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Conceptual History of Tadbir-e-Manzil in the period of Translation Movement and its Sociopolitical Implications

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Abstract:

The concept of Tadbir-e-Manzil (household management) is a concept in history of political thought in Islam. It refers to management of household and the way family members participate in carrying out and regulating the affairs of Manzil (household). With the aim of achieving a new understanding of Tadbir-e-Manzil and its formation and evolution in its semantic domain, this article's question is a question about the origin and the nature of its concept, its semantic evolution, and its sociopolitical implications within the framework of its conceptual history and in the period of translation movement. The period during which the process of translation causes an environment of cultural exchange that introduces a possibility of semantic comparison of concepts in relation to their sociopolitical realities. Studies show that Tadbir-e-Manzil in its conceptual origin and in its sociopolitical reality in ancient Greece as Oikonomia, has been a support to the concept of Greek citizenship, in relation to its ethics and economic production status. And then in the course of its semantic transition and change to the realm of the Islamic Iranian civilization, it has been selected and applied as Tadbir-e-Manzil by Moslem scholars in relation to Islamic sociopolitical realities as well as Islamic acting space of translation movement. In fact, the main issue is that Tadbir-e-Manzil, in an obvious difference with ancient Greek Oikonomia, has been used in accordance with Islamic political reality based on individual Islamic morality and political obedience. Tadbir-e-Manzil presents Islamic innate and sublime tendencies in achieving prosperity. It also gives continuity to the acting of political reality based on Divansalary as a system managing house and household.

Key words: Conceptual history, Tadbir-e-Manzil, Oikonomia, Translation Movement, Divansalary

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Introduction

Relating to the mind and the object as one of the important topics of thinking and acting and among the various research traditions that explain and interpret the relation and interaction between thoughts and realities, the focus of this article is to see the world as a whole in concern with relation between political thought and political reality. Accordingly, the article aims to explore a new understanding of Tadbir-e-Manzil (household management) and to find out how it was formed and evolved in its semantic field during translation movement while using Reinhart Koselleck's conceptual history as a theory and method.

Therefore, through such a phenomenological approach, the concept of Tadbir-e-Manzil and its ancient Greek equivalent Oikonomia are discussed in full relation to both their realities in Iranian Islamic traditional realm and ancient Greece. The aim is to achieve a new understanding of Tadbir-e-Manzil through excavation of its semantic layers in the context of its sociopolitical evolutions over time.

In the process of excavation of semantic layers contained in the concept of Tadbir-e-Manzil, Koselleck's conceptual history recognizes both aspects of continuity and discontinuity. This approach also expresses the importance and necessity of transparency and accuracy in examining sociopolitical events and their semantic evolutions throughout history and in the course of transferring from culture to culture at the level of texts and their lived experience.

Among the phenomenological implications of such an approach to semantic change and

evolution of concepts during the period of translation movement are the impacts of the themes, such as appropriateness to the realities of Islamic acting defined by the Shari'a teachings of Iranian Islamic translators and thinkers, family moral management, and hierarchical obedience-based management in the overall system of Iranian Divansalary.

The translation movement is a period during which Muslim thinkers translated and interpreted the works of thinkers of other nations, especially those of ancient Greece, while preserving their religious beliefs. It is a period during which cultural-exchange process provides a right platform for comparative semantic study of concepts, particularly in relation to their sociopolitical realities in ancient Greece and Iranian-Islamic traditional realm.

Many research studies have been conducted on key concepts of conceptual history, Oikonomia, Tadbir-e-Manzil, and translation movement. They have provided valuable findings that resulted in a constructive body of literature. They have been published in forms of books and articles, and studied in the course of writing this article. Considering its special point of view and its innovative aspect, this article goes beyond reading them individually, but examining them as an integrated body of knowledge that supports the initiative of exploring the main meaning of Tadbir-e-Manzil and Oikonomial as products of thought in relation to their sociopolitical realities, respectively.

