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Nasiriddin Tusi's Philosophical Views on War and Peace in "Akhlaqi Nasiri"

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ANNOTATION: In this article, the great philosopher and scientist Nasiriddin Tusi, who made a great contribution to the development of science in Iran, Azerbaijan and Central Asia in the 13th century, has studied the views of state management in his work "Akhlaqi Nasiri". The article also scientifically analyzes the thinker's philosophical views on foreign policy, war and peace, and mutual cooperation between states.

KEYWORD: state, politics, violence, friendship, justice, conflict, war, forum.

One of the great thinkers who played a special role in the science, social and political life of 13th century Iran and Azerbaijan is Nasiriddin Tusi. In his scientific heritage, he reflected the philosophical-ethical, socio-political views that are relevant even for today. Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Hassan Tusi was born on February 18, 1201. According to historical sources and literature, different information is given about the birthplace of the thinker. For example, Hamidullah Mustafi, the author of "Tarihi Guzida" (Selected History), wrote that Nasiriddin and his descendants first lived in the city of Sovva, and later moved to the city of Tus. Another historian of that time, Rashiddin, reports that the thinker was born in the city of Hamadan. The fact that the thinker himself mentions his thoughts on the origin as Muhammad ibn Hasan al-Tusi in all sources indicates that the truth is Tus. That is, the thinker himself notes that he lived in the city of Tus. Tusi's father, Muhammad ibn Hasan, was a jurist and an educated person with deep knowledge of hadith and tried to give his son a good education. As a result, despite being very young, the scholar not only knew the Quran by heart, but also deeply mastered the sciences of morphology and syntax. Nasiruddin Tusi, who was thirsty for knowledge, came to the city of Nishapur, which was the center of knowledge of the Muslim world at that time. Here, the thinker met with famous scientists and tried to learn from them. For example, he studied philosophy from Fariddin Domad Nishapuri, medicine from Qutbiddin Misri, and Mu'iniddin Salim ibn Badro studied legal sciences and became one of the most famous scientists of his time. But the philosopher could not live in Nishapur for long. As a result of the conquest of Nishapur by the Mongols, Tusi was forced to leave this city. He accepted the invitation of the ruler of the Ismailis, Muhtasham, and moved to Kohistan. During the period when the thinker lived in Kohistan, he wrote a number of famous works, including "Akhlaqi Nasiri", "Asos al-iqtibas" (Basics of Knowledge), "Akhlaqi Muhtashami", "Risolai muiniya" (Tractise of Muini), "Sharkhi risolai muiniya", "Rawzat at- Taslim" (Garden of Piety) and others [1].

The thinker's views on politics, law and the state, as well as his valuable moral theory, are expressed in his famous work "Akhlaqi-Nasiri". There is some interesting information about the writing of this work.

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| 131 | ISSN 2690-9626 (online), Published by "Global Research Network LLC" under Volume: 3 Issue: 8 in Aug-2022 https://grnjournals.us/index.php/AJSHR |
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Nasiruddin Muhtasham, the leader of the Ismailis of Kohistan, who was interested in ethics, logic and philosophy, invited thirty-year-old Tusi to his palace and asked the young scholar to translate the work of Ibn Miskawayh (“Tehzib-ul Akhlaq”) from Arabic to Persian. Tusi skillfully explained to the ruler that translating such a beautiful work into another language could change its original meaning, as well as the absence of two important themes in the work, family relations and city management, which were of great importance for the needs of that time. He decided to write a new and more perfect work. Ruler Nasiruddin Muhtasham accepted the offer of the great thinker. Tusi wrote the work “Akhlaqi Nasiri” using the ideas of many Eastern and Western scholars such as Plato, Aristotle, Ibn Sina, Farabi.

The thinker analyzed the philosophical ideas of each of these prepatetic philosophers and combined them in “Akhlaqi Nasiri”. “Akhlaqi-Nasiri” was revised by Tusi at least three times. This work was written for the first time in 1232-33 at the request of the ruler of Kohistan, the second time in 1254-55 after the defeat of the Ismailis and the rise of the Mongols, and the third time in 1272-73 according to the wishes of Abdulaziz Nishapuri. By revising this work, Tusi made a number of changes in accordance with the demands of his time. For example, when he served as an advisor to the khan in the court of the Mongol ruler Khulagu Khan, he replaced the beginning of the word “Ruler of Kohistan” with the name of the Mongol ruler in the work “Akhlaqi Nasiri” [2].

