CITY as the RESOURCE of PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT

The relation between the concepts of philosophy and the city in the sense of the resource of philosophy is discussed and clarified. Why the philosophical manner of thinking which defined as "the causes of the creation or generation in the natural world should be searched in the frontier of natural world and the autonomous reason of man should be the only and adequate means" by Guthrie comes out form Ancient Greek instead of Ancient Egypt or other cultural realms? Agora which makes it possible to dispute in objectifying manner besides keeps also to think philosophically is an agent differs Ancient Greek form other similar cultures. One could talk in this sense about a parallelism between the philosophical manner of thinking and Ancient Greek's way of life, i.e. Agora.

Key words: *Philosophy, Ancient Greek, city, Agora*

Felsefenin Bir Kaynağı Olarak Şehir

ÖZET

Bu araştırmada, felsefece düşünümün olanağı anlamında şehir kavramı ya da olgusu ile felsefe kavramı arasındaki ilişki belirlenmeye ya da temellendirilmeye çalışılacaktır. Guthrie'nin "doğal dünyadaki oluşumların nedenleri doğal dünyanın sınırları içinde aranmalıdır ve özerk insan aklı bu araştırmada tek ve yeterli aracımız olmalıdır" biçiminde tanımladığı philo-sophia tavrı ya da geleneği niçin Antik Yunan

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kadar eski olan Mısır ya da başka uygarlıklarda/kültürlerde değil de Antik Yunan uygarlığında ortaya çıkmıştır? Felsefeyi mümkün kılan nesnel(l)eştirici tartışma ortamını sağlayan Agora'nın, Antik Yunan kültürünün diğer kültürlerden farkını ve/veya özgünlüğünü oluşturması bağlamında felsefî düşünme tarzının başlaması ile Antik Yunan polisinin (sitesinin/şehrinin) yaşamı arasında bir paralellikten söz edilebilir.

Anahtar sözcükler: *Felsefe, Antik Yunan, şehir, Agora*

INTRODUCTION

One of the main obscure problems of philosophy in terms or its own history is the discussion about why philosophy or the mode of philosophical thinking begins especially in Ancient Greek cultural-geography instead of some other similar geographic regions. The beginning or the roots of philosophy discussed around the term "Greek Miracle" in the literature has been an arguable points throughout the history of philosophy. There are some theses in this context on one hand argue that ancient Greek culture is the trigger of philosophical tradition there are some other arguments on the other side claiming that there is a long and significant preparatory period longs up to Sumerians (Arslan 2007: 54). There are another several disputations about the reason of why the history of philosophical thought induced or begins exactly with Thales. Philosophical mood of thought as a matter of course has not begun in a day's morning. What meant here is that philosophical way of thinking has not been formed from night to day but it grown gradually into its own form. In other terms, in many other cases of determining the beginning point as well, the issue is not to fix upon a specific date but is to start it form a conjectural period or atmosphere. Thereby the issue of when just initiated philosophical thinking manner, whether it is seen as "Greek miracle" or not or instituted in ancient Greek or from before that specific cultural period is always a problematical point. After all, the concession about the beginning of *philosophy* as a manner or the tradition of *philo-sophia* which is defined by Guthrie as "the generation of natural world should

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be look for within the natural world and the autonomic reason should be only and adequate mean" (Guthrie 2011: 44) with Ancient Greek is more agreed acceptance than its origins, roots or dating it a specific time. It is asserted in brief that the narrative or adventure of philosophy begins with the interest in and then theoretical or speculative quest about natural cases, formations and/or processes. It is claimed in this context for instance that in the formation period of Greek philosophy the philosophers' underlying interest focuses on being itself and therefore their responses for what the nature of being is the main point of philosophy and the subject of pre-Socratics found their subject matter in the 'outer-world' or in 'nature' (Erkızan 2002: 183-186).

