

Greek Philosophy: The Classic View of Education

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ABSTRACT

Education began with the classical view of ancient Greek philosophy regarding logical truth, in the medieval period there was a restriction regarding freedom of thought by the church on the grounds that truth could not be produced by reason as happened in the ancient Greek period, after that came the modern period called the *Renaissance*, namely the school of thought. rationalism which prioritizes reason as a source of knowledge. From knowledge that continues to develop, new ideas and knowledge emerge that make the world of education activities increasingly complex. This history-based educational theory research uses a qualitative approach with a type of bibliographic research so as to present accurate historical facts in accordance with theory from various historical experts' points of view. The science developed in western education is philosophy which is formed as a reference for their thinking, which will give rise to thoughts characterized by Materialism, idealism, secularism and Rationalism.

Introduction

Education does not just place people with responsibilities. However, humans have a view that it is the most complete basis or resource. Education itself is not allowed to be trapped or remain in neoclassical theories, namely, a theory where humans are placed as sources or tools used to produce where humans become masters of science and technology and also have the aim of supporting power and interests. capitalist.

The reality that often occurs today is that the formation of a good person as an *agent of change*, namely an educated human being who bears responsibility for major changes in his life, the life of his nation and country in a better direction, actually experiences problems, this is not in line with Plato's thoughts: "Man being part of nature, should therefore follow it and strive to utilize its principle of harmony or balance, which in its human equivalent is justice; on this the state should be built, and individuals should devote their energies to securing and

maintaining it. Following the natural distribution of intellect, men contribute to society in different ways, but it is self-evident that leadership should come from those most fit to provide it," (Hobson, 1987, p.27).

Besides not being in line with Plato's thinking, conditions like this are also not in line with the expected goal of education, namely humanizing humans as an effort to realize human existence as *caliph fil ardhi* (Ungguh, 2005). To provide answers to these problems, educational philosophy is one of the keys to building and guiding goodness for all humans. In the world of education, we are dealing with Islamic and western educational philosophies. Both have a history of development and thought, similarities and differences which have extraordinary implications in the world of education. So periodically the development of the first philosophy, namely Greek philosophy, becomes important to study in the genealogy of educational philosophy.

Method

Research that discusses history-based educational theories requires methods that can explain in detail so that they are able to describe the concepts being studied. Educational theory research entitled Greek Philosophy; The Classical View of Education This study uses a qualitative approach, namely carrying out comparative inferential analysis of the dynamics of the relationships between observed phenomena using scientific logic. This research is literature research, including a type of library research where data collection is carried out by collecting data from various literature alone without field research (Zed, 2004, p.3) so that it can present accurate historical facts, in accordance with theoretical studies from the perspective of historical experts.

Results and Discussion

The period of Greek philosophy is the most important period in the history of human civilization. This was because at that time there was a change in the mythocentric mindset, namely a mindset that relied heavily on myths to explain natural phenomena, they did not accept truth that came from reason or logic.

After the 6th century BC, a number of thinkers emerged who opposed the existence of myths. They want questions about the mysteries of the universe, answers that can be accepted by reason (rational). This situation is a demythology, meaning an awakening of thought to use reason and abandon things that are mythological. The efforts of thought experts to lead to freedom of thought, then many people tried to create a concept based on the power of pure reason, then the miraculous event The Greek Miracle emerged, which means it can be used as the basis of world civilization (Achmadi, 2019; Munawwaroh & Taenenji, 2003; Wahid, 2021).

Education is not only a transfer of knowledge but also a transfer of values, this statement comes from the classical view of education. The classical view of education is generally said to be an institution that can carry out three functions at once. First, preparing the younger generation to hold certain roles in the future. Second, transferring knowledge, according to the expected role. Third, transferring values in order to maintain the integrity and unity of society as a prerequisite for

the survival of society and civilization (Harisah, 2018). Historical records show that Western philosophy began in Greece. The Greeks were the first nation to use reason to think. This is because they enjoy traveling, so they can think freely (Bertens, 1987). Western educational philosophy assumes that knowledge does not arise from a religious view of life, but it is claimed that Western education is value-free, that is, free from religious and divine values. Science is not built on revelation and religion but on cultural traditions, which are strengthened by philosophical speculation, which focuses on humans being rational creatures (Soyomukti, 2008).

The science developed in Western education is philosophy, formed as a reference for their thinking, giving rise to thoughts characterized by Materialism, idealism, secularism, and Rationalism. This thinking can influence science's concept, interpretation, and meaning. For example, Rene Descartes, a figure in Western philosophy from France, made reason the only criterion for measuring truth. (Ismail, 2017) We will further describe the history of the development of educational philosophy in the Western world.