According to the great thinker, the main goal of politics, which is the art of state management, should first of all be aimed at the development of the people, and as a result, bringing them to happiness. He refers to this policy as “virtuous politics” or otherwise “imamat” [3].

The author dwells on politics and argues that there is also a “defective” or wrong kind of politics called “violent” politics. So, the purpose of this policy is to enslave the people, and the result is misery and blame. The first policy calls the people to justice, looks at the government as the most loyal friend, fills the country with works that benefit the people, and the ruler controls his “sexual” feelings. In this policy, people’s interest, peace, tranquility, mutual help, friendship, justice, loyalty, chastity, kindness and similar virtues prevail. The second policy is aimed at plundering the people, treats subordinates like slaves and servants, fills the country with evil deeds that harm the people, and becomes a prisoner of lust. The harm of this to the people is manifested in riots, suffering, fear, panic, rebellion, discord, oppression, envy, hypocrisy, betrayal, insults, gossip and so on. In both cases, the people look up to the rulers and try to behave like them. Because, says the philosopher, “the ruler is the father of society” [4].

According to the thinker, the problem in every country can be caused by two things:

- 1) when brutality escalates in the country;
- 2) when the country was ruined by arbitrary action.

A cruel king is dangerous, because tyrants are glorified here, so tyranny and despotism are dangerous, because low and wicked people are valued here. “The person responsible for governing the country must know one thing for sure that the foundations of the states are created on the basis of the common union of people who come together on the basis of mutual help and work, and thus are members of one body”. According to the great philosopher, representatives of the four classes, which constitute one of the main pillars of the state’s development, are mutually inseparable: intellectuals, soldiers, merchants, and those engaged in agriculture (farmers, herdsman). If one of these classes is preferred over the other three, then the balance of affairs in the society will be disturbed and various problems will arise”. According to the thinker, when these four classes “work together, in harmony, a system of culture, virtue and happiness will be formed and flourish in society”. Therefore, if the ruler of the state conducts politics for a long time only by uniting

these four castes on the basis of justice and appointing talented people to suitable positions, then such a state can survive for a long time. Expressing the whole essence of the state and statehood through the laws of justice, virtue and wisdom, the total income of the state should be distributed among the members of the society in such a way that no one is dissatisfied with it, the thinker said. Therefore, “the common revenue must be protected, efforts must be made to give each his share... ability and “his service” must be considered”. Because “maintenance of total income keeps the state, government and so on healthy”. It should be noted that “each person has a certain share in relation to the total income. Giving a share more or less than this will lead to oppression,” writes the scholar [4].

In his philosophical views on the state, Nasiriddin Tusi further developed the ideas of the ideal state of Farabi and Nizami Ganjavi, among the great scholars who passed before him. Tusi was also a utopian philosopher who dreamed of a society where people could live freely. In this free society, people are equal, have all the rights, in such a society there are no rich and poor, in this city everyone lives as they want and achieves their goals. The citizens of this city are equal, and they are superior to the public officials, because the public elects the officials... There is no need for a ruler at any time, in every era. If there is order among the population, it will be enough for them. But there is always a need for a wise ruler in the society. If this is not the case, order will be lost, human society will not be able to develop as it should [5].

It is known from the history of international relations that Nasiruddin Tusi was not only a famous scientist, mathematician, astronomer, but also a prominent state and political figure who attracted the attention of the Ismaili state established in Iran in the Middle Ages and the Khulaku Khan dynasty, which later ruled the Near and Middle East. Tusi, a great master of interstate and foreign policy, first worked as an advisor to the ruler in the Ismaili palace for twenty-two years and as a minister in the palace of Hulagu Khan for twenty years, and played an important role in the foreign policy and historical fate of those countries. The thinker had great influence in the court of both dynasties, and gained great respect and trust by closely influencing foreign policy. The Mongol Khan Khulagu Khan and other rulers tried to see the scholar in their presence and admire his talent.

The issues of foreign policy, war and peace were expressed not only in Tusi’s daily practical work as a statesman, but also in many scientific works. Among the scientific works created by the philosopher, in 1232-1233, when he was still working as the closest advisor to the ruler in the Ismaili court, the work “Akhlāqi Nasiri” written in his name on the instructions of the Ismaili ruler Muhtasham occupies an important place[6]. In this work, Tusi touched on the state, society, family, education and many other issues, including foreign policy, analyzed its various aspects from a philosophical point of view and tried to clarify this issue. For example, the practice of the world, such as destabilizing the peace of the state by inciting internal conflicts that the great powers still use today, and turning their population into slavery, was known even in the Middle Ages of that time.