This is why this article intends to review these key concepts in relation to one another as a whole concept, explaining and interpreting the

conceptual and semantic as well as lexical transition of Oikonomia to Tadbir-e-Manzil within the framework of Koselleck's conceptual history which will be followed by its sociopolitical implications and the final conclusion.

Conceptual history:

Conceptual history (Begriffsgeschichte), also known as the history of concepts, is a branch of historical and cultural studies that deals with the historical semantics of the concepts. It has been theorized and practiced by Reinhart Koselleck (1923–2006), the German historian and theorist of history whose concern was to uncover the logic and semantics of the concepts that have been used to describe historical events and processes. Conceptual history or “the history of concepts can be differentiated from affine phrases such as “figure of history, “idea of history”, “theory of history, “philosophy of history,” and so on” (Koselleck, 2002: xi)

In conceptual history every concept has a history; a history that can be traced in events. From this view, conceptual history as a theory has a temporal look to historical process and “it is not only a history of concepts in the narrow sense, but also a history of the relations of concepts to words and to objects.” (Palonen, 1997:49) That is how the history of the concept of Tadbir-e-Manzil could be the history of its relation to the objective reality of its time.

In fact, concepts and realities are in relation with each other. They “change at variable speed, so that on occasion it is the conceptuality that outpaces the reality, and sometimes the other way around.” (Muller, 2011:83) Concepts in conceptual history, as theoretical,

mental, and linguistic products, can be examined in overall relation with realities. Concepts, as the constituent and fundamental components of thoughts and beliefs are abstract ideas or general ideas that occur in the thought and speech. They play important role in all aspects of cognition.

On its path to examining the semantic layers of concepts, conceptual history begins from social history. To achieve semantic values of concepts, this approach looks at how they are applied in the context of time in socio-political situation to address their histories as changing study units. Concepts derive their meaning from their application in historical contexts. Therefore, in order to study and understand them, beyond their literal meaning, it is very important to know their historical contexts.

Theoretically, conceptual history has a historical and temporal view to concepts and their changes to discover and reflect their main meaning, in the semantic and ideological layers. And methodically, start from the semantic values of the concept and arrives at word and examines it according to the entanglement of the history and language. Conceptual history “has the convergence of concept and history as its themes. This convergence should not be understood as one of identity between language and history, but as a more dynamic relation characterized by constant interaction and change: “Semantic change and social change” (Olsen, 2009:169)”

The application of this theory and method in the study of concepts also provides the necessary grounds for the researcher to critically address the temporal layers of concepts and helps to increase his awareness of the history of concepts in order to more understand the

semantic evolution of concepts in historical speech and action events. Based on these theoretical and methodological capabilities of this approach, this article seeks the historicity and semantic evolution of the concept of Tadbir-e-Manzil in the socio-political objectivity of the translation movement.

Translation Movement:

Contextual factors and realities play a decisive role in explaining the relation between thinking and acting. This role is such that depending on the context and realities, knowledge and understanding of the objectivity of the phenomena and concepts around differ. In other words, the use of concepts and words and the interpretation of their meanings is the result of the effect of ideological and cognitive schemas based on the context and environmental conditions. "Context not only affects but directs construction of meaning. From a Cognitive Linguistics approach, I will claim that context is not some extra information we turn to when bare semantics is not enough. On the contrary, in real uses, context always comes first, that is, before the linguistic unit can be interpreted there is a big amount of information available to participants that will direct the process of meaning construction and determine which sense, from all the possible ones, must be selected." (Requejo, 2009:170).

Accordingly, in the process of using Koselleck's conceptual history to study the historicity and meaning of concept of Tadbir-e-Manzil, this article examines the socio-political objectivity of the period of translation movement, during the Abbasid rule (Between 185 AH and 428 AH), as a context for its formation and selection. A context during which, it is possible to study semantic evolutions of

concepts in relation to their sociopolitical realities, using Koselleck's conceptual history.

