

Anatolian Practice with Islamic Political Theory -from *Ilm Tadbir al-Manzil* to *Baciyân-i Rûm**

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Abstract

The question of “what is philosophy” has many answers given in the long history of philosophy. But none of these answers has been able to describe it and set the framework for it. On the contrary, more questions have always been added in succession. In order to recognize the philosophy and to evaluate its place in the life, we’ll be faced with the question of where we can see and observe it beyond description. Where are the apparent practical provisions of the theory? We want to confine our work by only taking a look at one of those answers. We will try to discuss specific situation in Islamic Philosophy of *ilm tadbir al-manzil* which goes back to the ancient Greek Philosophy by following the traces of everyday practices of Anatolia. In Anatolian practice how important is this matter which has its own frame in Islamic political theory? Does the organization of *Baciyân-i Rûm* (Sisters of Anatolia) have similar and related practices that can be associated with these theoretical bases? What has been seen and appeared while Islamic political theory put its theoretical discourse into practice in Muslim Turks’ Anatolia?

Key Words

Theoria • Anatolian practice • Islamic philosophy • *Ilm tadbir al-manzil*

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Philosophy is the occupation of present. It's covered and busy with the present. The previous and the next can exist depending on present. It is human centered and this human is located in the present. The previous is meaningful in terms of human as being the evidence; the next is meaningful in terms of human as being the target.

The philosophy attempts to the act of looking down which occurs when the stack -that arised with the accumulated information composed by acquisition of the previous- inclines towards the next. This peak is convenient to see the universal one and expressing the complete scene is called "theory". [Theoria means: looking (around), watching, beholding, contemplating, preeing, observing, monitoring etc...] (Peters, 2004).

Philosophy belongs to this world and is appendant to everything related to the world. Philosophy does not exist before life and does not plan to survive after it. This position, however, does not prevent its decisiveness about life. In fact, this decisiving act is not a claim in the form of pontification. But, contains another, maybe a bigger claim in itself; to explain the origin of life, to show archetypes/first examples, to mark the first reason, the first provocative drive, to try explaining the principles of the basic sciences necessary to talk about life; the structure of existence from reality towards the truth.

The way of operating and transacting of philosophy draws itself into depths of life, as it brings it to observe, to look out, and to deeply embrace. Philosophy becomes invisible, or at least becomes uneasily observable.

The question of "what is philosophy?" is not allowed to be completed with one or more definitions by the state of invisibility or difficult observability (Mengüsoğlu, 1988; Cevizci, 2013). A necessity occurs to recognize it, more than a definition. As we don't investigate with the purpose to reveal the answer of "what else is needed?", mentioning only one of the probable list will serve to the purpose of this study. We can express this title as the theory-praxis (Soykan, 1995) context and correlation of philosophy (theoria-praxis in the context of classical philosophy debate) (Randall & Buchler, 1982).

Yet, when it is understood in fact, this theoretical elevation is to cast a look to the straightness of the life with its before and after; then the operating and processing form of philosophy will become clear.

We can say, the philosophy, which is understood not to be related with inside or outside of life but with core of life, will be a little bit visible, since it's involved with everything related to life.

Right this way, there appears a transition path to the main subject of this intellectual investigation. Yet Anatolia, saved a great deal of human experience in its vast historical topography; it owns an observation hill, that is to say a theoretical field that enables us to look at a total view. On the other hand, Anatolia has the chance to be a practical/ an experiential ground of our subject, in point of being the red apple that always embellish Turks' horizon and being holy motherland they settled in before and after Turks choose Islam.

From this point on, we hope it's possible to ask "is there a passage from the theory of Islamic politics to the Anatolian practice?" and around this question to try giving a small contribution for one of the answers with theory-practical context of the question of "What is philosophy?"

Ilm Tadbir al-Manzil

The issue that we express in the title and try to explain; has two important pillars. Ilm Tadbir al-Manzil, is a subject of Islamic ethics philosophy, more precisely, is one of three categories in which the philosophers, who

approach the issue of ethics in Islamic thought with philosophical view, separated. One of these categories is stated as Tadhīb al-Akhlaq in general. Individual ethics inturanccludes individual morality and its topics. The second category is stated as the Tadbir al-Manzil title.

