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A Reflection on Our Relationship with Western Modern Philosophy and Thought: Beyond Clarity and Obviousness

Ali Aghaeepour[1]

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Abstract

The main issue of the present paper is: What exactly is the relationship between our Iranian culture and thought and Western philosophy and thought? Most discussions raised in Iran regarding tradition and modernity have considered this relationship to be self-evident and obvious. However, contrary to appearances, it seems this relationship is not so obvious and clear. The mere fact that we study books and sources of Western philosophy, or write texts and articles about it in the form of various research projects, does not mean that we, who have been situated and grown within a different historical and intellectual framework, have a relationship with the intellectual tradition of the West. It must be acknowledged that the historical and intellectual course of modern

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Western thought, considering its roots and origins, has its own requirements and characteristics that do not necessarily align with the historical and intellectual framework in Iran. Therefore, the absolute extension of its precepts and concepts to this framework does not seem entirely acceptable. This very issue must be subjected to a serious question; that is, we must understand what the aforementioned relationship actually is and what characteristics it can possess. Hence, this seemingly clear relationship must itself become a subject for serious reflection and scrutiny. Finally, this paper proposes that instead of taking our relationship with modern Western thought for granted, we must begin an effort to discover the various dimensions of the internal logic of Iranian thought and reflection.

Keywords

Iranian Thought, Modernity, West-Centricity, Christianity, Tradition, Modern Rationality

Introduction

Western philosophy and thought (especially modern philosophical thought, which is emphasized here) originate from a distinct historical, cultural, and civilizational context that is not necessarily related to our own history, culture, or thought. According to the great German philosopher Leo Strauss, Western civilization and thought have two essential pillars: Judaism-Christianity and Hellenism (Strauss, 2018, p. 321).

These two pillars have had little influence on our history and culture, or at least not in a way that profoundly affected the historical and intellectual trajectory of Iran. This means that, from a historical perspective and considering the surviving works of various thinkers, Iranian thought and reflection, at their foundation, were not near the core influence of these components. This is despite all the cultural communication and contact that has flowed between Eastern and Western civilizations throughout history, which is not negligible.

Naturally, the intention is not to draw a decisive border between our history and thought and that of the West, as such an act is neither wise nor even possible. The aim is to state that the cultural and intellectual foundations of Western civilization, which are also the source of modern Western philosophy, despite their possible influence on the entire history of the world, did not become part of our lived historical experience and were simply not in the realm of this historical experience.

It can be argued that the historical reserves we have deeply held at the core of our experiences and accumulations, and which have shaped our historical and cultural lived experience, are Iranian identity and Islamic identity. It is true that, historically, some works of Greek philosophy were translated into Arabic at the beginning of Islamic civilization and found their way into our culture. Still, they never

became internalized within the fabric of this civilization and culture. Considering the elaborations added to Greek philosophy in Islamic philosophy by predominantly Iranian philosophers, and the fundamental concepts introduced to it, thought and philosophy in Iran advanced on a different path until the contemporary era.

It must be noted that the meaning of "we" here is the Iranian "we" of this time and place, supported by a specific tradition. A "we" that has lived in a distinct historical and intellectual sphere that is neither similar nor identical to the historical and intellectual sphere of the West. Philosophically, it can be said that the issues raised by great Western philosophers in the modern era are not necessarily our issues, because they have reflected and spoken strictly within the framework of their own specific intellectual tradition, which dictates problems unique to itself.

Another point for reflection is that it seems we are unable to properly connect with our own tradition and its heritage. This is not a personal matter or something related to individual interests, but a complex philosophical-civilizational problem (if such a term can be used). It is as if we face large, yet intangible and unconscious, obstacles when confronting the sources and intellectual heritage of Iran. It is as if our communicative bridge with our own tradition has been severed. This issue entails a double burden for us, as here the act of confrontation itself has become an issue, not merely *how* to confront it. To reach an understanding of Iran, we must engage with its intellectual sources and writings, but now it seems this first step won't be easily taken.

A concrete and perhaps trivial example in this regard is that we, the people of the humanities, endure the pain of learning German, French, or Greek so that we can access the original texts of European

philosophers—texts that were not necessarily written for us or focused on Iranian issues (though it should be noted that the effort itself is highly instrumental and important for understanding the modern Western world). However, this seemingly ordinary occurrence becomes questionable when we realize that, in contrast, we haven't reached a level of proficiency in Arabic or even Persian that allows us to study our own sources directly and effortlessly. These sources stem from both wellsprings of our thought, such as the Quran, Nahj al-Balagha, Avesta, Tarikh-i Bayhaqi, Shahnameh, Diwan of Hafez, and the texts of Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Mulla Sadra, among others. It must be emphasized again that this is not merely a personal issue but indicates a deeper predicament.

The history of Iranian reflections on the encounter with the West perhaps reaches back about three or four centuries, when our civilization was once again directly confronted with the West, specifically during the Age of Enlightenment and following the emergence of modernity. Most of the sources resulting from those initial reflections have, of course, gained historical value today. However, in recent decades, discussions on this important topic have been presented in various sources, and Iranian experts have attempted to understand Iranian civilization in relation to the West.

Most of the research in this field is thematically often categorized in the realms of history and politics, rather than presenting distinctly philosophical analyses. They have examined the relationship between Iran and Western civilization based on specific historical periods. Among the most important of these works are: the late Dr. Davoud Feirahi's book *The Concept of Law in Contemporary Iran* (Nashr-e Ney), Dr. Farzin Vahdat's *Farsi: Intellectual Encounter of Iran with Modernity* (Nashr-e Qoqnoos), Dr. Abbas Milani's *Modernity and Anti-Modernity in Iran* (Nashr-e Akhtaran); or Dr. Seyed Javad

Miri's article titled "Our Relationship with the West and its Impact on the Social Existence of Iran", which is mainly a re-reading of the views of Dr. Davari Ardakani on the West.

Among these, Dr. Hossein Mesbahian's book, *Modernity and Its Other*, which is also a source for this article, has attempted to examine the philosophical aspects of this issue, especially with regard to the views of Western thinkers and a critique of exclusive and monopolistic modernity. However, alongside all this notable and valuable research, the books of the late Dr. Seyed Javad Tabatabai perhaps have the closest proximity to the main idea of this article, as he aims to conceptualize the issue of Iran and turn the confrontation with the West into a fundamental subject through philosophical analysis based on historical and political data.

The present paper, borrowing from some of these sources, takes a step toward understanding the principle of the issue of relationship and connection. That is, it attempts to emphasize the very initial stage, rather than organizing its analyses *a posteriori* by assuming our relationship with Western culture and thought. In this context, the potential contribution of this writing can be that we intend to establish ourselves at the first step and question the relationship and connection with the West itself. This very action will guide us toward discovering the structure and internal logic of thought in Iran. Our aim and endeavor has been to add these points to the existing discussions to pave the way, as far as possible, for subsequent research.

1. On the Roots and Origins of Western Modernity

It must first be said that although parts of the doctrines of modern Western philosophy have universal aspects, their roots and origins are not. Carl Schmitt, one of the most important political philosophers of the twentieth century—a key figure alongside Karl Löwith and Hans

Blumenberg in the dispute over the legitimacy of the modern age—states in the first volume of his book, *Political Theology*, in a sentence that has practically become proverbial: "All significant [and pregnant] concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts [i.e., of Christian theology]" (Schmitt, 2014, p. 77). He emphasizes that this transition process did not happen merely due to historical developments but rather due to the systematic structure of theological concepts; for instance, the concept of the omnipotent God in Christian theology was transferred to the concept of the absolute sovereign or legislator, and the concept of the miracle in theology became the concept of the exception in law (Schmitt, 2014, p. 77).

Generally, according to Schmitt, modernity and its concepts are a phenomenon resulting from the configuration of Christian theology and do not possess a wholly independent status of their own. Although this notion has staunch opponents like Blumenberg, the principle that the modern age originated from the wellspring of European Christian civilization is agreed upon by those who hold expertise in this area. In fact, the discussion revolves around the degree or nature of the connection between the modern age and its preceding Christian-Western heritage, not a doubt about the connection itself.

Carl Schmitt insists on the deep amalgamation of political theology concepts and the categories of modern thought—concepts that are so interwoven that they cannot be precisely separated by a boundary. According to Schmitt, the modern legislative state triumphed along with the same theology and metaphysics that dispensed with the miracle as an exceptional state (Schmitt, 2014, p. 77). And, ostensibly, it sought to advance the ordering of human life in a purely worldly and secular manner.

Similarly, some other interpreters believe that at the threshold

of the modern era, the theological-political problems arising from Christianity were unique and specific to European civilization. Moreover, the awareness of how Christianity differed and the unprecedented nature of its political crisis became very powerful and prominent. Mark Lilla expresses one of the most important of these unique problems as follows:

> When the ancient Jews were an independent kingdom, they were governed exclusively through the Torah, that is, through divine law, not human law. Medieval Muslim societies were [mostly] ruled in the same way, through the Sharia. [Thus,] in no other religion could the struggle between 'Church and State' arise. But Christianity, at least in its original sense, was not law-based; Christianity retained the Ten Commandments, but abolished the highly elaborated system of Jewish Law in favor of the law of the heart... Medieval Christianity followed no model, neither the Judeo-Islamic nor the pagan model; and this... was the closest source of the crisis (Lilla, 2023, p. 40).

One way to explain the emergence of modern political philosophy (and the entirety of modern thought) is to situate it within the context of the specific theological-political disputes and conflicts that occurred in the West, conflicts that reached a critical and perilous level during the Protestant Reformation and the religious wars that followed. In the sixteenth century (the threshold of the modern age), there was no unified and integrated Christianity (which determined the main intellectual context in the Middle Ages) in the West. All that existed was a collection of churches and sects that cooperated with the rulers of the time. Doctrinal differences and political ambitions mutually incited each other and fueled the flames (Lilla, 2023, pp. 36-37).

A period then had to pass for new ideas to emerge and rely on the preceding intellectual tradition. The changes in Christian thought,

and especially Christian political theology, prepared the ground for new changes and developments (Lilla, 2023, p. 37). The concept of "modern" itself fundamentally emerged within the context of Church reform in the twelfth century, although its meaning at that time was different from the present era. The Church reformers believed they were building upon the heritage of their predecessors, but the crucial point is that they did not see a path leading to a prosperous and shining horizon; instead, the future for them was the imminent approach and arrival of the Apocalypse. Therefore, to them, being modern meant standing on the threshold of eternity; for example, this idea was embodied in the work of Joachim of Fiore, one of the most important thinkers of that period (Gillespie, 2019, p. 46). The view of figures like Joachim of Fiore regarding this spiritual and eschatological age served as a precursor to the Renaissance view of a new golden age or the idea of modernity concerning the age of reason and rationality. However, the medieval concept of the modern still had its roots in a specific understanding: an understanding of eschatology and an allegorical view of time (Gillespie, 2019, p. 46).

To understand the idea of modernity, attention must be paid to a crucial distinction established in the eighteenth century between the two terms: the Old Way (*Via Antiqua*) and the New Way (*Via Moderna*). According to some interpreters, including Gillespie, this decisive distinction is not, as it may first appear, a historical distinction, but is fundamentally a philosophical and metaphysical distinction concerning two views on universals (general concepts), which were related to two different interpretations of Aristotle. In truth, the Old Way was a Realist and objectivist approach that ultimately considered general concepts to be real and objective entities. In contrast, the New Way was primarily a Nominalist approach that regarded particulars and singular entities as real and

treated universals merely as a collection of names. Thus, a new understanding of existence and time was seemingly forming (Gillespie, 2019, p. 47), and a new era was being shaped, born out of a fundamental philosophical problem related to the issues of medieval philosophy and Christian theology. According to Gillespie, the word "modern", in the sense we mean today, was virtually not in use before the sixteenth century (Gillespie, 2019, p. 47).

The basis of the modern era scientists' (like Bacon) evaluation of the difference between the ancient and new ages, which often argued in favor of the new age, was not only the development of a new concept of knowledge and awareness but also a new concept of time—time that was considered not cyclical but linear and infinite. Within this framework, change was a continuous natural process that man could master using new methods and tools. The Western human thus gained the ability to become the master and possessor of nature and to manage it (Gillespie, 2019, p. 48).

Modernity emerged from within the metaphysical and theological structures of the Christian-European tradition; that is, modernity arose from the ruins of the medieval world (Gillespie, 2019, p. 58). The epoch-making question from which the modern Western world was born was the product of a metaphysical-theological crisis in Christianity concerning the nature of God and, consequently, the nature of existence. This crisis manifested itself most prominently in the Nominalist Revolution against Scholastic philosophy. Of course, this intellectual revolution itself reflected a deeper transformation that had occurred in the Western person's experience of existence (Gillespie, 2019, p. 61). This great and fateful crisis, in brief, was that the Scholastics during the Middle Ages, ontologically, believed in the real existence of universals or general concepts; that is, they were considered Realists in this respect. They viewed the world as the

material embodiment of the categories of Divine Reason, meaning they believed that, ultimately, these general concepts are real and objectively reflect reality. Scholastic philosophers formulated this view and experience through the structures of syllogistic logic—a logic that, in their view, corresponds to or is at least a reflection of Divine Reason. Cosmologically, creation itself was the physical and material form of this Divine Reason, and man, as a rational animal and a being created by God in His own image, sat at the head of this creation (Gillespie, 2019, p. 61).

In contrast, Nominalism overturned this entirely rational and unified world. According to them, universals are nothing more than illusions, and the world of existence is wholly particular and individual. Words do not signify real universal entities but are merely signs of utility for human understanding. Cosmologically, Nominalists consider creation to be fundamentally individual and particular; that is, they did not interpret creation teleologically. Consequently, God can be known to some extent not by human reason but only through Evangelical Revelation and mystical experience. Therefore, human beings have no natural or supernatural purpose or goal. In this way, the Nominalist Revolution against Scholastic philosophy utterly demolished the medieval world. This revolution ended the extensive effort of Scholastic Christianity, whose goal was the synthesis of revelation and reason (Gillespie, 2019, pp. 61-62).

The God of Nominalism was chaotic and terrifying. This God was frighteningly omnipotent and beyond human comprehension, constantly threatening the order of human life. This God could not be captured in the form of words and categories; rather, He could only be experienced as a terrible enigma that evoked human fear and reverence. This concept stood in direct opposition to the God defined by a Scholastic philosopher like Aquinas—a God whose benevolence

and glory are everywhere observable, or at least whose manifestations are always evident (Gillespie, 2019, p. 62). It can now be said that Modernity emerged as a result of attempts to find a way out of the crisis created by the Nominalist Revolution (Gillespie, 2019, p. 63).

The two movements of Humanism and the Reformation, which grew amidst the emergence of Nominalism and the formation of the modern world, both affirmed the ontological particularism or individualism stemming from Nominalist views. However, their difference centered on the issue of whether priority lay with God or with man. Humanism, naturally, gave priority to man and interpreted God and nature based on this prioritization. The Reformation, however, departed from God and viewed man and nature from God's perspective. These differences between Humanism and the Reformation seemed irreducible, and these profound differences had a fundamental impact even on the catastrophic religious wars that occurred in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, profoundly affecting the lives of the people of Europe (Gillespie, 2019, p. 65).

Generally, according to the prominent American philosopher Mark Lilla, it is we in the West who are different, not the non-Western nations. Modern political philosophy is a nascent and new invention even within the West itself, where Christian political theology has been the dominant, and perhaps the only, constructed intellectual tradition for centuries. The new political philosophy of the West, by critiquing Christian political theology, challenged the legitimizing factors of political authority. This was a decisive and historical rupture in the West (Lilla, 2023, p. 25). It was within the framework of this significant rupture that Western history and thought experienced a fundamental transformation, and the new world gradually took root. According to Lilla, the originality of modern political philosophy was the separation of the realm of human political affairs from the sphere

of theological contemplation regarding what lies beyond this realm. Political philosophy, in effect, abandoned recourse to revelation and mystical insight as tools for justifying the principles and foundations of political power (Lilla, 2023, p. 27).

Overall, the core of Christianity that drives it forward is the doctrine of the messianic Incarnation—the teaching that God became man. This doctrine is generally considered the source of Christian political theology (Lilla, 2023, p. 18). Based on this foundational doctrine, Christianity has a view of history that links it to eschatology and an apocalyptic end goal. On the promised day, Christ, who is the incarnation and physical form of God, will appear on Earth. Therefore, the intellectual structure of the modern West, in a broad perspective, could be constructed or even legitimized by following such an image. Recourse to such discussions is not raised merely in a religious and dogmatic context. Indeed, some thinkers consider the ideas related to progress and building an ideal world in modern thought to be a secularized form of the Christian eschatological framework, and they regard the modern age as lacking identity without considering this connection. In theological literature, in Lilla's words, the Christian God, who is the Father, stepped onto our earthly world and risked His transcendence. The Savior, who is the Son of God, became embodied and incarnated but left us, promising to return at the end of time (Lilla, 2023, p. 18).

This same discussion can be raised in connection with the concept of the Subject (or 'Self'), as the main pillar of modern philosophy and thought. In a sense, it can be stated that the Subject is the result of the Western man's defeat before the Christian God—a Nominalist God who initiated a revolution in thought in the late Middle Ages.

Nominalism holds that God is entirely transcendent to this world, and this God is like a will that is completely incomprehensible,

irrational, and, of course, unknown and terrifying. Man is unable to approach this God because He has become so transcendent and distant that He has left man and his world entirely to their own devices. Now, man must live in this absolutely contingent world, which is deaf and blind to his desires, and he must organize his affairs by himself, alone.

The Subject comes into being under such conditions, when divine attributes and qualities become humanized. From this point onward, man is the center of the world, and by relying on this centrality and axis, he confronts and organizes reality. In the modern era, Christianity and its churches gradually continued as a form of religious faith and belief, but they were replaced by a new approach to politics that was primarily human and worldly in nature. According to Lilla, a phenomenon called the Great Separation occurred under such conditions, which specifically severed, or at least diminished, the link between Western philosophical thought and Christian theology.

However, it must be noted that the problems that led to this Great Separation were not universal, but limited to Christianity. Problems such as: Why has a specific interpretation of the Bible overshadowed the lives of us, the people of Europe? Why do disputes over issues such as the Incarnation, divine grace, or various rituals threaten existing political stability? The various attempts to answer these dilemmas and concerns ultimately created a new way of understanding human life and the organization of political and social life (Lilla, 2023, p. 42).

2. A Critique of West-Centric Modernity

2-1. A Brief Look at the Ideal of Enlightenment Rationality

We must pay attention to the somewhat dominating character of modern Western rationality itself. This is the Cartesian rationality that subordinates everything to the two criteria of clarity and distinctness,

excluding anything that does not meet them. Consequently, many other intellectual horizons and structures are fundamentally unable to assert themselves and are expelled from the realm of thought and reflection.

This issue is intensely linked to the ideal of objectivity in the Enlightenment era, an ideal that, relying on a trans-historical reason, aimed to bring about a relatively unified and integrated framework for the entirety of human thought. This ideal was partly dependent on the remarkable growth of scientific achievements and the imposition of its method onto all aspects of human life. In essence, the Enlightenment sought an objectivity that transcended specific temporal, spatial, and historical contexts—a refined and impartial objectivity that science also aspired to achieve.

Due to the increasing emergence of natural and empirical sciences in the Enlightenment era, an ideal arose that influenced all intellectual endeavors: the ideal of setting aside subjective presuppositions. This ideal sought to use specific, objective methods as much as possible to achieve knowledge.

Based on this, according to Gadamer, modern science adopted the rule of doubt and the idea of method from Descartes to realize this ideal. Cartesian doubt implies that we must doubt anything that is capable of being doubted, and therefore, we must empty our minds of all presuppositions and pre-understandings. However, the crucial issue is that our inherently historical knowledge, which shapes our historical consciousness and is formed based on presuppositions, cannot be reconciled with this Cartesian ideal (Gadamer, 2004, p. 273).

The empirical sciences fostered an environment where understanding or reflection itself became a laboratory activity; that is, anyone, using specific methods and principles, could achieve a

universal and all-encompassing thought—a thought that would be usable and meaningful for all human beings in any position. This is precisely analogous to how different individuals in a laboratory environment can perform the same experiment based on similar methods and arrive at specific results. Under these circumstances, the methodology of science was considered comparable and shared with the foundations of other domains of thought, and a subject addressed in philosophical or artistic discussions, for example, was treated like an object of scientific research—i.e., without regard for the contexts or presuppositions upon which these discussions are necessarily dependent (Gadamer, 2007, p. 236).

In fact, philosophers such as Heidegger and Gadamer, in opposition to the abstract rationality of the Enlightenment and the ideal that emerged from it, situated reason within the context of history. For these philosophers, the historical approach is a concrete one that must be engaged with, not merely regarded as something expired and passed.

Reason is not self-sufficient and trans-historical; rather, it has its own specific requirements at every juncture and is constrained by given conditions. With this perspective, the ideal of Enlightenment reason—a reason that had achieved remarkable dominance, around which all doctrines and relations revolved, and whose inherent quality was considered to be self-grounding and autonomy—is destabilized. This reason ostensibly stood above all historical constraints and determinacies. Still, considering the understanding articulated by Gadamer and others, different questions and problems must fundamentally be raised in a different manner.

Perhaps this entire issue can be summarized in this one sentence by Gadamer: "In fact history does not belong to us, but we belong to it" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 278).

Indeed, the problem with rationalism is that while reason claims to be comprehensive and universal, it is always dependent on a specific cultural text and context (Mesbahiyan, 2019, p. 254).

2-2 Questioning the Universality of Western Modernity

Given the description of the ideal of objective Enlightenment rationality, the crucial question now is: When a particular culture and thought (Western thought) attempts to justify universality based on a specific type of rationality (Western rationality) and claims that only *that* culture and thought have achieved such rationality, does this in itself not indicate a self-perception of superiority over other cultures and thoughts?

In reality, it must be stated that there is no consensus regarding the all-encompassing nature or universality of Western rationality (Mesbahiyan, 2019, p. 217).

Eurocentrism, meaning positioning European culture and doctrines as the axis for all other cultures, naturally emphasizes European concerns and issues and gives them precedence over the intellectual and cultural elements of other nations (especially nations with historical roots). The idea of European superiority over other nations emerged historically during the era of European imperialism in the sixteenth century, expanded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and peaked in the nineteenth century. Simultaneously, philosophical doctrines and social sciences were influenced by Eurocentrism to a considerable extent (Mesbahiyan, 2019, p. 290).

Historically, starting in the nineteenth century, modern Europe, which had considered itself the center of world history since 1492, defined all other cultures as its periphery. Considering this historical point, there is undoubtedly a serious and vital need to arrive at a

different conceptualization of the Enlightenment and Modernity so that this phenomenon takes on a multi-dimensional and global form (Mesbahiyan, 2019, p. 301).

Fundamentally, we must take action to recognize the other/others of Western modernity. Through this effort, we can arrive at our own specific intellectual and historical context and, after that, explore this context to provide a new framework that is not necessarily Western. In other words, recognizing the other/others of Western modernity is only the first step. What the subsequent analysis of our own Iranian history and thought will yield, and how this analysis should be conducted, is the very issue that arises after the first step.

If we consider that Western Enlightenment and the entirety of Modernity have managed to present themselves as the central base in world history over several centuries and push other cultures to the periphery, then it becomes clear that European ethnocentrism is the only type of ethnocentrism that claims to be universal and all-encompassing. In reality, the Eurocentrism of Modernity is confused and fluctuates between two poles: on the one hand, the claim of universality, which is truly an abstract issue; and on the other hand, the desire for concrete and palpable domination over the world, which arises from the position of Europe and the West as the center (Mesbahiyan, 2019, p. 297).

For example, Reinhart Schulze, a German historian and Islamic scholar, subjected Western unilateral historiography concerning Islam to serious criticism during a scientific conference in 1988. He compared the history of the Islamic eighteenth century to the European Enlightenment era and showed that Western historiography has appropriated all progress that existed in the history of other nations and counted them as Western achievements (Mesbahiyan, 2019, p. 308).

Habermas, as one of the most prominent contemporary defenders of the universality of Western Modernity, emphasizes the concept of the Lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*), which serves as the backdrop for all interpersonal interactions. Furthermore, Habermas's concept of Communicative Rationality is built upon the permanent social solidarity that enables the formation of the modern Lifeworld. Indeed, for Habermas, the Lifeworld makes both the possibility of understanding and the understanding of context achievable. Fundamentally, Habermas links his concepts of Communicative Action and Communicative Rationality (a rationality that he claims is a universal foundation for human life) with the notion of the Lifeworld derived from phenomenology. It is through this concept of the Lifeworld that human life's communications and interactions can somehow have meaning or at least be closer to realization (Mesbahiyan, 2019, pp. 228-229).

However, the reality is that the concept of the Lifeworld itself is not a truly general category and a shared horizon for human actions and values, because the Lifeworld is a prerequisite for communication, and communication itself is encompassed by historical processes (Mesbahiyan, 2019, p. 230). That is, communication itself includes determinacies that have been shaped by different histories and cultures over time.

Every individual in the process of communication carries with them a mass of historical, intellectual, and cultural presuppositions, both consciously and often unconsciously. Therefore, the concept of the Lifeworld, despite its appearance, cannot be considered truly comprehensive. Every form of communication and interaction is inevitably accompanied by an encounter with completely diverse and varied Others. This otherness, this alterity and difference, cannot be effaced under the pretext of entering a shared field. In a sense, specific Lifeworlds and their details and components are formed in a particular

situation, and we exclusively experience them as a horizon. In truth, the Lifeworld is unable to secure the criterion of knowledge and become fully rationalized (Mesbahiyan, 2019, p. 230).

The Western rationalism of figures like Habermas has failed to see how its supposedly universal ethics may manifest in different cultural forms (Mesbahiyan, 2019, p. 238). In fact, we will not be able to adequately discuss the project of Modernity or even address the debate on the diversity of modernities unless we can pay attention to the specific contexts from which Modernity or various modernities arise (Mesbahiyan, 2019, p. 240).

Some researchers have proposed the idea of the diversity of modernities (*Multiple Modernities*) in contrast to a single-voiced, Western modernity. The source and main claim of the diversity of modernities is that a re-reading of different intellectual and cultural patterns that emerge from the historical context of each civilized nation can lead to the appearance of different modernities, provided that the differences and diversity of traditions and cultures across the world are recognized beforehand. It is true that Modernity and the Enlightenment originated in Western Europe, but they cannot be considered phenomena whose creator and founder was exclusively the West (Mesbahiyan, 2019, p. 299).

The idea of the diversity of modernities (*Multiple Modernities*) can challenge the single-voiced and exclusive narrative of Modernity in several ways:

1. First, the idea of the diversity of modernities, instead of emphasizing inherent differences, contradictions, and the clash of civilizations, often insists on the inclusion of other cultures and intercultural interactions.
2. Second, introducing the diversity of modernities into the

paradigm of discussing Modernity and the Enlightenment largely nullifies the single-voiced narrative. At the same time, however, the concept of the diversity of modernities is aware of the dangers of relativism and intellectual chaos.

3. Third, the diversity of modernities intends to explain the specific characteristics of civilizations and cultures not merely in terms of their proximity to the West, but with attention to their internal concepts and frameworks (Mesbahiyan, 2019, p. 301).

3. The Necessity of Returning to Tradition and its Fundamental Re-Evaluation

The ambitious ideal of the Enlightenment, which was previously discussed, is summarized in Kant's famous phrase: "Dare to use your own understanding" (Kant, 2006, pp. 51-52). According to this ideal, the entire world should, as much as possible, be appropriated within the bounds of pure reason. This is how uncontextualized reason finds an undisputed position in the heart of the Enlightenment worldview. It is as if one can set aside all presuppositions and achieve a rational form of knowledge, free from any constraints.

However, to the extent that the issue of presuppositions and the role of determinate historical and cultural conditions were attacked during the Enlightenment era, to that same extent, the revival of the importance of tradition appears to be a necessary action for thought and reflection. This is an action toward giving serious attention to the present and living voices echoing from the past. These voices resonate as presuppositions that shape the framework of our thought. This continuous chain must be kept in sight, because "this issue means protecting the possibility of confronting those ways of seeing and

thinking which propose answers to the questions that preoccupy us" (Davey, 2006, p. 8).

The Enlightenment believes that for evolution and progress, one must be freed from the superstitions and prejudices of the past. From the perspective of the Enlightenment, any tradition and authority that has been declared meaningless and invalid by the new reason is no longer worthy of being examined. Everything that has reached us from the past, including the tradition and the authority we ascribe to it, must be subjected to judgment before the court of reason to determine its veracity and validity. Any kind of unquestioning obedience to the legacy of the past is completely rejected and must be set aside. The Enlightenment believes that no tradition can claim absolute validity:

> Generally, the Enlightenment does not intend to accept the authority of tradition and aims to place everything before the court of reason; therefore, [for example,] the written tradition of the Bible, like any other historical document, cannot claim absolute validity... It is not tradition that is the ultimate source, but reason that constructs authority... (Gadamer, 2004, p. 274).

The Enlightenment believes that reliance on the authority of tradition means blind and irrational obedience and causes us to be deprived of reason. In fact, the authority of tradition imposes a tyrannical rule over reason and rational thought and blocks the way for any kind of rational deliberation. Therefore, the authority of tradition must be the servant of reason, not its master (Gadamer, 2004, p. 279).

In his critique of the Enlightenment ideal, Gadamer considers this ideal itself to be an unexamined prejudice. He argues that the Enlightenment, by emphasizing the fundamentality of reason and rational knowledge, seeks to invalidate knowledge based on the authority of tradition (Grundin, 2012, pp. 59-60).

The belief in the existence of such fixed rational foundations is merely an abstract concept and incompatible with reality. Reality has a concrete and historical character, and this view of rationality throws us into a distant abyss. In such a case, we will no longer be able to establish a connection with reality.

The Enlightenment views the authority of tradition as something that influences various beliefs. This, in itself, is true. However, the important point here is that when tradition influences various viewpoints, it does not mean that tradition cannot be a source of truth. But the Enlightenment neglected this important issue; it entirely regarded the authority of tradition as a cause of misunderstanding and intellectual deviation, and it sought to eliminate the associated requirements (Gadamer, 2004, p. 280).

What Gadamer specifically emphasizes is the dominance of finitude and limitation over us and our consciousness. This issue is directly related to the critique of the Enlightenment's ahistorical view, because, according to the Enlightenment, we must overcome pre-existing conditions and focus on a trans-historical sphere. We must achieve true knowledge free from the constraints of the historical context that limits our view. From this perspective, man is a being who can and must free himself from these limitations. Indeed, it is on this basis that we set aside the requirements arising from historical tradition because these requirements keep us bound to our specific historical situation.

This is in stark contrast to Gadamer's clear stance against this view, as he emphasizes the fundamental importance of human existence's finitude and contingency on its specific historical conditions (Gadamer, 2004, p. 277). By what criterion and authority can man, in principle, pass beyond history? Man lives in specific historical conditions and is unable to transcend this finitude. Thus, the

necessities and requirements arising from historical tradition must be given serious attention.