The Abbasid governments, especially those ruled during Mansour, Haron-al-Rasheed, and Mamun, provided a suitable platform for Muslim thinkers to discover new truths of science and knowledge from other nations in the process of translation. In fact "With the accession of Arab dynasty of the Abbasids to power and the foundation of Baghdad (762 AD), a Graeco-Arabic translation movement initiated that lasted for well over two centuries." (Gutes, 1998:1) The quality of the translation products was of high quality with the Abbasids where "the translation movement transferred from ad hoc activity into an organized and institutionalized movement." (Abdo Rababah, 2015:130) In the light of the exchange of views between the Islamic and Greek cosmologies in the field of thought and action, a remarkable body of science and knowledge formed up which was "the result of an encounter between two fundamentally different worldviews, the worldview of Greek philosophy and science and the Qur'anic worldview." (Falatouri, 2013:102)

As the direct result of such a step forward, translation became more organized and controlled by Bayt-ul-Hikmah which used to govern the process of selection of Arabic concepts and word equivalent to the ancient Greece's, reflecting the Islamic objectivity on the ground in the framework of the relation between thought and reality. Bayt-ul-Hikmah could make Moslems both get familiar with the ancient Greece civilization and introduce Islam to other nations.

It was in such a situation that Iranians could enter into the court of the Abbasid caliphs in

the form of Divansalary system and left profound effects on the quality of Islamic translators and thinkers' encounter with the knowledge and experience of ancient Greece. This led to empowerment of Divansalary governance under the Iranian Islamic way of thinking and acting.

Tadbir-e-Manzil and its conceptual transformation

The concept of Tadbir-e-Manzil, which has also been interpreted as Hekmat-al-manzil (wisdom of household), refers to household management "corresponds to Oikonomia in the Greek Practical Philosophy tradition" (Orman, 2013: 179) It is a place where family members participate in carrying out and regulating the affairs of Manzil (household). This concept, in its conceptual origin of ancient Greek Oikonomia, is a combination of oikos (house) and nomos (law). It represents the management of the production and distribution of family assets in the objectivity of ancient Greece where Oikonomia, as a combination of three components of abundance, economic rationality, and surplus, was "a sphere in which man, confronting abundant means, must acquire an ethical disposition of economic rationality enabling him to meet his needs and generate surplus to be spent outside the boundaries of the economic sphere, that is, in philosophy and politics." (Leshem, 2016:231)

In the Aristotelian classification, Oikonomia is placed under practical wisdom. This wisdom was created on the belief in the two-dimensionality of man in the realms of mind and object, as well as thought and action. In its classification, wisdom refers to morality when managing personal soul in the form of

individual and family and to politics when contemplating in family and community affairs. This concept does have special and vital role in the construction of the Greek polis in the field of subjectivity and objectivity of ancient Greece in general and in the field of thought and its relations in particular.

This is while there is nothing in Tadbir-e-Manzil about the production, distribution and consumption of assets. In fact, Tadbir-e-Manzil in the field of action of the Iranian and Islamic political society of that time was a field of activity in house management which was planned on the criterion of virtue and in accordance with Islamic religious and ideological ideas to guide people to sublimity which could provide the ground for their happiness.

There is no such thing as individuality in Tadbir-e-Manzil; therefore, the morality that preceded it is realized not in the personality of the individual but in family relations. And there is also no city-state to have appropriate policy for Tadbir-e-Manzil. As a result, the government is reduced to family relations. That is why the Iranian Divansalary has manifested itself in the family system and that they are the families who run Divansalary.

To know more about the sphere of thought and action in the realities of translation movement, this article introduces some of the Islamic thinkers whose approach to the concept of Tadbir-e-Manzil could provide a phenomenological opportunity of semantic comparison to explore the main meaning of its concept.

Abu Yusuf al-Kundi discusses Tadbir-e-Manzil through natural and construction (industrial) affairs. He does not consider manzil (household) as something separate from nature. According to him, a house cannot be

obtained without any kind of industry or job. For him, home is a building that has a natural aspect. According to Kundi, if there is to be a discussion about Tadbir-e-Manzil, it must be pursued in relation to understanding of "household". For him, a house (and possibly a manzil) is a construction that has a natural aspect as well. It is while in study of Oikonomia in Greece, we found that it does have nothing of nature. In other words, being industrial was not intended for it. Like Madineh (city), Manzil is mediator that man creates, not the other way around: it means that for Kundi city and house are human products and artifacts.

