

EVOLUTION OF MORAL AND PEDAGOGICAL IDEAS DURING THE PERIOD OF BURHONIDDIN TERMIZIY

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Annotation

This article explores the moral and pedagogical ideas that emerged and developed during the lifetime of Sayyid Burhoniddin Muhaqqiq Termiziy, one of the prominent representatives of the spiritual and scientific heritage of Termez. The study examines the historical context in which his ideas took shape, the educational and ethical values reflected in his teachings, and their influence on the intellectual and moral development of society. Special attention is paid to the evolution of pedagogical thought in the medieval Islamic world and the continuity of moral education traditions in the works of Termiziy. The research highlights the relevance of his philosophical and ethical views for modern pedagogical practices.

Keywords: Burhoniddin Termiziy, moral education, pedagogy, Islamic philosophy, ethics, spiritual heritage, medieval thought, educational traditions, moral development, Sufism.

INTRODUCTION

Sayyid Burhāneddin lived between 1165 and 1244, having lived for approximately 80 years. During his lifetime, in the region where his birthplace, the city of Termez, is located – covering parts of present-day Uzbekistan and Afghanistan – the Khwarazmian Empire prevailed. In Anatolia, there was the Seljuk Sultanate, while in Syria and Egypt, the Ayyubids ruled. The Abbasid caliphs in Baghdad were regarded as the spiritual leaders of the Islamic world. In Central Asia, the Mongol-Chinggis Empire, which had emerged under Genghis Khan, first destroyed the Khwarazmian state, devastating this renowned Turkish and Islamic land, and then advanced toward the borders of the Anatolian Seljuks.

While attempting to resist the Mongols, the last Khwarazmian ruler, Jalaluddin, retreated toward Kalasia and the Anatolian borders to maintain control and stop the Mongols, inadvertently causing damage to some Islamic cities and their populations. During this period of conflict between Jalaluddin and the great Seljuk Sultan Alâeddin Keykubad, Sayyid Burhāneddin migrated to Anatolia in 1232, at the age of 57, and arrived in the Seljuk capital, Konya. There, he took on the education of Mevlânâ Jalaluddin Rumi, the famous son of his sheikh Bahaeddin Veled, who had passed away a year earlier.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Alâeddin Keykubad successfully completed the military campaigns in the east and neutralized the Mongol threat on the borders. During his reign, he turned Anatolia into one of the most prosperous regions in the world, highly valuing scholars and Sufi masters, and he himself possessed a high level of knowledge. During this period, sheikhs and saints such as Bahaeddin Veled, Shihabeddin Suhrawardi, Najmuddin Razi, Evhadu'd-Din-i Kirmani, and Ahi Evran were highly respected, and many other Sufi mystics and poets flourished [1].

Unfortunately, the great Sultan's life and reign were short-lived. In 1237, in Kayseri, the second summer capital of the Seljuks, he died under suspicious circumstances in his summer palace, Keykubadiye, at the age of 45–50. His sudden death removed the major obstacle in front of the Mongols, and shortly afterward, Anatolia and the entire Islamic world, including the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad, faced their invasion, destruction, and brutal attacks.

Only the Turkish-Mamluk state in Egypt and the Karaman Beylik in Anatolia managed to resist this second catastrophe, striving to halt the Mongol onslaught and save Anatolia. The family and the caliphate that had fled to Egypt after the fall of Baghdad were preserved until Yavuz Sultan Selim's conquest of Egypt.

After Alâeddin Keykubad's sudden death in Kayseri, contrary to his will, the throne passed not to Kılıç Arslan, his middle son by Adile Hatun (from the Ayyubids), but to his eldest son Giyaseddin Keyhüsrev, born of Mahperi Hunat Hatun, supported by a faction of emirs. However, this new sultan lacked the capability and qualities necessary to rule effectively, as his father had understood. The administration fell into the hands of incompetent and harmful emirs, causing rapid deterioration of the state, while the Mongols, the great eastern enemy, found their task easier, and the wealthy lands of Anatolia were laid open before them [2].