A point that can pave the way for discussion here is the depiction of a new conception of tradition that stands in opposition to the Enlightenment's understanding. Gadamer believes that the Enlightenment has a distorted meaning of authority in mind, which has led to widespread suspicion toward it. Based on its conception of reason and freedom, the Enlightenment saw authority as being in contradiction with reason and freedom—meaning that, according to the Enlightenment, the authority of tradition signifies absolute subservience and the suspension of reason and freedom. In contrast, Gadamer explicitly states:

> ...But this meaning is not the essence and nature of tradition... [Generally] the authority of persons is not based on the surrender and resignation of reason, but on an act of knowledge; that is, the Other is superior to us in judgment and insight, and for this reason, his judgment takes precedence. This is related to the fact that authority is not granted to someone, but is earned, and if someone is to rely on it, it must be so... This reliance on authority is dependent on the act of reason, a reason that is aware of its own limitations and trusts the better insight of others. In this sense, the authority of tradition is correctly understood; that is, the authority of tradition has nothing to do with blind obedience to commands and orders, but is related to knowledge... The true basis for giving authority to a superior person is freedom and reason, primarily because they have a broader view of things or are more informed—that is, because they have more knowledge and know more (Gadamer, 2004, p. 281).

In accordance with this approach, we fundamentally refer to another source or person to gain a better and truer understanding. This

Other becomes our destination for reference due to their ability and capacity—meaning this Other possesses a stronger insight and broader knowledge than us. Otherwise, referring to them would mean blocking the path of rational and intellectual freedom. Thus, when the Other is a trusted and reliable authority, they must necessarily be competent; otherwise, baseless referral to someone or something is clearly irrational. In other words, it must be remembered that the competence and qualification that the authority must possess are not something granted through attribution or inheritance. This qualification is an acquired matter, dependent on possessing capacities and capabilities.

Generally, our existence is unintentionally influenced by what has reached us from the past, as we have a finite historical existence and cannot free ourselves from the past and its heritage. However, there is a difference between tradition and the prevailing beliefs and customs we have inherited. Tradition is like a refining filter that organizes our lived experiences in various situations. It is a current that is always present and explicitly or implicitly sustains its presence. "Tradition is a filter that allows new experiences to occur, but only after these experiences are recognized as valid and approved through the lens of prior experiences" (Ritivoi, 2011, p. 70).

As long as we consider tradition as an uninterrupted and dynamic flow, understanding and thought, whose foundations are inherently shaped by this continuous flow, are not meant to end at a final point (Gadamer, 2007, p. 240). That is, knowledge and understanding, which are themselves historical and constrained by specific historical conditions, never reach a definite and final completion. Our understanding and knowledge, riding on the continuous flow of history and tradition, possess an inherent dynamism, fluidity, and becoming. Consequently, our understanding and knowledge of ourselves are constantly evolving and expanding.

With this in mind, it can be said that one of the tasks we must undertake in the re-evaluation of our own tradition, history, and thought is to understand that, through the passage of time, there are seeds hidden within this tradition and thought that have the potential to sprout and grow. As mentioned, we must, with a deeper look at tradition, comprehend the complexities of its concept. Tradition is not an expired matter; rather, it always possesses the capacity for movement and dynamism, and it is precisely by virtue of this capacity for movement that one can approach it and confront its various dimensions.

Generally, if we want to arrive at modernity, renewal, and innovation from within, or in other words, to internalize modernity and renewal within our own culture and thought, we must not exactly and precisely implement Western Modernity here, especially only its manifestations, not its intellectual foundations. Western Modernity can be considered as renewal and desire for change—that is, the renewal and transformation of the very historical and intellectual tradition that belongs to us and is known as our foundation. When the idea of renewal passes through our internal and lived experience—that is, when it becomes our actual historical experience—only then can we speak of renewal, a renewal that is not necessarily equivalent to or co-referential with its Western meaning.

However, a very important point is that we do not want to present a new version of the issue of "Return to Self" (*Bazgasht be khishtan*), nor do we want to overemphasize the role of colonialism and dominance by modern Western countries, although the discussion of the undeniable importance of colonialism itself requires a separate opportunity. Above all else, we must trace the process of decline and decay from within Iranian history and thought and correctly highlight the role of internal factors, instead of merely looking at conspiracy theories and excessively emphasizing external factors.

4. The Need for Conceptual Tools from Within Tradition

Given this context, we must fundamentally and radically rethink Iranian history and thought, specifically through conceptual tools extracted from the very core of this historical and intellectual tradition. In other words, this intellectual and historical tradition and the transformations it has undergone serve as the raw materials from which concepts must be derived from within them and for the sake of understanding them.

One could argue that, in our current situation, we are not truly capable of thinking authentically about ourselves, because the majority of our concepts, ideas, and analytical tools are somehow borrowed from Western thought. These Western concepts, however, are tailored for the materials and subject matter that constitute the core of Western history and thought. Western thinkers and philosophers have tested these concepts against the materials, instances, and specificities of Western thought and have innovated ideas aimed at self-understanding.

4-1. The Beginning of the Effort to Discover the Internal Logic of Iranian Thought

The crucial and thought-provoking point is that it seems that after the arrival of Modernity and its fundamental concepts, we lack even the necessary conceptual tools to think about ourselves and understand Iran. This issue is not solely limited to the influence of Western Modernity. It must be remembered that our historical decline and decadence began approximately four or five centuries ago. Iranian thought and reflection seem to have suffered from a conceptual and textual void from a certain historical juncture onward—a void of concepts and texts stemming from the intellectual endeavors of Iranian thinkers, through which we could comprehend the internal

logic of our own history and thought and arrive at its specific structures. This compels us to re-evaluate the Iranian intellectual tradition and extract concepts from its very core.

In a sense, we are in serious need of intellectual *Ijtihad* (independent reasoning in Islamic law), an Ijtihad aimed at discovering the internal logic or mechanism of Iranian history and thought. This logic is certainly not one-dimensional and straightforward, possessing many complexities that cannot be contained within a relatively short article. Nevertheless, within this limited scope, one can strive to achieve such a plan and entrust its potential yield to future research. This intellectual Ijtihad is naturally a very extensive, comprehensive, and critical endeavor that will take a long time, perhaps generations, and no single researcher can accomplish the task alone.

In this context, the issue of the conceptual void (which the late Dr. Javad Tabatabai also referred to as the textual void) is of paramount importance. At a certain point in our history and thought, we suffered from a conceptual void or the lack of concepts; that is, we currently do not possess a system of concepts from whose perspective we can analyze and evaluate our situation—concepts that have arisen from the raw materials of the history of thought in Iran. The concepts and ideas that we have tacitly borrowed from modern Western thought are not suitable for application to our historical materials and instances, because they originated from a fundamentally different context (a point already referenced in the section on the roots of Modernity).

For instance, the concept of Secularism (*'Irfi Shudan*), very briefly, indicates a process that occurred in the history of Western thought—a process in which Christian theological concepts gradually gave way to modern concepts, and modern thought was formed from

this conceptual transformation within Christian doctrines. Or, for example, the concept of Humanism in Western thought emerged in opposition to the idea (prevalent at least during the peak of Nominalism, in response to which Humanism, as a modern movement, partly appeared, and not across the entirety of Christianity) that human nature and essence were polluted due to Original Sin—in essence, man had, as it were, fallen from God's grace. In principle, the entire material nature is a realm of ignorance and darkness, and man descended into this realm due to Original Sin. Now, under such circumstances, Humanist thought, in contrast to this view of man and his status, claims that man, on the contrary, has an important, prominent, and central status (Gillespie, 2019, p. 65). Man is not a base and sinful being who has been subjected to God's indifference and wrath. This man, in fact, can be the center of the world and organize this world himself.

This is while the view of man in our history and thought is not like this. Nor is there such a view towards nature and the material world. Iranian and Islamic thinkers operated with a completely different perspective. They not only did not regard material nature as a source of darkness and ignorance but viewed natural phenomena as the manifestations and signs of God's creation. Scientific work for them meant discovering the signs of God's power in nature. Metaphysically and philosophically, man for Iranian and Islamic thinkers is considered the Caliph (*Khalifa*) and vicegerent of God on Earth and the noblest of creatures (*Ashraf al-Makhluqat*). Man is, in fact, the boundary between heaven and earth and the meeting point of *Lahut* (divinity) and *Malakut* (the spiritual realm).

Therefore, the consequences and implications arising from this kind of outlook can potentially draw a different path before us. From this standpoint, without intending to make a value judgment, we must

recognize that the intellectual foundations of the concept of Humanism are fundamentally not related to the general framework of our culture and thought and have their own specific contexts.

Of course, there are extensive and very broad discussions regarding the details of these changes and transformations, which are not the subject of our current study. Naturally, we do not witness such a process in the history of Iranian thought; that is, the curve of intellectual transformations in Iran, at least in the last few centuries, has not been determined by such events. Concepts cannot be used carelessly and abstractly. Every important concept has its own specific background and roots that have developed from a unique set of circumstances. In other words, concepts are not formal and mental words that can be easily detached from the context of their reality.

In principle, Iranian historiography in the modern period, which emerged through imitation of Western researchers, attempts to explain the materials, instances, and examples arising from the context of Iranian history by applying Western methods and styles. In fact, this historiography, which naturally also covers the history of ideas and concepts, is a repetition of Western historiographical discussions but in the absence of attention to their theoretical foundations. In other words, the Iran of Western historiography is an Iran whose new era is primarily Western (Tabatabai, 2016, p. 16). This means that we have approached the writing and analysis of Iranian history (in the general sense) and the history of Iranian thought (in the specific sense) with the framework of new Western concepts. The result is precisely a Westernized Iran (i.e., Iran analyzed based on modern Western concepts).

According to Javad Tabatabai, the history of Iran is generally a counter-flow (*khelāf āmad*) (Tabatabai, 2016, p. 27). That is, the history of Iranian thought and culture has followed a path that does not

necessarily correspond to the curve of Western-European intellectual and cultural history. This history has its own specific logic, and by discovering the various aspects and dimensions of this logic, an analysis specific to the entirety of Iranian history can be achieved. However, because Western-European history is typically taken as the axis of world history, Iranian history (especially the history of thought and ideas) has inevitably been measured and inferred in relation to the Western model.

A significant example is Persian Poetry and Literature as one of the central pillars of thought in Iran. It must be said that Persian poetry and literature is the main focus of Iranian thought and reflection, especially from around the seventh to the tenth century AH (Tabatabai, 2016, p. 40). This signifies a unique characteristic that determines the basis of investigation in Iranian thought, while this very characteristic holds little significance in modern Western thought, or at least not with the same intensity and density as in Iranian history. Searching for concepts and engaging with Iranian thought by relying on the context of Persian poetry demands its own specific requirements. Furthermore, the thought presented in Persian poetry is a different kind of thought that cannot necessarily be identical to the thoughts arising from the philosophical texts of the modern West. In fact, according to Javad Tabatabai, with the decline of historiography after the Mongol invasion, the continuation of Iranian historical memory, which had been preserved for centuries, became a sensitive and precarious matter. It was in this situation that Persian literature, as the guarantor and carrier of historical memory, represented Iranian thought (Tabatabai, 2016, p. 40).

After the Mongol invasion, with the end of the golden age and flourishing of Persian poetry, which includes the period after Abd al-Rahman Jami, the ties between Iranian thought and reflection and the

questions and issues of the time were severed. A long period began, lasting until the preliminaries of the Constitutional Movement, which we refer to as the period of the hardening of tradition (Tabatabai, 2022, p. 427).

Another most important issue concerning Iran's complex and challenging situation is that the Iranian Middle Ages came *after* its Renaissance, unlike European history, where a clear process saw the Middle Ages followed by the Renaissance and rebirth. In fact, during a period of Iranian history when Iranians ceased theoretical thought or at least experienced stagnation and intermission in it, a certain type of thinking became possible in Iranian literature and poetry. And this Iranian literature flows in the various languages spoken by Iranian ethnic groups (Tabatabai, 2016, p. 58). In a sense, the Golden Age of Iranian culture, which continued approximately until the sixth and seventh centuries AH, was followed by a period of stagnation and decay whose continuation is observable even up to the contemporary era. In fact, one might even say that this single point—that the historical logic of our thought differs significantly from the curve of intellectual history in the West—is sufficient to warrant serious and urgent attention to the specific characteristics of Iranian history and thought.

5. Stagnation, Conceptual Void, and the Non-Self-Evident Relationship with Modernity

It can be said that the cessation of Iranian thought and reflection during the three centuries prior to the preliminaries of the Constitutional Movement (from the mid-Safavid era onward) made the articulation of the questions and issues of the new era impossible. The Constitutional Movement itself was primarily a transformation in action, but theoretically, little change occurred in the Iranian thought

system (Tabatabai, 2022, p. 409). The discussion of the conceptual void subsequently emerges from this historical situation. This characteristic, in relation to the issue of the precedence of Renaissance over the Middle Ages in Iranian history, can be understood.

Given the state of the cessation of thought, which lasted at least three centuries, the introduction to new Western concepts created a complex and confusing situation. On the one hand, our thought system was weakened and had lost its dynamism, and on the other hand, new issues were forming in the minds of Iranians according to the requirements of the time, while concepts and doctrines were simultaneously entering Iran from the West, originating from a different intellectual space.

Conclusion

In summary, it must be stated that, considering the main lines of analysis in this article, the relationship between Iran (and us, the Iranian people, here and now) is no longer a self-evident and clear relationship. That is, we cannot simply speak of a determined and specific relationship and pursue the subsequent related discussions by presupposing it.

In short, the majority of concepts used in Western philosophical thought, especially the modern world, all originate from the historical and intellectual framework of Western civilization. These concepts are, in effect, the result of the Western person's confrontation with their own problems. This Western person is not an abstract and formal concept but has emerged from a specific, concrete context.

Likewise, the Iranian person has been nurtured in a different historical and intellectual structure and carries concepts, doctrines, and ideas that, inevitably, originate from the context of this very structure.

Considering the arguments and examples presented in this paper, it can be said that each of these macro-frameworks has its unique characteristics that are not necessarily related or congruent with each other. In truth, Modernity was a phenomenon that was imported from the outside onto a stage called Iran, rather than being a historical experience that we arrived at in an internal and natural way. Therefore, this very issue can encourage us to pursue an internal and self-willed renewal that can be paved by criticizing and examining the past intellectual tradition.

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Farabi's Political Philosophy: Reconciling Platonic Ideals with Realist Perspectives on Justice and Interstate Relations

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Abstract

This study examines Farabi's perspective on international relations, focusing on the concept of the Virtuous City (al-Madīna al-Fāḍila) and the Non-Virtuous Cities. The research method is based on textual and comparative analysis of Farabi's works, particularly *The Principles of the Views of the People of the Virtuous City (Ārā' Ahl al-Madīna al-Fāḍila)*, *Civil Policy (al-Siyāsa al-Madanīya)*, and *Selected Aphorisms (Fuṣūl Muntaza'a)*. This analysis emphasizes a comparison with the views of Plato in the *Republic* and *Laws*, and Thucydides' *Melian Dialogue* in the *History of the Peloponnesian War*. Influenced by Plato, Farabi defines the Virtuous City as a just society guided toward happiness (sa'āda) by a chief-philosopher. He categorizes the Non-Virtuous Cities into three types: Ignorant

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(Jāhila), Immoral (Fāsiqa), or Erring/Straying (Ḍālla), with the Vicious City (al-Madīna al-Taghallubīya) serving as their core, dominated by the motive of superiority/dominance (taghallub). The study indicates that the beliefs of the inhabitants of the Ignorant Cities, particularly regarding justice and dominance, reflect Thucydides' views (as articulated by the Athenians in the Melian Dialogue, that "the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must"). Farabi considers just war to involve defense, securing legitimate rights, or guiding others toward the good (khayr), while unjust war arises solely from dominance and a lust for superiority (taghallub). This study argues that, for Farabi, the survival of the Virtuous City amidst dominant cities necessitates a strong defense, and the expansion of the Virtuous City into a Virtuous Nation (al-Umma al-Fāḍila) and a Virtuous World (al-Maʿmūra al-Fāḍila) is a prerequisite for eliminating war and achieving true happiness.

Keywords

Farabi, Virtuous City, Domineering City, Plato, Thusydides, War, Interstate Relations.

Introduction

Farabi is known as the "Second Teacher" (al-Mu'allim al-Thānī) and the "Founder of Islamic Philosophy." The epithet "Second Teacher" likely indicates his profound influence from Aristotle—who is known as the "First Teacher"—and his pivotal role in the development and continuation of Aristotelian thought in the Islamic world. However, his title as the Founder of Islamic Philosophy primarily stems from his efforts to harmonize philosophy with religion (al-Milla/the religious community or creed).

Plato's ideas, especially those expressed in the *Republic* and the *Laws*, had a significant impact on Farabi, particularly in the conceptualization of the philosopher's social and political role. In his work, *The Principles of the Views of the People of the Virtuous City (Ārā' Ahl al-Madīna al-Fāḍila)*, Farabi is profoundly inspired by the *Republic*, although he does not explicitly refer to it in this text. However, in treatises such as *The Philosophy of Plato (Falsafat Aflāṭūn)*, which extensively focuses on the *Republic*, he frequently references this work (Farabi, 1997 a, pp. 153-154). In *Ārā'*, Farabi introduces the concept of the Virtuous City (al-Madīna al-Fāḍila), which is derived from Plato's idea of the "Ideal City" in the *Republic*. Plato describes a just society governed by Philosopher-Kings who establish social order through wisdom and justice. Similarly, Farabi proposes a Chief-Philosopher who leads the community toward happiness (sa'āda), guided by divine knowledge and intellect. Like Plato, he believes that justice and virtue form the foundation of an ideal society.

However, Plato does not extensively address the relations between states or cities. Similarly, Farabi offers almost no direct references to interactions or conflicts between states or cities. Specifically, although both thinkers classify various types of

antagonistic cities and societies, neither one deals with war or its causes in detail within their works. Farabi wrote a treatise titled *The Epitome of Plato's Laws (Talkhīṣ Nawāmīs Aflāṭūn)* which is solely dedicated to the *Laws* (Farabi, 1997 b, p. 197). Plato's *Laws*, written after the Peloponnesian Wars, includes several references to war as a social phenomenon, though it avoids explicit mention of the Peloponnesian Wars, only referring to general strife. Plato also alludes to the Trojan War, which Farabi explicitly references as the war over "Ilios," an alternative name Plato used for Troy. In the *Laws*, Plato focuses on the role of war in emphasizing the necessity of just laws within the community. Indications of Farabi's attention to Plato's classifications of the Non-Virtuous Cities and the beliefs of their inhabitants are evident in works such as *Ārā'*, *al-Siyāsa al-Madanīya*, and *Fuṣūl Muntaza'a*. Nevertheless, as will be shown, Farabi's statements diverge somewhat from those of Plato.

In contrast to Plato, the Greek historian Thucydides stands out. In his work, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (c. 411 BCE), Thucydides analyzes the war between Athens and Sparta, showing that fear, power, and self-interest are the principal causes of conflict. In the "Melian Dialogue", he writes: "The strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must" (Thucydides, 1963, p. 89). This power-centric principle became a fundamental element in classical realism, which views international relations as an arena of relentless competition. Thucydides identifies the cause of the war between Athens and Sparta as Sparta's fear of the growing power of Athens—an idea later echoed in modern realism. In contrast, Plato in the *Republic* discusses justice, social order, and just war, which can be considered a prelude to liberal ideas about peace and cooperation. Thucydides' ideas concerning the relations between the Greek city-states, alongside the thoughts of Machiavelli and Hobbes, had a

significant impact on the formation of realism in 20th-century international relations.

Since Farabi does not directly address war, peace, or the concept of relations between nations and cities, examining his view on international relations is challenging. Nevertheless, he does explore the parties involved in such relations. When discussing the Virtuous City (*al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*), he also addresses the cities that oppose it and enumerates their characteristics. Since these characteristics are often defined in relation to other cities and societies, it is possible to extract and delineate Farabi's principles regarding the relations between cities and societies. In this study, we aim to examine the components of Farabi's thought on potential interstate relations by drawing upon the debates of Socrates with Glaucon and Thrasymachus in the *Republic*, Callicles in the *Gorgias*, and the lesser-known work of Thucydides in the Islamic world, namely the *History of the Peloponnesian War*, especially the Melian Dialogue. We will demonstrate that the core ideas of the inhabitants of the Ignorant Cities (*al-Madā'in al-Jāhila*) bear a striking resemblance to what Thucydides narrates in his *History*.

Farabi defines the Virtuous City (*al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*) as a society in which individuals achieve true happiness (*sa'āda*). In his view, happiness is the ultimate goal of human life, which is only attainable within a just, orderly, and harmonious society (Farabi, 1995, p. 122). He compares the Virtuous City to a healthy human body, where every organ performs its specific function to ensure the health of the entire body. Therefore, in the Virtuous City, individuals cooperate to achieve happiness. Farabi emphasizes that happiness is accessible only in a society guided by a just and wise leader (Farabi, 1996, p. 55).

The leader of the Virtuous City (*al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*) must be

someone who has attained Divine knowledge and possesses the ability to guide the community toward happiness (*sa'āda*). This leader must embody moral and intellectual virtues, including wisdom, courage, temperance (chastity/'iffa), and justice (Farabi, 1995, pp. 125-127). Through revelation or perfected intellect, the leader connects with the Active Intellect, which enables them to legislate and effectively govern the community. This leader is not merely a sage and a philosopher but also possesses the capacity for political management and legislation (Farabi, 1996, pp. 60-62).

Like Plato, Farabi also divides society into different classes, each having a specific role in maintaining order and achieving happiness (*sa'āda*). These classes include philosophers, guardians (or protectors), craftsmen, and other groups, which are organized hierarchically (Farabi, 1995, pp. 130-134). The main goal of the Virtuous City (*al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*) is to provide the conditions for individuals to achieve intellectual and moral perfection. This perfection is realized through education, legislation, and the cultivation of moral virtues (Farabi, 1995, p. 119).

The central focus of this study is to explore Farabi's perspective on international relations; specifically, how the Virtuous City (*al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*) can survive and achieve happiness in a world filled with Non-Virtuous Cities, particularly the Dominant Cities (cities driven by *taghallub*, or superiority/dominance). The aim of this research is to extract the principles governing relations between cities and societies in Farabi's political philosophy through a comparative analysis of his ideas with the Socratic dialogues in Plato's *Republic* and *Gorgias*, and Thucydides' *Melian Dialogue*. This research focuses on the question of how his Platonic ideals can be reconciled (or aligned) with realist views on justice and interstate relations.

Some studies have addressed this topic, including: Mahallati (2016) argues that, according to Farabi, justice is closely linked to internal economic equity and external defensive or compensatory actions, while he explicitly rejects the use of force to reform imperfect states and advocates for education as the preferred approach. Azarkasb, S. M., & Maftuni, N (2023) analyze how Farabi's works propose an educational strategy for achieving global peace. This strategy positions his positive concept of peace as "cooperation among virtuous nations to achieve happiness" in contrast to negative definitions (absence of war/violence). According to the authors, Farabi advocates for educating the elite through logical demonstration (burhān) and educating the populace through rhetoric, poetry, persuasion, and imagination. The goal is to minimize differences in the interpretation of truths among virtuous nations, reduce mental hostilities, and enable global peace within the framework of a virtuous civilization. Emami Koopaee (2021) examines the concept of "just war" within the broader framework of Farabi's political philosophy. This research investigates the conditions under which conflict might be justified in line with his view of the Virtuous City and its leadership. The study links his views on governance, happiness, and social order to the ethical considerations regarding war. Ahmadi Tabataba'i (2020), while covering broader philosophies of war (including Mosely), also includes perspectives from Islamic philosophers, especially Farabi. This research explores how elements such as rationality, cultural beliefs, and civilizational structures, which are central to Farabi's thought, influence the conceptualization of war and peace. Khosravi (2017) primarily focuses on the views of Imam Khomeini but engages with fundamental Islamic political philosophy, including Farabi's ideas on human nature, the state, security, and the relationship between war and peace. This study contextualizes later Islamic thought within the framework established by early philosophers like Farabi.

These prior studies mainly emphasize educational strategies for peace, the moral dimensions of just war, or integration with broader Islamic or Shiite thought. However, this article distinguishes itself by reconciling Platonic ideals with realist views within the framework of Farabi's thought, particularly through a comparative analysis of his concepts regarding the Virtuous City (*al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*) and the Dominant Cities with Thucydides' views on justice and dominance in interstate relations. This article argues that the survival of the Virtuous City in a world of dominant entities requires defensive power and global expansion to completely eradicate war.

In addition to these points, several works in English have examined similar topics in Farabi's political philosophy: Mahdi (2001), in *Farabi and the Foundation of Islamic Political Philosophy*, explores Farabi's synthesis of Platonic and Aristotelian ideas and introduces him as the founder of Islamic political thought. This work focuses on the Virtuous City (*al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*) as the model for achieving human perfection through rational governance. Galston (1990), in *Politics and Perfection: The Political Philosophy of Farabi*, analyzes Farabi's key treatises to present a coherent theory of political perfection. He emphasizes Farabi's adaptation of Plato's *Republic* while also considering practical governance and the role of the Chief-Philosopher. Parens (1995), in *Metaphysics as Rhetoric: Farabi's Interpretation of Plato's Laws*, examines Farabi's interpretation of Plato's *Laws*, highlighting the metaphysical and rhetorical elements in political legislation as well as the harmonization of philosophy with religion. Black (2011), in *A History of Islamic Political Thought: From the Prophet to the Present*, provides a historical overview that includes Farabi's contributions to political theory, including his views on justice, hierarchy, and inter-state dynamics influenced by Greek thought. Brown, Nardin, and Rengger (2002), in *International*

Relations in Political Thought: Texts from Ancient Greece to the First World War, include excerpts from Farabi alongside Thucydides and Plato, placing his ideas about the Virtuous and Non-Virtuous Cities within the broader evolution of International Relations theory.

The distinction and innovation of this study lie in its unique integration of Thucydides' realist insights—such as the Melian Dialogue's emphasis on power and domination—with Farabi's Platonic-inspired model, demonstrating that beliefs in ignorant cities mirror Thucydidean realism, while arguing that the virtuous city's expansion into a global virtuous order (al-maʿmūra al-fāḍila) is essential for transcending war, thus bridging idealistic and realistic paradigms in a way not fully explored in prior works.

1. Justice

Farabi emphasizes that justice is established when every individual occupies their proper place and correctly performs their duties (Farabi, 1995, p. 128). He also stresses the role of religion in the Virtuous City (*al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*), believing that religion serves as a tool to guide the masses and is in harmony with reason and philosophy (Farabi, 1995, p. 141). By equating the truth of reason with the truth of religion, Farabi states that the leader of the Virtuous City must be a philosopher; one who connects with the truth through reason and interprets Divine laws in a way that is comprehensible to the masses (Farabi, 1995, p. 126).

Farabi classifies the cities that oppose the Virtuous City (*al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*) into three categories based on their relationship with virtuous beliefs and principles:1- Ignorant City (*madīna jāhila*): A society where individuals pursue material and worldly pleasures and are ignorant of true happiness (*saʿāda*) (Farabi, 1996, p. 70). 2- Immoral/Wicked City (*madīna fāsiqa*): A society where individuals

are outwardly compliant with Divine laws but, in practice, act in pursuit of their personal interests (Farabi, 1996, p. 72). 3- Erring/Straying City (*madīna ḍālla*): A society where individuals adhere to false and deviated beliefs (Farabi, 1996, p. 74). He believes that just laws must be founded on reason and wisdom to guide individuals toward moral and intellectual virtues (Farabi, 1996, p. 65).

As stated, to examine Farabi's potential perspective on the relations between perfect societies, it is essential to explore his views on the Virtuous City (*al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*) and his views on the other cities that oppose it.The counterpart to the Virtuous City is either another Virtuous City—leading to a Virtuous Nation (*Umma Fāḍila*) or a Virtuous World Order (*Maʿmūra Fāḍila*), which is either a single government or non-hostile states that differ only in their imaginative representations of the same truth (and this is not particularly challenging, as justice governs the conduct of the leaders and people in all these cities, and conflict arises from unjust behavior)—or it is one of the other types of cities, all of which oppose the Virtuous City. Therefore, it can be concluded that the main challenge in international relations lies in the principles governing the interactions among the Non-Virtuous Cities and the relations between the Virtuous City/Nation and the other cities and nations. Accordingly, we will examine the types of Non-Virtuous Cities and the beliefs of their inhabitants to understand Farabi's potential view on their relations. Subsequently, we will address Plato's classifications of the Virtuous and Non-Virtuous Cities, and finally, we will compare Thucydides' views with those of Farabi.

2. Non-Virtuous Cities

Farabi categorizes non-virtuous cities, specifically the ignorant and erring cities, into seven types: the mean city (madīna nadhāla), the

necessary city (madīna ḍarūriyya), the vile city (madīna khasīsa), the honorable city (madīna karāma), the domineering city (madīna taghallub), the free city (madīna ḥurriyya), and the collective city or city of the free (madīna jamā‘iyya or madīnat al-aḥrār) (Farabi, 1995, pp. 128-129).

> The Necessary City (madīna ḍarūriyya) is a society where people cooperate and coexist to secure the necessities of life, such as farming, hunting, or even theft. The leader of such a society is usually someone who is skilled in these tasks and is capable of leading the people in these endeavors (Farabi, 1996, pp. 100-101).

The Mean/Base City (madīna nadhāla) is a society where people, after securing the necessities of life, cooperate to amass greater wealth. The sole aim of individuals in this society is greed and materialism. Naturally, the leader of such a society is one who excels in accumulating wealth and can guide the people toward this goal (Farabi, 1996, pp. 101-102).

The Vile City (- madīna khasīsa) is a society where people seek material pleasures and cooperate to attain them. Consequently, the leader of this city is someone who is foremost in the pursuit of pleasure and can guide the people's efforts toward achieving these pleasures (Farabi, 1996, p. 102).

The honorable city, according to Farabi, is distinct from the aforementioned societies in an interesting way. The focus of this society is honor and recognition. In other words, people cooperate to achieve honor and greatness. These individuals seek to be respected and honored by other nations, sometimes expending significant resources to achieve this goal. Happiness is attaining honor and greatness from their perspective. Farabi notes that in these societies, achieving honor and greatness may not always be the primary goal;

sometimes, they seek to acquire wealth through this means. Farabi discusses this society in considerable detail (Farabi, 1996, pp. 102–107).

The collective city, according to Farabi, is a society where people are free to do as they wish and enjoy complete equality. The laws of such a society are formulated based on the principle that no human is superior to another. In this community, only those who contribute to the freedom of others hold value (Farabi, 1996, p. 114). Farabi emphasizes that a wide variety of individuals and groups come together in such a society, ranging from the best to the worst individuals. The rulers of such societies are under the influence of the populace and subject to their will. This does not mean that the leaders are not respected or honored; instead, people respect them as long as they strive to fulfill the people's desires and absolute freedom and protect it from internal and external enemies (Farabi, 1996, pp. 115-116).

In such cities, Farabi states that all the goals of the other Ignorant Cities are fully manifested. Due to the diversity, variety, and boundless freedom in the Collective City (City of the Free - *madīna jamā'iyya* or *madīnat al-aḥrār*), this city is popular with everyone, and many prefer to settle in it. These societies expand rapidly due to their popularity. Farabi believes that virtuous individuals who can form a Virtuous City may be nurtured in such a society. However, the worst and most base individuals also have the opportunity to thrive in these communities. At the same time, Farabi points out that even though virtuous individuals may have a chance to grow and spread in such a society, they never attain leadership. This is because leadership is only granted to those who obey the citizens and fulfill their desires. Therefore, whenever a virtuous individual takes the lead, they are quickly deposed or killed, or conflict and strife erupt in the society (Farabi, 1996, pp. 116-117).

3. The Dominant City

The Dominant/Tyrannical City (madīna taghallub) is one of the most important types of Ignorant Societies that Farabi addresses in the context of inter-society relations. Farabi dedicates more attention to this type than to other forms of Ignorant Cities, likely due to its prevalence and because he considers it the worst type of Ignorant Society (Farabi, 1996, pp. 107-108).