Moskowiye Razi, in *Tahzib -al- Akhlaq* (refinement of morality) brings the issues of Tadbir-e-Manzil to the house of morality and deals with them in the field of disciplinary and educational issues for young people and children from the perspective of morality. In the process of semantic transformation, Moskowiye takes Tadbir-e-Manzil to the level of politics and to internal affairs of family. In his thought, morality which is restored in Tadbir-e-Manzil and politics which tends to Tadbir-e-Manzil have deep relation. Moskowiye looks at educating young people and children in Manzil from moral perspective. That is why he believes that "the first thing deserves to be received in a child with insight and through which he argues for his intellect is Haya (modesty)." (Moskowiye, 1442 AD: 137)

Ishāq ibn H̄unayn is famous for his translation of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. It is the right reflection of his method and priorities in selection the Arabic equivalent words for those in Greek through his style of translation seeking to respond to the request of his Moslem readers. He was a distinguish member of the school of translation. He achieved a high

and reliable quality in linguistic reform in translation led to development of "a suitable scientific terminology in the Arabic language, as if this was not the only effort took place in this case" (Rosenthal, 1383: 12)

Farabi sees Tadbir-e-Manzil as part of prosperity and "in a special way, political. It is political because it requires the discipline of others' life and not just the individual lifestyle of a philosopher." (Galston, 2007: 169) Regarding the role of the house in influencing the mood of its owners, Farabi refers to different types of houses with different structures in order to ask the city authorities to take care of people's houses. In *Fosul-e-Montaze*, Farabi deals with the family under Tadbir-e-Manzil and as the first institution of society. In his view, "the house consists of members and relations by which the house is forms up and gets organized. The members work together for a common goal. The family needs a manager and a manager wants the members to get united to achieve a single goal." (Farabi, 2016: 27) Farabi sees the house in relation to the city and in such a relation, he refers to the components that "each creates a special action against the other. Then through their actions arises cooperation to promote the goal of the city or the integrity and expressiveness of the house system" (Farabi: 28)

Ibn Sina or Abu Ali Sina has a treatise on Tadbir-e-Manzil. It consists of five chapters covering the politics of the soul, the politics of income and expenditure of the house, the politics of the family, the politics of children and the politics of servants. About the science of Tadbir-e-Manzil, Ibn Sina writes "But the other science is the science of Tadbir-e-Manzil, so that the partnership among wife, husband, father, children, owner of houses and his

servants organized on a systematic discipline.” (Ibn Sina, 2004: 63)

Ibn Sina’s *Tadbir-e-Manzil* was written with the aim of providing a way for a person to achieve happiness in human society to shape his personality. It is “devoted to ethics and economics and regimen of the household which comprises the master of the family, his wife, children and servant.” (Ismail, 2012:24) Ibn Sina considers *Tadbir-e-Manzil* as a provider of a basis for acquiring moral virtues and moral refinement, which in turn leads to religious and otherworldly prosperity. The world and the hereafter begin and end not from society, but from house. For Ibn Sina, house is a place for children’s education to which priority goes to *akhlaq* (morality) and religious teaching. In *Siyasat al-Rajul Waladah* (On Man’s Management of His Children), he “says the first step must be on *akhlaq*, then comes the religious teaching, followed by the study of literature and poetry, mathematics (*al-nisab*), engineering (*al-handasah*) and medicine (*al-tibb*).” (Zakaria, 2012:246)

These views reveal the fact that in spite of a conceptual continuity in terms of a shred perspective among ancient Greek and Moslem thinkers toward *Manzil* an *Oikos* as a physical place where family members used to live, there is discontinuity when it comes to the management of the house in terms of how to put its affairs in order based on a certain law. This finding has several leading sociopolitical implications for studies to come in future while enjoying the past and presents. That is, to understand the sociopolitical concepts through calling the Koselleck’s simultaneity of the non-simultaneous in the history of concepts.