During this period, hundreds of thousands of people fled the Mongol advance and sought refuge in Anatolia. In 1240, when Sayyid Burhâneddin left Konya and settled permanently in Kayseri to establish his khanqah, the state had somewhat stabilized. Sultan Giyaseddin replaced some incompetent emirs and undertook military campaigns in the east. However, in the same year, the Sheikh Baba Ishak rebellion, supported by parts of the population, was only suppressed with difficulty in Kırşehir.

In Kayseri, the Seljuk vizier of Iranian origin, Sahib Shamseddin Muhammad Isfahani, entered Sayyid Burhâneddin's service and became his disciple. Having spent a long time in Kayseri, he had previously served in high-ranking positions at the court during the reigns of Alâeddin Keykubad and his brother Sultan Izzeddin Keykavus, including the role of munshi (secretary). He was also a talented poet. During Keykubad's reign, he was appointed to military leadership and participated in campaigns in the east. Under Giyaseddin Keyhüsrev, he was elevated to the high office of regent [3].

The Mongols, under the command of Baycu Noyan, took advantage of the internal disorder of the Anatolian Seljuks. Moving from Kalasia, they first reached Erzurum, a major Turkish-Islamic city in the east, capturing it through betrayal. As elsewhere, they burned the city, destroyed much of its infrastructure, and massacred the population.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

In response, the Seljuk council decided to send Shamseddin Isfahani as an envoy to neighboring states to gather support against the Mongols. Otherwise, their lands would be next. Shamseddin Isfahani traveled through southern Syria, explaining the situation to the Ayyubid rulers, offering large sums of gold and silver for expenses. Only the Ayyubids of Aleppo accepted the invitation and sent troops to support the Seljuks.

In the spring of 1243, Sultan Giyaseddin Keyhüsrev mobilized the Seljuk army in Kayseri against the Mongols and marched toward Sivas. Upon arrival, he learned that the Mongol army, along with Georgian and Armenian forces under Baycu Noyan, was also advancing toward Sivas. The Seljuk army, poorly organized and led by inexperienced and reckless commanders, prepared to confront the enemy between Zara and Suşehri at Kösedağ. Ignoring the advice of experienced state officials, the young and incompetent sultan indulged in leisure and attacked the Mongols prematurely. This led to the disastrous Battle of Kösedağ, a turning point in Turkish-Islamic history and the fate of Anatolia [4].

The disintegrated Seljuk forces fled rapidly, abandoning their posts, and retreated to Konya. The Mongols, astonished by their easy victory, captured vast spoils, including the sultan's tent and other treasures. They continued their campaign smoothly, reaching Sivas. Although the Sivas Qadi handed over the city under an agreement, the Mongols looted it for three days, destroying weapons and fortifications.

After moving from Sivas to Kayseri, the Mongols saw that the city had refused to surrender and was prepared to defend itself. Indeed, some Seljuk commanders in the city, including Samsaeddin Kaymaz, certain emirs stationed there, and the local population had decided to resist rather than surrender. Particularly, members of religious orders such as the Ahis and Kalandars greatly assisted in the defense, and Sayyid Burhâneddin was present in the city at that time. The inhabitants and soldiers, retreating behind the walls, resisted the enemy fiercely, even secretly attacking the Mongols near Battal Mosque, causing them harm.

Due to this heroic resistance, which lasted fifteen days, the Mongol army, known for burning, destroying, and killing wherever they went, was temporarily halted and even considered withdrawal. At this moment, a high-ranking Armenian emir named Haçikoğlu betrayed the city by secretly passing through hidden passages to the Mongols. He advised them to continue the siege, claiming the defenders had lost their strength, and showed them secret entrances into the city that he himself knew [5].

