



The Issue Of Nafs Discipline In The Ethical Philosophy Of Abdurahmon Sayyoh Toshkandiy

Suvonqulov Husan Toirovich

Department of Social Sciences of Gulistan State University, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the issue of nafs discipline in the ethical philosophy of Abdurahmon Sayyoh Toshkandiy, primarily on the basis of Me'yor ul-axloq and, comparatively, Tanvir ul-ahdoq fi makorim ul-axloq. The research analyzes the relationship between nafs, reason, moral character, human faculties, virtue, and self-education. Historical-philosophical, hermeneutic, and conceptual methods are employed. The findings show that Toshkandiy regards moral maturity as a gradual process in which uncontrolled desires are regulated through reason, knowledge, habituation, self-observation, and ethical education. The concepts of nafs al-ammara, nafs al-lawwama, and nafs al-mutma'inna reflect different conditions of moral consciousness and self-control. Discipline of the nafs is therefore interpreted not as the complete rejection of natural human needs but as their regulation according to moral measure. This conception forms an important foundation of Toshkandiy's understanding of human perfection.

KEYWORDS: Abdurahmon Sayyoh Toshkandiy, nafs, moral discipline, Me'yor ul-axloq, ethical philosophy, self-education, virtue, moral perfection, reason.

INTRODUCTION

The discipline of the nafs occupies an important position in Islamic ethical philosophy because human moral development is closely connected with the ability to regulate desires, emotions, intentions, and actions. Within this tradition, the nafs does not denote only a negative impulse; it also expresses a dimension of personality capable of transformation through knowledge, self-control, repentance, habituation, and spiritual education. Consequently, the problem of moral perfection concerns the direction in which human inclinations are developed.

Abdurahmon Sayyoh Toshkandiy develops this issue within the ethical and educational environment of early twentieth-century Turkestan. His Me'yor ul-axloq, published in Tashkent in 1912, systematically examines moral character, virtue, vice, human inner powers, and the possibility of correcting undesirable qualities. Studies of the work identify ruh, nafs, rational power, irascible power, and appetitive power among its key ethical categories.

Recent philosophical research on Toshkandiy's heritage specifically emphasizes the relationship between moral perfection and the states described as nafs al-ammara, nafs al-lawwama, and nafs al-mutma'inna, while also connecting moral maturity with wisdom, courage, and temperance. The purpose of this thesis is to clarify the philosophical meaning of nafs discipline and its function in Toshkandiy's model of moral self-perfection.

The primary methodological basis consists of historical-philosophical analysis, hermeneutic interpretation, and conceptual reconstruction. Toshkandiy's Me'yor ul-axloq is treated as the principal source, while Tanvir ul-ahdoq fi makorim ul-axloq is used to clarify the broader

structure of his ethical thinking. The latter source also addresses the concepts of spirit and nafs, intellectual, irascible, and appetitive powers, and the virtues associated with their proper regulation.

The hermeneutic approach is used to interpret nafs not merely as desire but as a dynamic category connected with moral consciousness. Conceptual analysis examines the interaction between desire, reason, habit, virtue, and moral responsibility.

The analysis shows that Toshkandiy's conception of nafs discipline is closely related to the idea of moral measure. Human beings possess natural appetites and emotional powers, but their existence is not itself morally reprehensible. Ethical problems arise when these powers exceed their proper limits or dominate rational and moral judgment. Therefore, moral education should regulate human inclinations rather than mechanically eliminate them.

This position becomes clearer through Toshkandiy's distinction between intellectual, irascible, and appetitive powers. Their balanced functioning produces virtues, whereas excess or deficiency generates moral defects. Research devoted to Me'yor ul-axloq confirms that Toshkandiy interprets ethics through the relationship between the inner nature of the individual, human powers, and the possibility of cultivating good character.

Within this ethical structure, nafs al-ammara expresses a state in which desire tends to govern conduct and draw the person toward morally harmful actions. Nafs al-lawwama represents the emergence of moral self-criticism: the individual becomes capable of evaluating personal behavior, experiencing remorse, and recognizing the need for correction. Nafs al-mutma'inna can be interpreted as a more mature condition of inner stability in which impulses have been brought under ethical regulation. The presence of these categories in research based on Toshkandiy's ethical heritage demonstrates that the nafs is understood dynamically, in relation to moral development rather than as an unchangeable essence.

The transition between these states requires self-knowledge. A person who cannot recognize greed, arrogance, excessive desire, selfishness, or anger within himself cannot consciously correct them. For Toshkandiy, therefore, ethical discipline begins internally but must manifest itself externally through behavior. Moral self-control acquires practical meaning when it produces honesty, moderation, patience, courage, justice, and responsible relations with other people.

Knowledge also performs a regulatory function. Rational development enables the individual to distinguish beneficial actions from harmful ones and to evaluate the consequences of desires before translating them into behavior. Toshkandiy's ethical philosophy consequently establishes a close relationship between aql and nafs: reason provides direction, while disciplined habituation transforms rational recognition into stable moral conduct.

The possibility of changing character is especially important. Toshkandiy does not treat negative dispositions as an irreversible fate. Studies based on Me'yor ul-axloq indicate that education and moral correction can restrain undesirable qualities and gradually establish better habits. In this sense, discipline of the nafs becomes a continuous educational process rather than a single act of self-restraint.

The philosophical significance of Toshkandiy's position lies in the fact that he connects internal self-discipline with the formation of socially valuable character. The regulation of the nafs is not confined to private spirituality. Uncontrolled desire may manifest socially as selfishness,

arrogance, greed, injustice, or irresponsibility. Conversely, self-regulation creates the psychological and ethical conditions for justice, generosity, patience, respect, and cooperation. This approach is also evident in *Tanvir ul-ahdoq fi makorim ul-axloq*, where Toshkandiy relates the inner moral constitution of the person to education, family relations, social conduct, and personal perfection. Modern analysis of the work highlights its connection between Islamic ethical principles, moral upbringing, social relations, and the formation of a mature personality. Thus, nafs discipline in Toshkandiy's thought should not be reduced to ascetic suppression. Its philosophical essence is moral governance of the self. Natural inclinations are subjected to measure, conscious evaluation, and responsibility. The ultimate purpose is an internally balanced personality capable of consciously choosing virtue.

Abdurahmon Sayyoh Toshkandiy interprets nafs discipline as one of the fundamental conditions of moral perfection. The movement from uncontrolled inclination toward self-criticism and inner stability reflects the gradual formation of ethical consciousness. Reason, knowledge, moral education, self-observation, and repeated virtuous conduct constitute the principal mechanisms of this transformation.

The philosophical value of Toshkandiy's conception lies in its understanding of the human personality as morally changeable. The individual is capable of recognizing harmful inclinations, restraining them, cultivating constructive habits, and transforming internal discipline into socially responsible behavior. Thus, the discipline of the nafs constitutes a link between self-knowledge, virtue, education, and human perfection in Toshkandiy's ethical philosophy.

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