According to Farabi, the people of the Dominant City cooperate to achieve dominance and superiority over other cities and societies. They are obsessed with dominating others. The basis of this superiority-seeking differs and may include control over the lives or wealth of others. This desire for dominance is sometimes so intense that it is unacceptable to them if other nations surrender their lives or wealth willingly, without coercion or violence, and they may even ignore such offerings. Farabi does not always consider the means of dominance in such societies to be military; sometimes, this goal is achieved through reason (deception and strategy), physical force, or tools and technologies (Farabi, 1996, p. 108). The desire for dominance among the citizens of such societies is absolute. They even wish to dominate their fellow citizens. However, since they need each other for their survival, cooperate to dominate others, and require mutual support to prevent others from dominating them, they refrain from dominating one another (Farabi, 1996, p. 108).

Farabi believes that the leader of such societies naturally possesses greater ability and strategy to achieve dominance over others and to prevent other societies from dominating their own. This leader strives to make dominance (*taghallub*) a part of the society's culture, customs, and social traditions (Farabi, 1996, pp. 108-109). The people of such societies are generally hard-hearted, oppressive, and violent, indulging excessively in material pleasures such as food and

marital relations. In short, their goal is to dominate all worldly goods by subjugating and humiliating their owners (Farabi, 1996, p. 109). Farabi notes that sometimes the people of domineering societies pretend that their dominance over other societies is due to the latter's need for civilization and urban life (Farabi, 1996, p. 110).

Farabi divides the Dominant/Tyrannical Societies (*taghallub*) in several ways, which is highly significant because it will be shown that, based on one classification, every Non-Virtuous City is potentially a Dominant City. Farabi classifies the Dominant Societies based on the distribution of those who seek dominance. Some have only a single dominant figure, whose citizens are merely instruments of his will. The efforts of individuals in this society are directed toward empowering the ruler to achieve power and dominance, and in return, their needs are met. Farabi compares the relationship between the ruler and such citizens to that of a hunter with a falcon or a hunting dog. Such a society is considered dominant, but its general populace is not inherently driven by the desire for dominance. Farabi deems the title "Semi-Dominant" to be more appropriate for such a society (Farabi, 1996, p. 111).

Farabi offers another classification of Dominant Societies based on the priority of dominance (*taghallub*) in the hierarchy of the citizens' goals. He believes that sometimes the citizens of a dominant society view dominance merely as a tool to achieve other goals, such as securing necessities, accumulating considerable wealth, indulging in material pleasures, or attaining greatness and honor, and they resort to force and dominance to reach these ends. He states that while these societies are also dominant, the most appropriate type for the title "Dominant City (*madīna taghallub*)" is one where the people strive to obtain all these pleasures solely through force and dominance (Farabi, 1996, pp. 111-112).

Farabi sometimes combines these two criteria, stating that Dominant Cities (*madā'in taghallub*) are either those whose entire populace seeks dominance or those in which dominance is not the intrinsic goal but rather a means to achieve another end. In other words, a city whose people do not all seek dominance uses dominance as a means to reach other goals. Farabi continues that sometimes citizens seek both dominance and other benefits simultaneously (Farabi, 1996, p. 12).

Therefore, The First Type is a city whose entire populace seeks dominance and superiority over other societies, often with the sole intent of achieving dominance, regardless of how it is acquired. Sometimes, they may inflict harm on others (such as killing), without gaining any benefit, and merely for the pleasure they derive from it (Farabi, 1996, p. 112).

The Second Type is a Dominant City that pursues dominance merely to achieve material benefits, and if those benefits are attained without force, it refrains from using force. Farabi believes these societies are desirable to people because every desire and whim can be satisfied within them. The Third Type is a group that seeks material benefits through force and dominance and would refuse to accept those benefits if they were acquired without force. Farabi calls this group the "Masters of Arrogance/Leaders of Pride" (*Arbāb al-Ta'azzuz/Sardmadārān al-Ta'azzuz*) (Farabi, 1996, p. 113).

Farabi believes that the first group, which seeks only dominance, may forego material benefits if attained and may even be respected and admired for this behavior. He suggests that this group may include those who value honor and esteem. However, most dominant cities tend toward tyranny and despotism rather than honor. Sometimes, people in wealth-seeking cities, after acquiring wealth, become arrogant and consider themselves uniquely happy and

respected by other nations. This group considers the first type foolish (Farabi, 1996, p. 113).

Farabi's framework for the Ignorant Cities (*al-Madā'in al-Jāhila*) is essentially centered around the Dominant/Tyrannical City (*madīna taghallub*). As explained, he believes that the title Dominant City applies to any society that seeks superiority and mastery over others, whether for survival, wealth, material pleasures, or honor and greatness. Since the Collective City/City of the Free (*madīna jamā'iyya*) includes individuals pursuing these diverse goals, it can also be considered a Dominant City. Next, we will examine the types of Non-Virtuous Cities from Plato's perspective. As will be observed, despite the similarities, there are significant differences in how the two philosophers portray the cities opposing the Virtuous City.

4. Plato's Virtuous City and Its Opposites

In the *Republic*, particularly in Books VIII and IX, Plato discusses the Virtuous City (*Kallipolis*) and its gradual decline into less perfect political systems. Plato's Virtuous City is an ideal society founded on justice, harmony among the social classes (philosopher-rulers, guardians, and producers), and the supremacy of reason over the other parts of the soul (Plato, 1992, pp. 427e–445e). However, Plato believes that even this ideal city is susceptible to decline due to human flaws and social changes. He introduces four types of imperfect political systems as stages of degeneration from the Virtuous City: 1- Timocracy (rule of honor/esteem): (*hukūmat-i sharaf/iftikhār*) 2- Oligarchy (rule of the wealthy): (*hukūmat-i sarvatmandān*) 3- Democracy (rule of the people): (*hukūmat-i mardum*) 4- Tyranny/Despotism (autocratic/ oppressive rule): (*hukūmat-i khodkāma/zālimāna*) These systems gradually deviate from justice and the common good, and each is associated with specific characteristics of the human soul and social organization (Plato, 1992, p. 544a).

4-1 Timocracy

Timocracy is the first stage of decline from the virtuous city. Plato explains in The Republic that this system emerges when harmony among the classes of the virtuous city is disrupted, particularly when guardians, who are meant to follow reason and the common good, come under the influence of the spirited (thumoeides) part of the soul. This part of the soul, associated with honor, ambition, and the desire for fame, takes precedence over reason (Plat'o, 1992, p. 548c). Timocracy is a system where honor and military prowess become the primary values, and rulers pursue personal glory and power rather than the common good. Plato compares timocracy to states like Sparta or Crete (Plato, 1992, p. 545a). In this system, the ruling class (formerly guardians) turns to wealth accumulation and luxury, which conflicts with the principles of the virtuous city, where guardians own no private property (Plato, 1992, p. 547b). Timocracy is also characterized by competition and envy among rulers, as personal ambition overshadows the collective good.

4-2. Timocracy's Connection to Honor, Power, and External Domination

Timocracy is particularly associated with honor and ambition. Plato believes that in a timocracy, "ambitious and honor-loving" individuals rise to power. These individuals seek fame through military victories and dominance over others (Plato, 1992, p. 549a). Unlike the virtuous city, where reason guides the common good, in timocracy, the primary motivation of rulers is achieving honor and superiority, often through external wars. This system prioritizes military power and competition with other cities, with success in war serving as a measure of the rulers' honor and value. This characteristic is tied to the spirited part of the soul, which Plato describes in The

Republic as related to anger, honor, and self-defense. In timocracy, this part dominates reason, driving rulers toward external wars. Plato notes that this system, while better than other imperfect systems, deviates from justice due to its focus on honor and power (Plato, 1992, p. 547c).

Plato's descriptions of timocracy are comparable to Farabi's discussions of the honorable city and the domineering city. Although Farabi distinguishes these two societies, as noted, honor and recognition in the honorable city constitute a form of domineering society, where individuals seek superiority over others for the sake of honor.

4-3. Oligarchy

The next stage of decline is Oligarchy (rule of the wealthy). In this system, wealth becomes the primary value, and power is concentrated in the hands of a small number of rich individuals. Plato writes that oligarchy emerges from Timocracy (rule of honor) when ambition and honor give way to greed (Plato, 1992, p. 551a). This regime is associated with the appetitive (epithumetic) part of the soul, which seeks material pleasures and wealth (Plato, 1992, p. 553c).

Oligarchy, in Plato's view, is more unjust than Timocracy because even honor fades, and the rulers focus solely on preserving their wealth and power (Plato, 1992, p. 554a). Farabi's Mean City (*madīna nadhāla*) holds a similar position to Oligarchy. In both of these regimes, the goal is the accumulation of wealth. However, Farabi does not limit the pursuit of wealth to the rulers and explicitly states that the accumulation of wealth can lead to a desire to dominate other societies to gain access to their financial resources. Thus, the Mean City is also potentially a Dominant City (*madīna taghallub*). Nevertheless, Farabi does not delve into the internal dynamics of the

Mean City, emphasizing that its leader is superior to others in accumulating wealth and remains in power as long as they assist the citizens in this pursuit.

4-4. Democracy

Democracy is the next stage of decline. Plato sees democracy as the result of the revolt of the poor against the rich in the Oligarchy. In this system, freedom becomes the primary value, but this freedom leads to anarchy and disorder (Plato, 1992, p. 557b). Plato describes democracy as a system where all individuals pursue their own desires, without regard for the common good or justice. Democracy is characterized by diversity and a lack of order, but this excessive freedom sets the stage for tyranny (Plato, 1992, p. 558c). Farabi's description of the Collective City/City of the Free (*madīna jamā'iyya* or *madīnat al-aḥrār*) is a reflection of democracy; he describes a condition where freedom acts as a means to pursue diverse goals such as wealth, honor, necessities, and others.

4-5. Tyranny

Tyranny is the most extreme and worst form of political system, and it emerges when an individual in a democracy exploits the anarchy and seizes power. Plato describes tyranny as a system in which the ruler is completely dominated by his personal desires (Plato, 1992, p. 571a). This regime is highly unjust, as the ruler prioritizes his private interests over the common good and enslaves the people (Plato, 1992, p. 576a). Farabi does not portray tyranny as a distinct form of government but states that any of the various (Non-Virtuous) Cities can lead to tyranny, depending on the interaction between the ruler and the citizens. The Collective City (City of the Free - *madīna jamā'iyya*) might be an exception, as there, power and respect are only attained by those who satisfy the desires and ambitions of the people.

4-6. Plato's Focus on Timocracy

Plato devotes the more attention to timocracy in The Republic because it is the first stage of decline from the virtuous city and still bears some resemblance to it (Plato, 1992, p. 545c). Timocracy serves as a bridge between the virtuous city and imperfect systems. Plato carefully explains how minor flaws in the education and training of guardians, such as inappropriate music or physical exercise, can lead to the dominance of the spirited part of the soul (Plato, 1992, pp. 546d–547a). He also provides a psychological analysis of the timocratic individual, describing them as ambitious, honor-loving, and inclined toward competition (Plato, 1992, pp. 548c–549b).

Timocracy is significant for Plato because it marks the beginning of deviation from justice. He also notes that timocracy, due to its emphasis on honor and military power, can be relatively stable in the short term but ultimately collapses into oligarchy due to greed (Plato, 1992, p. 550d).

In contrast, Farabi focuses on the domineering city, not because it is the initial stage of decline, but because it is, firstly, the worst type of city and, secondly, not fundamentally different from other non-virtuous cities. Farabi considers the collective city, which is akin to democracy, and sometimes the honorable city, to be better than other non-virtuous cities. The centrality of the domineering city is more strongly supported in Farabi's works, particularly as he frames the beliefs of the inhabitants of non-virtuous cities around the pursuit of dominance.

5. Beliefs of the Inhabitants of Virtuous and Ignorant Cities

Before discussing the beliefs of the Non-Virtuous Societies, Farabi outlines the shared beliefs of the inhabitants of the Virtuous City (*al-*

Madīna al-Fāḍila). These beliefs include: Knowledge about the First Cause of beings, immaterial entities, and celestial bodies. Knowledge about the generation and corruption of natural bodies and the understanding that all that occurs in bodies follows a wise, just, and orderly pattern. Knowledge about humans and their faculties. Knowledge about the First Ruler and revelation. Knowledge about the successors of the First Ruler. Knowledge about the Virtuous City and its people. And knowledge about the Virtuous and Non-Virtuous Nations (Farabi, 1995, pp. 142-143).

Farabi states that these knowledges and their details are known either through direct contemplation by the souls and intellects or through imaginative representation. The philosophers of the Virtuous City understand these matters through demonstration (*burhān*) and their own insight. Those who are on a lower level than the philosophers know these matters as they are, but they rely on the knowledge and insight of the philosophers and trust their sayings. The rest of the people understand these matters through representations and analogies (*tamthīlāt*), which bring these concepts closer to sensible perception, because they lack the intellectual capacity or aptitude to grasp these matters as they are (Farabi, 1995, p. 143). The knowledge of the philosophers is naturally superior to the knowledge of others. Those who know these matters through representations may do so with examples that are close to the truth, somewhat distant, very distant, or infinitely far from the truth (Farabi, 1995, p. 143).

These matters and truths are represented to every nation and people through representations familiar to them, which are ordered according to their significance. The type of knowledge of these matters may differ among various nations. Consequently, these truths are depicted differently for each nation compared to how they are presented in other nations. For this reason, Virtuous Cities (*al-*

Madā'in al-Fāḍila) and their nations may differ from one another, but all believe in the same happiness (*sa'āda*) and a singular goal. When these matters are known and proven through demonstration (*burhān*), there remains no room for disagreement or sophistical arguments; neither through sophistry nor from someone who is incapable of understanding them due to misunderstanding (Farabi, 1995, p. 144).

However, if these matters are known through representations (*tamthīlāt*), there might be a basis for disagreement in these representations. This disagreement might be less in some cases and more in others, sometimes obvious and sometimes hidden. Some of those who know these truths through representations might resist specific examples (Farabi, 1995, p. 144). These individuals are divided into several groups. One group is seeking guidance. If the representations they deem false are replaced with representations closer to the truth and they are persuaded, the goal is achieved. If these representations also seem false to them, they are explained using other representations at a higher level. This process continues until they are either persuaded, or if all representations appear false to them and they have the capacity to understand the truth, they come to know the truth itself and join the ranks of the philosophers' followers. If they are not persuaded but show an inclination toward wisdom, those who have the ability proceed to study wisdom (Farabi, 1995, p. 144).

These statements indicate that, in Farabi's view, it is permissible to have multiple Virtuous Cities (*al-Madā'in al-Fāḍila*). However, these cities will never enter into war with one another, because they all believe in a single, unified truth. Their only differences arise from the multiplicity of imaginative representations (*tamthīlāt*) of these truths, which may lead to seemingly different outward beliefs. But upon examining the beliefs of the inhabitants of the Ignorant Cities (*al-Madā'in al-Jāhila*), it will be observed that

they are highly susceptible to war-mongering, which stems from their desire for dominance (*taghallub*) in various domains.

6. Ignorant and Erring Cities

Farabi attributes the emergence of all types of Ignorant (*Jāhila*) and Erring (*Ḍālla*) Cities to the metaphysical belief that "intrinsic conflict governs beings." He believes that Ignorant and Erring Cities come into existence when a nation's ontological foundations are built upon corrupt and defunct beliefs. One of these incorrect assumptions is that some believe that all beings are in strife with one another, and each seeks the destruction of the other. They claim that every being is equipped with the means to preserve its existence and repel its opponent. Some beings are created to dominate others and use them for their own benefit. This belief leads to the conclusion that every being is created solely for itself, and the existence of others is harmful to it. Therefore, every being must either destroy the other or subjugate it for its service (Farabi, 1995, pp. 147-148).

Farabi attributes the emergence of this view among humans to individuals or groups who relentlessly seek to dominate one another, without regard for order or proportionality. Based on this belief, every individual must dominate others to gain access to goods and benefits. This belief leads to the rise of cities in which no natural or voluntary friendship and association exist, except in necessary cases. Even in these cases, the association only lasts until the need is fulfilled, after which enmity and separation resume (Farabi, 1995, p. 149). Avoiding social conflict is a self-serving strategy to preserve personal interests more effectively.

7. The Origin of the Concept of Justice in Non-Virtuous Cities

Based on the key beliefs outlined regarding the Ignorant Cities (*al-Madā'in al-Jāhila*), Farabi analyzes the presence of concepts like

justice or piety (*dīndārī*) in Non-Virtuous Societies and argues that these concepts essentially carry meanings contrary to their true sense. According to him, in these societies, some believe that when tribes or cities are differentiated from one another through various associations, similar to the distinction between individuals, they should seek to dominate one another based on the principle of intrinsic conflict among beings and groups. The goods they compete to acquire include health, honor, wealth, and pleasure. Each tribe strives to deprive others of their benefits and appropriate them for itself. The tribe that prevails in this competition is considered happy (*sa'īd*). Farabi states that, according to this view, justice means domination and superiority (*taghallub*). Based on this definition, if a tribe is defeated, it is either destroyed or enslaved to serve the interests of the victorious tribe. These actions are also considered natural justice, where "what is in nature is just". In other words, "might makes right" (Farabi, 1995, p. 152).

However, within a single society based on such a conception of justice, the benefits gained through domination over other societies must be divided according to the effort each individual or group has exerted. If material goods are absent, honor or other things are granted according to effort. However, matters such as fairness in buying and selling, trustworthiness, or refraining from usurping others' property are observed only due to fear or inability (Farabi, 1995, p. 153).

The above view is similar to Thrasymachus' statement on justice in The Republic. Thrasymachus says: "Justice is nothing other than the interest of the stronger… Each government enacts laws for its benefit… and declares these laws just for its subjects" (Plato, 1992, pp. 338c–339a). Thrasymachus considers justice the result of one-sided domination by power. Just laws are enacted by rulers to consolidate their dominance, and justice operates to the detriment of the weak and in favor of the powerful minority.

Farabi, in one of his works, recounts Thrasymachus' narrative under the title "the praiser of injustice". He quotes the praiser of injustice as saying: "Justice is the matter that benefits the stronger" (Farabi, 1997 a, p. 152), although in the introduction to his work, he refers to "Thrasymachus" as a sophist teacher and rival of Socrates. Furthermore, Farabi offers another interpretation of justice in ignorant cities that is closer to Glaucon's account of the origin of justice. Farabi states that some citizens of ignorant cities believe that when two tribes or individuals are equal in power and have both experienced victory and defeat, they agree to divide benefits justly and refrain from encroaching on each other's property. This agreement persists until one party becomes stronger and seeks to break the covenant to dominate the other (Farabi, 1995, p. 154).

In Book II of the *Republic*, Glaucon also presents a similar view regarding the origin of justice, focusing on the concept of the social contract and the balance of power. He argues that justice is neither an intrinsic good nor the product of human nature, but rather arises from a balance of power among equals in society. Glaucon, much like what Farabi attributes to the beliefs of the inhabitants of the Ignorant Cities, believes that human beings naturally seek their own interests and prefer to inflict injustice. However, when the power of individuals or groups is equal, no one can dominate the other (Plato, 1992, p. 358e). Consequently, justice emerges as a compromise to avoid mutual harm. He states: "People say that to inflict injustice is naturally good and to suffer injustice is bad, but that the badness of suffering injustice is greater than the goodness of inflicting it. So when people have both inflicted and suffered injustice and have had experience of both, those who lack the power to do the one and avoid the other decide that they had better agree among themselves to neither inflict injustice nor suffer it. Hence they began to make laws and covenants;

and what the law commands they call lawful and just" (Plato, 1992, pp. 358e–359a). He reinforces this idea with the story of the "Ring of Gyges," suggesting that if an individual possessed unlimited power (like invisibility), they would abandon justice, because the motivation for justice is not an intrinsic good, but a necessity stemming from the balance of power (Plato, 1992, pp. 359c–360d).

After explaining the meaning of justice in the beliefs of the inhabitants of the Erring Cities (*al-Madā'in al-Ḍālla*), Farabi addresses piety or the concept of religious devotion (*dīndārī*). He states that, according to the people of the Erring Cities, piety means affirming the existence of a God who administers the world and spiritual beings who oversee human actions. If a person engages in worship, glorification, and sanctification of God and renounces worldly goods, they will receive a great reward after death. However, if they cling to worldly goods and neglect these acts, they will face punishment in the hereafter (Farabi, 1995, p. 155). Farabi states that in Non-Virtuous Cities, these beliefs are regarded as a kind of deception and trickery used by some to gain benefits. Those who are unable to dominate overtly use these beliefs to deceive others into renouncing benefits, pretending to be uninterested in worldly goods to gain the trust of others and achieve their goals without resistance (Farabi, 1995, pp. 155–156). This interpretation is close to the statements of Callicles in the *Gorgias* (481b–527e). Callicles divides justice into "natural" and "legal". He believes that legal justice, established by the weak, is an attempt to restrain the powerful and acts contrary to nature. Callicles says: "Nature itself shows that it is just that the better should have more than the worse, and the stronger more than the weaker... but these weak masses... establish laws and call what is to their advantage just" (Plato, 1925, p. 483c).

Farabi states that another group that adheres to these matters

has either been deceived or continues this path due to fear of losing their benefits. These religious beliefs stem from observing nature and beings and have taken root in many souls. However, once these benefits are obtained, they must be preserved and increased, either through voluntary transactions or by dominating others (Farabi, 1995, p. 156).

What Farabi states above is discernible in a Socratic dialogue. Glaucon sees justice as the result of a balance of powers, where neither party can dominate the other. This view is pragmatic, considering justice a compromise to maintain order in conditions of relative equality. In contrast, Thrasymachus emphasizes inequality, viewing justice as a tool for the stronger to exploit the weaker (Plato, 1992, p. 338c). Unlike Glaucon, he believes that justice exists even in conditions of inequality but operates in favor of the powerful.

Nevertheless, it cannot be definitively stated that Farabi drew these beliefs directly from The Republic. The significant point about him is that, in describing the beliefs of the inhabitants of ignorant cities, he aligns with Glaucon's view that justice becomes meaningful when both factors are weak (Plato, 1992, p. 358e). The difference is that Glaucon considers justice between two human individuals, whereas Farabi appears to extend this concept to relations between groups and cities in ignorant cities. In other words, what Glaucon proposes is merely a social contract requiring a higher authority, namely the law and its enforcer, the city's leader. However, Farabi initially accepts the principle of similarity between individual and societal behavior and states that, according to the beliefs of the inhabitants of ignorant cities, when tribes or cities are distinguished from one another through various connections, similar to the distinction between individuals, they must seek to dominate one another. He further states that some citizens of ignorant cities believe that when two tribes or individuals

are equal in power and have experienced both victory and defeat, they agree to divide benefits justly and refrain from encroaching on each other's property. This agreement persists until one party becomes stronger and seeks to break the covenant to dominate the other (Farabi, 1995, pp. 147–148).

The extension of this concept of justice to relations between cities or states and conflicts among various nations is not explicitly stated by Glaucon. While Farabi explains justice from the perspective of the inhabitants of non-virtuous cities as stemming from an inability to dominate, this aligns with the centrality of the domineering city among non-virtuous cities.

8. Farabi, Glaucon, and Thucydides

Farabi's interpretations in this section are more akin to the statements of the Athenians in their dialogue with the Melians, as narrated by Thucydides in The History of the Peloponnesian War, than to Glaucon's views. The Melian Dialogue, found in Book V of The History of the Peloponnesian War, describes a negotiation between representatives of Athens and the people of the island of Melos in 416 BCE. The Athenians, as the stronger power, demand the surrender of the Melians, who, as the weaker party, appeal to hope and justice. The Athenians present a realist perspective, stating that justice is relevant only when the power of the parties is equal: "In our view, in human affairs, justice is considered only when the power of the parties is equal; otherwise, the stronger do what they can, and the weaker must accept it" (Thucydides, 1963, p. 89). This statement reflects a realist approach that power determines relations in international affairs, and justice is relevant only when neither party can dominate the other. The Athenians argue that the Melians, due to their military weakness, cannot rely on justice or hope and must surrender, as justice has no

place in the absence of equal power (Emami Koopaee, 2021, pp. 90–91). This view emphasizes the principle that "might makes right" and considers justice a concept contingent on the balance of power.

It is unclear whether Farabi had access to The History (Gutas, 1998, p. 28). What is certain is that Thucydides' History was not translated during the Arabic translation movement. However, according to some accounts and evidence, Farabi had some knowledge of Greek and likely consulted some available works with the assistance of translators like Yūnus ibn Mattā and others. Although there is no reference to Thucydides or his History in the Islamic works that have reached us (Rosenthal, 1968, p. 19), this weakens the hypothesis that Farabi had Thucydides' views in mind when presenting the beliefs of the inhabitants of ignorant cities.

Another hypothesis is that Plato, in dialogues such as The Republic, Gorgias, and The Laws, expressed Thucydides' views through characters like Glaucon and Thrasymachus and then critiqued them through Socrates. Thus, Farabi can be considered in an indirect dialogue with Thucydides.

We can now somewhat delineate Farabi's perspective on relations between cities and nations. Farabi divides cities into two main categories: virtuous and non-virtuous. He considers both virtuous and non-virtuous cities to be multiple. The factor of multiplicity in virtuous cities is the difference in the representations and analogies reflected in the beliefs of their inhabitants from unified truths. Thus, the core and root of the beliefs of virtuous cities are shared and unified. These cities do not seek to dominate one another, so there is no concern regarding relations between virtuous cities. However, non-virtuous cities are divided into types such as the necessary, vile, honorable, collective, and, finally, the domineering city. In this study, we have shown that the domineering city is the core

of non-virtuous cities. This hypothesis is based both on Farabi's descriptions of non-virtuous cities and on his descriptions of the beliefs of their inhabitants, which revolve around dominance and superiority.

The Athenians, Glaucon, and Thrasymachus view justice as a phenomenon dependent on power, not an intrinsic good. The Athenians in the Melian Dialogue explicitly state that justice is meaningless without equal power (Thucydides, 1963, p.89), and Glaucon also sees justice as the result of a social contract between the week (Plato, 1992, pp. 358e–359a). Thrasymachus, while not considering equality a condition, links justice to power (Plato, 1992, p. 338c). All three view justice as a pragmatic, not moral, concept.

At the same time, the Athenians consider justice meaningful only in conditions of equal power, and in unequal relations, the stronger act without regard for justice (Thucydides, 1963, p. 89). Glaucon also emphasizes equal power but sees justice as the result of a social agreement within a society, where individuals submit to just laws to avoid mutual harm (Plato, 1992, pp. 358e–359a). Unlike the Athenians, his view focuses on internal relations and the social contract. Thrasymachus rejects the necessity of equal power and considers justice a tool of the stronger to control the weaker (Plato, 1992, p. 338c). Unlike the Athenians and Glaucon, he believes that justice exists even in conditions of inequality but operates in favor of the powerful.

9. Relations Between Cities and Nations

Although Farabi does not explicitly discuss the nature and extent of relations between cities or nations, he enumerates the characteristics of the virtuous city and non-virtuous cities and details the beliefs of their inhabitants. Like Plato, he focuses on justice as the central concept of the virtuous city. In contrast, ignorant cities are shaped

around injustice. For Farabi, this injustice manifests fully in the domineering city. Both in listing the types of non-virtuous cities and in referencing the beliefs of their inhabitants, he considers each of them a domineering kind of city. According to him, a non-virtuous city is a society that either openly seeks dominance and superiority for the sake of the pleasure of superiority or pursues dominance to achieve necessities, honor, wealth, freedom, or other bodily pleasures.

Based on the preceding premises, the Virtuous City (*al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*) confronts societies and nations that, either intrinsically or for the sake of other interests, seek to dominate it. In such circumstances, the strengthening of the Virtuous City becomes increasingly necessary. This does not imply an adherence to offensive realism, but rather that the protection of the Virtuous City necessitates the presence of a strong defensive force among the guardians. This perspective is reinforced by Farabi's justifications for various types of war.

10. Just War

In the work *Fuṣūl Muntazaʿa* (Aphorisms Selected), Farabi addresses subjects that were less covered in his earlier works or about which he was questioned (Farabi, 1985, p. 76). Daneshpazhooh believes that *Fuṣūl Muntazaʿa* was written later in Farabi's life, after works such as *Attainment of Happiness (Taḥṣīl al-Saʿāda)*, *The Opinions of the Inhabitants of the Virtuous City (Ārā' Ahl al-Madīna al-Fāḍila)*, and *The Political Regime (Al-Siyāsa al-Madaniyya)* (Daneshpazhooh, 2011). In this work, contrary to his previous works, Farabi divides cities into two categories: the Necessary City (*madīna ḍarūriyya*) and the Virtuous City (*madīna fāḍila*) . It seems that his concept of the Necessary City is a society in which association is either a vital necessity or a prerequisite for achieving material benefits through the domination of others.

Farabi divides war in this work generally into two types: Just War and Unjust War. In explaining Just War, he states that war is just when it is waged to repel an enemy and defend the city against foreign invasion. Furthermore, it is justified when war is initiated to secure benefits that the people of the Virtuous City are more deserving of than others (Farabi, 1985, p. 76). Farabi also says that war is just when its purpose is to compel a group to accept something that is better and more beneficial for them. He points out that these individuals may not recognize this good themselves and thus reject the words of those inviting them, in which case war becomes necessary (Farabi, 1985, pp. 76–77). He states that war is also justified against those for whom servitude is more suitable and beneficial but who refuse to accept it. Farabi believes that some people in this world ought to be servants (Farabi, 1985, p. 77).

Farabi says that sometimes the interests or rights of the city's people are usurped by citizens or nations of other cities. In such cases, war against them is appropriate. He believes the goal of initiating such a war is twofold: first, to secure benefits for the citizens; and second, to compel the usurping group to observe justice and fairness (Farabi, 1985, p. 77). Farabi considers another type of Just War to be a war waged to punish a group that has committed an offense, prevent its recurrence, and deter others from coveting the city. He says this action is a way of securing benefits for the city's people, in addition to restoring that group to a more suitable position and repelling a potential enemy (Farabi, 1985, p. 77). Finally, Farabi deems a war conducted with the aim of destroying and eradicating a group to be permissible and in the interest of the city, because their existence is harmful to the city's people (Farabi, 1985, p. 77).

In contrast, Farabi considers a ruler's war-mongering against a group to be unjust if it is solely for the purpose of forcing them to

submit, obey his commands, or show him respect, with no goal other than imposing obedience, gaining respect, or managing their affairs according to the ruler's desires (whatever they may be). Similarly, he states that if a war is waged purely for dominance (*taghallub*) and superiority-seeking, with the sole objective of victory and no other aim, it is also unjust war. Likewise, if a war or killing is solely for the purpose of quelling anger or obtaining the pleasure derived from victory, and without any other goal, it is unjust. Furthermore, even if a group has provoked the anger of a city's leader through their injustice, but the punishment they deserve is less than war and killing, then the war and killing are undoubtedly unjust (Farabi, 1985, p. 76).

Conclusion

This study explored Farabi's perspective on international relations, focusing on the concept of the Virtuous City (*al-Madīna al-Fāḍila*) and the Non-Virtuous Cities, and analyzed how his political philosophy reconciles Platonic ideals with realist views. The findings indicate that Farabi, influenced by Plato, sees the Virtuous City as a just society led by a philosopher-ruler toward happiness, but its survival among Non-Virtuous Cities, especially the Dominant City (*madīna taghallub*) driven by the pursuit of superiority, necessitates strong defensive capabilities. Farabi considers just wars to involve defense, securing legitimate rights, or guiding others toward the good, while unjust wars arise from mere dominance-seeking. The study argues that the expansion of the Virtuous City into a Virtuous Nation (*Umma Fāḍila*) and ultimately a Virtuous World Order (*Maʿmūra Fāḍila*) is a prerequisite for the complete elimination of war and the achievement of true happiness. Through a comparative analysis of Farabi's works with Plato's Socratic dialogues and Thucydides' Melian Dialogue, the research demonstrated that the beliefs of the inhabitants

of the Ignorant Cities, particularly concerning justice and dominance, closely align with the realist views of Thucydides.