The word of “tadbir” stems from d-b-r letters; and is used with the meanings of looking after and measuring. This word has been a term as management/administration in the works of ethics and politics in the tradition of Islamic thought. When that word has been compounded in an order with the word “manzil” (Tadbir al-Manzil), it has been used as one of the three main sections which corresponds to ethics in practical philosophy that located in Islamic political philosophy (Çağrıci, 2011).

Ilm Tadbir al-Manzil stands in a meaning floor, that’s today translated as household management, is actually more meaningful, we think. With the principals which are based on the word economy and which extend to the Ancient Greek dictionary, it builds up the second part of the practical ethics sections, so to speak, the middle floor.

On the last floor, another layer is created concerning to the state government, which can be described as Ilm Tadbir al-Medina, also related to city government, city administration.

In the history of Islamic philosophy, ethics has been regarded as a major interest area from the beginning, and this category has always existed in the ethics classifications of philosophers and Islamic philosophers; who consider ethics in point of philosophy (Fahri, 2004).

It is necessary to say that Ibn Sina and Ghazali mentioned the subject and to bring this matter’s commencement until Farabi with his works that own a strong character of political philosophy (Çağrıci, 2011). However, it would not be wrong to say that; the first Islamic philosopher who dealt with the category of the Ilm Tadbir al-Manzil all by in itself and who expressed independently this concept in political philosophy, is Nasir al-Din al-Tusi (Çağrıci, 2011; Gafarov, 2011). Because it will be seen that the philosopher mainly discussed the title which is included in the researches of Islamic philosophy from Ancient Greek, in his work known as Akhlaq-i Nasiri. After that, it’s seen that philosophers such as Adududdin al-Ici, Cemaleddin Aksarayi, Celaledin Devvani mentioned the subject in their works.

Kinalizade Ali Efendi’s Akhlaq-i ‘Alai also completely mentions these topics. This work also shows that subject maintains its important in Ottoman tradition. In terms of our study, this book is important with regards to being a sample work (together with Akhlaq-i Nasiri) and also deriving from Anatolian experience (Uysal, 2013a).

We can see, even with a few paragraphs, in his book named Fusul al-Madani (Farabi, 1987), Farabi has included descriptions and explanations that form the basis of the Ilm Tadbir al-Manzil.

The later philosophers dealt with the issue in some degree, as we have mentioned above. Tusi, however, is differ from them by dealing independently with the issue.

Tusi, who separates philosophy into two, speaks of theoretical and practical philosophy. After he has divided the practical philosophy into two, as mentioned above, he talks about the individual ethics (tadhīb al-akhlaq) and the collective one, in other words, social ethics. Here, Tusi again classifies, the first pillar -of the definition what

he separated into two parts- as household administration (tadbir al-menazil) and the second pillar as the state administration (siyaset al-mudun) (Tusi, 2007).

The second part of the book with five chapters is assigned to household administration and Tusi does not refer to place by the mean of “manzil/house”. It’s obvious that he implies a “family”, in other words individuals who are inseparable part of a home, called with names like women, men, mother, father, offspring, workers, servants. He deals with starting and maintaining the family; making it healthy, productive, and strengthening its structure (Tusi, 2007).

The work of Kinalizade Ali Efendi has followed Tusi's work as a basic plan. He is aware of ethical and political philosophy literature formed before him. He has also taken advantage of them.

In the second volume of the Akhlaq-i Alai, Kinalizade Ali has discussed Ilm Tadbir al-Manzil in five chapters. In these chapters, we see a content which is compatible with the general plan of that subject. The plan scheme and content reflect past accumulation (Çelebi, 2007).

However, here we especially want to address to Akhlaq-i Alai hence it’s perhaps the last authoritative example of this genre, as well as due to its effect and impression on the Ottoman-Turkish society (Uysal, 2013b).

These two works, which have discussed the subject of Ilm Tadbir al-Manzil of political philosophy comprehensively and fundamentally in comparison with other works of Islamic Philosophy, have basic topics to be summarised: *The reason you need homes; management of good, food, sustenance, supply of family maintenance; spouses’ subsistence, mutual responsibilities of spouses; livelihood with children, education of children, education of obedience to parents, prevention of rebellion, administration of servants and workers, livelihood with them and how to treat them* (Tusi, 2007; Çelebi, 2007; Çağrıçı, 2011; Maraş, 2013, Gafarov, 2011; Oktay, 1998).