According to Tusi, “Man is wise. He does not want war. No nation wants war. But the rulers will force them to this massacre” (Tusi “Akhlāqi Nasiri”, -p. 53). During the time when the thinker lived, the Islamic East was experiencing a severe political and military crisis. Mutual religious conflicts, struggles for political power, foreign invasions led to bloody wars. As a result, countries were weakened, territories were devastated, and Islamic states were unable to unite against attacks by non-Muslim states, leading to a weakening of their military power. The great thinker believes that if the heads of state are fair and benevolent in foreign policy, if they fulfill the terms of alliance, wars, conflicts and disagreements will not arise, and people will not destroy each other because of war. Tusi argues that the most powerful weapon against enemies is to anticipate what they will do. The philosopher condemns wars of aggression and admits that it is not always necessary to wage war to resolve interstate conflicts. Therefore, the thinker said, the head of the

state “should be extremely diligent and careful in bringing the enemies on the road and making a deal with them, but it should be done in such a way that there is no need to fight and kill” [4]. The great politician says that “interstate agreements should not weaken the vigilance of state leaders, that is, they should not create an opportunity for wars and bloodshed” [7].

Based on this, Tusi put forward the idea of convening international forums with the participation of state leaders to improve interstate relations and to discuss and solve various issues. According to the philosopher, the goal of one of the warring parties should not be anything other than justice and equality. When you are sure of victory, it is right to attack. If there is no hope of victory, then war should not be started. “War should be a last resort”. The thinker, having seen many wars and drawing conclusions from their bitter experience, advises that the ruler should not take part in the battle himself as much as possible, and entrust the command of the army to a brave, faithful, experienced general. One of the most important conditions of war is to know the secrets of the enemy side with the help of vigilance and spies. At the same time, he believed that it is necessary to be steady and restrained during military operations, and that it is wrong to be hasty, foolish, and self-loathing. The thinker considered it fair to give high awards, cloaks and gifts, honorary titles to those who showed courage during the war. The great humanist scientist states that it is advisable to gather people in reliable, strong, well-protected places, fortresses, in order to minimize the casualties of civilians during wars. According to the thinker, it is advisable to put an end to massacres and murders in the country after the victory, if there are any prisoners, they should not be executed. “Because he insists that it is more important to use, bail out, and forgive those who fall into the century than to execute them”.

According to Tusi, oppressing the citizens of the conquered country is a sign of the weakness of the ruler. It is possible to see the presence of humanitarian ideas in this opinion of the philosopher. Although the great thinker justified his just wars, he called the leaders of the states for peace. He tried to convey his point by quoting the famous command of the Holy Quran: “Come to peace, all of you together. Do not follow the path of the devil, for the devil is your open enemy... Fight those who fight with you in the way of Allah, but do not go beyond the limits. Allah does not love the wrongdoers” [8].

Therefore, as a scholar philosopher and politician, Tusi’s suggestions and strategic recommendations regarding military issues in mutual relations between states regarding foreign policy are valuable for that time and for today.

This policy can be seen in the foreign policy of the New Uzbekistan. In particular, one of the seventh priority tasks defined in the development strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-226 was the task of conducting a balanced, continuous dialogue on regional and global issues with partner countries and within the framework of international organizations, conducting bilateral and multilateral meetings with them, organizing consultations in political, economic and cultural spheres and at various levels, as well as bringing comprehensive cooperation with leading countries to a strategic level and signing partnership and cooperation agreements.

In order to implement such important tasks, on July 21-22, 2022, the fourth Consultative meeting of the leaders of the Central Asian countries was held in the city of Cholponota, Kyrgyzstan, in order to consistently solve the complex tasks of ensuring the security and stability of Central Asia, as well as socio-economic development. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, who took part in this meeting, emphasized that our peoples feel the most important positive changes as a result of the strategic cooperation between the Central Asian countries, and emphasized the following: “I agree with the assessments have been made here of the challenging situation in the world, which has directly affected our region.

There is a rapid transformation of the international order with unpredictable consequences. We are witnessing a growing lack of dialogue and trust at the global level.

As a result of the intensification of the crisis in the global economy, our countries are facing with the problems of breaking traditional supply chains, the import inflation is growing, and the food and energy security risks have multiplied.

Under these circumstances, the coordination and effectiveness of multilateral cooperation in the framework of the Consultative Meetings is even more required.

Let me emphasize that peace, stability and well-being of the entire region depend on our cohesion and readiness to take decisive measures to protect the common interests of Central Asia” [9].

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