By extracting the principles of international relations from Farabi's texts and emphasizing the Dominant City as the core of the Non-Virtuous Cities, this study revealed that Farabi's political philosophy integrates realist elements alongside its idealistic foundations, notably through its focus on the defensive power and global expansion of the Virtuous City. This research provides a novel framework for understanding interstate relations in Farabi's thought, contributing to a deeper comprehension of the balance between idealism and realism in Islamic political philosophy, and establishing Farabi's views as a bridge between these two paradigms in International Relations theory.

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The King and His Subjects: Insights from the Biblical Vision

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Abstract

This article explores key verses from the Old and New Testaments to formulate a Biblical view of leadership focused on service, justice, and the common good. Drawing upon texts from Genesis, Deuteronomy, the Books of Samuel, Psalms, the Books of the Maccabees, and several New Testament texts (including Matthew, Luke, Mark, and 1 Peter), the study contrasts positive models of servant leadership (such as Moses, David, Solomon, and St. Joseph) with negative models (such as Antiochus IV Epiphanes). The article argues that the Bible consistently describes legitimate authority as being characterized by accountability to God, humility, care for the vulnerable, and the promotion of communal flourishing. It further connects this Biblical ideal to the concept of the common good within Catholic Social Teaching (citing, for example, the papal encyclical *Laudato si'*), suggesting that the leader's primary role is to create social conditions that enable the integrated growth of

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individuals and communities. The implications of this vision for contemporary political and ecclesiastical leadership include prioritizing justice, protecting distinct communal identities, and fostering participatory structures for public prosperity.

Keywords

Servant Leadership, Biblical Vision, Common Good, Political Theology, Identity.

Introduction

This article is an expanded version of a paper presented online on December 16, 2024, during a conference hosted by the Research Center of Islamic Philosophy and Theology in cooperation with the Center for Deepening Faith and Religious Beliefs in Qom, Iran. I am delighted and honored to have been invited to participate in this conference and to publish this article. I extend my gratitude to Dr. Mohammad Sahhaf Kashani (Director of the International Conference on Comparative Studies of Ethics in Islam and Christianity) and Dr. Jafar Hosseinnejad (Secretary, Ambassador of Iran to the Vatican) for the invitation to present and publish this work.

I would like to begin with a comment on a recent book published by His Excellency Mohammad Hossein Mokhtari, Iran's Ambassador to the Vatican, titled *Prayer in Islam and Christianity: A Comparative Study* (Avellino, 2024).

In this book, the author states that sincere prayer to God deepens an individual's sense of dependence on God and fosters an attitude of servitude. This sense of dependence develops as one becomes increasingly aware of owing everything to God. This idea is also strongly present in the Bible. For example, Moses is often referred to as the servant of God (Deuteronomy 34:5, Psalm 105:26, etc.). Moses, acting in God's name, led the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt to the promised land of freedom. Here, we see a man who, while serving God and obeying His commands, leads God's entrusted people. In short, as God's servant, he leads the community entrusted to him.

We may recall that Jesus calls his disciples friends, not servants (John 15:15). Nevertheless, the concept of service to God is not foreign to the Bible and Christian tradition and is expressed in various

ways (see, for example, Mark 10:45, Matthew 25:21, Romans 6:22, 1 Peter 2:16, etc.). This Christian servitude is linked to their complete readiness to serve others according to God's will, and at this level, the Ambassador's book attests that he has grasped this tradition in both Islam and Christianity.

Numerous Biblical verses paint a clear picture of the role of a leader and their relationship with their subjects. The Biblical concept of this role and relationship is constant. "Service" is the key word that emerges from these verses. We will cite a few of them as examples to describe that role and relationship. Then, based on those verses, we will provide a reflection to highlight the essential points contained within them. We will use various terms such as "king," "ruler," "leader," and so on to refer to the leader figure, even though each carries slightly different nuances of meaning.

1. Biblical Verses

As mentioned above, in this section we list a few verses from the Bible that can give us a Biblical insight into the role of the leader.

1-1. Genesis 2:19-20. Adam Naming the Non-Human Creatures

We will see how Adam foreshadows kingship in this verse.

> Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

In the Genesis narrative of the creation of humanity, we can find a very clear picture of a good leader. God asks Adam to name all the creatures, and in that call, we can see an invitation to exercise a

measure of authority. That is, he is invited to identify the creatures' identity. This is an important role of a leader. He must recognize the identity of his subjects. Here we have an idea of Biblical leadership: the leader's responsibility includes recognizing the identity of his followers and helping them to find and grow deeper and stronger in that identity. The sense of identity is fundamental for human beings. An individual's behavior, attitude, thoughts, outlook, and relationships depend largely on their sense of identity. In its absence, a person cannot know himself or understand his human nature and may behave like an irrational being. Therefore, a leader has a great role in helping their subjects establish a sense of identity which is fundamental to social life.

2. Identity and Leadership in the Bible

Within this framework, we must discuss individual identity and social identity. Every person has their own specific identity, and every community (ethnic, religious, social, political, etc.) also possesses its own specific identity. When Genesis 1:27 states that God created man in His own image, this refers to the core of human identity. However, every individual must grow and realize that identity, meaning each person should develop the divine element within them by becoming more fully human.

We can draw an analogy between this growth process and the growth of an apple seed. One could say a good apple seed *is* already an apple tree, because if placed in the right conditions, it can become one. Therefore, it is appropriate to envision a fully grown apple tree in its seed. Similarly, a human, created in the image of God, must realize that image by fully growing into their true being. They need the right conditions for this growth. In this growth process, a leader plays a key

role in nurturing and fulfilling this identity, particularly by promoting conditions where every individual can flourish.

2-1. Deuteronomy 17:14-20. God's Commands to the King

In the Book of Deuteronomy, we have an excellent section that reveals God's perspective on the King of Israel. The text is self-explanatory:

> When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, 'Let us set a king over us, like all the nations around us,' be sure to appoint over you a king the Lord your God chooses. He must be from among your own people. Do not place a foreigner over you, one who is not of your own people. The king, moreover, must not acquire great numbers of horses for himself or make the people return to Egypt to get more of them, for the Lord has told you, 'You are not to go back that way again.' He must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray. He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold. When he takes the throne of his kingdom, he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law, taken from that of the Levitical priests. It is to remain with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees and so that he may not consider himself better than his fellow Israelites and turn from the law to the right or to the left. Then he and his descendants will reign a long time over his kingdom in Israel.
>
> This passage provides a very concrete and penetrating image of the kind of kingship God desires to rule over Israel. First of all, the king must remember that he has been chosen by God. Second, he must remain dependent on God and rule over his subjects as God's

> agent. He must constantly remind himself of God's Law and not deviate from it.

2-2. Deuteronomy 30: 11-20. Choice between life and Death

Moses, addressing the Israelites on behalf of God during their journey towards the promised land, tells them: “See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. …. This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live” (Deuteronomy 30: 15, 19). This story provides a beautiful image of the role of a leader present in the bible. This says that a leader is the one who helps his subjects choose life and avoid death. Life is the result of the following of the way of the Lord and death follows deviation from that way. A king is to choose life and help his subjects choose the same.

2-3. Maccabees 1:41-50 and 2 Maccabees 6: 1 and 6. Kings Disrespecting Their Subjects

These passages from the first and second books of the Maccabees provide a negative model of a king. That is to say, how a king should not behave. It is important to know that a king can show disrespect towards his people and, in doing so, hinder their growth. But by doing so he is going against his divine-given mission. We are considering what is narrated in the book of Maccabees about some policies of their king Antiochus IV Epiphanes. One of his policies was to impose Hellenistic practices on all his subjects (Jews and Gentiles alike) to bring cultural uniformity in the kingdom.

> Then the king [Antiochus IV Epiphanes] wrote to his whole kingdom that all should be one people, and that all should give up their particular customs. All the Gentiles accepted the command of

> the king. Many even from Israel gladly adopted his religion; they sacrificed to idols and profaned the sabbath. And the king sent letters by messengers to Jerusalem and the towns of Judah; he directed them to follow customs strange to the land … He added, 'And whoever does not obey the command of the king shall die' (1 Maccabees 1:41-50). … On the same policy of the king, the narration adds: "Not long after this, the king sent an Athenian senator to compel the Jews to forsake the laws of their ancestors and no longer to live by the laws of God. … People could neither keep the sabbath, nor observe the festivals of their ancestors, nor so much as confess themselves to be Jews (2 Maccabees 6:1).

The Jews considered it their duty to observe the divine-commanded customs such as the observance of Sabbath, circumcision, etc. Those were part of their essential law. As such, those customs were part of their identity. To be forcefully deprived of the possibility of the observance of those laws was for them the privation of a constituent part of their identity. Thus, they were very unhappy with the rule of the king. The success of a king would depend to a great extent on respecting the legitimate customs of different communities within his kingdom and promoting them without becoming a threat to the national unity. If he can do it, each community within his kingdom feels that its identity is respected. That is a way of making the subjects experience security. The failure of a king in respecting the legitimate customs of his people is a failure in his governance.

From this passage we understand that the bible held it an important duty of the king do respect the identity of all the communities within his kingdom and promote them without making them a threat to the national unity. One of the responsibilities of a king is to make provision for all communities (including minorities) within

his kingdom to observe their legitimate customs so that they can feel secure that their identity is respected.

2-4. Samuel 8: 10-18. Israel Asks Prophet Samuel for a King

The Israelites, having settled in the Promised Land, recognized God as their true King, who governed them through prophets like Samuel. However, over time, they grew dissatisfied with this system and approached Prophet Samuel, requesting a king like the other nations around them. To their request, Prophet Samuel replied:

> The king will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots; and he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plough his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his courtiers. He will take one-tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and his courtiers. He will take your male and female slaves, and the best of your cattle and donkeys and put them to his work. He will take one-tenth of your flocks and you shall be his slaves. And in that day, you will cry out because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves; but the Lord will not answer you in that day.

From this passage, we can discern the type of king that God desires for His people. Implicitly, God rejects a king who would exploit or use his subjects for personal gain. Viewed from another perspective, the text reveals that God envisions a king who respects his people — a leader who does not reduce them to servants or conscript them into service as horsemen, soldiers, or laborers for his own benefit. He does not want a king who would take their daughters

to serve his pleasures or who would seize the fruits of their labour to sustain a life of luxury. In essence, God desires His people to be free to work, live, and enjoy the fruits of their efforts without being enslaved by any human authority. The king's role, therefore, is to foster this freedom and create the conditions in which his people can thrive and grow. God respects human freedom, allowing His people to attain their full potential through that freedom. This process of growth can be understood as self-realisation. The role of authority, as God conceives it, is to establish the conditions that enable each person to achieve that full growth.

Of course, freedom does not mean letting people do all what they like or as they like. A leader has a great responsibility to discern, with the subjects, what is most suitable to create the condition in which all can grow and reach the fulfilment of their potentialities or the self-realisation. Anybody making a hurdle to the creation of this condition may be instructed and if continues, may be punished for his own good and that of others in the society.

2-5. Samuel 16. David Chosen by God as King to Rule God's People in God's Name

God asked Prophet Samuel to anoint David as the King of Israel. David was chosen by God to that position. He was to rule his subjects in the name of God; that is to say, it was God who decided that David would be the king (1 Samuel 16: 1). The real ruler would be God and David would be only an agent of God. We shall see what the bible says about the choice of David. This is important because it reveals the mind of God about a king. As God commanded, Samuel anointed David and God's spirit came powerfully on him (1 Sam. 16: 13). The people of Israel visited David in Hebron and reminded him that "The Lord said to you: 'It is you who shall be shepherd of my people

of Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel'" (2 Sam. 5: 2). On the choice of David as the king, the book of Psalms says:

> He chose his servant David, and took him from the sheepfolds; from tending the nursing ewes he brought him to be the shepherd of his people Jacob, of Israel, his inheritance. With upright heart he tended them, and guided them with skilful hand (Psalm 78: 70-72).

From these narrations, we get a very good picture of the role of a king. First of all, he should be a choice of God, the choice cannot be a human work. In other words, it was not the merit of David which made him king, but was the choice of God. Accordingly, God gave David all the graces which he needed to rule over Israel (2 Sam. 7: 8-9). That is the only reason for which the king can work in the name of God. The most important element here is that the king rules his subjects according to the will of God, and it is God's decisions that the king executes. Obviously, the first duty of the king is to be constantly united to God and seek His will for the people whom the king rules. This is a very serious responsibility. The success of the king rests on his union with God and in executing God's will in ruling his subjects. This quality of constant union with God and ruling His people in accordance with His will is the requirement demanded of a king according to the bible.

2-6. Kings 3: 5, 9. Solomon Asks God the Wisdom to Govern His People

A story recounted in the bible gives us insight into a quality which a king should have. In a dream, God, pleased with King Solomon's offering, tells the King "Ask what I should give you". Solomon did not ask more richness or power or destruction of his enemies, but he asked "Give your servant therefore an understanding mind (wisdom) to govern your people, able to discern between good

and evil". This shows another biblical image of a leader, one who prays constantly for wisdom to guide his people, not one who accumulates richness and power. This image has found deep roots in Christian theology regarding the role of leaders and their responsibility towards their subjects. Such leadership sets as priority the good of the subjects and it is the desire for that good that those leaders live, pray and work.

2-7. Psalm 72: 1-4. Prayer for a Good King

Looking at the image of the king in the bible, we can get a view from the prayer Israel is addressing to God. Here it is:

> Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king's son. May he judge your people with righteousness and your poor with justice. May the mountains yield prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness. May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.

The image of a king presented in the prayer is that he should be one guided by divine virtues such as justice and righteousness. He is to be a defender of the poor, a deliverer of the needy, and an opponent of the oppressor. This prayer reflects the ideal of a king that a community wishes and prays for, and the prayer reflects that such a ruler is a gift of God.

2-8. Matthew 7: 9-11, Luke 11: 11-13 and 18: 1-8. God: a Good Father and Judge

Going through a few passages from the New Testament, we shall find that the image of a leader emerging from this section of the bible is consistent with what we have seen above in the Old Testament. In the passages referred to here (Matthew 7: 9-11, Luke 11: 11-

13 18: 1-8), God is presented as a good father and a dutiful judge and those who govern are representatives of that good father and judge. Inviting his listeners to a reasoning process, Jesus exposes his idea. "Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him" (Mt 7: 9-11). In the parallel text from Luke (MT: 11: 11-13), it is said that God will give the Holy Spirit (the greatest gift of God) to those who ask him. God, who is good, will immediately do justice and will not make His children wait (Lk 18: 1-8). God who is a good father and a dutiful judge will do good to his children or subjects. Through vivid imageries, the parables in these passages present God as a governor who is keen on helping his subjects who are considered his children. Additionally, this imagery evokes also the father-children relationship between leaders and subjects.

2-9. Matthew 20: 25-28. Jesus' Concept of leadership is Service: the leader Is a Servant of the people

This passage reveals the mind of Jesus on a ruler.

> But Jesus called them [disciples] to him and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Jesus sets very clearly the point of reference and criteria for leaders. They are to develop a deep awareness of their role as servants of the people whom they govern. The model of this kind of leadership

is Jesus himself who came to serve and not to be served. To be a servant does not mean one who acts always according to the wishes of others, but it refers to one who spends himself (including his resources and time) for the good of others: the *good* is the criterion here. This is the way that a leader can serve his people. It is for the servant-leader to study well the context and the ways in which he can help the growth of his subjects. This role requires a continuous study, reflection and prayer. This servant model requires the leader to be deeply humble, because only that can make a leader a servant. Only great people can become humble. Humility makes one other-centred rather than self-centred. Only such a mentality can empower others. (For the same idea see also Luke 22: 24-30 and Mark 10:42-45).

2-10. Peter 5:1-3. Peter Advises Church Elders to Be Docile and Gentle leaders

Apostle Peter, in his first letter, gives a clear idea of a good leader. “I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it – not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge but be examples to the flock.” In Peter’s time, elders were leaders of local communities of the Church. This passage highlights a leader’s role as a shepherd, caring and leading by example rather than by force. The Church considers Jesus to be the Chief Shepherd and all his followers are sheep. The Chief Shepherd has committed his life for the good of the flock. The leaders of the Church are shepherds under the Chief Shepherd, and they are supposed to follow the same method of commitment (of the Chief Shepherd to the sheep) to their subjects. The most effective way of leading a community is to set good examples in the deeds of a leader. Their honest and just deeds are

more effective sources of inspiration rather than what their words can do.

3. Reflections Based on the Biblical Passages

In this section, we undertake a deeper reflection of the same passages which we have listed above, relating them to the role of a leader in the Christian vision.

In Adam we have the first man of the world according to the bible. Having accomplished the creation, God calls Adam to name the subhuman creatures (Genesis 2: 19-20). God's call of Adam is an invitation to participate in the creation work of God, and is a manifestation of Adam's God-given authority to care for the creatures and enrich further the creation. In the name-giving process, Adam is identifying them and recognising the uniqueness of each of them, and he respects that uniqueness and at the same time assumes responsibility for their care and growth. In fact, he is not the giver of identity to creatures, but he is only taking note of their identity as they are created, and the name (the identification mark) what he gave them remains for ever. He is respecting the identity which God gave them and helping them to maintain that identity. He is their custodian and helps them to multiply. His role is to help them develop and reach their fulfilment. It is there that we can find an important role of a king. A king is called by God to do the work of Adam in his naming function, that is, to identify their uniqueness which God gave them, and to care for them and to help them to grow and reach their fulfilment. In doing so, he is collaborating with God in the creation process. His rule over them should serve these purposes. The king's role consists in guiding his subjects to reach the perfection of creation.

In the book of Deuteronomy (17: 14-20), we have a set of basic guidelines given by God to the king. First of all, the Israelites will be

permitted to have their king, but he will have to rule them according to the will of God. The king should be one from the community of Israel, and not a foreigner. Israel considered it a blessing to have one from among themselves as their king, and not to be submitted to a foreign ruler. As the method of knowing the will of God, the king must keep a copy of the law of God given through Moses, he should read it regularly, and live according to it. This is a call to the king to remain in total submission to God, and to promote the values contained in the law such as justice and mutual respect. The king was not to acquire large military power and wealth and lead his subjects to idolatry. It is prohibited for the king to be tyrant, but a servant of God and His people and to keep before his eyes the common good. In short, the king's authority comes from God, and that is why he has to follow the will of God in governing his subjects.

Moses' words in Deuteronomy 30:11-20, before Israel enters the Promised Land, are a powerful testimony of the image of a king as one who indicates to the subjects the way leading to life and helping them to avoid the way leading to death. He acts as an agent of God, who is fully life. The way leading to life is fidelity to God and total obedience to His law. Before pronouncing these words, Moses had already communicated to Israel the law given by God. Now he says that observing those laws is the only way leading to life, although that observance may seem difficult in the beginning. It is important to see that finally the decision is left to the people and at that level they are responsible for their choice of life or death. Life means living according to the will of God, and death means breaking away totally from the communion with God. A king does all that he can to help people see the advantages of choosing life and the dangers of choosing death.

In the book of Maccabees, we have seen how King Antiochus

imposed the Greek culture and religion upon the Jews (1 Maccabees 1:41-50 -2 Maccabees 6: 1-6). This passage has something to say about the quality of a king, namely, it explains who a king should not be or a model which a king should not follow. Seeking cultural uniformity in his kingdom, Antiochus suppressed all the legitimate particular customs of the Jewish people and permitted many Hellenic customs such as sacrifice of pigs which animal was considered unclean by Jews. He thought that by imposing this uniformity, he could make all of them into one people. In fact, what made Israel one people was their faith in God and observance of the law which God gave. These two facts distinguished them from other people. Thus, the king, by imposing uniformity, was denying their distinct identity. Imposition of a foreign culture on Israel, cancelling their legitimate customs, was not a help for them to grow in their identity. In fact, a king's most important duty is to help, by creating suitable conditions, his subjects to grow and reach their fulfilment.

Samuel (8: 10-18) shows how Israel's desire to be like other nations around them leads them to ask God a king like those others. But for God, Israel was his chosen people and should not be like other nations. God Himself was their king. When they insisted, He communicates to Samuel a warning about how a human king will exploit them and give priority to his interests at the cost of their interests. He will demand heavy works from his subjects like military service, will seize their resources and fruits of their work, and they will not have the freedom which they have when they are directly under God's rule. This passage also attests to the temptations of a king, or gives a negative model of a king. A king's duty rests mainly in ruling his subjects in accordance with the will of God by respecting them and helping their full growth and self-realisation.

Another passage from the same book speaks about the choice

of David as the king of Israel (1 Samuel chapter 16). It shows clearly that according to the bible it is God who chooses the king to rule His people. Thus, anyone who tries to gain this position by manipulation is not acting in accordance with the will of God. Only if the king is chosen by God, can he penetrate the mind of God and rule his subjects according to that mind. As mentioned already, bible perceives the king as God's agent and thus only according to the will of God should he govern his subjects.

A passage of a slightly different message is found in 1 Kings 3: 5 and 9 which narrates the prayer of Solomon. God appears to Solomon, who has recently become the king of Israel, and promises him to give what he asks for. He did not ask for material riches or more power or destruction of his enemy, but for wisdom and the ability to discern between good and evil to govern his subjects. This is a very important episode for a king. He should constantly pray for wisdom and the ability to discern between good and evil to govern his subjects. Only then can he govern his subjects in the right path. In addition, it shows Solomon's humility and sense of total dependence on God for the capacity to govern his subjects. This is also a quality needed for a king. Above all, It is important to note that Solomon put the wellbeing of his subjects before all other riches and that is why he asked for wisdom and ability to discern between good and evil: all other richness and qualities were means which may help govern well his subjects, that is, for their wellbeing. This fact reminds us that a king is to constantly and before anything else seek the wellbeing of his subjects and it is for them that he has become the king.

The prayer in Psalm 72: 1-4 contains the vision of an ideal king: a just and a righteous one. While it appears only as a prayer, it is equally a vision of an ideal king of Israel. The people are praying for this kind of king so that he can guide his subjects with justice and

righteousness. This prayer also visualises the king as the judge of his subjects who carries out this mission with righteousness and justice especially towards the poor. This prayer reminds the king of his duty to be always just and righteous in governing and judging his subjects and that he may also pray for these graces.

Coming to the New Testament, in Matthew 7: 9-11, Jesus presents another image of leadership: one in whom his subjects can have absolute trust – that is to say, a leader should be absolutely trustworthy. Through a parable, Jesus reassures God's goodness towards those who seek him. If human parents, who are imperfect, know how to be good towards their children, how much more the heavenly Father (God) will know how to be good towards His children! A king is a father of all his subjects and should know to deal with them as a loving father would do towards his children.

We have a passage very relevant to the theme that we are treating in Matthew 20: 25-28. Here, Jesus teaches about true leadership, that is, a leader should be first of all a servant of his subjects. Jesus teaches this as a response to the petition of the mother of James and John that her sons may get high positions (right and left of Jesus) in the kingdom which Jesus would establish. The vision of true leadership, according to Jesus, does not go along with the request of the mother of those disciples; for Jesus, that was the normal world's concept of leadership. Jesus emphasises servant model of leadership. For him, a true leader is not to seek gains for himself (like positions) and not to impose his will or likes and dislikes over his subjects. They are really self-serving people and abuse their authority to "lord it over" their subjects to make them servants of the leaders. But Jesus wants true leaders to be the servants of their subjects, that is to say, giving priority to the needs or good of others over the likes and dislikes of oneself. This means that true leadership involves radical

humility, self-sacrifice, and total dedication to the service of others.

Peter 5: 1-3 offers Apostle Peter's concept of leadership; he outlines certain principles which are to be followed by Church leaders. He is exhorting the leaders as one who has partaken in the suffering of Christ and who is confident to share Christ's future glory, that is, as one who has known deeply the message of Christ and deeply moved by faith in Him. His words worth citing here: "tend the flock of God … exercising oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it – not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge but be examples to the flock". First of all, the expression "flock of God" captures our attention. According to this vision, the subjects of a king belong to God, and they are not the property of the king. That implies that the king has to rule them according to the will of God: "as God would have you do it". This requires accountability to God for the work of governance. He is not to be motivated by any worldly gain, and rule them by giving good examples without being tyrants to impose on them the king's wishes. But as shepherds, the leaders are to care for their subjects, protect them, guide them even by giving up the shepherd's life. Here also a leader is asked to be a servant.

From these passages, we understand that the biblical image of a king is that of a servant. Service to God is rendered through obedience to God, and, in that obedience, as God's agent, the king rules his subjects according to the will of God and in keeping with the values which God has taught in different ways and through different people. This image is very much present in the bible and is often repeated in different ways. In addition, we understand that God loves His people, and the provision for a king is part of the expression of that love. That is why, God asks the king to rule His people with respect for them and to help them to reach their full growth. God's

love for His people is expressed through His self-giving and He asks the same from kings, that is to say, the kings are to govern by giving themselves for the good of their subjects spending their energy and time for the wellbeing of their subjects. This self-giving for the good of others is the most evident sign of love, and kings are duty bound to love their subjects in this way.

4. The Principle of the Common Good

Before we conclude this article, we would like to have a short section relating the king's role to the principle of the common good. According to the teachings of the Church, the common good is "the sum total of the conditions of social life enabling groups and individuals to realise their perfection more fully and readily".[1] Following the same line, the encyclical *Laudato si* of Pope Francis defines the common good as "the sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfilment" (Francis, 24 May 2015, *Laudato si* 156). In essence, the principle of the common good is understood as the conditions in a society which help its members to attain the full growth and development of their capacities. A believer may say that the fulfilment of a person is reached when he becomes that for which God has created him. If every person in a society has the circumstances suitable for their full flourishing in every sense in keeping with their human dignity, we can say that in that society the

1. The document of the Second Vatican Council *Gaudium et spes* n. 26, promulgated by Pope Paul VI on 7 December 1965. The translation is from Norman P. Tanner, ed. & tr., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, London-Washington DC, 1990. See also the commentary on this document by Otto Semmelroth in Herbert Vorgrimler, ed., *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. V, London, 1969, 170-172.

common good exists. This growth is not limited to the material welfare, but is the integral development of all persons. This also has to do with mutual respects of rights and obligations of each individual in the society. The common good is a mutual commitment of all in a society to creating the conditions in which every individual can reach his full growth in harmony with others for which the state, guided by just and efficient leaders create suitable structures and law.

In the explanation of the biblical passages given above, often we can find that the king's role in a society is tightly tied to the creation and promotion of the principle of the common good. It is he who should create and promote the law and other structures which can be at the service of the common good. Part of his responsibility in this field is to give exemplary punishment to those who deliberately create obstacles to the common good. Of course, in the pursuit of the common good, we cannot deny the role of the society and each individual in the creation of the conditions in which all can realise their perfection more fully and readily. Individuals and smaller groups are not merely passive recipients; they are both beneficiaries and benefactors. In other words, they have a contributory role as well or they actively participate in the social life by offering whatever positive they can to the wellbeing of the society, which often contributes to the common good or shared goals. In the realisation of the common good, the king is a means and the society is not meant for him, but he is meant for the society.

The biblical image of leadership is intrinsically connected to the principle of common good. As briefly mentioned above, common good is the condition in which all in a society can reach their full growth. All members of a community have a part in creating such a condition. The role of the leader of a community is particularly significant in this case. He has to see that such a condition is created

through suitable laws and their correct application and honest administration of justice. If somebody seriously creates obstacles to the existence of such a condition, it is up to the leader to make suitable provision to punish him in order to reintegrate him into the society. If we understand common good in this sense, I think that the biblical image of a leader can be summarised as one who gives himself to creating and sustaining common good, namely, the condition in which all people can reach their full growth in every aspect such as physical, mental, spiritual, intellectual and social. For this, it is necessary that the leader deeply study all the necessary elements, reflect on various aspects, and pray constantly, purifying himself to understand and follow the will of God. A leader may be guided by the vision that all what he does directly or indirectly should promote the common good.

Conclusion

The leadership according to the bible can be conceived only in relation to the wellbeing of the subjects. Any concept of leadership of tyranny and self-centred rule is alien to the biblical image of leadership. In other words, leadership is not meant for the material growth of the leader.

God wished that the kings of Israel should have deep knowledge of God's law, meditate on the scripture, obey God's law, and be humble before God considering himself as a servant of God and His people. An ideal king is conceived as a man of justice, righteousness, incorrupt, compassionate to the people especially those who suffer, striving to obtain freedom to his subjects, morally integral, servant-hearted, accountable to God and possessor of other such virtues.

Obedience to God implies leading a life observing the values taught by God. Servant leadership is a key value which a leader is to

assume, because the leader's role is that of service to his subjects. Bible speaks of the need of wisdom and understanding and ability to discern between good and evil for a leader. In the absence of these virtues, a man cannot be a good leader. These are God's gifts for which a king has to constantly desire and pray. A true king sets as his priority the wellbeing of his subjects. He cannot put his wellbeing before that of his subjects; rather, he works constantly for his subjects even, at times, at the cost of his own wellbeing. Freedom is conceived as the space which is required for each individual and group for responsible growth. It gives the opportunity to use the conditions in which all in a society can fully develop their personality and capacities. The promised land for Israel represents the state of freedom. Each individual in groups is marching towards the promised land where all will have the conditions in which they can fully develop. The exercise of freedom is to be guided by the principle of the common good, and a leader has to set guidelines for its correct exercise. King has a fundamental role in the creation and promotion of those conditions.

As a conclusion, we can find that a good image of a leader is available in the figure of St Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus Christ. We can see that he helped Jesus grow in wisdom and age and in the favour of God and man as the evangelist says: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years [age], and in divine and human favour" (Luke 2: 52). This is a very insightful verse. If Jesus grew in that way, Joseph had a key role in that growth. A king's role is to help his subjects in wisdom and age and in the favour of God and man.

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The Relationship of Hegel's Political Philosophy to Classical and Modern Political Philosophy

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Abstract

In this article, the author aims to demonstrate how Hegel's political philosophy establishes a synthesis between classical political philosophy, particularly that of Aristotle, and modern political philosophy, from Machiavelli to Hobbes and Rousseau. In other words, the author seeks to show how Hegel utilized the strengths of both periods of political thought to construct his modern state.This research, conducted using a descriptive-analytical method, has studied all the primary texts of Western political thought. One of its findings is the influence of classical political philosophy on Hegel in the domain of the state. This is where, echoing Aristotle, Hegel views the state as prior to the individual, and the sphere of the common good as generally taking precedence over the

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individual. Consequently, the state holds a higher position than civil society and the family in Hegel's thought.On the other hand, modern political thought discovers the individual as separate from the whole and from the state. It attempts to recognize this newly discovered individual, with all their desires and inclinations, and to make the state subservient to them.Hegel, by drawing on the achievements of both past traditions, portrays a state that, while it is prior to the individual, is entirely structured from within the individual and is the objectivity of their inner subjectivity.

Keywords

Classical Politics, Modern Politics, Aristotle, Hegel, Nature, Inner Freedom.

Introduction

In this article, we aim to gain an understanding of the difference in the logic of classical and modern political thought. The discussion will primarily focus on the political philosophies of Aristotle and Hegel, or more precisely, it will be a philosophical and historical exposition of Aristotle's *Politics* and Hegel's *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. The author believes that a precise and meticulous explanation of these two books can lead to a comprehensive understanding of the logic of perceiving the political realm in the classical and modern eras.