Ancient Greek Philosophy (600-500 BC)

In ancient Greece, philosophy was dominant, starting with the emergence of natural philosophy. It is so named because the first Greek philosophers tried to find answers about the origins and events of the universe. Many famous philosophers, including Thales (624-546 BC), were considered the first philosopher in Greece. He was a philosopher who tried to find the ark (principles) of the universe. According to him, the first principle of the universe is water. He thought that water was the primary substance that was the basis of all life. Everything starts from water and ends in water, too. Anaximandros (610-546 BC) was a pupil of Thales. Like his teacher, he also looked for Arkhe, but his opinion was different from his teacher's. According to him, the main principle underlying everything was not water but "the infinite" because the physical thing must change while what changed was not arched. Anaximenes (585-528 BC) believed that the origin of everything was air because air is the primary material that forms all objects in the universe. If the collection of air is extensive, it changes shape into clouds or something that the eye can see; if wet, it will become rainwater; and if the cloud becomes denser, it becomes earth, stone, or even a human body. (Ismail, 2017)

Pythagoras (570-490 BC) believed that the universe was nothing but numbers. The number element is an element of everything. In other words, even and odd numbers are the same as finite and infinite. Democritus (460-370 BC) was a figure of atomism, and he explained the shape and relationship between atoms. Atoms form matter. Socrates (470-399 BC) strongly opposed the relativism taught by the sophists and disagreed with the relativism of the sophists. According to him, truth is not something subjective and relative. We can perceive the existence of objective truth, which does not depend on the individual who thinks or reaches it.

In everyday life, some behaviors are good and evil, appropriate and inappropriate, and the determination of good and evil lies not in the strength of each person's argument but in something universal. Plato (428-348 BC) argued that reality is divided into the sensory world, constantly changing, and the world of ideas that never changes. Ideas are objective, not created by the mind; on the

contrary, the mind depends on these ideas. Ideas relate to the world in three ways: they are present in objects, participate in concrete, and are models or examples (paradigms) for concrete objects. This division of the world will, in turn, provide two introductions. The first is an introduction to ideas; an introduction achieved through this ratio is called episteme (knowledge) and is firm, clear, and unchanging. Second, recognition of things is called doxa (opinion) and is unstable and uncertain; this recognition can be achieved with the five senses. Aristotle (384- 322 BC) argued that logic is not a separate science but precedes science as preparation for scientific thinking. For the first time in history, logic was described systematically. It cannot be denied that Aristotle's logic played an essential role in human intellectual history. Regarding knowledge, Aristotle said that knowledge can be generated through induction and deduction, induction relying on the "weak" five senses, while deduction is independent of sensory knowledge. Therefore, in his logic, Aristotle gave much place to deduction, which he saw as the perfect path to new knowledge. (Hakim, 2017a)

This ancient Greek period is commonly called the period of natural philosophy. It is said that because this period was marked by the emergence of natural thinkers, whose direction and attention were to what was observed around them, they made questions about natural phenomena that were philosophical (based on reason) and not based on myth. They are looking for the first principle of the universe (arche), which is absolute and behind everything that changes. The first Greek philosophical thinkers came from Miletus, an overseas Greek city on the coast of Asia Minor. They are amazed at nature's nuances and rituals and try to find answers to what lies behind all that material. (Adib, 2010)

Middle Period (400-1500 BC)

Medieval Western philosophy (476-1492 AD) is also considered a dark age. Based on the church history approach, the church's actions shackled human life at that time. Humans no longer have the freedom to develop the potential within themselves. The thinkers at that time also did not have freedom of thought. Moreover, some thoughts conflict with the church's religious teachings. Whoever brings it up will be severely punished. The church prohibits investigations based on religious reasons. Therefore, studies of religion (theology) that are not based on church regulations will be strictly prohibited. The only person who has the right to conduct investigations into religion is the church. However, some violated these regulations, and they were considered apostates and then a manhunt (inquisition) was held. (Maksum, 2010)

The history of medieval philosophy begins approximately in the 5th century and continues to the early 17th century. Historians generally determine the year 476, namely the end of the Western Roman Empire, which was centered in the city of Rome, and the emergence of the Eastern Roman Empire, which would later be centered in Constantinople (now Istanbul), as the data for the beginning of the Middle Ages and the year 1492 (the discovery of the American continent by Columbus) as the final data. (Tjahjadi, 2004)

This period began with the birth of European philosophy. Just as Greek philosophy was influenced by belief, so medieval philosophy or thought was

influenced by Christian belief. This means that medieval philosophical thought was dominated by religion.