Politics generally ranks under the headings of ethics. Philosophy focuses on the ontology, epistemology, and axiology, (existence, knowledge, value). Inside, it is divided into subtitles to constitute new titles. It goes like countless infinite numbers, according to the curiosity and great interest of human. In this distinction, the ethics is the one of the main titles. Ethics and aesthetics take place under axiology/value heading; and politics is under the ethics heading. Generally, the theory of politics is built on this. Although there are some opposite opinions that prioritize politics to ethics, the common view is formed in this way. Islamic political philosophy has also this view and perspective.

Here, the remarkable point is that there is a constituted category between the individual and state perception and relationship. As mentioned above, this category has existed in Ancient Greeks since Aristoteles, and also mentioned that is discussed in Islamic philosophy from beginning.

What constitutes our main subject is to examine the nature and existence of the relationship between a period in which the combination of household administration/ ilm tadbir al-manzil/ tedbirul-menazil is settled and clarified as a term in our philosophy culture and a practice in Anatolia in same/recent the periods. We aim to investigate “could we draw a small- perspective from this relationship between theory/doctrine-practice/action to the present?”

So, it is necessary to look at the subject of Baciyan-i Rum here.

Baciyan-i Rum

It is known that this combination appears within the quaternary classification such as Gaziyan-i Rum, Abdalan-i Rum, Ahiyan-i Rum, and Baciyan-i Rum in the history of Aşık Paşazade.¹ It's certain that there is a speculation (Köprülü, 2014) about this combination related to explaining, accepting and rejecting with different arguments among Fuad Köprülü and orientalist historians.²

Today, it should be noted that the opinion prevailed in these debate is the views of Fuad Köprülü, or rather Aşık Paşazade (Bayram, 1994; Hacıgökmen, 2011). Additionally, in the light of the new, increasing researches by the time, we see that more information is gathered about the structure of Baciyan-i Rum.³

Based on these subsequent data, we can say that Baciyan-i Rum is the name of an organizational initiative conducted by Turkmen womens in Anatolia as an education and a production activities, and it's one of the important elements of a social and moral conquest movement that arised from Khorasan with a destination to Anatolia.

When we look at their practices, occupations, fields of activities and what they do; it can be said that they educate, guide and guard women in some basic fields –enables us to establish correlations with household administration/tadbir al-menâzil, which are not actual but mental, not the premise-result, acceptable as the term and social dynamics- like craft teaching, providing women with occupation, professional engagement. It's understood that Bacılar (Sisters of Anatolia), who prepared women's power and ability at various points of life in a way to contribute to the community service, took part in military activities also, if necessary. However, it is possible to say, they were specifically busy with affairs that will bring the necessary qualities of household management which enables to transform a house to a nest for Anatolian women in order to meet social and spiritual needs. They also undertook a function of a religious-sufistic training. In addition, that's noted that in terms of both production and trade they carried out activities to train women on craft and similar subjects and they also actively worked in these fields (Turan, et al., 2018).

Conclusion and Suggestions

When we look through *Tadbir al-Manzil* and *Baciyan-i Rum* topics, it can be said that they exist in the same period/era from the thirteenth century onwards.

It is important to see this intersection is derived from the theoretical and practical applications that overlap with each other in a common geography, in the same time zone, rather than as the interaction of each other. Yet, it's possible to have an answer from here; from the intrinsic search for the question of “What does philosophy do?” which is seemed to be unanswered.

¹ “And there is four groups in the Rum referred to as guests. One of them is «Gasiyan-ı Rum», the other is «Ahiyan ı Rum», and the other is «Abdalan-i Rum», and the last one is «Baciyan-i Rum» (Barkan, 2006; Atsız, 1992).

² On one hand the debates on its historical reality go on, on the other hand, in 2006, *Sisters of Anatolia/Baciyan-ı Rum/Sisters Organization* was the subject of the movie “*Why was Hacivat-Karagöz killed?*”. They were transformed into an expression of fantastic imagination, showing that the director was more inspired by the *Amazon Women* narrative. In this movie, *The Sisters of Anatolia/Baciyan-i Rum* was popularized and also its reality was covered somehow (Akay, 2006).

³ We should specifically mention the exhibition that held on, in the publication stage of this study, November 19-24, 2018 in Fatih Mosque. In this activity, the portraits (picture-miniature-document) which depict the historical existence of the Baciyan-i Rum were exhibited (Turan, et al., 2018).