However, to bridge the more than two-thousand-year gap between Aristotle and Hegel, we must also explain the fundamental ruptures that have occurred in the history of political thought. Without referencing these ruptures, it's impossible to gain a deep understanding of Hegel or to successfully explain the historical transformation of classical political thought and its transition to modern political thought. This is because Hegel builds upon the shoulders of prominent thinkers such as Niccolò Machiavelli, Hobbes, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Kant, and Fichte. Without understanding the changes they brought about in the history of political thought, neither Hegel nor the logic of the rupture between modern and classical political thought can be explained.

Furthermore, some initial explanations regarding the structural method of this article are necessary. First, the article begins with Machiavelli and the other modern philosophers. Within their explanation, it will constantly refer back to the logic of Aristotle's political approach and his perspective on each topic, comparing them simultaneously. This way, when the reader reaches the section on Aristotle, they will already be familiar with all the conflicts. Thus, Aristotle will initially be explained within the context of modern philosophy, and at the end of this section, we will independently

elaborate on the elements of his political philosophy. Second, after explaining Aristotle, we will move to the final section, namely Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, where we will endeavor to explain both logics of these two distinct political perspectives, considering Hegel's view and their place within his system of political thought.

Research background: Regarding the topic of this article, no independent research has been conducted so far, and the author has tried to explain Hegel's political thought in the synthesis between classical and modern political thought and to show how Hegel used the tradition of past thought.

1. Niccolò Machiavelli and the Foundation of Modern Political Thought

Niccolò Machiavelli, with his concept of "effectual truth," immediately distinguishes himself from political treatise writers, religious law proponents, and the virtue-based philosophy of Greece. He asserts that he's not interested in dictating what people *should* do or how a prince *ought* to behave. Instead, he intends to speak about the "effectual reality"—that which actually happens in practice, not what exists in imaginations.Machiavelli writes:

> Since my intention is to write something useful for anyone who understands it, it seems to me more fitting to go directly to the effectual truth of the thing than to the imagination of it. Many have imagined republics and principalities that have never been seen or known to exist in truth; for it is so far from how one lives to how one should live that he who neglects what is done for what should be done learns his ruin rather than his preservation; for a man who wishes to make a profession of good in everything must necessarily come to grief among so many who are not good (Machiavelli, 1998, p. 61).

With this statement, Machiavelli fundamentally challenges all utopian ideals and all ethical books concerning politics. Tabatabai, in his book *Jadal-e Qadim va Jadid* (The Contest of Ancient and Modern), writes:

> In the realm of political action, any action and force that has an effectual role in the arrangement and transformation of forces—even mere pretense and the logic of 'appearance,' which can be more effective than reality in political relations—is the reality of the matter (Tabatabai, 2003, pp. 488-489).

In an unprecedented move in *The Prince*, Machiavelli substitutes the logic of appearance for the logic of being, considering it even more significant than what truly is, due to its greater external effect. This marked Machiavelli's first rupture from the tradition of past political thought. Machiavelli's second epistemological rupture from the traditional basis of political thought lies in the concept of fortune (fortuna). As Machiavelli writes in *The Prince*:

> I do not ignore that many have held, and still hold, the opinion that worldly events are governed by fortune and by God, in such a way that human reason cannot correct them, nor is there any remedy for them. From this, one might conclude that one should not sweat much over things, but let oneself be governed by chance. Nonetheless, so that our free will may not be extinguished, I judge it to be true that fortune is the arbiter of half of our actions, but that she allows us to direct the other half, or close to it (Machiavelli, 1998, p. 98).

He incessantly adds that humans can overcome fortune or exploit it for their benefit through foresight, prudence, and effort. Indeed, the very purpose of writing *The Prince* was to disrupt the fortune that had been ruling Italy, and Machiavelli implores the

contemporary prince to shatter fortune with his own sword. This is because, in Niccolò Machiavelli's view, fortune is a woman, and she yields to masculine virtues.

Leo Strauss, to highlight this revolutionary element of Machiavelli's philosophy in contrast to classical philosophy and its logic, writes: Classical political philosophy was a quest for the best political order or the best government that would foster the most virtue and tell people what they ought to do. However, the establishment of this best political government fundamentally depended on elusive, uncontrollable fortune. According to Plato's *Republic*, Plato believed that the emergence of the best regime essentially depended on an accidental congruence between philosophy and political power. Aristotle, the so-called realist, also agreed with Plato on this matter, believing that the best form of government was one that had the greatest correspondence with virtuous action, and that too depended on chance to occur. But this matter, which for Aristotle was under the dominion of fortune, for Machiavelli was merely a major problem that could be solved by an outstanding and capable man (Strauss, 1953, pp. 84-85).

This innovative approach of Machiavelli stemmed from his conviction that he had discovered the science of politics. For him, or for example, for Hobbes or Locke, politics is an artificial body (not a natural phenomenon as the Greeks thought). Since we ourselves have constructed it, we can reform it by relying on the techniques we have understood in its construction. This means that from this point onward, political discussion is no longer about ethics, fortune, and civic virtue; instead, politics has been reduced to techniques through which solutions to any matter can be found.

Machiavelli's next step was the expulsion of ethics from the realm of politics. This is because Machiavelli believes that, unlike in

the domain of individual ethics, in the realm of politics, a good deed can have very bad consequences. He sees a significant gap between action and effect; that is, a morally good action can have an extraordinarily disastrous result and effect in the political sphere. As he states in chapter thirty-seven of the third book of *Discourses*: in every human action undertaken to achieve a desired result, one can always distinguish between two aspects—good and bad—and there is always the possibility that a good action might lead to a bad effect (Machiavelli, 1998, pp. 294-296). Justice, which was considered an ethical concept, also stands outside Machiavelli's political philosophy. He has no belief in justice as an independent entity that can be defined and explained; rather, he believes in the relationship between political forces. This means that justice is defined by necessity at any given moment. The concepts of justice, good, and bad are defined within the relationship between political forces, and not as something prior to any external event. In this regard, Tabatabai writes:

> Every action, under specific conditions and within the relationship of certain forces, creates an effect, and it is this effect that determines the nature of that action. Based on this assessment of the gap between the reality of the relationship of forces and power dynamics and the illusion of an ethical politics, Machiavelli, by breaking from the moral logic of political writing, lays a new foundation for politics, marking the beginning of a new era in the history of political thought (Tabatabai, 2003 b, pp. 493-494).

Another of Niccolò Machiavelli's innovations was the invention of the concept of power in a new sense, which remained permanently in the tradition of Western thought. This is because he considers tension to be inherent in the very concept of power, which is the most fundamental concept of new political thought. As Tabatabai states, Machiavelli does not view power as a monolithic and static

rock; rather, for Machiavelli, power is the outcome of the relationship between forces and a plural reality within unity, and this unity arises solely from the continuous tension of its components (Tabatabai, 2003 b, p. 495) As Machiavelli writes in *The Prince* on this matter:

> In every city one finds these two diverse humors, and this arises from the fact that the people desire not to be commanded or oppressed by the great, and the great desire to command and oppress the people. From these two diverse appetites, three effects are produced in cities: principality, liberty, or anarchy (Machiavelli, 1998, p. 39).

2. The Far-Reaching Strides of Hobbes's Political Philosophy

Initially, Strauss believed that it was Hobbes who had unilaterally discredited the entire tradition of political philosophy preceding him, deeming their ideas mistaken and inadequate. However, Strauss later writes that Hobbes, in fact, trod the path that Machiavelli had previously opened (Strauss, 1953, pp. 83-84). In another of his books, *Natural Right and History*, Strauss also writes: "Before Christopher Columbus, it was Machiavelli who discovered a continent on which Hobbes built his theory" (Strauss, 1953, p. 176). Therefore, in explaining Hobbes, we will attempt to elucidate him as continuing the path initiated by Machiavelli and in relation to him.

Hobbes's first major undertaking is realized in his return to Machiavelli. As previously mentioned, Machiavelli bids farewell to Greek nature in his political philosophy; in other words, he severed the pre-existing link between the science of politics and natural law, and no longer believed in justice as something independent of human will. Hobbes, by returning to this revolutionary element of Machiavelli's political philosophy, added another step, which Strauss explains thus:

> While prior to Hobbes, natural law was explained in light of the hierarchical system of human ends, with self-preservation at its lowest rung, Hobbes understood natural law solely as self-preservation; for this reason, natural law was fundamentally understood as a right to self-preservation, and in distinction from any duty or obligation (Strauss, 1953, p. 88).

This transformation from duty to rights is a revolution that effectively paved the way for the theory of liberalism, as in such a theory, the state's duty is to defend and protect precisely these rights. This is important because in ancient political philosophy, right stemmed from natural law, and the individual possessed rights by virtue of following these natural laws. Thus, the major difference between ancient and modern political philosophy is that ancient political philosophy considered law as the principle, while modern political philosophy was based on rights.

Indeed, it was this complex and novel understanding of nature by Hobbes that constituted a major rupture from the traditional ancient system. And it was this new perspective on nature that was, in effect, put forth in opposition to Aristotle's view of nature, and Hobbes knew precisely what he was aiming at. This is even evident from the significant subtitle of Hobbes's most important book, *Leviathan*. The full title of his important book in English is: *Leviathan or the Matter, Form, and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiastical and Civil*. Tabatabai, in his interpretation, writes:

> Hobbes's consideration, in choosing the book's title, was due to the four Aristotelian causes, and by bringing in the material and formal causes, he intended to highlight the correctness of those two causes in understanding the state. However, by completely abandoning the final cause and replacing the Aristotelian efficient cause with power in general, he distances himself from the Aristotelian basis

> in understanding and explaining power (Tabatabai, 2014 a, pp. 73-74).

Indeed, as will be explained in detail later, Aristotle brought his particular understanding of nature into the realm of human affairs, stating that the city (*polis*) is a natural phenomenon and not the result of a contract. As Aristotle writes in *Politics*:

> From this it is clear that the city is a natural growth, and that man is by nature a political animal, and a man that is by nature and not merely by accident cityless is either a poor sort of being, or else superhuman (Aristotle, 2011 a, p. 6).

However, in the second revolution within Hobbes's political philosophy, the idea emerges that society or the city is not natural at all, but rather the result of a contract.

Hobbes's other revolutionary act was to cast man into the state of nature. In doing so, he suddenly strips man of all affiliations he had acquired throughout his history from theology and nature, leaving him with only his desires and needs in the state of nature. With these meager materials, man gradually constructs his own political system, thereby explaining the state and humanity. Hobbes depicts the state of nature in *Leviathan* as follows:

> In this war of every man against every man, this also is consequent: that nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice have no place. Where there is no common power, there is no law; where no law, no injustice. Force and fraud are in war the two cardinal virtues (Hobbes, 1651, p. 79).

When Hobbes leaves man in such a primitive condition, he not only takes away his moral, virtuous, and religious affiliations, but also, on this basis, he can articulate the science of the state and, in a sense, create the science of politics. This is because from this point

onward, nothing is natural; rather, everything is a human artifact. And because it is a human artifact, created by humans, it can be explained from within and is not explained by nature.

Therefore, from this perspective, one can say that political philosophy, as Aristotle thought, is not about understanding a natural phenomenon, but rather about constructing and creating the state. This is why the state transforms into a science in modern philosophy. And it is under these conditions that one can speak of technique, because its construction is a human endeavor, and humans, not nature, know the techniques for solving its problems. As Strauss also writes: "one of the characteristics of the first wave of modernity was the elimination of the moral-political problem and its replacement by the technical problem" (Strauss, 1953, p. 89). Contrary to Aristotle's view, the state is no longer a natural entity but an artificial animal created by humans, and its sovereignty serves those who formed it. Nature, according to Hobbes, is the art by which God created and governs the world, and human art is to imitate this very nature and create an artificial animal.

3. A Glimpse into Rousseau's Influence

With Rousseau's ethical, legal, and political philosophy, numerous ruptures occur from the logic of classical political thought. Leo Strauss understands the second wave of modernity to begin with Rousseau, writing: "The second wave of modernity is ushered in by Rousseau. He changed the moral climate of the West as profoundly as Machiavelli had changed it before him" (Strauss, 1953, p. 89).

Rousseau's first important action in the history of European political thought was the destruction of both the classical concept of nature and the modern concept of nature, replacing both with reason. The classical concept of nature is what the Greeks understood: a divine natural order governing the universe, containing all laws

inherently as fixed principles from eternity. Man had to harmonize himself with this eternal, teleological mechanism of nature and lacked the power to disrupt this existing order. Regarding this, Strauss writes:

> It is very different to say, as in Greece, that man is the measure of all things, than to say that man is the the maker of everything. In the first case, man has a place within a whole, human power is limited, and man cannot overcome the limits of his nature. Our nature has been enslaved in many ways (Aristotle) or we are playthings of the gods (Plato) (Strauss, 1953, pp. 85-86).

Strauss says this limitation in Greece manifested itself in the impenetrable power of fortune. In Greece, the good life is a life in accordance with nature, which means being within the limits of nature, and so on (Strauss, 1953, pp. 85-86). Generally, one can say that there was a nature that guided everything toward its ends, and human will was of little importance. But with Rousseau, this view of nature becomes obsolete. With Rousseau, nature no longer holds any authority over man.

The second type of view is the concept of nature that developed in the modern era from Hobbes onward—a nature understood from the core of human existence, which traces back to Christianity and will be explained in the section on Hegel. However, even this modern concept of nature had fixed and unchanging principles. Rousseau's contribution is to place reason in the stead of nature, thereby impregnating the concept of nature with history. That is, nature gives way to historical reason, which is constantly progressing, and its principles are also changing. In fact, in Rousseau's state of nature, man not only lacks society, as Hobbes says, but also lacks rationality and its ever-increasing development. Thus, the past is no longer the guiding light for the future. As Tabatabai writes: In Rousseau's political philosophy, man transitions from a natural being

to a social being, and natural laws give way to laws of reason. Thus, Rousseau denies the *de facto* existence of natural law in the state of nature so that he can introduce it as the law of reason into political society (Tabatabai, 2014 a, pp. 447-448). What is known in Europe as "rationality" reaches its peak in Rousseau. And precisely because human rationality lays down the law, that law is correct, and good and bad are understood in terms of what the general will of society dictates.

The concept of history first appears in European political philosophy in Rousseau's thought; no one before him had incorporated the concept of history into their discussions. One of the applications of this concept in Rousseau's philosophy is that the concept of the ideal (*idea*) for the first time emerges as something concrete and realizable, not merely an horizon, because this concept is intertwined with the historical rational growth of humanity. Rousseau, as Strauss says, removes the gap between "is" and "ought," between the real and the ideal. According to Strauss, Rousseau states that there is a connection between the general will of individuals and the historical progress of man, such that with the movement of these two and the desire of the general will, anything can be realized in history. This actualization of "ought" into "is" occurs through a historical process and does not require human intervention for its actualization. This statement, of course, contains Rousseau's precondition that, in his view, man possesses free will and no one has authority over him, and society and its advancements originate solely from human will.

According to Rousseau, the general will of human beings is distinct from the will of all; that is, it is not merely a combination of the wills of all private individuals. Rather, it is the will of every citizen considered as a member of the sovereign power. In Rousseau's philosophy, sovereignty means the sovereignty of the people, and the

sovereignty of the people is composed of a general will that represents the common good, not our individual interests. And this general will, as the will of the citizen, never errs. Rousseau resolves all complex discussions related to the individual, society, the state, and their unity through the general will, creating a bond between them.

The general will replaces the concept of nature in Rousseau's political philosophy. And because this general will is the will of all individuals of a nation, it never errs. This will lays down its own law and obeys only its own law, as he explicitly states that in the state there is only one contract, and that contract is the social contract of free will, and this contract negates any other contract. Human freedom, self-legislation, the realization of historical reason, and alongside all of these, the replacement of human reason for the law of nature—all these concepts emerge from Rousseau's philosophy onward. Strauss, at the end of his discussion on Rousseau, writes: "Rousseau's thought was the inspiration for Kant and the philosophy of German Idealism, that is, the philosophy of freedom" (Strauss, 1953, p. 92). This statement by Strauss is profoundly true, for no one influenced German Idealism as much as Rousseau.

4. An Exposition of the Key Elements of Aristotle's Political Philosophy

Aristotle's political philosophy stood as the most advanced political theory of its time within the classical world. In political thought, Aristotle was the first to distinguish the term "politics" from concepts like household management, mastery and slavery, and monarchy, defining it instead in terms of the public good and citizenship. Before delving into his political thought, we will first examine the fundamental terms of Greek political thought.

Indeed, the fundamental word and concept of Greek knowledge

in the realm of human action was polis. Farabi interpreted this as *madina*, and Avicenna, in his *Danishnameh-i 'Ala'i*, rendered it as *shahr* (city). For the Greeks, as will be discussed, the highest human bonds and associations were established within the order and organization of the people of a city, which was called *polis* in Greek. This was distinct from the city in its current usage as an administrative unit, which in Greek was called *astu*. Thus, for the Greeks, the paramount bond among human individuals in a city was citizenship, which was organized among free and equal men in independent Greek cities, outside the sphere of the household and family ties. All other ties, such as religious and family bonds, were considered subordinate to it.

The Greek city was the domain of public good and stood outside the relations that constituted the sphere of private interests. "Society" in its current usage is defined in opposition, or at least in contrast, to the state. In contrast, within Greek cities, the public good of citizens was unified with the community of those considered citizens. For the Greeks, every political matter was defined in its opposition to the personal and private, and the political was synonymous with the common and public. The political realm was associated with the Greek city and its free and equal citizens.

In ancient Greek political philosophy, political relations were the only matters considered truly worthy of theoretical discussion. This was where people deliberated on the common good of citizens. Other matters, such as trade, commerce, and wealth creation, held little value and, as will be discussed later, were largely condemned by Aristotle. They didn't even merit theoretical discussion and were simply relegated to the sphere of household management (economics).

Another aspect of little importance in Greek philosophy was individual interest. This did not involve discussions of traits like

greed, ambition, or increasing personal profit. Instead, the focus revolved around virtues, which stands in complete contrast to modern political philosophy. In modern thought, what were considered "bad" human traits are not only not condemned but are even praised. For instance, from Hobbes to Adam Smith, the belief is that if society can make the most use of these "bad" human traits in various areas, it will lead to greater progress, wealth creation, and societal welfare. This implies that these traits should be placed in a dialectical process where they can be harnessed to increase individual personal gain, ultimately leading to the common good and greater social welfare.

To better understand the value of political relations in Greece and to explain a few other terms: The concept of command or *arche* was separated from kingship or *basileia* and applied solely to the realm of political activity. *Arche* was annually delegated to the political ruler through council elections, and this election required preliminary debate and deliberation. Later, it was said that *arche* was at the center, meaning that in the *agora*, discussion and consultation among equals flowed freely in a public space. From then on, the city was not built around a royal palace; instead, at the city's center was the agora, or the public space and common ground, where matters concerning the public good were discussed and deliberated. From the moment the city was organized around the public space and the *agora* square, it became a polis.. The importance of discourse on political matters and the public good of the city is understood from this very mise-en-scène that governed Greek cities, as the city's center was no longer the king's palace, but a place where people spoke about the common welfare.

Aristotle writes in the first book of *Politics*:

> Every city, as we see, is a kind of community, and every community is established with a view to some good; for mankind

> always act in order to obtain that which they think good. But if all communities aim at some good, the state or political community, which is the highest of all, and which embraces all the rest, aims at good in a greater degree than any other, and at the highest good (Aristotle, 2011 b, p. 1).

Aristotle's system of thought is teleological, and in politics, just as in all other sciences he discussed, it is goal-oriented. Its ultimate goal is human happiness, and it is precisely for this reason that Aristotle considers politics the supreme science. In fact, one can say that the natural order, or *phusis* in the Greek sense, is fundamentally teleological, and anyone thinking within this system cannot disregard this fact. This is why Aristotle's works are interconnected by a few general principles, one of which is precisely this notion of good and end. Here, it is better to explain the concept of nature more thoroughly.Aristotle writes in *Politics*:

> Hence it is evident that the state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal. And he who by nature and not by mere accident is without a state, is either a bad man or above humanity; he is like the 'tribeless, lawless, homeless' man of whom Homer speaks, censured as a monster (Aristotle, 2011 a, pp. 5-6).

It is clear that nature in the Greek and Aristotelian philosophical system is a teleological totality, and everything in this cosmic order possesses a nature that clarifies its end, limits of movement, and perfection. The concept of nature and its understanding in Aristotle's thought system can be one of the principles that unifies all his works. It is also one of those principles that is rejected by all philosophers in the modern world, even though the discovery of this concept in Greece was itself initially considered a revolution.

Strauss, in his essay "The Three Waves of Modernity," writes about the Greek concept of nature:

> According to this concept of nature, all natural beings move toward an end, a perfection toward which they strive. There is a specific perfection that belongs to each specific nature; there is a specific nature for man that is determined only by man's nature as a social and rational being. Nature provides a standard that is good (Strauss, 1953, p. 85).

Based on this, Aristotle also regards the city (*polis*) as a natural phenomenon and writes:

> From this it is evident that the state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal. And he who by nature and not by mere accident is without a state, is either a bad man or above humanity; he is like the 'tribeless, lawless, homeless' man of whom Homer speaks (Aristotle, 2011 a, p. 6).

The Aristotelian human is social by nature; that is, nature dictates that they live in society. More precisely, the cosmic order governing humans compels them to submit to community. Understanding this is immensely important in the history of political thought because the concept of nature undergoes internal transformation multiple times throughout its historical course. Through this evolution, the very meaning of the approach to politics changes.

Regarding the relationship between ethics and politics, Hamid Enayat, in The Foundations of Western Political Thought, writes: "Since the goal of political society is happiness, and happiness, in Aristotle's view, lies in the activity and application of virtue, its institution does not tolerate tyranny and oppression, and its perfection is only possible through moral virtues" (Enayat, 1972, p. 72). In the Greek

intellectual system, autocracy wasn't merely a form of rule but represented an anomalous order that damaged or corrupted the cosmic order founded on justice and the moderation of its parts. Thus, Greek opposition to autocracy was less a political stance and more an aversion to disorder and a desire to avoid disrupting the natural order. This further deepens our understanding of the Greek perspective on the cosmos and nature.

If we look at these aforementioned theories of Aristotle through the lens of a reformer grounded in the principles of modern political thought, one could almost say that all of them are fundamentally flawed in their approach and have no place in the realm of politics. With Machiavelli, as we discussed, the spheres of ethics, virtue, and happiness are entirely separated from politics. He laid out a blueprint for politics that largely persists to this day. Even Kant, Europe's champion of ethics, follows Machiavelli in this regard: if you make decisions in politics with an ethical approach, you're effectively condemning your country to ruin. According to Machiavelli, politics is not about fostering human happiness; it's about maintaining the balance of power in the political world. It's irrelevant to the state whether I wish to be happy or not. This dealt a severe blow to the foundation of Greek ethical politics, as well as to the political and religious treatise writers.

Furthermore, in modern politics, there is no belief in a fixed end or ultimate goal. As Hobbes stated, politics pursues neither the highest good nor the ultimate end. As Strauss writes: "The rejection of the final cause destroyed the theoretical foundation of classical political philosophy" (Strauss, 1953, p. 87). This is because in modern politics, no cosmic order governs; instead, man is the central figure of the world and its creator. Nature becomes subject to human reason and will, and there is no longer a predetermined end in the world.

To deepen our understanding of Aristotle's ethical and virtue-centric approach to political matters, the type of critique he levels against Plato's communal ownership of property can be helpful. Aristotle believes that making property communal leads to the corruption of two virtues: self-control and liberality (Aristotle, 2011 b, p. 67). Aristotle offers an ethical reason to explain why communal property is not correct, which highlights his perspective on political issues. Or, for example, in Book Seven, Aristotle places material pleasures beneath spiritual pleasures, validating material pleasures based on them, and assigns a limit to material pleasures beyond which they become harmful. He writes that material pleasures are only naturally valuable when they contribute to the comfort and joy of the soul and mind (Aristotle, 2011 b, p. 373). Even when Aristotle discusses the best form of government (which is the most political and crucial part of political philosophy), his ethical approach is clearly visible. This is because Aristotle believes that to understand the best form of government, one must first propose the best and most pleasant way of life. The nature of the desirable best government is understood only through this method (Aristotle, 2011 b, p. 371).

Another point that contrasts sharply with the approach of modern political thought is the idea, as seen in *Nicomachean Ethics*, that the duty of educating citizens and determining the necessity of various arts and sciences falls to the government and the legislator. This is detailed in Books Seven and Eight of *Politics*, where Aristotle extensively discusses education. Enayat rightly notes in his works that another commonality between Plato and Aristotle is their belief that since moral qualities are of such critical importance for the existence and permanence of a political community or state, then their cultivation, meaning the work of education, must be the duty of the state (Enayat, 1972, p. 72).

This concept is heavily criticized by modern political philosophy, which asserts that the state has no right to dictate what I should do or what I should learn, as I have no need for a guardian. In a sense, this represents the most significant achievement of modern Western philosophy: the point where man becomes autonomous and self-legislating. This is particularly evident in John Locke's political philosophy of freedom. Due to his conception of the state of nature, Locke can develop the notion of civil society. For Locke, the state of nature is not a lawless condition; on the contrary, it is a state where, in Hobbes's terms, there is no common power to enforce the law (Tabatabai, 2014 a, p. 274). Thus, people in the state of nature have their own laws, and Locke believes that because the order of the state of nature among people can be threatened at any moment by others, only a government is needed to protect our rights and property, not to tell us what to do. Tabatabai writes: "If Locke had not distinguished between society and power relations, the expansion of his liberal state's foundation would not have been possible" (Tabatabai, 2014 a, p. 284). For Locke, civil society arises in the sphere of governmental non-interference and governs itself through the free laws of individuals, with the state merely observing, not dictating. Locke's state is a minimal state.

Tabatabai, continuing on another important point about Aristotle's politics, provides a summary that can serve as the conclusion of our discussion: First, Aristotle introduced a distinction between the city (*polis*) and the household, and between the political sphere of citizen relations—which was thereafter called "political"—and relations among individuals within a family. The subject of Aristotle's political thought was precisely these citizen relations, and although a treatise on household management also survives from him, this discussion held little importance for him. Until the publication of

John Locke's treatises on government, the main subject of political thought was the sphere of power relations. But, as his subsequent explanations in the same book clarify, with John Locke, the primary discussion shifted to civil society (Tabatabai, 2014a, p. 283).

In modern philosophy, especially from John Locke and Rousseau onward, the state is no longer responsible for the happiness of citizens. Instead, it provides the external guarantee for the laws that the people themselves have enacted. Consequently, its power is reduced to the bare minimum because the relations among people shape the state, rather than the state shaping the relations among people.

Another point of difference between modern politics and Aristotle's politics is that the individual's desires are subordinated to the desires and good of the city, and the good of the city precedes the good of the individual. This is because, in Aristotle's politics, the city precedes the individual, and the individual derives their meaning from the city. As Aristotle writes in *Politics*:

> Now it is evident that the state is by nature clearly prior to the family and to the individual, since the whole is of necessity prior to the part; for example, if the whole body be destroyed, there will be no foot or hand, except in an equivocal sense, as we might speak of a stone hand; for every hand when destroyed will be no better than stone, so will be the case for any other part, after the whole is corrupted (Aristotle, 2011 a, p. 7).

Aristotle, using his example of the body, makes it perfectly clear what he means by this priority. For Aristotle, an individual outside the city is as worthless as a hand carved from stone. He only discusses the individual theoretically when that individual is a part of the city; otherwise, the individual has no place in Greek political

philosophy. As the American sociologist and Washington University professor, Rodney Stark, rightly writes in this regard: "From this concept of the inner conscience of every Christian believer, the concept of individuality gradually developed, which was inherently linked to the free will and salvation of each individual" (Stark, 2005, p. 2). The explanation of individual individuality, in contrast to the collective, also begins in some ways with Christianity, as Greek and Jewish cultures did not recognize the individual. Stark elaborates on this point:

> Plato, when writing his *Republic,* focused all his attention on the community and sacrificed the individual for the community, even rejecting private property. In contrast, the individual became the focus of Christian political thought, and this influenced the political thinking of philosophers like Hobbes and Locke. According to the author, this was a revolutionary tool in the hands of Christianity, because, in his view, individuality was a creation of Christianity (Stark, 2005, p. 11).

The explanation of how Christianity can introduce human individuality, freedom, and autonomy will be addressed in the section on Hegel.

In modern politics, the individual possesses a value greater than the whole, i.e., the city or the state. Indeed, the state is shaped by the individual and their autonomous laws, rather than the state shaping the individual. This is another major distinction between the approaches of new and old political philosophy. The individual truly emerges for the first time with Machiavelli.

Another important point to mention is the concept of nature or "natural" in Greek political philosophy, which clarifies the limits of everything, shapes everything, and guides it toward its end. Anything

that is not natural in Aristotle's philosophy is considered incorrect and flawed; this concept is also integrated into Aristotelian ethics and politics. As we have previously cited parts of Aristotle on this matter, for example, slavery and mastership are natural in Aristotle's philosophy, as he writes:

> The first community necessarily arises when there are two, of whom one is by nature a ruler and the other a subject, in order that both may be preserved. For he who can foresee with his mind is by nature a ruler and master, and he who can work with his body is a subject and a slave by nature; hence master and slave have the same interest (Aristotle, 2011 a, p. 3).

Aristotle naturally distinguishes qualitative differences between humans, as he himself stated elsewhere. Thus, it is clear that by the law of nature, some humans possess freedom, while others are by nature slaves, and being a slave is beneficial for them. As Aristotle again wrote in another passage: "Some human beings are marked out from birth, some to be governed and some to govern" (Aristotle, 2011 a, p. 12). This concept of nature also strongly asserts itself in Plato. As Aristotle writes in *Politics*: "It is for this reason that Socrates says that God has mixed gold in the composition of some, silver in others, and in those who are to be artisans and husbandmen, copper and iron" (Aristotle, 2011 b, p. 73). In this very context, Aristotle stated: "Inequality and disparity among people who are similar and equal to each other is contrary to nature, and what is contrary to nature cannot be good and right" (Aristotle, 2011 b, p. 381).

In modern philosophy, such a rigid natural law doesn't exist. All individuals are equally free and need no guardian. As Descartes writes at the dawn of the modern era in his *Discourse on Method*:

> ...reason or sense, inasmuch as it is alone that which constitutes us men, and distinguishes us from the brutes, I am disposed to believe

> that it is complete in each individual, and on this point to follow the common opinion of philosophers, who say that there is more or less of accident in the diversity of mental endowments of different persons, but that, as regards the form or reason, all men possess it equally... (Descartes,2015 , p. 3).

Following this, John Locke and Rousseau firmly establish human freedom in politics.

Here, it's also important to clarify the concept of freedom. Stark, explaining the distinct meaning of this word in relation to other traditions, writes:

> Unlike Asian languages, Latin and Greek have words for freedom, and a large number of Greeks and Romans considered themselves free. But the problem is that they explain their freedom in contrast to the mass of slaves, and in reality, freedom was a privilege (Stark, 2005, p. 12).

This is contrary to Christianity, where freedom was not a privilege but an essential part of being human. As Hegel stated, through Christianity, the Western world has recognized the freedom of the individual for a millennium and a half, and it has become a fundamental principle for us (Hegel, 2003, p. 92).