The medieval period had striking differences from previous centuries. This difference lies in the dominance of religion. The emergence of Christianity at the beginning of the century AD brought major changes to religious beliefs. The Middle Ages was a golden age for Christianity. (Mustansyir, 2009) This is where the problem arises, because Christianity teaches that God's revelation is the true truth. This is different from the ancient Greek view that the ability of reason can achieve truth. (Surajiyo, 2005)

Medieval philosophy can be divided into two periods, namely the *patristic era* and the *scholastic era*. In the *patristic era*, church figures who had a huge role in laying the intellectual foundations of Christianity devoted their attention to the development of theology. Augustine, a great poet and philosopher, opposed skepticism (a school that doubts the truth); according to him, God created the world, and its contents do not use materials. In contrast to the scholastic era, this era began in the 9th century. Their philosophy was called scholastic because philosophy was taught in schools, monasteries, and universities according to a standard and international curriculum. (MKD, 2011)

In the Middle Ages, the development of science achieved rapid progress due to the translation of classical Greek philosophical works into Latin, as well as the re-translation of the works of Greek philosophers by Arabs into Latin. The focus on developing knowledge through schools became the attention of King Charlemagne (Charles I) with the establishment of schools and the recruitment of teachers from Italy, England, and Ireland. The education system at school is divided into three levels. First is primary teaching (required for prospective religious officials and also open to the public). Second, seven liberal arts are taught, which are divided into two parts: a) grammar, rhetoric, and dialectics (trivium), and b) arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music (quadrivium). The third level is the teaching of sacred books. (Hakim, 2017b)

Modern Period (1600-1900 BC)

Philosophical thought began to develop around the beginning of the 6th century BC. Philosophical thinking means not just philosophy in the narrow sense but philosophical thinking in general until modern times. From a historical perspective, Western philosophy has four periodizations. This periodization is based on the dominant style of thought at that time. First, in the Ancient Greek era, a prominent characteristic of ancient Greek philosophy was that it focused primarily on observing cosmic and physical phenomena to find their origin (*arche*), which was the initial element in the occurrence of phenomena. (Bertens, 1998)

Philosophers at this time questioned the origin of the universe and the universe, so the characteristic of philosophical thought at this time was called *cosmocentric*. Second, in the Middle Ages, the characteristic of philosophical thinking in this era was called *theocentric*. Philosophers at this time used philosophical thought to strengthen Christian religious dogmas. As a result, the development of European thought in the Middle Ages was significantly hampered by the need to adapt it to religious teachings, so philosophical thought was too

uniform and even seen as if it were not essential for the history of philosophical thought. Third, in the Modern Age, the philosophers of this era made humans the center of philosophical analysis, so the style of philosophy of this era is commonly called *anthropocentric* after that came the *Renaissance period*, which separated science and religion.

The Father of Philosophy, Rene Descartes (1596-1650), emerged during the Renaissance. He pioneered the flow of Rationalism by prioritizing reason as a source of knowledge. Next emerged the flow of Empiricism with its pioneers Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and John Locke (1632-1704). This school considers experience to be a source of knowledge. (Bertens, 1976) Then emerged the school of Transcendental idealism with its figure, Immanuel Kant. This school considers knowledge to be a synthesis between what is a priori and a posteriori. Another philosophical school, Positivism, pioneered by Saint Simon and developed by Auguste Comte, also emerged. In this school, metaphysical truths are rejected.

Next, the flow of Positivism gave birth to a flow that relies on material or material things, known as Materialism. Hobbes (1588-1679) and Karl Marx (1820-1883) are among the figures. According to Hobbes, as quoted by S. Takdir Alisjahbana, everything that happens in this world is material movement. Even human responses, thoughts, and feelings are material movements. (Alisjahbana, 1981) In line with Hobbes' opinion, Karl Marx believed that "the reality that exists is the material world and humans have a tendency to act due to material factors." (Idi, 1997) Therefore, education aims to achieve success in the world. " *education was highly regarded as the means to world success.* " (Wong, n.d.) According to Uyoh Sadullah, the implication of this school in the world of education is that thought movements in the brain are the result of other events in the material world. (Sadullah, 2003a) The material around them influences all human actions. This concept is supported by the Behaviorism school in psychology with its theory of Conditioning theory. This theory explains that human behavior is a response to existing stimuli. (Muhaimin, 1996)