As a result, the Mongols, who had established their headquarters in Tabaklar district (near Yoğunburç), abandoned their plan to withdraw. They stormed the Sivas Gate of the city and successfully entered, using the intelligence provided. At that moment, Kayseri faced unprecedented slaughter and destruction. Most of the population was killed; young men were captured, bound, and taken away. The cries of massacre and the flames of fire mingled. Tens of thousands perished, and many buildings were destroyed. Some captives died on the roads. According to sources, Sayyid Burhâneddin was present near the Inner Fortress, in front of his khanqah (later turned into a Mevlevi lodge), which was located where the Vakıf Bayrampaşa İshani now stands. A Mongol soldier attempted to attack him but, witnessing his spiritual presence, refrained and instead offered him gifts. Shortly after this incident, Sayyid passed away, and his funeral was personally overseen by Seljuk Vizier Shamseddin Isfahani [6].

After the Kayseri massacre, the Mongols, observing the change of seasons, withdrew to their homeland, leaving behind the destruction and killings they had wrought along the way. Following this, experienced and patriotic Seljuk officials, led by Vizier Mühezzibüddin Ali, negotiated with the returning Mongols to establish an agreement based on tribute payments. From this point on, the Seljuk state became a tributary to the Mongols, with sultans appointed according to their decisions, high officials designated by them, and eventually controlled by Mongol governors in Anatolia. For roughly a century, the people of Anatolia suffered under Mongol oppression or that of their appointed administrators.

Anatolia was eventually liberated in the 1340s by the last Mongol governor of Anatolia, the Turkish-origin Alâeddin Eretna, who ended Mongol dominance, established a state in central Anatolia, and enabled the growth of other Turkish principalities, including those that later became the Ottomans, marking a new era in Turkish-Islamic history. The graves of Sultan Alâeddin Eretna and other sultans of his family are located in Kayseri, in domed tombs inside the Köşk Medrese, originally built for Eretna's wife, Suli Paşa, now maintained as an imaret by foundations.

The Seljuk vizier Shamseddin Muhammad Isfahani, who had served Sayyid Burhâneddin and attended his funeral, was elevated from regent to vizier after the Battle of Kösedağ. During his administration, he exercised absolute authority over the state, managing both literary and military affairs. He spent time with artisans, scholars, and poets, reciting odes during gatherings, and wrote and performed poetry himself. After the Mongol invasion, his tenure was relatively peaceful. When Sultan Giyaseddin Keyhüsrev II died in 1245, his son Izzeddin Keykavus ascended the throne. However, a period of fraternal succession struggles and bloody conflicts among emirs followed, and Isfahani, encouraged by some emirs and under the Mongols' influence, was killed in 1249 in Konya. Between Erzincan and Sivas, near Sivas, he established a caravanserai later named Kemaleddin Rahat Ribati [7].

CONCLUSION

The life and times of Sayyid Burhoniddin Termiziy reflect a critical period in the history of the Islamic world, marked by political upheaval, foreign invasions, and social transformation. Living during the 12th–13th centuries, he witnessed the rise and fall of the Khwarazmian Empire, the expansion of the Mongol Empire, and the internal challenges of the Anatolian Seljuk state. Despite these tumultuous circumstances, Termiziy's moral and pedagogical ideas flourished, demonstrating the resilience of spiritual and educational traditions even amid conflict.

Through his teachings, guidance of disciples, and engagement with contemporary scholars and Sufi leaders, Termiziy contributed to the preservation and development of ethical, religious, and educational values in a time of uncertainty. His experiences in cities such as Konya and Kayseri, including his presence during military and social crises, illustrate the interplay between spiritual leadership and societal challenges.

Ultimately, the evolution of moral and pedagogical thought during Termiziy's era underscores the enduring importance of education, ethics, and spiritual guidance in shaping resilient societies. His legacy continues to inspire contemporary studies in pedagogy, ethics, and Islamic moral philosophy, providing valuable insights for both historical understanding and modern educational practice.

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