5. An Outline of Hegel's Political Thought Based on the *Philosophy of Right*

The explanation of philosophers like Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau before delving into Hegel was important because it allowed us, albeit imperfectly, to bridge the over two-thousand-year gap between Aristotle and Hegel. Another reason is that Hegel extensively utilizes the legacy of political philosophy that preceded him, incorporating all the brilliant insights of modern political thought into

his *Philosophy of Right* and thinking with all of them. The approach of modern political philosophy is, in essence, Hegel's approach. In explaining Hegel's political philosophy, all the intellectual revolutions behind him are significant, and we have, to some extent, depicted them.

The central issue of German Idealism is to demonstrate that man is a unique being who, possessing reason, lays down his own law and can only trust and obey the law of his own reason. This profoundly begins in Europe with Descartes' *Meditations*, as it seems even Descartes' "I think, therefore I am" carries within it the autonomy of man. As Marcelo Araujo writes in his book, Descartes indeed establishes a connection between "I think, therefore I am" and human autonomy, stating: "My greatest attention is given to the fact that Descartes explains the concept of autonomy or self-legislation of reason as the capacity to explain itself through the law it gives to itself" (Araujo, 2003, p. 117). In German Idealism, this continues in its most radical form, beginning with Kant, who forever indebted European modernity to his *Critique of Pure Reason*.

In terms of politics and law, Idealism pays attention only to man's inner freedom. Human right originates from human free will. In this regard, no external authority plays a role. Right is an internal matter and must be explained from within. Hegel attempts to gradually construct his entire political philosophy, building the edifice of his state, using this very minimal "mortar" of freedom, which he borrowed from Christianity, as an inherent and enduring internal principle.

To begin, it is best to start, like Hegel in the *Philosophy of Right,* by explaining Hegel's method. On the second page of his book, Hegel writes that he has already explained his method in his *Science*

of Logic and will only provide a general overview here. The key sentence Hegel uses here is: "Since this treatise deals with science, and in science, the content is necessarily inseparable from its form" (Hegel, 2003, p. 10). This sentence is, in a sense, a summary of Hegel's way of thinking, because for Hegel, the logic of thinking is identical to the logic of the movement of the *in-itself* (or the subject matter itself). The explanation of the movement of the *in-itself is* logic. Hegel writes in his *Science of Logic*:

> How could I pretend that this method which I follow in this system of logic—or, rather, that this method which the system follows in itself as a movement of its own—could not be capable of higher perfection or further elaboration? While at the same time I know that this method is the only true method. And this is evident from the fact that this method is nothing separate from the *in-itself* and its own content—for it is the *in-itself* in itself—the dialectic which the *in-itself* has within itself as *in-itself*, the dialectic which drives the *in-itself* forward. It is obvious that no investigation can possess scientific validity if it does not move with this method, and does not conform to its rhythms, for it is the very process of reality itself (Hegel, 2010, p. 33).

In simple terms, method in Hegel means a way of moving or proceeding. And what is this way of moving? The method consists of the movement of every entity and every subject, and the explanation of its internal transformation. Method in Hegel is not something that comes from outside or is imposed externally; rather, it is something inherent within the *in-itself*, and these two, as Hegel states in his *Science of Logic* and *Philosophy of Right*, are not separate from each other. In other words, method is simply the transformation of the *in-itself* that occurs from within itself, and the explanation of these events

and transformations that occur within the *in-itself* becomes dialectic in Hegel's view. Hegel writes in his *Science of Logic*:

> On this account, logic must be understood as the science of pure reason, as the realm of pure thought. This is the realm of unveiled truth, truth as it is in and for itself... Therefore, one can say that this content is the exposition of God as He is in His eternal essence before the creation of finite nature and spirit (Hegel, 2010, p. 29).

In simpler terms, one can say that logic is the progression of immutable essences in the mind of God before creation, before nature came into being. And subsequently, throughout Hegel's philosophy—whether in nature, where God has alienated himself, or in spirit, which becomes self-aware—this very logic is followed. Hegel's God is the Christian God who has permeated human beings and lives within them. This is where we will see, further on, that he shifts his *Philosophy of Right* from the realm of nature to the realm of spirit, and the implications he draws from this action are infinite.

This is modernity's view of everything. As we previously explained in modern political philosophy, from now on, everything is explained from within, and external factors, whether divine providence or natural law, are not relevant to this explanation and elucidation. Rather, everything is explained based on its own self-founding laws.

However, what primarily causes Hegel to separate the essence of the modern world from that of the Greek world is man's inner freedom, a principle which Hegel himself stated was revealed to us through Christianity. From here, he builds a critique of Plato's political philosophy. Hegel writes about Christianity in his *Philosophy of Right*:

> The right of subjective freedom, or inner freedom, is the central point and nucleus of difference between the ancient and modern

> worlds. This right, in its unlimited form, first emerged in Christianity and has become the fundamental principle of a new form of world reality (Hegel, 2003, p. 151).

Christianity and the principle of conscience or the realm of inner freedom, which appeared in its most radical form particularly in Luther's theology, hold great value in Hegel's philosophy. So much so that one can boldly say that the entire trajectory of his book is about how inner freedom brings the outer world under its dominion. But before that, we must provide a comprehensive explanation of the Christian perspective and its difference from the Greek one.

eoretical foundation and perspective of Christianity on humanity and the world fundamentally differ from the naturalistic Greek view and the legalistic Jewish religion. It neither embraces the concept of nature in the Greek sense nor understands law in the Jewish religious sense; rather, in all discussions, one can say that Jesus adopted a thoroughly complex stance. Émile Bréhier, at the end of the second volume of his *History of Philosophy*, explained two major differences between Christianity and Greek thought.

According to Bréhier, in Greek culture, the subject does not exist as an independent, autonomous entity in relation to its object. However, in Christianity, an independent subject exists, which is, in fact, defined separately from objects. Its entire activity is not merely thinking about the world; rather, it possesses a specific life, which is the inner realm (heart or conscience), not explainable by the world or the conceptions arising from it. This inner realm or conscience is the only thing that cannot be reduced to any object. This inner realm, inaccessible by any external authority, is what constitutes the subject, and it is only in this civilization that idealist thought flourishes and the subject thinks independently. The second difference is the historical

view of existence, which also began concurrently with the advent of Christianity (Bréhier, 2016 a, pp. 294-295).

Regarding the concept of freedom, it must also be stated that it lacks the Greek and Roman historical background in the sense presented by Christianity. That is, the idea of freedom spontaneously and autonomously emerging from within the human being. The concept of freedom holds such a paramount position in the modern European world that understanding this world is impossible without comprehending freedom. Stark, explaining the distinct meaning of this word in relation to other traditions, writes:

> Unlike Asian languages, Latin and Greek have words for freedom, and a large number of Greeks and Romans considered themselves free, but the problem is that they explain their freedom in contrast to the mass of slaves, and in reality, freedom was a privilege (Stark, 2005, p. 12).

This is contrary to Christianity, where freedom was not a privilege but an essential part of being human. As Hegel stated, through Christianity, the Western world has recognized individual freedom for a millennium and a half, and it has become a fundamental principle for us (Hegel, 2003, p. 92).

This extensive explanation is not only important for understanding what we previously discussed about classical and modern political philosophy but can also help in comprehending everything that follows in the explanation of Hegel. This is because, for Hegel, it is primarily this inner or moral freedom that constitutes the freedom within Europe. Humanity must understand good and bad through this very inner freedom. Hegel believes that moral and religious determinations should not merely compel individuals to obey them; rather, the foundation, legitimacy, and acceptance of these

commands must reside in the individual's heart and conscience. This aspect of man's free inner self is an end in itself, and nothing can have authority over it. As Hegel writes in Paragraph 106 of *The Philosophy of Right*:

> Men expect to be judged according to their autonomy and are free in this respect, regardless of any external authority. Breaking the bounds of this inner freedom is impossible; the sanctity of this boundary is necessary, and therefore the moral will is inaccessible. The worth of man is determined by his inner actions, so the moral viewpoint is the viewpoint of freedom that exists for itself (Hegel, 2003, pp. 135-136).

With these explanations, we can now turn to Hegel's discussion and his critique of Plato's *Republic* at the beginning of *The Philosophy of Right*. Initially, Hegel states one of his core philosophical principles: the task of philosophy is to comprehend what is, because understanding it is reason. As far as the individual is concerned, every individual is a child of their time; thus, philosophy is also the comprehension of its own time (Hegel, 2003, p. 21). With this statement, Hegel removes the boundary between "is" and "ought," a phenomenon which, as we explained earlier, profoundly occurred with Rousseau. This point is also related to the core of Hegel's philosophy: the Idea.

One of the differences between Hegel's and Aristotle's political philosophy also stems from this point. That is, while Aristotle understands that the state should not be a contractual matter—contracts are beneath the dignity of the state—he fails to grasp the importance of the individual. He grants the individual no significance outside the *polis* and considers them unworthy of theoretical discussion outside the city. Aristotle's political philosophy is not based

on the individual; rather, it is based on the community, with the individual subordinate to the community. However, in Hegel's political philosophy, the main importance lies with the individual and their sphere of inner freedom.

Moving from the Preface of the book to the Introduction, the first paragraph begins where Hegel writes this important sentence: "The subject matter of the philosophical science of right is the Idea of right—that is, the rational concept [Begriffe] of right and its actualization" (Hegel, 2003, p. 25).

Hegel quickly distinguishes his understanding of the concept (*Begriff*) or rational form from the previous meaning of "concept," stating that he is not referring to a subjective concept or a form obtained through abstracting from external reality. Hegel regards the concept as a true entity that actualizes itself within the *in-itself* (the subject matter itself) and, in fact, is what, in other words, creates history. Its dialectical form of movement is identical to its very existence; you cannot separate the form from the content. Thus, the rational form is the self-founding essence of being, and its movement is what is called dialectic. Marcuse treats the concept in Hegel's philosophy as a fundamental principle, considering it something that exists within things themselves, enabling them to become what they ought to be. He also states that every particular matter is elevated to a true reality only by actualizing the concept within itself, and the more it actualizes the possibilities of its concept, the closer it gets to reality (in Hegel's sense) (Marcuse, 1955, pp. 121-122).

But what is the Idea in Hegel's philosophy? The concept gradually actualizes itself, and when, in this process of actualization, it manifests itself as it truly is, it transforms into the Idea. In other words, when all reality is embodied in the concept, it elevates to the

Idea. The Idea is not subjective, it is not an illusion. The Idea is the rational form of a thing or a reality and its external actualization, as Hegel himself states in the sentence above. From here, Hegel separates himself both from the Greek horizon and Idea and from the Idea in the Kantian sense. Instead, with this view, as we said earlier, he connects "is" to "ought".

By articulating his particular view and specific meaning of the rational form of right, Hegel distinguishes himself from the meaning of nature and right as presented in Aristotle's philosophy. This is because he seeks to explain right from within and then bring it to external relations, understanding those relations through this right. In contrast, in Greece, nature is an external given, and we understand right from it beforehand; right does not originate from human essence. Where does the foundation of right originate? Hegel writes:

> The basis of right is the sphere of spirit in general, and its precise location and point of departure is the free will. Freedom constitutes its substance and essence, and the system of right is the realm of actualized freedom, the world of spirit produced from within itself as a second nature (Hegel, 2003, p. 35).

Here, Hegel considers the free will of the individual as the foundation of right and its source. And it is with this free will that Hegel elevates man beyond his own nature. That is, in a sense, man is part of nature, but because he is in the realm of spirit and thus possesses free will, he can transcend nature and, through his own free will, create a second nature. Here again, Hegel lays a foundation that goes beyond the Greek notion of nature and speaks of spirit, which has a Christian basis. Hegel continues: "Right in general is the existence of free will. Therefore, right in general is freedom as Idea" (Hegel, 2003, p. 58).

The Idea of freedom in Hegel's philosophy of right is initially immediate or potential, which is the person in the formal and abstract stage. Gradually, as it progresses, this freedom becomes increasingly actualized. In another stage, the will has externalized itself, confronted another, returned to itself, and determined itself as an individual with an inner freedom in opposition to a universal, which is, in one sense, internal to it and, in another, external. This second sphere is the sphere of morality (*Moralität*), which is the sphere of inner freedom. The third stage is the unity of these two, the unity of the substantial and the subjective. Hegel refers to anything that does not have an inner dignity as substance, because the substantial is something external to my will. It is in the third stage that the family, civil society, and the state are discussed.

For Hegel, the principle of the modern world is the individual with their inner freedom. Its foundation traces back to the emergence of Christianity. The ancient world did not know this. They did not recognize man as a subject. But in the modern world, an individual has appeared with their inner freedom, and the external world must clarify its relationship to this. This is where a dialectic must be established between the individual and the state.

From what point does man become a subject in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*? Hegel writes in the second part of *The Philosophy of Right*, i.e., Morality:

> The moral viewpoint is the viewpoint of the will, in a state where the will is unlimited both in itself and for itself. This return of the will into itself and its identity with itself, in contrast to its existence and immediacy and the limitations that develop within its immediacy, constitutes the person as Subject (Hegel, 2003, p. 135).

Hegel's sphere of morality (*Moralität*) is not merely private ethics, and its validity does not come from outside. It has an internal essence and is self-legislating because the person at this stage becomes the agent. Generally, ethics in Hegel's philosophy is precisely the inner freedom of Europe and the origin of the discourse on freedom. It is the sole authority that judges every other matter and is not itself subject to judgment, because nothing has authority over it.

For Hegel, there are two spheres of ethics. One is *Moralität*, where man becomes a subject or agent. The second is *Sittlichkeit*, or ethical life, which refers to all the customs and morals of a nation, or the collective spirit of a nation. This second ethical sphere emerges from within the first ethical sphere. This is because my inner free will manifests itself somewhere; it's not merely seeing itself in its own mirror, but rather entering into the mirror of relations and objectifying itself there. As Hegel writes: "Ethical life is the Idea of freedom. When free will actualizes itself externally, it is called the Idea, and that is where inner freedom finds external realization" (Hegel, 2003, p. 189). Ethical life is where freedom or the inner will has appeared in its objectivity, in and for itself.

Hegel himself explains the three stages of the third section of his book, namely Ethical Life, in paragraph 157. Initially, the spirit of ethical life is immediate and natural, which is the sphere of the family. This substantial unity gradually disintegrates from within, and civil society is created—meaning the individual as a self-sufficient entity pursuing their personal needs. Then, there is a return from this external state back to the inner, which is the sphere of the state, representing the sphere of the public good.

In Hegel's system, the family, with the introduction of individuality and the breakdown of its general and natural state, gradually transitions into civil society. This is where individuals'

personal interests, their preservation, rights, and so on, gain importance. Civil society is a sphere of multiplicity and difference, existing between the family and the state, both of which are natural and non-contractual entities. In civil society, each individual is an end in themselves, and other things hold no meaning for them. However, individuals cannot achieve their goals without relating to others, thus others become tools for reaching their own ends. Hegel writes about civil society:

> The selfish aim, in its actualization and thus conditioned by the universal, establishes a system of reciprocal dependencies, such that the welfare of the individual and their rightful existence are interwoven with the welfare and rights of all, and only in such a space can all of them be actualized and enjoy security. This system can, at first glance, be understood as the external state or the state of necessity and of the understanding (Hegel, 2003, p. 221).

In this paragraph, Hegel articulates several important points that should primarily remind us of Adam Smith's explanation of the market economy. That is, human individuals, with all their self-interests, ambitions, and abilities, enter the arena of civil society and exert their utmost efforts to achieve greater profit and success. However, from a higher perspective, it seems that the more people exert energy and utilize traits previously considered "bad," the more they promote social and universal welfare in line with their personal well-being. This is where Smith's "invisible hand" enters, placing society in a complex interaction where individual self-interests transform into greater social welfare.

Civil society is also a phenomenon later than Greek knowledge. The Greeks understood political community, but because they did not recognize the individual, they could not conceive of civil society and autonomous individuals who enter it to gain more profit and satisfy

their ambitions. That is, a sphere that is not under the supervision of the *polis*, but rather a sphere that must be explained in its independence from the *polis* and has its own internal laws. In the modern era, civil society is distinct from the state, and its explanation is not entirely congruent with that of the state. Instead, it is a place where people govern themselves by their free will. In Greece, the only matters worthy of theoretical discussion were political and civic relations; economic relations held no theoretical value for them.

Hegel sees the logic of the modern era in mediations. Explaining these mediations and the internal logic of how they all relate to one another is what constitutes Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*. For this reason, civil society is the most complex part of his *Philosophy of Right*. He identifies three estates in this section: 1. Farmers, who pursue their immediate interests and have not yet entered into mediations, remaining dependent on their immediate connection to the land. 2. Artisans, who perform the intermediate work, divided into three parts: craftsmen, those who work in workshops, and merchants who transport what is produced. 3. Civil servants, who must solely consider the public good and whom the state must provide for. However, because their connection to the state is direct, Hegel again introduces two further "breakwaters": the legal system and the police. Alongside these, he also speaks of unions and guilds. The more this degree of universality and "we-ness" is emphasized, the closer civil society becomes to the state in Hegel's conception.

The increasing complexity and fragmentation of these classes, as well as the creation of various other institutions, is so that the power descending from the state is attenuated enough that, when it reaches the individual through these channels, it does not overpower them. Conversely, when my desires ascend from below, they do not

become a revolution but rather gradually diminish in force within these channels. For this reason, Hegel says that modern politics is an explanation of mediations.

The state has two important roots: the family and the guilds, because it is in these that the cell of that "we-unity" that Hegel envisions for the state is placed. Traces of the Idea of the state are seen whenever the public good is discussed. Hegel writes: "The state is the actuality of the ethical Idea" (Hegel, 2003, p. 257).

Hegel had previously explained that one truth of the modern world is the individual's inner freedom, which was born with Christianity. And up to this point, that is, until the end of civil society, he constructs it with this very inner freedom of the individual. But Hegel also holds a second reality, which he has taken from classical philosophy: a state that is prior to the individual and not the product of a contract. This harkens back to Aristotle. As he refers to this in paragraph 270 of *The Philosophy of Right* and alludes to Aristotle's *Politics*, he writes:

> The city is prior to the family and every individual, for the whole has priority over its part. For if you separate the hand or foot from the whole body, it is no longer a hand or foot except in name, just as one might speak of a hand carved from stone (Hegel, 2003, p. 460).

Here, Hegel states the foundation of the ancients and returns to them in his theory of the state. So, on one hand, he takes the individual with their inner freedom from modern political philosophy, but he does not accept the contractual state they propose. On the other hand, he adopts Aristotle's state, which is natural and not subject to contract, and is also prior to all individuals. This is because Hegel believes that the state is logically prior to the family and civil society.

If there were no state, these matters would have no meaning. He even states that the individual does not become a member of the state by their own will; rather, it is necessarily so.

However, the problem with Greece is that it does not recognize the individual as a subject, but only as a citizen. The Hegelian state, of course, differs from the natural Aristotelian state because Hegel introduces the concept of spirit, writing:

> The state, in and for itself, is the totality of ethical life, and the realization of freedom, and also the end of reason, which is actual freedom. The state is present in the world as spirit and consciously recognizes itself within it, while nature is the sphere of the alienation of spirit. The state is a state only when it is present in consciousness (Hegel, 2003, pp. 280-281).

However, the Hegelian state, which is prior to the individual and non-contractual, differs from what Aristotle stated. From this point, Hegel articulates something that transcends both modern and classical politics, leading humanity from the realm of nature to the realm of spirit, which is the pinnacle of Hegel's philosophy and also traces back to Christianity. Hegel incorporates the foundations of classical and modern politics like threads into his own thought, creating a new rebirth from them. Hegel writes: "The individual attains their substantial freedom in the state (which is their essence, goal, and the product of their activity)" (Hegel, 2003, p. 275). This means the state is not Aristotle's state, which is based on nature—although in a sense it is natural in that we did not create it, that doesn't mean the state is not the embodiment of our will. The goal of the state is the freedom of the individual, and the state is the result of the individual's will.

The priority of the state in Hegel's view is based on the idea

that the state is the sphere of the public good, and it is where the transcendent manifests itself—where "we" becomes a "We," meaning our common good as a "We" precedes our individual interests. This is the logic of the modern state, and for this reason, it is prior to civil society, because civil society, which is the sphere of the free individual with their needs, can only endure in such a realm that ultimately leads to the public good.

Conclusion

This article aimed to construct a philosophical framework highlighting the differences in the logic of classical and modern political thought. Aristotle's political thought is based on his specific understanding of nature, ethics, virtue, teleology, and the pursuit of happiness. These are all facets of a single reality expressed through different terms. For Aristotle, what is natural is also the ultimate goal, aligns with ethics and virtue, and so on. Any other political matter must be judged by the standard of nature to reveal its goodness or badness. For example, economic activities and wealth accumulation are, in his view, unnatural, meaning they are bad.

On the other hand, Greek political philosophy, in general, does not recognize the individual with their inner freedom and autonomy. Since it doesn't recognize the individual and affords them no theoretical standing in political thought, nothing is explained in relation to them. Instead, everything is explained by the aforementioned principles, and the individual is subservient to nature. In Aristotle's political philosophy, the city is prior to the individual, and an individual without membership in the city has no meaning. Consequently, the Greeks do not recognize civil society, nor do they recognize the spheres of law and economics in relation to the individual.

In contrast to all these points, modern political philosophy emerges, prioritizing human freedom and autonomy above all else. Every matter in the political world must be measured against the standard of man's inner freedom. Modern politics is not ethical, teleological, virtue-oriented, or happiness-seeking. Instead, it pays more attention to human desires—an aspect condemned by classical political philosophy. Most importantly, the concept of nature in modern political thought gives way to the freedom of human will and reason. Luck or chance has no place in modern political philosophy; man subjugates luck to his will. It is from this perspective that the individual explains institutions. The individual no longer has duties; rather, they possess rights. The state is no longer my guardian or responsible for my upbringing; instead, it must only protect what I desire and has no right to interfere, as it is not responsible for my salvation.

Hegel incorporates this entire tradition into his political thought, attempting to think with both classical and modern foundations. In all the aforementioned aspects, Hegel accepts the modern approach, but like Aristotle (albeit with his own unique understanding), he considers the state prior to the individual, unlike modern philosophy. He logically views the individual, family, and civil society as subsequent to the state, because without the state, they hold no meaning, and the state is the ultimate goal of all of them as it is the sphere of the public good. The public good, from the very beginning, plays a role as a goal throughout the stages of family and civil society, and as they progress, they strive to actualize and shape the public good. However, in modern philosophy, the state is a creation of man or the individual, the individual is prior to the state, and the state is formed by a contract among individuals. Hegel takes the individual with their inner freedom from the modern world and the

natural, extra-contractual state from Aristotle. He then attempts to synthesize these two in such a way that neither is reduced to the other. That is, neither does the individual fall under the state, as in Aristotle's politics, nor does the state fall under the individual, as in modern politics. This is because Hegel, like Aristotle, believes that the individual must come under a state. However, ultimately, Hegel considers the state to be the result of the free will of man, but not in the sense understood by modern philosophy. Rather, it means that the state is the complete actualization of man's free will, and for this reason, it logically pre-exists and only needs history to unfold for it to be actualized if it implicitly exists within the individual beforehand. This is because the state represents the interests of all of us, and when it is actualized, it is as if our public interests have been actualized, and it is not separate from our inner freedom but is our very objectivity.

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Ethics and Sustainable Peace with an Emphasis on the View of Hans Küng

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Abstract

The imposed wars and current aggressions in the Middle East and the world increasingly necessitate the need for sustainable peace and ethics in society (Statement of the Problem) Kant, by creating the Copernican Revolution, completely changed the perspective in ethics and practical reason. By believing in the formulation of law and equality in society, he considers the establishment of a sustainable peace possible. In fact, according to his Copernican view, we should no longer wait for the ethical foundations and peace from the heavens; rather, it is necessary to reach a global agreement for establishing a lasting peace in the world, with an emphasis on the foundations of human rights and ethical and religious pluralism. Hans Küng, inspired by Kant's moral philosophy, and while adopting a critical approach to it, seeks to find the common

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ethical frameworks among religions and thereby facilitate the possibility of mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence among religions (Research Findings) Therefore, this research has explained this important matter using a qualitative and analytical method (Objective and Method)

Keywords

Kant, Sustainable Peace, Hans Küng, Ethics, Religion.

Introduction

Today, humanity needs to discuss this topic more than ever, as the wars waged across the globe under the pretext of religious beliefs or excessive demands are the result of a misreading of ethical, legal, and ultimately religious principles. Hans Küng, inspired by Kant, is one of the contemporary theoreticians in the field of peace and global ethics. In fact, Küng's main goal in presenting the relationship between ethics and religion is to reach universal and comprehensive principles of global ethics so that a peaceful relationship among the followers of different religions can be established. Kant outlines conditions for guaranteeing the establishment of sustainable peace in his treatise. Upon examining these conditions, we must not forget that Kant's main prerequisite for establishing sustainable peace lies in the very characteristics he presented in his anthropology[1] and philosophy of law. In fact, if Kant can prove that rationality is equally distributed among human beings, and that this rationality leads humans to establish laws among themselves, only then can we hope for the creation of sustainable peace.

However, it does not seem that Kant holds such optimistic assumptions about man in his treatise "Perpetual Peace." Kant distinguishes between the reality of man and what he ought to be, and this is what led him to differentiate between the study of man in nature

1. Kant is clearly a **human-centered** thinker, and human-centeredness is an inseparable part of the Kantian movement. In Kant's anthropological view, **man is free** and the axis of all matters. Man is a free being, and freedom has no place in nature. According to Kant, this free being is created within nature, and he is not alien to it. In fact, in this work of Kant, man is neither considered pure nature nor a mere spirit. Therefore, he is a **spiritual nature** or a spirit within nature. Kant is one of the first thinkers to question and critique the **duality of mind and body** (Kant, 1367-1369, p. 37) (Not in the bibliography).

(in the *Critique of Pure Reason*) and the explanation of his supernatural and ideal aspect (in the *Critique of Practical Reason*). In fact, Kant's political theory, formulated in *Perpetual Peace*, is a continuation of his ethics and practical reason. In his view, if a law is to be established at the international level, this law must be moral.

What is meant here is not individual ethics, but juridical ethics (legal morality). For instance, it can be predicted that perpetual peace is established when every nation recognizes the other nation and treats it in the way it expects other nations to treat itself. This is the very Kantian Categorical Imperative at the level of global politics. If such an ethic is not dominant, the threat of war will always remain. Just as individual ethics and international law enable different nations to live peacefully side-by-side. The first statement in this regard is: "For Kant, peace in the international sphere requires the establishment of law as a basis for the rights of states".

States have rights and duties corresponding to these rights. In this way, an assembly of states, or the Global Federation, is equivalent to a society of individuals. And just as ethics are only applicable to free individuals, sustainable peace is only possible among free states. For this reason, Kant only endorses a republican government for the internal politics of countries, because in this form of government, the freedom of individuals is transferred to the freedom of the state. This is one of the fundamental conditions for perpetual peace. Therefore, if countries are not democratic, the prerequisite for establishing global sustainable peace is not met.

On the other hand, perpetual peace is only possible under the sovereignty of a comprehensive and accepted law, and the people who have accepted a law—that is, have formed a republican government—are the only people who can form a nation that accepts global law. For

law to govern the world, it must also govern within countries, and this means a republican government.

Therefore, a people who have accepted within their own borders that everyone is equal before the law can also accept on the global stage that all states are equal before the global law. In fact, sustainable peace is established between countries where the people within have agreed to live in peace by recognizing one another. If one of these countries experiences instability and civil war internally, one cannot expect perpetual peace in the world.

Research Background

Najafi, (2024 a) in an article titled "Practical Reason in the Thought System of the Ash'arites and Robert Adams with Emphasis on the Epistemological Foundations of Josiah Royce", points out that Robert Adams considers practical reason and ethics to be dependent on reason but ultimately tied to religion. This is because, on the one hand, he is influenced by the Divine Command Theory and the Ash'arite Theory of Acquisition (*Kasb*), and in the theory of the dependence of ethics on religion, he believes that ethics culminates in religion. On the other hand, he considers the foundation of his practical reason to be the rational goodness and badness (*Husn wa Qubh 'Aqli*). Josiah Royce believes in moral idealism and establishes a meaningful relationship between ontology, ethics, idealism, and monotheistic theology. Royce's moral idealism neither subordinates ethics to a specific religion (like Ghazali) nor considers religion and ethics independent of each other. Rather, he views man as a transcendental being possessing a priori knowledge of moral principles. Therefore, the concordance of religion and ethics will not have a posterior and historical aspect, but a metaphysical and ontological foundation. Adams, regardless of prioritizing reason and

free will, bases his beliefs on the principle of a "sense of duty" towards the commands of the Almighty and the experience of conscience. However, the Ash'arites, according to the "Divine Command" and "Theory of Acquisition", consider whatever the Almighty permits or forbids to be right and wrong, respectively, and whatever the Almighty commands is obligatory. Therefore, the criterion for the validation and truthfulness of any act must be measured according to the standards of Sharia, and man is only the acquirer (*kasib*) of the commands of the Almighty and the Divine Law. The common ground between Adams and the Ash'arites, however, is that they both consider happiness and all moral actions to be dependent on religion.

Najafi, (2024 b) addressed the important issue in an article titled "A Study of the Theory of Global Peace and Ethics in the Holy Quran". This research seeks to provide a new reading of the verses of the Quran to derive from it a concept of global peace and ethics. The theory of global peace and ethics was proposed by Hans Küng in response to global wars, sanctions, and existing problems. Küng believes that it is a mistake to consider Islam a religion of war and the sword and to ignore its essential religious core. He argues that there is no doubt that Arabs, through the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), reached the level of a transcendent ethical religion founded on the belief in the One God and a fundamental human ethic that contained the clear requirements of justice and higher humanity. Islam was originally based more on ethics than on Sharia. In Islam, too, something akin to the Ten Commandments forms the basis of a common human ethic. There is no doubt that Muhammad (PBUH) was an authentic and credible prophet and, in some respects, similar to the prophets of the Israelites. Muslims attach great importance to the fact that Muhammad (PBUH) is not the center and core of Islam in the

way that Jesus Christ is the center and core of Christianity. In the view of Muslims, the Word of God was not transformed into a man, but into a book, and the Quran, which is the Word of God and attributed to God Himself, is the center and core of Islam. Furthermore, Islam is a religion with the unique book of the Quran that completes and replaces the Torah of the Jews and the Gospel of the Christians. In the view of Muslims, the Quran is an unparalleled, complete, and highly authoritative book, and experts, in particular, seriously learn it and recite it by heart. This research intends to examine the aspects of global peace materials from Küng's perspective within the Quran.

In an article by Najafi et al (2018) titled "A Study of the Relationship Between Religion and Ethics from the Perspective of Ghazali and Hans Küng and the Establishment of its Metaphysical Foundations based on Moral Idealism", the following important point is addressed: Based on the Divine Command Theory to which Ghazali subscribes, whatever God permits or forbids is correct or incorrect, respectively, and whatever God commands is obligatory. Therefore, the criterion for the correctness or incorrectness of any action must be measured according to the standards of Sharia (Islamic Law).

In contrast, some Western thinkers defend the independence and self-sufficiency of ethics and do not accept the grounding of ethics in religion. Hans Küng, as one of the contemporary theologians, inspired by Kant's moral philosophy and adopting a critical approach to it, seeks to find the common ethical frameworks among religions and thereby facilitate the possibility of mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence among religions.

One of the conclusions of this discussion is the impossibility of global ethics in Ghazali's theory, because he reduces ethics to historical religion and allows no room for universal ethical principles.