In subsequent developments, philosophical schools developed what we know as modern educational philosophy:

a. Progressivism

Progressivism recognizes and tries to develop the principles of Progressivism in a reality of life, so that humans can survive in the face of everything Life challenges. Named *instrumentalism* because this school thinks that human intelligence ability is a tool for life, prosperity, and development of human personality. Named *experimentalism* because This school realizes and practices the principle of experimentation to test the truth a theory. And it is called *environmentalism*, because this flow considers it The living environment influences personality development. (Syam, 1986a)

Progressivism is a school of educational philosophy that has been very influential in the 20th century. This influence was felt throughout the world, especially in the United States. This flow of Progressivism generally drives reform efforts in the field of education. Usually this flow of Progressivism is associated with the liberal view of life " *the liberal road to culture* " which is meant by this is a view of life that has the following characteristics: flexible (not rigid,

not resistant to change, not bound by a particular doctrine), curious (want to know, want to investigate), tolerant and open minded (having an open heart). The main characteristics that constitute the identity of Progressivism in the mission of educational philosophy are reflected in the following:

- 1) Education in a liberal culture
- 2) Become a pioneer in renewing old ideas towards new principles to welcome new cultures and times.
- 3) Transition to a new culture. (Hakim, 2017c)

This flow developed and was pioneered by William James (1842-1910). He believes theory is a tool for solving problems in human life experience. (James, 1958) James believed that the brain or mind, like any aspect of organic existence, must have a biological function and life-sustaining value. He emphasized that the function of the brain or mind should be studied as part of the main subjects of natural science. James seeks to free psychology from theological preconceptions and place it above behavioral science.

Meanwhile, another figure is John Dewey. His thinking regarding education is that schools are a small model of democratic society. In school, students learn and apply several skills for living in a democratic society. They experience various experiences to face the reality of the outside world. (Ellis, 1986b) If the implications are related to the curriculum, then the curriculum must be open, adapted to local needs, and centered on experience.

Progressivism's opinion regarding the ideal school is a school whose educational content is integrated with the surrounding environment. Schools are part of society, so schools must strive to preserve the characteristics or uniqueness of the surrounding school environment or the area where the school is located. In order to preserve this business, schools must present educational programs that can provide students with insight into the characteristics or specialties of that area. Therefore, Progressivism requires an education system with "school while doing" *learning by doing*.

b. Essentialism

Essentialism is a school of education based on cultural values that have existed since the beginning of human civilization. Essentialism emerged during the Renaissance with characteristics that were different from Progressivism. The basis of this school of education is more flexible and open to change, tolerant, and has no connection to certain doctrines. Essentialism views that education must be based on clear values and durable, which provides stability and superior value values clear. (Zuhairini, 1991)

Essentialism started as a movement in the world of education and is not tied to a particular philosophical school. Essentialism comes from the Latin word *essential* which means "the main or essential thing". This flow is a reaction to Progressivism which places too much emphasis on learning methods through problem solving and students' own activities to follow their interests and needs. (Hakim, 2017d)

This school was pioneered by William C. Bagley (1874-1946). In this school's view, knowledge is essential for each individual to live a productive life. (Hall, 2008) The main function of schools is to transfer culture and cultural heritage to

students and the next generation. (Ellis, 1986a) The implication is that in the learning process, paying attention to the psychology and skills students possess is necessary. Essentialism emphasizes educational efforts in re-examining curriculum materials, providing essential and non-essential distinctions in various school programs and reinforcing the authority of educators in a class at school. Essentialists believe that the implementation of education requires modification to perfection following the human condition which is dynamic and always developing, but considering that human development always has shortcomings, education must be developed based on solid and long-lasting values in order to provide clarity and stability in the direction of its development.

c. Perennialism

This flow opposes the flow of Progressivism about change and something new. (Sadullah, 2003b) Supporters of perennialism react and fight the failures and tragedies of modern civilization by regressing or retreating (back) to axiomatic beliefs that have stood the test, both in the theory of reality, the theory of science and the theory of value, all of which have provided fundamental basis in previous centuries. (Brameld, 1955)

Muhammad Noor believes that perennialism is *a regressive road culture*, meaning a return or retreat to the old culture due to the present cultural crisis. To provide a solution to the crisis we are facing, we must return to the past culture, which was considered ideal. (Syam, 1986b)

In contrast to essentialism which focuses more on the ideal era during the Renaissance, perennialism sees that ideal and established old values existed in ancient Greece and the Middle Ages. Ancient Greece was an era in which the philosophical tradition provided a solid foundation for world civilization through the thoughts of its figures, especially Plato and Aristotle. Meanwhile, the Middle Ages was a time when church hegemony was very strong in shaping European society's values and cultural structure. The figure who became the patron of medieval philosophy was Thomas Aquinas. (Fudyatanta, 2006a)