In the same context, when one talk about the manner of *philo-sophia* and a tradition or history of philosophy a specific form of thought or of understanding then that means an attitude, tradition or history of a history that has begun and on-going up to our times as *Ancient Greek philosophy*. The attitude called as *philo-sophia* which "finds its own subject-matter or inquire matter in outer-world on in the nature" is principally an objectifying attitude. Objectifying requires on the other hand that the observer, i.e. the subject to remove the one that is objectified that means the being or the nature form himself or to go away as a subject from the being/object. Contemplation (or *theoria*) can only be possible or gain its own sense just by means of removing himself from the nature or being by the way the nature that is accepted as the being in itself i.e. with the technical term "phusis". Phusis in this sense is established for example by Anaximandros as cycle of seasons, genesis and disappearance of plant and creators and the cause of change of heaven objects' move (Kranz 1976: 24; Erkızan 2002: 192). In the similar manner, it could be put forward that the *phusis* is not chaotic but is cosmic and/or cosmetic structure; that is to say the outer world has a knowable (intelligible) and even has a quality as of beautiful (*cosmetic*) structure because of its intrinsic and imperative unity and tidiness on the basis of the same breaking off. The same manner of objectification

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leads to later "a peculiar attitude of man against to the world which characterizes West civilization which is defined by philosophical (and scientific) mood of thinking. It is an attitude which takes the outer world as an object of knowing and by doing so construct his individuality or produce himself as a "person". The peculiarity of that mood of thinking is being able to judge about the object construed by exerting the concept on to the object. There is the subject behind such a philosophical thinking which takes an initiation in the process of judging and establishes an intellectual distance between the object and himself" (Altuğ 1989: 104). The concept of *nomos* has got into the philosophical discourse just like coming on the scene of the concept of phusis, that is adapting the knowable tidiness of physical world into social and/or ethical world (Peters 2004: 244). In sum, splitting off the subject and the object from each other as the main constituents of thinking should be the first step or stipulation of philosophical mood or manner of thinking.

PHILOSOPHY-GEOGRAPHY

When we return to the point that how can be explicated the reason of why philosophy begins in the Greek cultural-geography instead of for example in ancient Egypt which is as archaic as Greek culture or civilization, some conditions like that Ancient Greek is neighbor to civilizations as Persian, Egypt, Mesopotamia, possibility of sea transportation, trading opportunities facilitated by sea transportation, social, political and cultural interactions yielded by trading are suggested or grounded the point on such agents. However it can be raised here well such a question: Were the other ancient cultures or civilizations not in some interactions or proceedings just like Ancient Greek was in? The other cultures or civilizations lack exactly the conditions that Ancient Greek has otherwise Ancient Greek culture has some other conditions that differ significantly it from others? Is for instance ancient Egypt not bound to sea? Is not read in the literature that the Nile River is one of the fountain of life besides opening out

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Mediterranean to which Greek geography open also out? Mesopotamia has never trading enterprises? Have they not any interaction with some other neighbor cultures or civilizations? It is a prevalent discourse that both Egypt and other cultures or civilizations are as ancient as Greek is. Is there any obstacle here to ask so that what is the proper reason of a significant transformation such as *philo-sophia*? Is it being any cultural accumulation or some other agents should be asked for?

PHILOSOPHY-*POLİS*

It is asserted as the other reason of the beginning of *philo-sophia* in the mentioned cultural geography that the *polis* or site and its particular characteristics life form which could be observed just in Ancient Greek and results in the transformation of the mood of thought. It is claimed that what has happened in Ancient Greek just as has happened because of the *polis* has essential social and political structure of which the philosophical mood of thinking requires in order to come or grow up. If so, then what kind of a social and/or political structure that could only be observed in Ancient Greek and so result in philosophical mood of thinking? The relevant social and/or political structure is according to Aristotle the separated structure as Athenian citizens which composed of whose parents are also citizens and can prosecute in courts on one side and the slaves, women, children and the ones come from out of Athens (Aristoteles 1975: 70). In this separation, the citizens could be involved into the government processes the others are lack of such a claim. It can be asserted here that Athens is a separated structure both social and political sense. Vernant's evaluation for instance as to this point is this: "The citizens of the site are "resembles" still the others although how different they may be as to their descents, social classes and their functions in the society. This similarity assures the uniformity of the *polis* because according as to Greeks only the similar ones constitute a community mutually and may gathered in a community. By this way the relation of one to the other one in the site takes reversible form and supplants the hierarchical form

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of relationship based obedience one to other or domination of one on the other (Vernant 2002: 57). Some questions may come into mind also here: What to Athens which is disintegrated both socially and politically owe this structure? As a Greek site or *polis* how Athens could accomplishes such stratification so that establishes lays for *philossophia*? Other cultures or civilizations out of Greek had not such cities or towns as those? Were they lack of such ruling and/or ruled ones? What is that is different in Ancient Greek *polis* or city so that if and only the "initial philosophers" of the history of philosophy appeared that cultural geography by what they told or did and become the "initial philosophers" by getting start the *philosophical* thinking?