Sociopolitical Implications

Findings of such a conceptual history approach to the concept of *Tadbir-e-Manzil* in the period of the translation movement have several socio-political implications of which this article refers to provision of clarification on history of Iranian political thought. This clarification facilitates new understanding of concepts in the process of semantic construction and evolution of concepts, most when it comes to the time and place of transferring from one culture to another. Of other implications, this article could refer to the one that makes the researcher to find himself in society and the political world. According to household management, the modern researcher can and should get rid himself of family relationships in the social sphere. This is the only way through which a human society could be built and that is to get rid of the *Divansalary* system of household management.

With the conceptual history of Reinhart Koselleck, other concepts of the tradition of Islamic political thought such as *Tadbir al-Mutavahid* can also be explained semantically in its historical acting text. In fact, household management as the management of *Divansalary* family relations is versus something called management of *Monotheist* which as a metaphor refers to someone and those who have no place in the *Divansalary*. The semantic historical roots of this compound can be traced back to Cynicism in Greece. From this point of view, management of *Monotheist* and its related concepts (*Nawabat*, *Aghyar*, *Gharba* ', etc.) are other concepts that are related to household management from another angle, which of course could be the subject of an independent study.

Another sociopolitical implication is that the findings of such research can also be used in research centers of universities and institutes, academia, by researchers and authors interested in identifying evolutions of socio-political and historical concepts in order to gain conceptual and semantic understanding; Different from just vocabularies.

Conclusion:

The research problem of this article was to find the main meaning of the concept of tadbir-e-manzil (household management) in the process of its semantic transformation in relation to its socio-political realities of translation movement. In this regard, it was important to find a theory and method among research and teaching approaches that can study and understand the concept of tadbir-e-manzil in the relation between political thought and political actions while looking at the world in a unified way through which no social conflict could expand. Accordingly, this paper chose the conceptual history of Reinhart Koselleck in the form of theory and method to study the concept of tadbir-e-manzil in the sociopolitical realities of translation movement by exploring its history and analyzing its language. The study shows that by applying this theory and method of Koselleck, and by presupposing the entanglement of mind and object or thought and action, and by relying on the findings of philosophy of language and linguistics and phenomenological contributions, concepts can be studied correctly in relation to their realities, without being confined to history.

Considering that the concept of tadbir-e-manzil has emerged as a product of thought in the context of the conditions and situation of its

time in the form of action, its study could show that tadbir-e-manzil, as an equivalent to the concept of ancient Greek Oikonomia refers to a field of action in management of household and to its member participation based on the criterion of virtue and in accordance with Islamic ideological thoughts, while retaining some of its original semantic aspects. This is what the study collected from the review of the perspectives and views of Abu Yusuf al-Kindi, Ishaq ibn Hanin, Abu Nasr Farabi, al-Moskowiyyeh al-Razi, and Ibn Sina as Muslim thinkers of the translation movement period.

In fact, the Oikonomia of ancient Greece has its origin in the context and practice of the citizens of ancient Greece. While the tadbir-e-manzil is in proportion to the relation of thought and action of the Islamic world, in which production and the core of action are at the disposal of the politics of families and the Divansalary system. It also refers to Tahzib al-Akhlaq (moral refinement) which has special ideological religion meaning, application, and impact. In other words, tadbir-e-manzil in a shared trace, that is, conceptual nature between these two concepts is the reduction of Greek practical wisdom to the family relations of the Iranian Divansalary system. Such a shared trace is Oikos (house) in metaphorical language. While what make the difference is Nomos (law). Oikonomia speaks of rules in the Greek house. These rules are different from the rules in Muslim houses (Divansalary system).

Accordingly, it is to be concluded that other concepts of the tradition of Islamic political thought can also be explained in its historical action-based text in the light of conceptual history approach.

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