeed confirms that many ancient religious traditions placed great importance on issues of health and hygiene. One striking example of such an approach is Zoroastrianism, one of the oldest monotheistic religions, which emerged approximately 3,000–4,000 years ago. The sacred texts of this religion, collectively known as the Avesta, contain numerous guidelines for preserving health and maintaining the cleanliness of the environment [2].

The Avesta offers recommendations on personal hygiene, body care, and proper nutrition. For instance, the text emphasizes the importance of regular bathing, particularly after contact with contaminated objects or individuals. It also highlights the need to

maintain the cleanliness of clothing and living spaces, demonstrating an understanding of the significance of sanitary norms even in ancient times. Additionally, the practice of fumigating with various substances to disinfect clothing and food was common.

Zoroastrians regarded the earth, water, and air as sacred elements that must be protected and kept clean. They believed that water possessed purifying properties and needed to be safeguarded from contamination. This belief was reflected in their practice of constructing special wells and reservoirs intended for ritual purification and drinking.

The earth was also considered sacred, prompting Zoroastrians to avoid burying the deceased in the ground to prevent its defilement. Instead, bodies were placed in special "Towers of Silence" (dakhmas), where they were consumed by birds—a process viewed as the natural return of the body's elements to nature.

Air was similarly treated with reverence. Zoroastrians avoided using fire in enclosed spaces, as smoke could pollute the air and harm human health.

These examples vividly illustrate that even in ancient times, people recognized the connection between health and the state of the environment. Historical analysis reveals that religion played a crucial role in shaping these perceptions, offering practical advice and guidance to promote physical and spiritual well-being.

In particular, the Buddhist tradition emphasizes the concept of karma, which holds that our thoughts, words, and actions influence our future, including our health. In this context, the ability to control thoughts and actions is seen as a critical element of maintaining health. According to Buddhist beliefs,

negative thoughts and actions can lead to illness, whereas positive intentions and deeds contribute to strengthening one's health.

The Buddhist interpretation of a healthy lifestyle is rooted in achieving harmony between an individual and their surroundings while striving to avoid causing harm to other beings. This concept is based on the idea that purity of thought and kindness in actions form the foundation of a healthy life. Viewing health as an inseparable unity of body and spirit, Buddhists aim to maintain the purity of their "qi"-psychophysical energy-by refraining from malicious intentions and excesses. In a secular context, this approach can also be understood as living a "healthy lifestyle"[3].

The foundation of the Buddhist understanding of a healthy lifestyle lies in the Four Noble Truths, which reveal the nature of suffering and the path to its cessation. According to Buddhist philosophy, physical ailments are merely one manifestation of universal suffering (dukkha), which arises from attachment to impermanent phenomena and a misunderstanding of the true nature of reality.

The principle of the Middle Way, formulated by the Buddha, is a central tenet of a healthy lifestyle. It advocates avoiding extremes in both the physical and spiritual dimensions of existence. This means refraining from both excessive indulgence in sensory pleasures and harsh ascetic practices.

Buddhist philosophy views health as a multifaceted phenomenon that encompasses several interdependent aspects:

Physical health (rupa) – Maintaining the body in good condition through balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, and adherence to a daily routine.

Energetic health (prana) – Proper management of life energy through breathing techniques and meditation practice.

Mental health (citta) – Cultivating mental clarity and inner peace through meditative practices and ethical behavior.

Spiritual health (dharma) – Following a spiritual path and developing wisdom aimed at understanding truth and freeing oneself from suffering.

Buddhist philosophy offers a profound and comprehensive understanding of a healthy lifestyle that goes beyond mere physical well-being. It is a holistic approach that integrates physical, mental, and spiritual health into a unified system.

In today's world, where the importance of holistic approaches to health is increasingly recognized, Buddhist philosophy provides valuable insights and practical methods for achieving and maintaining complete well-being.

A particular value lies in the Buddhist understanding of the interconnection between physical health and the state of consciousness, which is supported by modern scientific research on the effects of meditation and mindfulness on both physical and mental health. The integration of Buddhist principles of a healthy lifestyle with contemporary medical knowledge can help develop more effective approaches to health maintenance and disease prevention.

As noted by the President, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, religion plays a central role in our inner life and cultural heritage. The importance of faith lies not only in adhering to religious prescriptions but also in striving for a healthy and harmonious lifestyle. For enlightenment, a scientific foundation is needed, and to establish that foundation, time must be used wisely, and all of this must be put into practice[4].

The phenomenon of a healthy lifestyle in the Islamic philosophical tradition represents a multi-layered and complex system of views, shaped by core religious principles and moral-ethical norms. It is important to note that the Islamic concept of a healthy lifestyle is based on a holistic approach to understanding human nature, where physical and spiritual health are seen as interdependent elements of a unified system [3].