Some claims are put forward in relation to this point as that the Ancient Greek citizens have leisure time and atmosphere in which they speculate which they wish. In other saying the status of citizenship assures them comfortable life. Hobbes Put forwards likewise such claim or evaluation many and many years later as like this: leisure time is mother of the philosophy; site (*Polis*) is as for peace and leisure time. As for him again the Athens, after enrichment in some degree, as a people in the lack of any pursuit neither in Athena nor out of Athena have not occupy themselves other than attending or telling about what happened around or speculating about *philosophy* addressing to the young people of the site and then gained a seat in some platforms as *Academia*, *Lyceum* or *Stoa*. The first philosophical speculations or struggles has therefore come into appearance in the regions massive and developing cities (Hobbes 2001: 460). The leisure time, the relative welfare life conditions and the guaranty all of these are prerequisite of philosophical mood of thinking or of speculation. Athens as described with such characteristics has a structure akin to the modern sense that is the modern industry and trade and the formal relationships and so social form of life identified by them.

Besides all of such conditions, agents and partial differences there is another exclusive characteristic of the *polis* differentiating

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Ancient Greek citizen from other ancient civilization: the fact that the *polis* is comprised of two different sectors in which the citizens carry out their social/and/or political duties. The Ancient Greek site i.e. the *polis* which makes possible and/or realize the mood of philosophical thinking is composed of two separate distinct or unit: the governance centre, i.e. *Acropolis* which is founded on the hill of the site region and protected with city wall or castle and the public sphere, that is *Agora*[i] in which the citizens performed their ordinary social or economic activities or duties like olympic games or trading or others. Well, what happens in such a separated into two living area as *Acropolis* and *Agora*? May it be defined as a particular form of life? How it can also be defined? So, such form of life initiate philosophical manner that peculiar just to Ancient Greek?

Vernant asserts as to the relation between living mood and philosophical manner that economical, social and/or political atmosphere of the Ancient Greek site or *polis* give rise to conceive alternatively. The social structure Vernant refers is a structure within which one who has right to talk, i.e. the citizen can express his or her opinion about site life or comment on actual social or political issues around *agora*. They may do so because *agora* is a platform through which the dwellers of Athens could become socialized. *Agora* is in other terms an arena the rival opinions encountered with each other. Through *agora* in Vernant words "the Athens people who are not responsible officially can write down their impressions derived from sky observations or draw their own chronological tables on some walls or on other available ground. Their intent is not to inform the others about their respective ideas or opinions. They do so to intent that their messages which can as well be a norm like a law may be adopted publicly or by governors in order to be handled. Their *sophia* declared to public by this way attain an objectivity or an actuality: it itself is a reality (Vernant 2002: 50). The private observations or the subjective opinions of the citizens turn into debate or confrontation of different

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observations, views or interpretations, i.e., *agonism* in *agora* and then belong to the whole site or *polis* or *agora* other than personal or subjective. The observations or opinions about heaven and/or earth become thus incorporated or objectified.

CONCLUSION: PHILOSOPHY-*AGORA*

The form of life or the peculiar social structure hence brings into the philosophical moon or manner of thinking that is philosophy roots in such a site structure whose practice come out its peculiarity instead of natural requisiteness. It can be asserted here hence that there is a parallelism between coming out of the philosophical mode of thinking and the form of life in Ancient Greek *polis*. We should note here that when we speak about the *polis*, the reference is the *agora* which consists of the along with *acropolis* instead of referring to combined structure of the site. Because the body throughout which the individual opinions or subjective evaluations are declared to public and so objectified is not *acropolis* but is *agora*. It can be argued at this point that the real agent that make different Ancient Greek cultural-geography or its site from say, Ancient Egypt or Mesopotamia and then made possible to philosophical mod of thinking is its *agora* throughout which an original way of socialization or form of life could be executed. If it can be argued at all, we can assert here that the Ancient Greek *polis* which consists of two bodies as *acropolis* which is the governance centre of it and *agora* which is social sector is the resource of philosophical mood of thinking or the philosophical manner which termed as "Greek mood of philosophia" by Arslan (Arslan 2002: 265). In other conceptualization by Deleuze and Guattari, it this "geo-philosophy" that makes possible to think philosophically (Deleuze and Guattari 2002: 80-87).

NOTE:

(1) Aristotle does not recognize the boys and elderly people as "constitutive citizens" even though accepts that they can be called as child or elder citizens.

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