According to perennialism, Plato, Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas are figures whose thoughts and views still have meaning in the modern era. These three figures were able to lay an unchanging philosophical foundation. Even though there is a dynamic of philosophical thought (the emergence and fall of new thoughts), their thinking continues from generation to generation, from era to era. Therefore, their thinking is called perennial philosophy. (Ali, 1990)

The concept of Perennialist education originated in ancient Greece and the Middle Ages and has been redeveloped in the modern era by several contemporary figures, including Louis J. Mercier, Norman Foerster, and Robert M. Hutchins. Hutchins is even called the most significant figure of scholasticism or neo-Thomism. With a slightly different approach, there were also other Perennialist figures such as Mortimer J. Alder and Jacques Maritain. The following explains several concepts of Perennialism education; (Wahyudi, 2018)

Modern Perennialism, by developing the medieval concept of education, sees education not as a process of adapting to the environment but instilling the human ability to change the natural environment. So education aims to instill

high cultural values so that they become a tool for humans to change the natural surroundings to achieve their goals,

The ideal goal of education is to develop humans as human beings. According to Hutchins, humans' function as humans is the same throughout all times and societies because this is the result of their nature as humans. Perennialism believes that human essence (nature) is constant and fixed. The characteristic of humans is that they have rational abilities. Likewise, the goal of education is fixed, absolute and universal, namely developing rational humans.

d. Reconstructionism

Reconstructionism is often also called reconstruction. Socialism is a further development of the philosophical movement Progressivism. According to Arthur K. Ellis, followers of Reconstructionism generally believe that Progressivism has not gone far enough in seeking to improve society. (Assegaf, 2011a) Reconstructionism believes that Progressivism is only concerned with society's problems at that time, whereas in the era of rapid technological progress, it requires the reconstruction of society and a comprehensive new world arrangement.

The formation of a new society in the ideas of Reconstructionism is not limited to society with a narrow meaning but society in the context of the world's social order. The idealism of the new order of life is a democratic social order, social relations of equals, no domination of the strong over the weak. On the practical plane, the real implementation of democracy is expected to improve the quality of human life and culture in all areas of life, without distinction between race and nation. The ideal of Reconstructionism is that national sovereignty is protected by international sovereignty. (Fudyatanta, 2006b)

The idea of reconstructionist education can be traced to the thinking of John Dewey. In one of his explanations of Reconstructionist education, Dewey explained several characteristics of Reconstructionism. First, Reconstructionism talks about ends (consequences or results) and processes. This means that education is not synonymous with uncertainty about direction and goals and ignoring the process. Even though this experience has experienced development and change, it does not mean that education has lost direction and purpose.

Second, experiences and activities that develop and change are part of education. Therefore, the education provided must continually change and develop in line with the demands faced by education at that time. Third, the construction of this experience can occur both in individuals and society. So, as a consequence, education must pay attention to these two things. (Assegaf, 2011b)

Theoretically, the educational objectives of Reconstructionism can be formulated as follows; (Mudyahardjo, 2014)

- 1) Reconstructionist schools function as institutions for social, economic, and political change.
- 2) Reconstructionist schools aim to develop social "engineers," citizens who aim to change contemporary society's face radically.
- 3) Reconstructionist education aims to raise students' awareness of the social, economic, and political problems facing humanity on a global scale, teaching them the skills needed to overcome these problems.

Conclusion

The Ancient Greek period began with the emergence of logical theory by thinkers such as Pythagoras, Democritus, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, who issued ideas about philosophy and the reality of truth as preparation for thinking scientifically to produce science.

The medieval period was a dark age where humans no longer had the freedom to develop their potential, and thinkers no longer had the freedom to think due to the actions of church leaders who shackled this freedom. Christian beliefs influenced medieval philosophical thought, and this is the problem: Christianity teaches that God's revelation is the actual truth, while the ancient Greek view says that the ability of reason can achieve truth, so the dominance of religion at that time became an obstacle to freedom of thought.

In the modern period, he initiated new changes in philosophy. During the Renaissance, the father of philosophy, Rene Descartes, pioneered the flow of Rationalism by prioritizing reason as a source of knowledge, then John Locke, Immanuel Kant, and Auguste Comte with their respective thoughts on philosophy. From this freedom of philosophy, philosophical schools that talk about education developed what we know as modern educational philosophy: Progressivism, Essentialism, Perennialism, and Reconstructionism.

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