Likewise, Hans Küng, because he considers ethics to be independent of religion and does not attribute a heavenly origin to ethical principles, lacks a reliable metaphysical foundation for establishing an objective relationship between ethics and religion. "Josiah Royce's Moral Idealism" is an appropriate concept to justify global ethics in the thought of these two thinkers based on the metaphysical relationship between religion and ethics.

Research Innovations: As observed, no independent research has specifically addressed the explanation and investigation of Ethics and Sustainable Peace with an emphasis on the View of Hans Küng. This research is, therefore, unique and singular in its kind.

1. World Government

Kant mentioned the formation of a Global Federation as an essential condition for perpetual peace. We know that obstacles exist in the path of realizing this idea, but in any case, it is an idea that must be approached. Kant’s idea aimed for all people to feel the entire world as their homeland. Does this not mean that, in Kant's view, the borders between countries must ultimately disappear and everyone live under a World Government? Does cosmopolitanism mean the world turning into a single state? Does Kant believe in a world government? Could such a government not be an idea for achieving justice and security? Can a world government be a way to achieve perpetual peace? To answer these questions, we must first see what a world government is. This is important in the context of perpetual peace because most critics of the perpetual peace theory have conflated it with the idea of a world government. Most criticisms directed at the perpetual peace viewpoint are, in fact, related to the theory of a world government.

Catherine Lu defined world government as follows:

> World Government relates to the idea that all human beings should be united under a single common political authority. Such a thing has never existed in human history, and this is debatable and open to discussion, but proposals for a unified, global political authority have existed since antiquity—in the ambitions of kings, popes, emperors, and the dreams of poets and philosophers (Küng, 1998, p. 112).

In the context of world government, many arguments for and against it have been raised. Proponents have argued that if a benevolent government were to rule the entire world, all injustices and problems would be solved. From the perspective of these advocates, human nature tends toward war and encroachment on the rights of others, and if a powerful global authority does not exist, war will never be eliminated from the face of the earth.

Proponents of world government are usually unitarist and believe that the cosmic order is singular, and this plurality among countries is neither proportional nor aligned with the cosmic order. In fact, the ultimate goal of world government is an extreme part of cosmopolitanism in which all human beings are citizens of a single country called the World.

2. Perpetual Peace

This issue and the latter point connect law to ethics as well. In Kant's thought, ethics holds the same position as right (justice); in fact, ethics, like right, is the foundation of law. If we want to know which law is based on and conditioned by right, we must see which law expresses a moral command. Whether the law is municipal (within a city/state) or even international law, this is a condition that must be considered in any case.

Therefore, we arrive at the principle we stated earlier: perpetual peace is established when moral relations exist between citizens, compatriots, and states. If a law, under the pretext of establishing peace, protecting humans, creating security, or any other excuse, violates ethics, it possesses no genuine validity. Therefore, Kant has provided a clear touchstone for discerning a correct international law, against which it can be measured (Mosleh, 2017, p. 40).

A human relationship is moral when individuals, in their interactions with one another, take into account the other person's humanity. This is the condition for being a citizen and establishing a civil society. If human beings do not consider one another as human, they will enslave each other, and the world will turn into war, conflict, and revolution.

In fact, this establishes the basis for global citizenship rights. Individuals have the right, while being citizens of their own city and country, to also be citizens of the world, meaning that when they enter another territory, they must be treated as human beings. This is the meaning of the cosmopolitan right that Kant expresses in the treatise *Perpetual Peace* and which we discussed earlier.

The cosmopolitan right is a right, and every right indicates that a law must exist. This law should not obligate countries to give up their territory to a newly arrived foreigner, but it must obligate them to offer hospitality to foreigners, migrants, refugees, the homeless, and others, and to treat them as human beings (Mosleh, 2017, p. 42).

3. Kant's Perpetual Peace

Hans Küng was inspired by Kant, which is why Kant's intellectual foundations must also be addressed. Kant's goal is to steer the global community toward a World Republic. However, alternatives for the

future of the world can also be imagined, which Kant does not even address for the purpose of rejection. The only reason for proposing a Global Federation that Kant discusses is the idea of a World Government, which we previously examined.

But one could, for instance, point to regional federations and the creation of a parliament composed of regional representatives as a reason for Kant's proposal. If representatives of states were to raise their issues in regional parliaments, and then these issues were expressed at a higher level, the problems would find more practical solutions. Alternatively, one could speak of federations at different levels or on various subjects independently.

Kant only addressed the union of political representatives of states, but the creation of unions composed of non-political representatives of states has also been effective in establishing peace. For example, judicial, economic, cultural, and scientific unions, as well as non-governmental anti-war movements, youth organizations, global unions of various professions, and so on. These unions have been able to work toward securing the rights of these groups at the international level, while simultaneously fostering mutual understanding and peace in the world by expanding relations among the world's people, not just government officials (Kant, 1990, p. 123).

4. Incompatibility of Politics and Morality

A barrier Kant identifies for achieving perpetual peace is the conflict between morality and politics. To explain the necessity of overcoming this conflict, Kant authored appendices for the second edition of *Perpetual Peace*, titled "The Incompatibility between Morality and Politics in Relation to Perpetual Peace" and "Agreement between Politics and Morality According to the Transcendental Concept of Public Right".

Kant, in fact, critiques the views of Machiavelli, such as: "First act, then justify", or "If you do something unfavorable, deny it", or "Divide and conquer" (Kant, 1990, p. 123).

According to Kant, if the establishment of perpetual peace is the ultimate goal, then morality, politics, and honor must govern relations. In fact, the establishment of a legal system based on morality is an undeniable condition for the realization of perpetual peace. Ultimately, only genuine moral inclinations can lead to true union among people and the establishment of peace.

However, on the other hand, we all know that politics is not always equivalent to honesty. The prominent politician in the real world is not the most moral individual. In fact, it seems that Kant is very optimistic about world politics, while Machiavelli is highly realistic. The aim is not to suggest that Machiavelli's path is the correct one, but Kant should have considered the political realities of the world more, instead of deeming moral integrity sufficient for managing world politics.

Politics requires an intelligence that is not present in everyone. Kant, in his anthropology, approaches this concept of intelligence to some extent by stating the concept of prudence (*Klugheit*), but he does not use this concept in his political works, including *Perpetual Peace*. Of course, no one disagrees that peace necessitates the moral reform of nations themselves, and specifically, it primarily requires the reform of influential rulers and governors. This is also contingent upon a genuine union and unity among nations. Otherwise, the application of any other method will be classified as deception, and will be artificial and imposed. We fully agree with Kant on this point, but Kant needed to examine whether moral reform is sufficient for educating a politician. Therefore, Kant did not address political education in his political works (Kant, 1990, p. 148).

5. Postmodernism and Perpetual Peace

Other thinkers who have followed Kant's project in the modern world are the Postmodernists, who have paid special attention to world politics under the influence of modern developments in philosophy and social sciences. Most postmodern thinkers have referenced the topic of peace and the new world order in their works. However, among them, those who have systematically and extensively addressed the global structure of war and peace are the contemporary political thinkers Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. They focused on these issues in their two books, *Empire* and *Multitude*, and we will discuss them in detail here. These thinkers are more of an inversion of Kant than they are Kantian; although they address the issues he raised, they can ultimately be considered critics of Kant's political and legal philosophy and his plan for perpetual peace.

5-1. Postmodern Perspectives on Global Instability: Hardt and Negri

According to Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, instability and insecurity are the most critical issues facing the world today. This lack of stability and security threatens our world in terms of both life and employment. Events like the US invasion of Iraq, under the pretext of nuclear weapons, and the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York, broadcast to the astonished eyes of people worldwide, signaled to Hardt and Negri the advent of a new era: the era of Empire. From their perspective, alongside the fear of war and terror, job insecurity is currently disturbing minds across the globe. The world we live in has become intensely violent, ruthless, unjust, and undemocratic. Hardt and Negri suggest that the world is sustained only by violence.

They name the power that generates insecurity in the world as

"Empire" and the force that challenges and overthrows it as the "Multitude" (Harth & Negri, 2005, p. 50). Hardt and Negri's book, *Multitude*, is essentially the political-philosophical project for realizing the democracy that modernity promised but failed to deliver.

Multitude is written from a postmodern perspective and approaches global issues with its specific viewpoint. In comparison to Kant's plan, Hardt and Negri invert Kant; they strive to create an alliance from below among the masses. This approach brings them closer to the Marxists, whose slogan was "Workers of the world, unite!" and who championed the unity of the masses (Kant, 1990, p. 66).

Hardt and Negri argue that in today's world, war has become the fundamental and organizing principle of society, and politics is merely one of the means and manifestations of war. Therefore, "what appears to be domestic peace is simply the end of one form of war and opens the way for another war" (Hardt & Negri, 2005, p. 40). They also address the "Revolution in Military Affairs" and technological advancements in the production of weapons of mass destruction, highlighting the changes necessary for the pursuit of peace in such circumstances.

The concept of Empire is very close to Kant's idea of a Global Federation, but Hardt and Negri demonstrate the negative aspect of such an idea through the concept of Empire. In their view, Empire is not a territorial power center with distinct borders; rather, it is a decentralized and deterritorialized apparatus of rule that manages mixed identities, unstable hierarchies, and diverse exchanges through flexible networks of command and guidance.

In their book *Empire*, Hardt and Negri refer to four models of Empire, one of which is the Juridical Empire, which is very close to the current discussion. In the Juridical Empire, the national

sovereignty and jurisdiction of states have deteriorated, and global human rights norms, as transnational laws based on natural rights, are interpreted, promoted, and enforced by the powerful leaders of the imperial system. Consequently, states are forced to comply with imperial laws.

This type of Empire, envisioned by Hardt and Negri, is approximately equivalent to the legal order Kant intended to govern the world. However, Hardt and Negri pit Foucault against Kant. Empire operates based on Foucault's concept of biopower. Biopower is a form of power that internally regulates, monitors, interprets, and re-articulates the social life of human beings (Hardt & Negri, 2005, p. 50).

According to this power, Empire takes control and dominion over all aspects of human life, including their minds and bodies, and integrates the entirety of human existence as its intrinsic and internal components.

The domination of this global machine is so extensive that it controls the hidden individual dimensions of human lives, and even their eating and dressing habits and routines. The structure of the Empire is a pyramidal structure of domination where the US and international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank are at the highest level, followed by governments and multinational corporations, and at the lowest part are the United Nations General Assembly, the masses of people, and non-governmental organizations. This is precisely the Kantian blueprint for global peace that is being critiqued here.

Among other postmodern thinkers who followed Kant's path and addressed similar discussions, we can refer to the French philosopher Jean Baudrillard. Baudrillard, who paid attention to international politics and contemporary wars, gave great importance to

the media and visual nature of these conflicts. From his perspective, in the world today, media factors create wars more than actual confrontations. Wars have become more like war films. In the contemporary world, wars are a pretext for American technological experiments.

News and television today significantly influence wars and international relations. Therefore, in comparison to Kant's plan, it must be said that a perpetual peace might only have a media dimension, and in any case, the media and propaganda aspects of peace unions and federations must also be considered (Kant, 1990, p. 18). Baudrillard considered the spread of modern mass media, especially electronic media like television, to cause a fundamental transformation in the nature and character of our lives. Television does not merely "represent" the world to us; it actually defines the reality of the world we truly live in.

According to Baudrillard's argument, in an age where mass media is ubiquitous, a new reality is created, consisting of a blend of people's behaviors and the media's images. The world of hyperreality is built with simulacra—images that derive their meaning from other images and, therefore, lack a basis in "external reality." As Baudrillard shows, our world today is vastly different from the world of Kant's time, and we face issues in the world that were not even conceivable in Kant's era. To achieve perpetual peace in the world, issues that Kant could not have considered, such as propaganda, the media, and the image on the television screen, must be taken into account (Kant, 1990, p. 198).

5-2. Relationship Between Ethics and Law

In this section, we examine the relationship between ethics and law, the proportion of religion and ethics, and the role that religion plays in securing humanity's moral rights.

Küng considers ethics to be broader and superior to law and also the foundation for the realization of rights. According to this understanding, human beings possess rights, as stated in the Declaration of Human Rights, and it is the duty of the state and individuals to respect them. Here, the law ensures the observance of these rights. At the same time, human beings have primary responsibilities placed upon them by virtue of their humanity and personhood, and these responsibilities do not originate from rights. These are moral responsibilities that cannot be established in society by law: "No fundamental ethic can result from mere human rights; this ethic must encompass human responsibility that precedes the law" (Küng, 2010, p. 199).

Due to his theological insight, Küng is entirely influenced by monotheistic religions in his definition of religion and God, and he has no affinity for theoretical philosophy discussions (Küng, 2009, pp. 59-60).[1] Based on his pluralistic perspective, Küng believes that if one can be truly human, they are religious and devout, regardless of whether they adhere to Christian, Islamic, or any other religious doctrines. An individual who believes in religious pluralism is a proponent of peace and an opponent of ideological and belief-based conflicts. He considers the ultimate goal of religion to be ethics, and he summarizes ethics in humanity (Küng, 2012, Introduction).

Küng considers the most important function of religion to be giving meaning to life, a function he reserves exclusively for religion. He identifies moral doctrines as the common core among religions.

1. Küng believes that God cannot be proven by rational arguments. In his view, the affirmation of God's existence is a **decision or choice**—a choice that presents itself as a necessity in human life, rather than something that can be reached through rational and logical arguments (Küng, 2009, pp. 59-60).

His main concern is to create a form of unity among different religions by finding shared ethical principles and norms among them, thereby ensuring that human rights are fully realized.

The result of all Küng's academic and practical efforts throughout his life is summarized in a few sentences:

> There can be no peace among nations without peace among religions. There can be no peace among religions without dialogue between them. There can be no dialogue among religions without criteria for a global ethic. And there can be no survival for our planet without a global ethic (Küng, 2008, p. 13).

In Küng's view, the only way to establish peace among religions is through dialogue; however, dialogue must be based on shared elements. Therefore, the primary condition for the "Dialogue of Civilizations" is an emphasis on the commonality among religions and the avoidance of discord and exclusivism (Küng, 2005, pp. 179-180). From Küng's perspective, the most important commonalities among religions are the ethical principles and norms present in all of them. Thus, by highlighting these shared ethical principles and criteria, one can achieve a global ethic and advance this important agenda (Küng, 2008, pp. 220-221).

One of the obstacles in the path of peaceful dialogue among religions is the secularization of Western societies. Hans Küng does not consider the secularization of Western societies to be consistent with his main idea (globalization), because the secularization of Western societies runs counter to religiosity and respect for the religious and traditional beliefs of individuals, which is the exact opposite of the principles of a global ethic (Fenn, 1999, p. 25).

In Küng's view, at the heart of Christian principles and teachings, there is a certain tendency toward radical secularization.

This secularization occurs precisely within the sphere where Christianity involves itself in work and politics (i.e., everyday and ordinary affairs). Two secular states, such as France and England, which also possess civil religions, treat the transcendent as an ordinary matter and present it as worldly affairs.[1]

6. The Origin of Ethics

Küng locates the origin of ethics in conscience and the inner being of human beings; in other words, ethics arises from inner insight and the call of human conscience (Küng, 2009, pp. 14-15).

From Küng's perspective, humanity's primary emphasis in the ethical domain is on the worship of God (God-centeredness). However, this God-centeredness does not mean that something is moral simply because God has determined it. He even believes that moral principles, such as the Ten Commandments of the Torah, the Sermon on the Mount by Jesus, and the moral commands of the Quran, are not divine in that sense. Instead, these commands were present in human societies years before they appeared as the Ten Commandments, the Sermon of Jesus, or the Quranic commands.

1. Ethics, as the foundation of democracy, has been established and maintained based on the premise that life cannot continue without **individual liberty**. In a democratic state, there is a need for **moral and political consensus**; all social groups in the society, across all religions, support participation in all aspects of society. Everyone increasingly feels the need for a **fundamental agreement**, **consensus**, and the **avoidance of violence**. This is, in sum, what people call **"consensus in value subordination of conflicts"**—irrevocable criteria that are noteworthy and receive broader public attention. The emphasis is on **societal harmony and unity**, and failure to adhere to these principles will cause a religion or a nation to collapse (Küng, 2007, pp. 59-60).

They were subject to the trial and error of human experience and were ultimately accepted by these holy books.

> Ethics has not descended from heaven, but like language, it is the product of development and evolution. When the needs, pressures, and necessities of life emerge, rules of action, preferably laws, customs, and, in short, norms are introduced. Human beings test them and finally establish them (Küng, 1976, pp. 531-542).

Therefore, from this standpoint, man is essentially self-centered in the ethical domain. That is, he acquires the principles, norms, and rules governing his own behavior through the long course of human experience. Thus, in his view, through the continuous experience of human life, ethical norms and principles are tested and experienced, and finally established and accepted. For this reason, one cannot speak of their absolute nature, meaning that acting upon them is absolute and unconditional in all spatio-temporal situations (Küng, 2009, pp. 197-210).

From Küng's perspective, "In a world where religion and politics have caused fragmentation and divisions, and where we witness bloody wars and conflicts every day and hour, it is only through ethics that one can achieve global peace" (Küng, 1998, p. 1). On this basis, Küng's plan for a global ethic has gained particular prominence. The foundation of Küng's ethical discussion is its culmination in global peace.

7. Religious Differences as the Main Cause of Conflicts and Wars

One of the prerequisites for Küng's Global Ethic project is his view that religion is the most significant factor in past and present conflicts and wars. Küng emphasizes in most of his works that it is rare to find

a war or conflict in history where religion was not the primary cause or, at least, did not exacerbate it. Furthermore, in the contemporary world, we are witnessing various religious-ethnic wars across the globe that threaten human life. Therefore, if the world wishes to eradicate the source of these wars and conflicts, it must take religion seriously and address religious disputes before anything else (Küng, 2009, p. 222).

7-1. Religiosity in the Modern Era

A question that has preoccupied the minds of thinkers and many intellectual individuals is: What does religiosity mean in the Modern Era? In other words, is it possible to be both religious and modern at this time, or are these two categories fundamentally incompatible? Naturally, the first question that arises is: What are the characteristics and features of the Modern Era that might conflict with religion and religiosity?

The Modern Era refers to the fundamental transformations that occurred in the Western world from the Renaissance onward in various philosophical and scientific fields, and eventually in Western society and culture. These transformations brought about an unconditional trust in science, technology, and human reason in general, and a turning away from what reason is incapable of understanding. Based on this trust, the main characteristics of the modern person are the avoidance of blind obedience, the demand for evidence, and the rejection of traditional authorities, which are clearly in opposition to traditional piety and religiosity. This issue may be observed from the viewpoint of a philosopher of religion in the Modern Era, who consistently sides with reason and asks religion to harmonize itself with reason (Küng, 2009, pp. 63-64).

8. The Role of Religion in Global Ethics

Religions play a very important role in Küng's Global Ethic project, and it can be said that religion is the most crucial, and indeed the main, factor in the realization of this plan. As previously discussed, from Küng's point of view, until peace and understanding are achieved among religions, the realization of global peace through a global ethic is not possible.

The role of religion can be viewed from two perspectives; in other words, religion is important in the Global Ethic project for two reasons:

First, as stated in the Declaration Toward a Global Ethic, the Global Ethic project will be realized through inner transformation in human beings. That is, the Global Ethic project seeks a transformation in the global community that cannot be achieved through laws, moral recommendations, treaties, and covenants, but rather through a change in perspectives and values.

Therefore, it is by creating a transformation in the souls and minds of human beings that one can hope for a change in perspectives and values. But what force can bring about this transformation in the current crisis-ridden world? Here, Küng believes that no force other than the spiritual power of religions can effect this transformation. Thus, religion is the most important spiritual force for realizing this inner transformation.

As explicitly mentioned in the Declaration Toward a Global Ethic, although religions themselves cannot solve the environmental, economic, and social problems of the world today, there is a vital element in religion that is not achievable through economic and social programs: namely, the change of attitudes, mentalities, and, in a word, the change of people's hearts and redirecting the wrong course of life

toward a new path. In fact, this transformation is a spiritual revival that the spiritual power of religions can actualize (Küng, 1998, p. 13).

Based on this, "Religions, despite significant differences regarding the values and standards governing human life, still possess the spiritual power that can transform the face of the current world" (Küng, 1998, p. 13).

Furthermore, religions play a vital role in offering hope to human beings. Throughout history, people have witnessed numerous conflicts, wars, and disputes among individuals and human groups. Today, in the modern world, these wars and conflicts have not only failed to subside but have become even more widespread. Consequently, despair, hopelessness, and a bleak outlook on humanity's future are almost natural. Keeping the spirit of hope alive and thus searching for solutions to problems requires a powerful force.

It appears that here too, religions, with their rich human and ethical content, can keep the hope of achieving global tranquility and perpetual peace alive in the hearts of peace-loving people. Evidence for this claim is the "immense efforts of countless women and men throughout the current crisis-ridden world who are still sparing no effort to achieve peace among nations. A clear example of this hope is the participation of hundreds of followers of different religions in the Parliament of the World's Religions conference in Chicago" (Küng, 1998, p. 13). Saying "yes to God" means a kind of trust in life that is permanent and has an ultimate foundation. This is a form of primary trust that is rooted in the ultimate depth of foundations and is directed toward goals, with God as the basis of support. This factor is considered to create a sense of certainty and knowledge for individuals.

Fundamental trust and trust in God demonstrate a similar basic structure; it is not merely a matter of human reason, but the matter of

the entire human existence, with body, soul, reason, and motivations. Trust in God is beyond reason, but it is not anti-rational. When faced with rational criticism, it can be justified, but not by resorting to a compelling proof; rather, by convincing reasons. This is why the Holy Scripture uses the important word faith: "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Küng, 2012, pp. 160-161).

Second: In addition to being a spiritual force for initiating inner transformations, different religions also share common ethical principles and norms upon which dialogue can be established among them, ultimately leading to global peace and understanding. In most of his works, Küng attempts to illustrate these shared principles and norms across various religions. Küng analyzes and examines the world's great religions (primal religions, Hinduism and Buddhism, Chinese religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) and highlights their common ethical principles.

Küng’s intent regarding these common ethical principles and norms is that they are the same general ethical commands and rules found in the Ten Commandments of Judaism, the Sermon on the Mount by Jesus, the moral teachings of the Quran, and the ethical instructions of other world religions. Based on this, Küng believes that these ethical universals are not exclusive to a specific religion or culture; rather, they exist in all cultures and religions of the world, even in primal religions. Therefore, he strives to demonstrate the position of these principles in all religions and cultures.

From Küng's perspective, these principles exist in all cultures and religions of the world and all of them converge on more general principles such as "Treat people humanely" and "Love one another"—

the very principles that are stated in the Declaration Toward a Global Ethic.

> Among these, all these general ethical principles and commands return to one important principle, known as the 'Golden Rule,' which appears in various forms and expressions across all great religious and ethical traditions. That is: 'Do not do to others what you would not want done to yourself' (Küng, 2009, pp. 238-239).

9. Global Ethic

The Global Ethic is Hans Küng's core project, essentially the culmination of all his scholarly and practical efforts throughout his life. He summarizes this project in a few sentences:

> There can be no peace among nations without peace among religions. There can be no peace among religions without dialogue between them. There can be no dialogue among religions without criteria for a global ethic. And there can be no survival for our planet without a global ethic (Küng, 2008, p. 13).

Küng believes that he has traversed a very long path to achieve this goal, which he describes in his work *A Small Island* as: "The Long Road to a Global Ethic". By describing this path, he is essentially detailing his scholarly life, which is why he calls this project the fruit of his life's work. His main goal in this project is to achieve Global Peace—peace among different nations, civilizations, and cultures. The premise of this goal is, on the one hand, that humanity throughout history has been entangled in numerous bloody wars and conflicts for various reasons, in which the role of religion has been very fundamental. In the new world, the role of religions in creating and escalating wars and conflicts is also undeniable.

On the other hand, the positive role of religions in calming

these conflicts should not be overlooked. Every thoughtful and benevolent human being must feel a sense of responsibility toward this matter. Therefore, establishing peace among religions is one of the main pillars of this project, the neglect of which has prevented humanity from achieving perpetual peace so far. But how is peace among religions possible? (Küng, 2009, p. 220).

10. The Global Ethic Project of Hans Küng

Küng believes that the only way to establish peace among religions is through dialogue, but this dialogue must be based on shared principles. According to Küng, the world's various religions, despite their doctrinal differences, possess fundamental common ground that can serve as a basis for dialogue. In his view, the most important commonalities among religions are the ethical principles and norms present in all of them. Therefore, a Global Ethic can be achieved by highlighting these shared ethical principles and criteria, and this important project can be advanced.

Küng states that he has "lived with this project", meaning he has dedicated his entire scholarly life to its realization. To explain and examine this plan, it is necessary to first consider the foundations and preconditions that necessarily led him to it, then proceed to the principles and criteria of the Global Ethic and the role of religion within it, and finally, assess its current status and measure of success. Given the characteristics of Küng's theology, it can be said that these features are indeed based on the fundamental presuppositions of his theological thought, and it is on the basis of these presuppositions that he develops his Global Ethic project (Küng, 2009, pp. 220-221).

Whether the phenomenon of globalization is a threat or an opportunity depends on global initiatives, and the effort to achieve a Global Ethic is an example of such an initiative. In presenting the

Global Ethic project, Hans Küng has offered global declarations from a religious standpoint. These ethical declarations begin with a foundational rule (not an ultimate criterion) and then lead to basic and middle principles. The main topics discussed in these declarations are efficiency and effectiveness, internal consistency, applicability to religions, and adaptability to cultures and ethnicities.

Küng does not consider the Global Ethic to be based on naturalistic theories, nor does he view ethics as possessing inherent goodness or badness (*Husn wa Qubh Dhati*). He considers it a form of minimal absolutism that can be achieved based on the ultimate criterion of ethics—the unconditioned command (Qara Maleki, 2009, p. 79).

One of the important factors in Küng's Global Ethic project is the close relationship between ethics and politics. Küng is well aware that the management of world affairs has not been and is not in the hands of theologians or moral philosophers. Rather, throughout history, it has been politicians who have governed and made decisions about world administration. Consequently, Küng pays special attention to the moralization of politics. He discusses this topic in detail in his important book, *Global Ethic for Global Politics and Economics*. In this book, he rejects the view that advocates the separation of politics and ethics, believing that many of the new world's problems stem from this very viewpoint. Based on this, he emphasizes that politics must become moral. In this regard, he established contact with many political forums and major world politicians, sharing his Global Ethic project with them (Küng, 2009, p. 223).

Küng took action in 1991 by founding the Global Ethic Foundation in Tübingen. The goals of this institution are:

1. Encouraging and realizing inter-religious and inter-cultural research. This goal is precisely aimed at mutual

understanding and acquaintance between different religions and cultures to achieve one of the main pillars of the Global Ethic project: dialogue among religions and cultures.

2. Encouraging and realizing inter-religious and inter-cultural education aimed at acquaintance and resolving common misunderstandings between religions and cultures.
3. Providing the possibility for and supporting the confrontation (engagement) of religions and cultures with one another. This goal was pursued to achieve the other two goals, as interaction and confrontation are prerequisites for understanding and education.

With the help of his colleagues in this institute, Küng has been able to take important and effective steps toward the realization of the Global Ethic project. After the publication of the book *Global Responsibility* and the establishment of this institute, he was naturally the most suitable person to prepare the Declaration of the Parliament of the World's Religions with the orientation of Global Ethic and Peace (Küng, 2009, pp. 225-226).

10-1. Principles of Küng's Global Ethic

Hans Küng's Declaration was initially published in Tübingen (Tubingen) and was later announced from the perspective of the Parliament of the World's Religions with a preface by the Parliament, which included a summary of the declaration (Küng & Kuschel, 1994, p. 99).

The Declaration, recalling the terrifying face of the present age that threatens human civilization, emphasizes that "No New World Order Without a Global Ethic is possible". It then introduces four unchangeable guidelines for a Global Ethic under the heading

"Fundamental Requirement: Every Person Must Be Treated Humanely":

1. Commitment to a Culture of Non-Violence and Respect for Life.
2. Commitment to a Culture of Solidarity and a Just Economic Order.
3. Commitment to a Culture of Tolerance and a Life Lived in Truthfulness.
4. Commitment to a Culture of Equal Rights and Partnership Between Men and Women (Qara Maleki, 2003, pp. 82-83)

The following are the detailed principles of Hans Küng's Global Ethic:

1. Every human being, regardless of color, race, religion, etc., possesses dignity and worth.
2. Every human being has a duty to behave humanely toward others.
3. No individual, group, or organization is the criterion of good and bad. Do not do to others what you yourself would not want.
4. No one has the right to injure, terrorize, or kill another human being.
5. Disputes among states must be resolved in a peaceful manner.
6. The worth of every human being is infinite and must be respected unconditionally.
7. Every human being has a responsibility to act with uprightness, honesty, and fairness.

8. Everyone should make efforts to eliminate poverty, malnutrition, ignorance, and inequality.
9. Everyone should support the needy, the deprived, the disabled, and the victims of discrimination.
10. Property and wealth must be used responsibly and in accordance with justice and for the sake of human progress.
11. Every human being has a duty to speak and act truthfully and sincerely.
12. Politicians, business people, scientists, and other professionals are not exempt from general moral standards.
13. Mass media must be free to enlighten society and critique its structures and the actions of the government.
14. While religious freedom must be guaranteed, representatives of religions must avoid prejudices and discrimination against the beliefs of others.
15. All men and women have a responsibility to respect each other; no one has the right to exploit another sexually.
16. Marriage, in all its cultural and religious diversity, requires love, loyalty, and forgiveness, and its goal must be to ensure security and mutual respect between the spouses.
17. Each spouse is responsible for the reasonable planning of family affairs, and the relationship between parents and children should reflect affection, appreciation, mutual respect, and love (Küng, 2009, pp. 124-236). One of the most important ways to pave the path for global peace

and ethics is the Dialogue of Civilizations, which will be briefly addressed next.

10-2. Necessary Conditions for the Dialogue of Civilizations

In the West and the Islamic world, an exclusionary view still exists, and minority religions are deprived of many social benefits. Neither the West nor the Islamic world has yet been able to create a balanced situation for all individuals regardless of their religion. This situation can push individuals toward irreligion or, at times, toward violence and extreme exclusivism.

1-Some nations, at best, consider national dialogue a security problem and a ban on political and religious parties, because they view political association as a collective phenomenon and, in some cases, demand that ethnic groups avoid dialogue. Currently, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Jordan, and Morocco are attempting to integrate Islamic forces in a democratic fashion, based on the approach that the spread of Islamism reduces the tendency toward violence. This is in contrast to the former Soviet republics—Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—which are very weak, ruled by former communist autocrats, and have an unstable, dictatorial government with an uncertain future.

Therefore, the primary condition for the Dialogue of Civilizations is to emphasize the commonalities among religions and to avoid discord and exclusivism (Küng, 2005, pp. 179-180).

10-3. Final Analysis and Evaluation

In the view of Hans Küng, ethical principles do not have a heavenly origin but are the product of human lived experiences throughout history, which have gradually evolved into rules for action

and were later affirmed by divine religions. According to this perspective, religion and ethics are independent of each other, and ethical principles do not originate from religion; nevertheless, the moral consciousness of humanity has, coincidentally, been confirmed by religion.

What Hans Küng says about ethics suggests that he adopts a naturalistic approach to morality and attributes a biological origin to it. Undoubtedly, Hans Küng's approach to ethics is not of the same type as that of naturalists like Richard Dawkins (See: Dawkins, 2008, p. 249; See: Hick, 2017, pp. 5-7). This is because Hans Küng is, in any case, a Christian theologian and maintains a belief in the supernatural in the background of his thought.

