

Alaaddin Yanardağ and İlyas Altuner, *Social Philosophy Writings: Family and Society [Sosyal Felsefe Yazıları: Aile ve Toplum]* (İstanbul: Kitap Dünyası, 2023), 124 pp.

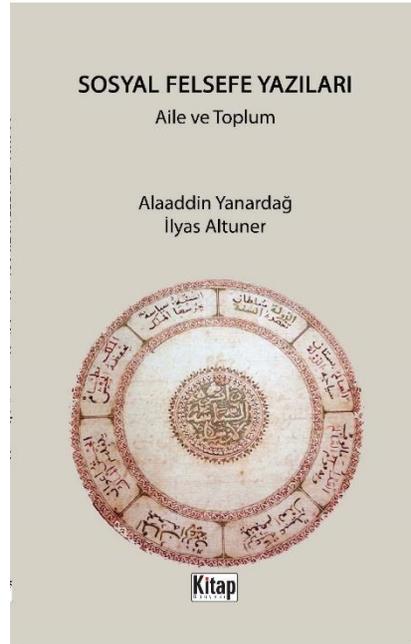
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Book Review

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Social philosophy or philosophy of society is the most general name for the discipline of philosophy that seeks to analyze the social behavior of human beings and the social contexts or frameworks for political, legal, moral and cultural problems on a philosophical level. At this point, a philosophical framework ranging from social ontology to epistemology, from theories of democracy to debates on law and human rights, and from global justice to gender issues constitute the topics of interest of social philosophy. Therefore, every philosopher who works and produces on the axis of these interests can be considered as a component of social philosophy at some stage.

Social philosophy intersects with other fundamental areas of philosophy at many points. For example, while the question “What is the nature of social institutions?” brings social philosophy closer to an ontological interest, we enter the



field of social epistemology when we ask the question “What effect do different types of social groups have on epistemic outcomes?” or when we begin to question the dynamics of the social production of knowledge. Among these intersectional clusters are a group of questions with ethical and political implications, such as why one type of society should be preferred over another, what goals a social and political organization should pursue, how social and political institutions can be evaluated in terms of criteria and methods, why a government should be obeyed and, if not, when it should not be obeyed. Although they may seem different, these questions evoke two particular philosophical positions, one evaluative and the other analytical. The former seeks to make judgments about society and social institutions concerning norms and values; the latter analyzes and evaluates the arguments presented in support of particular institutions and practices. Social philosophy represents the effort of philosophers to investigate and provide answers to solve such problems. From this perspective, social philosophy is a philosophical critique of the social process concerning the principles underlying social structures and functions.

As a philosophical critique of the principles underlying social processes, social philosophy seeks to analyze or establish the arguments that justify social and political institutions either as they are or as they are conceived. If a philosopher's emphasis is primarily on evaluation, social philosophy can become a branch of value theory that investigates the nature and meaning of our experience of value. It might even be argued that social philosophy consists in its application to the normative questions posed by the social order. On the other hand, if the philosopher's interest is in methods of inquiry and the analysis of concepts, social philosophy will seek to be neutral towards values and will be more oriented towards the clarification of terms and arguments and possibly factual determinations. Philosophers who operate at a more speculative level may try to combine these two interests in their approach. In any case, these approaches are similar in that they seek

to critically examine the justificatory arguments of social institutions.

Social philosophy contributes to meaningful social change. It is possible to see the social philosophy in fields such as gender studies, the study of racial discrimination and research on the rights of persons with disabilities. Social philosophy is also related to the familiar fields of metaphysics, epistemology and philosophy of values. When we think about race, gender or disability, we want to know what it is, whether it really exists, how it relates to underlying biological reality, and whether discrimination is a component of it or a consequence of its continued existence.

While these are abstract contextual questions, social philosophy does not ask them casually. We ask them in order to better understand and improve our common social life. This means that the answers to these questions are important. It means that we should try to arrive at the right answers. And just as importantly, we need to communicate our answers clearly and effectively to those who are in the best position to create change.

Each of the articles discussed in this work has been published by their authors in various publications. The institution of the family, one of the most important aspects of social philosophy, and its social effects are addressed both philosophically and sociologically. This work is only a part of a series. The work, which deals with the philosophy of family and society, tries to show us various approaches. The authors address a wide range of issues from the conceptual structure of the family to the social rights of women and the role of the individual in family and social life. The work not only looks at events from a social perspective but also examines issues from a religious point of view, an element at the heart of sociology.

The following titles are examined in the work: Redefining the Concept of Family, Sociological Dimension of Family Education, Female Sexism and the Status of Turkish Women in terms of Islamic Law, The Image of Woman in the Islamic Philosophical Tra-

dition, Sociological Possibility of the Individual in terms of Religious Sciences, Sociology of Customs and Traditions, and Social Progress or Regression from Mythos to Logos.

Here we need to emphasize the importance of the family. While talking about the value given to women as the pillar of the family in the Islamic world, some observations made in the work are interesting. I would like to share a few of them. If we talk about the importance that Islam attaches to women, we can talk about the fact that women have been relegated to a secondary role in Islamic society and culture, contrary to the Qur'anic injunctions, since the Qur'an states that women and men are equal creatures deriving from the same soul and complementing each other. If we say, like Ibn Rushd, that women themselves wanted this subordination, it would be appropriate to say that by submitting to it and distancing themselves from social affairs and turning to domestic work, women isolated themselves completely from society and caused the impoverishment of societies by losing their talents and were represented only as a burden in the family. The education of women should be compulsory like that of men, and they should be wise. Because when women have no say in the family, the upbringing of children will still be patriarchal, which is an effective reason for the weakness of girls in particular. For this reason, the right of women to have a say in the family, which was recommended by Islam at the time, needs to be further expanded and extended, and a balanced law needs to be established.