Within the framework of the Islamic philosophical paradigm, it is important to emphasize that a healthy lifestyle is not simply viewed as a set of hygienic rules and dietary recommendations, but as an all-encompassing system of life organization that carries deep ontological meaning. Notably, according to Islamic philosophical views, the human body is regarded as a divine amanat (entrusted property), which inherently

implies a responsibility for its preservation and maintenance in proper condition[4].

The Quran includes prescriptions that regulate aspects of nutrition, labor, rest, and personal hygiene. Regarding nutrition, Islam establishes the concepts of halal (permissible) and haram (forbidden), defining which foods are allowed to be consumed. For example, the consumption of pork, carrion, and alcohol is prohibited. The Quran also emphasizes the importance of moderation in food and taking care of one's health[5].

Methodologically, it is important to note that Islamic philosophy of a healthy lifestyle is based on the principle of wasatiyyah (moderation), which applies to all areas of human existence. Specifically, this principle is reflected in the concept of halal-haram, which not only regulates dietary prescriptions but also shapes a broader system of life values and priorities.

It is also important to emphasize that in Islamic philosophical tradition, a healthy lifestyle is closely connected to the concept of tawhid (monotheism), which entails understanding health as a manifestation of divine grace and requires a responsible approach to its preservation. Contemporary scholars of Islamic philosophy assert that this approach fosters a conscious attitude toward health and encourages adherence to preventive measures.

Furthermore, it is crucial to highlight that Islamic philosophy views physical health in an inseparable connection with spiritual and social well-being. In this context, it is worth mentioning that Islamic rituals, such as salah (prayer) and sawm (fasting), are understood not only as acts of worship but also as means of maintaining the psychophysiological balance of the body [6].

In the modern scientific paradigm, the Islamic concept of preventive medicine, based on the principle of "prevention is better than cure", has gained particular relevance. Practice shows that many Islamic prescriptions regarding personal hygiene, nutrition, and physical activity align with contemporary scientific recommendations for maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Thus, the philosophical understanding of a healthy lifestyle in Islam represents a comprehensive system of views that integrate religious, ethical, and practical aspects of human existence. It is evident that this concept has significant potential for addressing current healthcare challenges and promoting health-preserving behaviors.

In the context of modern scientific discourse, it is undoubtedly relevant to explore the conceptual understanding of a healthy lifestyle within the Christian tradition through the lens of philosophical reflection. It is important to note that the Christian understanding of health, according to fundamental research, is based on a holistic model that views the human being as a unity of spirit, soul, and body.

Methodologically, it is significant to emphasize that in Christian philosophy, the body is seen as the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20), which undoubtedly places a special responsibility on believers to maintain their physical health. At the same time, as theologian John Breck rightly points out in his work *The Sacred Gift of Life*, the Christian conception of health is distinct from the secular one, as it includes not only physical well-being but also a spiritual component.

In this context, it is necessary to focus on the fact that early Christian thinkers, including Clement of Alexandria and Origen, developed a holistic concept of "moderation in all things" as the central principle of a healthy lifestyle. Notably, this concept, as convincingly demonstrated by modern scholar Peter Brown, significantly influenced the formation of European health culture.

From the perspective of philosophical anthropology, Christian teaching on a healthy lifestyle is inseparably linked to the concept of asceticism. However, as modern theologian Kallistos Ware rightly points out, Christian asceticism does not involve the denial of the body, but seeks to achieve harmony between spiritual and physical needs.

In light of contemporary research, particular interest lies in the Christian understanding of the relationship between sin and disease. It is important to emphasize that Christianity does not

view all diseases as direct consequences of personal sin but points to the general corruption of human nature due to original sin.

It is also worth noting that the Orthodox tradition, in particular, has developed a specific concept of "holistic health" which is expressed in the works of contemporary Orthodox theologians [8]. In this context, a healthy lifestyle is viewed as an integral component of spiritual development.

Furthermore, when analyzing the Christian approach to medicine, it is important to highlight that Christianity has always supported the advancement of medical sciences, seeing it as a manifestation of Divine wisdom in the created world. However, Christian philosophy emphasizes the necessity of combining medical treatment with spiritual practices.

Analysis and results. The analysis of various religious traditions reveals that regardless of the specific faith, health is universally recognized as a paramount value that requires continuous attention and care. Religious practices, such as prayer, meditation, fasting, and other spiritual exercises, contribute to the strengthening of both physical and mental health.

Conclusion. In conclusion, it should be emphasized that philosophical and religious reflections on health provide a deep and multifaceted approach to understanding health as the highest value of human life. The integration of traditional religious practices with modern scientific advancements can contribute to the development of more effective strategies for health maintenance in contemporary society.

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