Thus, that question can be a reference point to see that philosophy is not just a thought disconnected from context of life, and can't be described as intellectualism, on the contrary it's an act of thinking that tries to explain life with every aspects by moving from life itself.

Philosophy is not just an *act of thinking*, it is an *act of deep thinking*. It's not disconnected from life but rather it's an act of thinking about life, with reference to the life, reflexive to the life, and on life.

The emergence and development stories of these two subjects (*Tadbir al-Manzil* and *Baciyan-i Rum*) seemed to be independent from each other, but in fact they are related to each other in terms of the period and the geographical plane on which they were born.

Neither *Tadbir al-Manzil* was asserted in order to do a purely intellectual activity by the philosophers nor *Baciyan-i Rum* is formed in vain.

From the point where we approach to the subject, it is possible to see how philosophy carried the practical necessities and benefits of life to an order and an expression. In this respect, it can help to explain how the practice become a principle, how it's transformed into a theory in philosophy.

When we return to the subject of *Baciyan-i Rum*, we can receive a sample related that how theory, in other words philosophy of state, can be practiced in the universe of *time-ground-needs*.

Again, when the answers of questions such as "*What is the cell or atom of the state's structure? What is the basic structure of the state? How should we evaluate the ontology of the state?*" are based on the practice of *Baciyan-i Rum* by following the category and title of *Ilm Tadbir al-Manzil*, we see that the answer is not the *individual*, but the *family*. In the debates of state's perpetuity and nation's welfare, between the individual and the state organization, this shows that the basic categorical structure is family, which we try to explain its importance but is ignored today.

The family, occupies a position of an indispensable transfer station for the individual to take part in the state organization and in order to be hold in the right position by the state.

In the ontological structure of the state, the family represents and constitutes the *atom of state*. The individual has a place within the family. How the basic parts of atomic and subatomic world; protons, neutrons, nuclei, neutrinos, quarks, electrons are connected with a fine architecture; women, men, mother, father, children etc. in other saying, the individuals form the nucleus of the state with a gracious architecture. In other words, the atom of the state is "family". The basic unit or foundation stone of state is not individual, but the family. The family is a cocoon in which the individual is prepared to be part of state and it is the basic unit of state.

In the conditions of human life, even the time and the space change, the basic needs remain the same and it's not difficult to come to conclusion that the position/importance of the family and the education of women have a deeper meaning than it's supposed to be.

By the means of education of women, we don't mean fundamental rights and freedoms or equal opportunities in education. Furthermore, the main point that we want to emphasize is that the woman, as the principal element of the family, that's atom of state, should be –specifically- trained to prepare herself for the struggle in life in a way that she can be strong and resistant with her biological, psychical and social aspects.

The face of philosophy, that seems to be as it does not exist at first glance (because even it's wrong, people keep insisting on asking 'what does philosophy do?'), at the last glance, it tends to greet us with a vital portrait. In this sense, the meeting of philosophy with life is not like meeting of an architectural plan and project with a construction or monument. Instead of saying something directly and searching for it in practice; it is necessary to observe philosophy in this theory-praxis operation, in the life's depth that influences, triggers, interacts each other.

Philosophy and life progress together: sometimes interbedded, intertwined, sometimes superimposed, sometimes separated, sometimes all snuggled up to but always connected and together. Elevations in life constitute theory, and roughnesses constitute practice. As long as this togetherness is maintained, a healthy result can be obtained.

From this point on, we may be able to discover the function of philosophy. As *Baciyan-i Rum* has an original position in the history of mankind, here we see, *Ilm Tadbir al-Manzil* has an original position in philosophy of Islamic ethics, Islamic political thought, and Islamic philosophy.

It can be said in a period which can be considered as early in the historical sense, with an organizational contribution by Turkmen women, the Turks, who have adopted Anatolia as a homeland, have been serving for the principle *the eternal state*. Today, the formula still maintains its validity as it is, for the state to have a permanent structure. Because the state demands for perpetuity. The whole calculation of state is about this. But in compulsory direction, life is always confronted with problems, forced to struggle and desire to receive answers.

The formula that we tried to illustrate through the structures of *Ilm Tadbir al-Manzil and Baciyan-i Rum*, *theoric (hypothesis) / praxis (action)*, keeps the same and valid; it is also needed to update. Because we think that reconsidering "family" institution with this perspective is an important issue in the Muslim Anatolian tradition to keep state's nucleus steady and healthy.

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