However, since he does not posit a heavenly origin for ethics, traces of a naturalistic perspective may be inferred from the tenor of his speech. Therefore, to rectify the lacunae present in his thought, a metaphysical basis can be conceived for the Global Ethic. This would both achieve Hans Küng's objective of peace among religions and avoid the imputation of a naturalistic approach to ethics.

Conclusion

Küng does not intend to discard tradition and modernity; rather, through his interpretations and understandings, he seeks to somehow integrate tradition and modernity. He also reconciles the state of being religious and modern in the modern world.

With the proposal of the Declaration Toward a Global Ethic, Hans Küng aims to establish peaceful relations among the followers of different religions. In his view, if religions set aside their historical and theological differences and focus solely on shared ethical doctrines, there is hope that perpetual peace can be achieved among all societies, regardless of their ideology or religious belief.

To achieve this goal, he does not attribute a heavenly origin to ethics; instead, he views the consensus of human beings on ethical principles as resulting from the accumulation of human experiences throughout history, which have incidentally been confirmed by divine religions. The implicit connotation of Hans Küng's assertion regarding the earthly origin of ethics is a naturalistic inference, which is comparable to the utilitarian view of thinkers like John Stuart Mill. Mill also rejects *a priori* knowledge, or knowledge preceding experience, and explains rational and ethical self-evident truths based on the accumulation of human experiences in the process of historical evolution.

In this context, to make the possibility of a Global Ethic viable, we referred to the theories of Josiah Royce—a moral idealist. Given that he establishes a meaningful relationship among ontology, ethics, idealism, and monotheistic theology, there is hope that by drawing inspiration from his thought, a metaphysical foundation can be provided for the Global Ethic. This would offer a model for ethics that is free from the philosophical shortcomings of the theories of both Ghazali and Hans Küng. Royce's moral idealism does not regard religion and ethics as independent of each other but views man as a transcendental being possessing *a priori* knowledge of ethical principles. Thus, the concordance of religion and ethics does not acquire a posterior and historical aspect but gains a metaphysical and ontological foundation.

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Ethical Readings of the Self and the Other: A Comparative Analysis of the Possibility of Peace in the Thought of Schmitt, Liberalism, Mouffe, and Levinas

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Abstract

Achieving peace in contemporary societies has become a fundamental issue in political and ethical thought due to complexities in identity, cultural pluralism, and political challenges. This article focuses on how the concepts of the "Self" and the "Other" are defined, and examines the impact of ethical readings on the possibility of achieving peace. The main research question is: How can ethical readings of the "Self" and the "Other" contribute to achieving peace in contemporary societies? This article explores the dominant frameworks for confronting the "Other" through a comparative analysis of the ideas of Carl Schmitt (friend/enemy

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dichotomy), Liberalism (rational consensus), and Chantal Mouffe (agonistic pluralism). Then, in contrast to these approaches, it introduces the responsibility-centered ethics of Emmanuel Levinas as a fundamental alternative. The hypothesis is that although each of these approaches offers a way to manage differences, stable peace is only possible through understanding the "Other" as an ethical existence that has precedence over the "Self," and establishing a relationship based on empathy and asymmetrical responsibility, as explained by Levinas. Using a qualitative content analysis method, this research shows that the transition from a purely political logic to an ethical logic is a necessary condition for peaceful coexistence and can lead to the development of theories related to dialogue and justice in human relations.

Keywords

Peace, Self and Other, Ethics, Emmanuel Levinas, Carl Schmitt, Chantal Mouffe, Liberalism, Political Identity.

Introduction

A: Generalities

In the contemporary world, the achievement of sustainable peace faces increasing challenges such as identity crises, structural inequalities, and cultural tensions. At the core of these challenges lies the manner in which two key concepts, the "Self" and the "Other," are understood and defined. The way an individual or a collective defines its identity in relation to others—who think or live differently—plays a decisive role in shaping either peaceful or hostile relations. This article argues that the root of many conflicts lies not in inherent differences, but in our "reading" of these differences and the ethical or political load we attach to them.

Contemporary political and philosophical thought has offered varying responses to this issue. Carl Schmitt, with his radical distinction between "Friend" and "Enemy," defines politics as an arena of existential conflicts, where the "Other" is a potential threat, and peace is merely a temporary interruption in this constant state of struggle. In contrast, Liberal theories attempt to contain differences within the private sphere and neutralize them in the public sphere through an emphasis on "rational consensus" and legal procedures, thereby making peaceful coexistence possible. Chantal Mouffe, critiquing both views, proposes a model of the "politics of difference" or "agonistic pluralism" (Agonism). In her view, the complete elimination of antagonism is neither possible nor desirable; instead, the "Enemy" must be converted into an "Adversary"—an other with whom we disagree but whose right to exist we nonetheless recognize.

In contrast to these viewpoints, which all remain, in one way or another, within the framework of political logic, this article focuses on the theoretical framework of Emmanuel Levinas. Levinas

fundamentally transforms the relationship with the "Other" by proposing a "First Philosophy" based on ethics.

From his perspective, the encounter with the "Face of the Other" is a foundational ethical event that, prior to any political definition or knowledge of the Other, calls the "Self" to an unlimited responsibility towards them. Peace, in Levinas's thought, is not a social contract or a balance of power, but the product of this ethical responsibility. The goal of Levinasian ethics, which interweaves duty and responsibility, is to achieve a world in which tranquility is realized not through the elimination of the Other, but through the acceptance of the Other in their totality.

Therefore, the main research question is: How can the various ethical readings of the concepts of the "Self" and the "Other" affect the achievement of peace in contemporary societies? And specifically, what unique solution does Levinas's ethical approach offer in this regard?

The main hypothesis of the article is that while the Schmittian, Liberal, and Mouffean readings each contribute in different ways to the management of conflict and the realization of "minimal peace," the achievement of "sustainable peace" is only realized if one transcends political logic and attends to fundamental ethical principles such as empathy, acceptance, and especially responsibility towards the Other. In other words, a profound understanding of the "Other" not as a political rival or an existential threat, but as an "ethical existence" that calls us to accountability, is the key to sustainable peace.

To test this hypothesis, the present research utilizes the qualitative content analysis method and employs Levinas’s ethical framework to examine the relationship between the self and the other. The theories of Carl Schmitt, Liberalism, and Chantal Mouffe are used

as a basis for comparative analysis to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each reading concerning the possibility of realizing peace. The results of this research are expected to show that, despite deep theoretical differences, the effort to open a space for an ethical and empathetic encounter with the Other can contribute to the development of theories related to dialogue, coexistence, and justice in today's pluralistic world.

B: Theoretical Preliminaries: The Political, the Self and the Other, and the Concept of Peace

This section is dedicated to clarifying the theoretical and conceptual framework of the research. First, by focusing on the concept of the "Political" (*das Politische*), we will specify the context in which identities and human relationships are formed. Subsequently, we will analyze the foundational concepts of the "Self" and the "Other" through three political readings (Schmittian, Liberal, Mouffean) and one ethical reading (Levinasian). Finally, we will redefine the concept of "Peace" in light of these conflicting viewpoints.

B–1: The Political and the Definition of the "Self" and "Other" Relationship

Understanding the nature and essence of the Political (*das Politische*) in a community is a precondition for recognizing the logic governing it (Kazemi et al., 2017, p. 30). "The Political" refers to that fundamental dimension of human coexistence in which collective identities are formed and the mode of social togetherness is organized (Tavana & Azarkamand, 2014, p. 28). This dimension both affects the mode of action of political actors and determines the framework of the political society (Rabiei Kohandani, 2021, p. 42).

At the heart of the Political lies the relationship between the "Self" and the "Other." The "Self" refers to the identity, values, and self-conception that an individual or group holds for itself; in contrast, the "Other" symbolizes the individuals or groups in distinction to whom the "Self" is defined. The mode of confronting the "Other" can be categorized into two general approaches: Violence, meaning the use of force and coercion to eliminate or subjugate the Other; and Tolerance (or Madaara), meaning forbearance and patience towards different thought and behavior, which is made possible through the effort to know and understand the Other.

Political and ethical thinkers have offered different readings of this confrontation, which can be examined within the Schmittian, Liberal, Mouffean, and Levinasian frameworks. The first three readings are fundamentally political, while the fourth proposes a radical ethical foundation.

B–2: Political and Ethical Readings of the "Other"

Political readings of the Other define identity within the context of power and antagonism. The Schmittian reading, with its absolute distinction between "Friend" and "Enemy," views the Other as an existential threat. In contrast, the Liberal reading attempts to confine differences to the private sphere and reduce the Other to an equal but neutralized citizen by emphasizing "rational consensus" and impartial procedures. Chantal Mouffe, offering a reading of the "politics of difference," critiques both and suggests that the "Enemy" be transformed into an "Adversary"—an other with whom we disagree but whose right to existence and legitimacy we recognize.

In direct opposition to these political approaches is the ethical reading of Emmanuel Levinas, which forms the main theoretical framework of this article. From Levinas's perspective, the "Other" is

not an epistemic object or a political rival, but an existence that "resists every kind of internalization." The "Other" is a transcendental matter that cannot be contained within the conceptual frameworks of the "Self." In his belief, ethics is born in the face-to-face encounter with the Other; this encounter calls the "Self" to an asymmetrical and unlimited responsibility towards the Other. Therefore, while in the political readings, the "Self" has priority over the "Other," in Levinas's ethics, the "Other" is the condition for the possibility of the formation of the ethical "Self."

B-3: Rereading the Concept of Peace: From Political Contract to Ethical Duty

Our definition of "Peace" is deeply dependent on how we understand the relationship between the "Self" and the "Other." In a common view, peace is a state in which war is absent. This definition, which has its roots in the Roman and legal tradition, considers peace equivalent to a "pact" for avoiding mutual harm[1]. This negative view (defining peace by the absence of war) was later transformed by Augustine and Thomas Aquinas into a more positive definition, namely the "tranquility of order," which formed the foundation of many modern definitions. In this view, peace is a state in which security, justice, and fairness are established, and concepts like violence, oppression, and conflict are absent.

However, Levinas offers a fundamental and different definition of peace. In his view, peace is not a political status or a social

1. The Latin word pax is close to the word pacisci, which means "to conclude a contract." However, this same word was used by a philosopher like Cicero to also mean "tranquility of the soul, integrity, and lack of anxiety," which indicates the duality in the understanding of peace from the very beginning.

contract, but an ethical duty that arises from accepting responsibility for the "Other." Levinasian peace is established when the "Self" ceases the attempt to dominate the "Other" and recognizes their dignity and right to life. Therefore, true peace is not the product of a balance of power or rational consensus, but the fruit of an ethical opening towards the Other and the acceptance of their vulnerability. This peace is not merely the "tranquility of the soul" (in Cicero's terms), but a tranquility that results from fulfilling an endless ethical duty.

1. The Logic of Antagonism: Analyzing the Schmittian "Friend-Enemy" Relation and the Possibility of Peace

To understand the structural obstacles in the path of peace, it is essential to analyze the thought of Carl Schmitt (1888–1985), the German political theorist. His thought is centered on the concept of "The Political," which he defines through a fundamental distinction: "Friend and Enemy."

Schmitt believes that just as ethics is defined by the distinction between good and evil, and aesthetics by the distinction between ugly and beautiful, the Political derives its identity from the existential opposition between "We" (Friend) and "They" (Enemy) (Schmitt, 2014, pp. 24-25).

This distinction is not merely a difference of opinion or economic competition, but an existential antagonism in which the "Other" is perceived as the negation of "Our" identity and way of life, and inherently contains the real possibility of physical struggle and killing.

From this perspective, the political identity of a group or nation is formed in opposition to an antagonistic "Other." As Mouffe

states, for Schmitt, understanding the political is impossible outside of the "friend-enemy grouping" (Mouffe, 2012, pp. 21-22). A political community is born when a group, by creating a distinction between itself and non-members (non-Self), becomes ready for a struggle for survival (Schmitt, 2011, p. 12). This shared sense of identity against a threat is what can compel individuals to fight and sacrifice their lives for the group (Ghahreman, 2014, p. 143). Within this framework, the State, as the supreme political institution, holds the exclusive function of defining the enemy and declaring war. Therefore, politics is meaningless without the possibility of an enemy, and every human is potentially a "combatant."

This logic of antagonism has direct consequences for the concept of peace. From Schmitt's point of view, sustainable peace is a liberal and dangerous ideal that ignores the true essence of politics. In the Schmittian world, peace is merely a temporary interruption in a permanent state of conflict. His emphasis on the "State of Exception," where the sovereign can suspend the legal order to confront the enemy, clearly shows that the political takes precedence over ethics and law (Ghahreman, 2014, p. 32). This prioritization of political survival and the weakening of international institutions aimed at limiting state sovereignty pave the way for the justification of violence and war (Schmitt, 2014, p. 32). Consequently, the structure of Schmitt's thought is fundamentally at odds with the possibility of achieving sustainable peace, as it considers antagonism and enmity an irremovable element of the human condition (Mouffe, 2013, p. 17).

However, can a lesson for defining the conditions of peace be drawn from this radical pessimism? While the direct application of Schmitt's thought for peace-making is contradictory, certain aspects can be critically utilized. First, Schmitt's realism warns us that conflict is an inseparable part of politics and cannot be ignored with naive

idealism (Mouffe, 2013, p. 20). Recognizing this reality is the first step toward the realistic management of conflicts. Second, his emphasis on the importance of collective identity and internal cohesion is a reminder that sustainable peace requires creating a sense of belonging and solidarity among citizens. Finally, his insistence on the necessity of decisive action in crises highlights the importance of competent political leadership for protecting peace against threats.

In summary, Schmitt's "Friend-Enemy" logic defines peace not as an ethical goal, but as a variable dependent on the dynamics of power and antagonism. This perspective, through the reductionism and polarization of human relations, practically blocks any possibility for ethical dialogue and understanding, and presents a fundamental challenge to any project for sustainable peace. The analysis of his thought helps us understand why the transition from a purely political logic to an ethical logic is essential for achieving peace.

2. The Liberal Paradigm: Peace through Rational Consensus and its Limitations

In opposition to the Schmittian logic of antagonism, the liberal paradigm proposes a different path to achieving peace: the management of differences through rational consensus. This approach, especially in the two main models of liberal democracy—the aggregative model and the deliberative model—seeks to reach a general agreement on fundamental principles and values. This section analyzes the role of this paradigm in creating peace and examines its inherent limitations.

Liberalism's peaceful promise rests on the assumption that agreement on shared values such as freedom, human rights, and the rule of law can reduce the likelihood of violent conflicts. Consensus on these principles provides a basis for constructive cooperation,

guarantees individuals' basic rights and freedoms, and prevents despotism and violence by strengthening democratic institutions. In this view, the "Other" is not an enemy, but an equal citizen with whom rational agreement can be reached through dialogue and legal procedures.

However, this peace-building project faces serious limitations. Critics point out that liberalism in practice can lead to severe economic inequalities, which are themselves a source of social unrest. Furthermore, this ideology alone is incapable of containing powerful and emotional forces like extreme nationalism, and the cultural relativism stemming from it sometimes challenges the formation of shared values.

However, the more fundamental critique concerns liberalism's inability to understand and confront the unavoidable dimension of "antagonism" in social life. According to critics like Chantal Mouffe, liberalism, due to its emphasis on individualism and rationalism, fails to fully grasp the pluralistic and passionate nature of politics—a dimension for which there is no final, rational solution (Mouffe, 2013, p. 57). The attempt by the aggregative and deliberative models to completely resolve conflict through consensus ignores the reality that every consensus is inherently based on an act of exclusion and rejection. There are always groups and viewpoints that are left outside the scope of this consensus, and this very act keeps the potential for antagonism alive.

This is where the key difference between the liberal models and the agonistic model becomes apparent. While aggregative and deliberative models view conflict as an obstacle to effective decision-making and seek to neutralize it, the agonistic model considers tension and competition a natural and even necessary element for a dynamic

democracy. In this view, the goal is not to eliminate conflict, but to transform the "Enemy" into an "Adversary."

Consequently, although liberalism provides an essential framework for creating "procedural peace" through law and rights, it faces a challenge in achieving sustainable peace. Its attempt to eliminate antagonism by searching for an all-encompassing rational consensus ultimately leads to the suppression of differences and the disregard of the true nature of the political. To achieve sustainable peace, one cannot simply overlook these limitations; it is necessary to seek approaches that recognize difference and pluralism not as a problem, but as a fundamental reality.

3. The Politics of Difference: Peaceful Management of Conflict in the Thought of Chantal Mouffe

Chantal Mouffe, the Belgian political theorist, proposes a third way between the Schmittian logic of antagonism and the liberal ideal of consensus. By critiquing both viewpoints, she seeks a framework that both recognizes the unavoidable reality of conflict in human societies and offers a way to manage it peacefully. For this purpose, Mouffe introduces the concept of "Agonism" or "Agonistic Pluralism."

Mouffe agrees with Schmitt that "The Political," as the ontological and inherent dimension of human relations, is based on a fundamental conflict or antagonism (Mouffe, 2012, p. 19). In other words, the formation of every collective "We" necessitates a distinction from a "They," and this distinction always carries the potential for antagonism. Thus, like Schmitt, she considers the liberal idea that conflict can be eradicated from society by achieving complete rational consensus a dangerous "illusion" (Rabiei Kohandani, 2021, p. 52).

However, Mouffe's key point of departure from Schmitt lies in

the management of this inherent conflict. While Schmittian antagonism leads to a "Friend/Enemy" relation in which the Other must be eliminated, Mouffe seeks to tame this destructive potential. She argues that the task of democracy is not to eliminate antagonism, but to transform it into agonism. Agonism, unlike antagonism, is a relationship between "adversaries," not "enemies." Adversaries are those who disagree and struggle to realize their conflicting viewpoints, but at the same time, they recognize each other's right to this struggle and adhere to a common ethical-political framework (Mouffe, 2012, pp. 27-28).

This common framework in liberal democracies is the agreement on the fundamental principles of "Freedom and Equality for all." Therefore, in the agonistic model, political conflict continues, but this struggle is over the "interpretation" and "mode of implementation" of these shared principles, not over the annihilation of the opposing side. The "Other" in this view is neither an existential enemy (like Schmitt's view) nor merely a rival with negotiable interests (like the deliberative liberal view), but a "legitimate adversary"; someone whose ideas we fight, but whose right to defend those ideas we respect (Rabiei Kohandani, 2021, p. 57).

With this approach, Mouffe critiques the dominant liberal models: the aggregative model (which reduces politics to bargaining over interests) and the deliberative model (which seeks the rational resolution of all conflicts). She believes that by ignoring the passionate and antagonistic dimension of politics, these models depoliticize it, and by suppressing legitimate conflicts, they open the way for the emergence of right-wing populisms and violent forms of antagonism (Khaleghi Damghani & Malekzadeh, 2015, p. 150). In her view, true pluralism is only possible when differences are not merely

tolerated, but are accepted as the driving force of a dynamic democracy (Moeini Alamdari, 2010, pp. 132-133).

Ultimately, Mouffe's point of departure with the agonistic model was to show how it is possible both to recognize the conflictual dimension of society and to preserve peaceful forms of political action from within pluralism. Peace in her thought is not a static, conflict-free state, but a dynamic and perpetual process of managing conflicts within a shared democratic framework. By transforming the "Other" from an absolute enemy into a legitimate adversary, she opens the way for a type of coexistence in which differences are not suppressed but become a source of political vitality.

4. The Ethical Opening Towards Peace: The Priority of the "Other" in the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas

Emmanuel Levinas, the Jewish-French philosopher, offers a radical alternative to political approaches to peace by presenting a "First Philosophy" based on ethics. In contrast to the entire tradition of Western philosophy, which is founded on the priority of the "Self" or the Subject, he argues that ethics begins not with the "Self," but with the encounter with "the Other" (Abbasi & Fazeli, 2023, p. 67; Aliya, 2009, p. 37).

Levinas's goal is not to formulate a prescriptive ethical system, but to describe the condition for the possibility of ethics and to find its meaning in the foundational experience of the human relationship. This approach is a revolution in ethical thought that emphasizes pluralism, particularity, and feeling instead of unity, totality, and reason.

4–1. The Nature of the "Other" and Asymmetrical Responsibility

At the heart of Levinas's philosophy lies the concept of "The

Face of the Other." The "Face" is not an epistemic object that can be known and summarized within the concepts of the "Self"; rather, it is an immediate, vulnerable, and commanding presence. The Face of the Other, through its nudity and defencelessness, issues an ethical command: "Thou shalt not kill me." This command, prior to any choice or social contract, calls the "Self" to an unconditional and asymmetrical responsibility. This responsibility is "heteronomous" (Other-derived), meaning it is imposed upon us from the outside (by the Other) and challenges the absolute spontaneity and freedom of the "Self."

In this view, I am responsible for the Other, even before they are responsible for me; this responsibility goes so far that Levinas states that "I care more about the life of the 'Other' than the life of 'Me'" (Saber Latibari, 2023, p. 77; Asghari, 2010, p. 153).

This ethical priority of the "Other" is the foundation of peace in Levinas's thought. Violence, in its essence, is an attempt to deny this responsibility and to objectify the Other—that is, to reduce them to a threat (Schmittian view), a rival (Liberal view), or a concept within the framework of one's own identity. Peace, in contrast, is not a political contract or a balance of power, but the product of accepting this fundamental responsibility. True peace is established when the "Self" ceases the attempt to dominate the "Other" and becomes accountable for their vulnerability. This view offers a novel definition of humanism: not a humanism based on the autonomous modern Subject who legislates for others, but an "Humanism of the Other" that is redefined based on responsibility towards them (Sayyad Mansour, 2017, pp. 199 & 201; Asghari, 2010, p. 148; Davies, 2007, p. 75).

4-2. The Role of Religion in Levinasian Ethics and Peace

Religion, especially the Jewish tradition, plays an inspirational

role in the formation of Levinas's ethics, but his ethics are not limited to any specific religion. Teachings such as the story of Cain and Abel, which emphasize human responsibility for one's brother, resonate in his thought. However, Levinas believes that the ethical experience of encountering the "Face of the Other" is a fundamental, universal human experience that precedes any religious or cultural belief. He does not seek to establish a religious ethic, but rather endeavors to phenomenologically describe the meaning of ethical acts such as forgiveness, love, and self-sacrifice that lie at the heart of religions (Saber Latibari, 2023, p. 77).

From this perspective, religion can play a dual role in achieving peace. If religion becomes a source of inspiration for responsibility, justice, and compassion towards the Other (even the alien or enemy Other), it can be a powerful force for peace. But if it transforms into a tool for fanaticism, the justification of violence, and the exclusion of the Other, it will become the greatest obstacle to peace. Ultimately, for Levinas, the true test of any religion and any ethic is in its manner of confronting the "Other." The ultimate goal of his ethics is to achieve a world filled with peace and tranquility; a peace made possible not through the elimination of differences, but through the acceptance of endless responsibility toward the different Other.

5. Comparative Analysis and Critique: From the Politics of Antagonism to the Ethics of Responsibility

The examination of the four perspectives discussed indicates a spectrum of approaches to the issue of the "Self" and the "Other" and, consequently, to the possibility of "Peace."

This spectrum begins, on one end, with the extreme realism of Carl Schmitt, who reduces politics to the ineliminable logic of

"Friend/Enemy" and regards peace as a temporary and strategic matter. In this view, the "Other" is always an existential threat, and ethics fades in the face of political necessity. This approach, through its reductionism and prioritization of power, practically forecloses any possibility for sustainable peace based on mutual understanding.

On the other side of the spectrum lies the idealism of Liberalism, which attempts to contain conflicts and transform the "Other" into an equal citizen within a neutral framework by relying on "rational consensus" and legal institutions. However, as critics have pointed out, this approach often suffers from oversimplification when confronting the stubborn realities of politics, such as structural inequalities, identity passions and emotions, and power dynamics. Its focus on procedures and institutions sometimes overlooks the root causes of conflict, and its idealization of democracy and consensus ignores the voices of marginalized groups.

Chantal Mouffe, by presenting the "Agonism" model, attempts to find a middle path. She accepts the unavoidable reality of "antagonism" from Schmitt but seeks to tame it by transforming the "Enemy" into a "Legitimate Adversary," managing the conflict within a democratic framework. This approach, by recognizing differences and legitimizing political contestation, goes beyond Liberalism's simplification. However, the fundamental question facing Mouffe is whether a mere agreement on the abstract principles of "freedom and equality" is sufficient to maintain this "agonistic" relationship and prevent its slippage into destructive "antagonism." Her model, while more politically realistic, still remains within the framework of a purely political logic and lacks a deep ethical foundation for confronting the "Other."

This is where the radical approach of Emmanuel Levinas gains significance as a "First Philosophy" based on ethics. By inverting the

entire tradition of Western philosophy, Levinas prioritizes ethics over ontology and the "Other" over the "Self" (Abbasi & Fazeli, 2023, p. 67; Aliya, 2009, p. 37). Peace in his view is not a political contract, but the product of an unconditional ethical commitment in the face of the "Face of the Other" (Saber Latibari, 2023, p. 77). This perspective, by placing responsibility at the core of the human relationship, offers the deepest alternative to power-based logics.

However, the main critique of Levinas is this: is this radical ethic and unlimited responsibility feasible in the real world of politics, which involves the presence of the "Third Other" (society, institutions, laws) and the necessity of judgment and justice? Does the pure focus on the "Other" not lead to a neglect of the "Self" and the necessities of collective survival?

6. An Alternative Perspective: Ethics, Politics, and Peace in Islamic Thought

At this juncture, a comprehensive critique of these viewpoints can be made from the perspective of Islamic Thought, and an alternative vision can be outlined. Islamic thought, by offering a comprehensive system, attempts to establish a balance among the different existential dimensions of humanity (ethics, politics, spirituality).

6-1. Critique of Western Perspectives from an Islamic Viewpoint:

From this perspective:

- Schmitt's theory is rejected due to its reduction of politics to naked power and its neglect of ethical and spiritual foundations. In Islam, power is not inherently evil, but a means to achieve transcendent goals and serve the people, and if separated from self-purification (*tazkiyat al-nafs*) and

piety (*taqwa*), it leads to corruption (Imam Khomeini, 2013, p. 71). Islamic politics is founded upon revelation and justice, and mandates the observance of ethical principles even when confronting an enemy.

- Liberalism is considered deficient due to its neglect of the spiritual dimensions of humanity and its attempt to establish a purely procedural and secular consensus. Furthermore, its inability to resolve structural inequalities renders it unsuccessful in achieving true justice.
- Mouffe's theory, although acknowledging the reality of conflict, lacks a firm metaphysical and ethical foundation for managing it. Agreement on abstract principles, without spiritual backing and internal commitment, is fragile.
- Finally, Levinas's theory, despite its significant affinity with Islam's emphasis on the Other, is critiqued for its neglect of ontology and its unilateral focus on the "Other." In Islamic thought, responsibility is a multidimensional concept that includes Responsibility before God (Quran, Al-Anfal: 27), Responsibility towards the Self (Quran, Al-Ma'idah: 105) and self-purification (*Jihad al-Akbar*), and Responsibility towards Society (Quran, Al-Baqarah: 143; Ma'refat, 2001, pp. 191-192). These responsibilities are defined and delimited within the framework of divine Law (*Sharia*) and, unlike Levinas's unlimited responsibility, possess boundaries and parameters.

6-2. The Islamic Solution: Prioritizing Self-Purification over Confrontation with the Other

From the Islamic perspective, before addressing the "external Other," one must address the "internal Other." The human possesses two "Selves": the "Commanding Self" (*Nafs al-Ammara*) (egoistic and

base) and the "Contented Self" (*Nafs al-Mutma'inna*) (spiritual and higher). Real peace in society is the product of the victory of the "Higher Self" over the "Commanding Self" within individuals.

A society whose individuals move toward perfection through self-purification and adherence to the guidance of intellect and revelation is, in Imam Khomeini's terms, a society where the "Other" in the sense of a non-Self and a threat will not exist, and the "Politics of Friendship" replaces the "Politics of Antagonism." In such a society, sovereignty belongs to God, and the human ruler (who must possess conditions such as knowledge, capability, and trustworthiness) is merely the implementer of justice and the trustee of the people (Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 34). However, even within this discourse, the danger of the "hypocritical Other," whom Imam Ali (A.S.) described as more dangerous than a believer and an idolater, always exists and requires insight and vigilance (Nahj al-Balagha, Letter 27).

Therefore, the Islamic solution for peace is a comprehensive project that, by emphasizing justice, dialogue, and the promotion of ethical values, ultimately seeks the root of peace in the internal transformation of human beings and the return to divine spirituality and ethics.

Conclusion

This research, aiming to answer the question, "How can ethical readings of the Self and the Other contribute to achieving peace in contemporary societies?", conducted a comparative analysis of four principal approaches in political and ethical thought. The results showed that each of these paradigms offers a distinct response to this fundamental issue, which directly impacts the possibility and nature of peace.

The approach of Carl Schmitt, by defining politics based on the existential opposition of "Friend/Enemy," reduces the "Other" to a threat and regards peace merely as a strategic interruption in a permanent state of conflict. Conversely, Liberalism, relying on "rational consensus" and legal procedures, attempts to neutralize the "Other" within the framework of equal citizenship, but often fails to comprehend and manage the irrational and passionate dimensions of politics and power. Chantal Mouffe, by presenting the "Agonism" model, takes a step further and proposes a way for the peaceful management of unavoidable political conflicts by transforming the "Enemy" into a "Legitimate Adversary," though her model lacks a deep ethical foundation to guarantee this coexistence.

In contrast to these primarily political approaches, the radical ethics of Emmanuel Levinas, as a "First Philosophy," offers the most promising vision for "sustainable peace." By prioritizing the "Other" over the "Self" and grounding the human relationship in "asymmetrical responsibility," Levinas defines peace not as a political contract, but as an endless ethical duty. The main hypothesis of this article—that a profound understanding of the "Other" as an ethical being is the necessary condition for sustainable peace—is most fully manifested in Levinas's thought.

However, this research demonstrated that each of these viewpoints, on its own, faces limitations. Ultimately, by introducing the Islamic perspective as a comprehensive alternative, it was argued that sustainable peace requires an integrated approach that attends to both political dimensions and ethical and spiritual foundations. From this perspective, external peace in society is rooted in the internal peace of individuals and the victory of the "Higher Self" (*Man-e Alavi*) over the "Commanding Self" (*Man-e Ammara*).

In final summation, it can be stated that the transition from a

"Politics of Antagonism" to a "Politics of Friendship" and the achievement of peace requires, above all, an ethical revolution in how we confront the "Other." This transformation, in which empathy, responsibility, and the recognition of the inherent dignity of the Other replace fear and self-interest, can open a space for genuine dialogue and coexistence in today's pluralistic world and pave the way for the realization of a stable and just peace.

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The Relationship between Understanding, Language, and Metaphor in Gadamer's Thought

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Abstract

In his ontological exposition of understanding, Gadamer, by raising the issue of dialogue between the interpreter and the text, paved the way for discussing challenging topics such as relativism in knowledge. In his view, the fusion of the temporal-linguistic horizons of the interpreter and the text explains the possibility of multiplicity of meaning and the endlessness of understanding. In this article, we attempt to examine the possibility of the metaphorical nature of understanding from a different perspective, namely by focusing on the discussion of "metaphor," due to its importance in providing reasons for the possibility of diversity and invention of meaning in language. Although the theory of metaphor is a core discussion in Ricoeur's philosophy, and Gadamer has not extensively addressed the topic of metaphor except for some allusions in

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explaining language; nevertheless, some commentators have re-examined understanding and the fusion of horizons by resorting to this theory. Therefore, while analyzing these interpretations using a descriptive-analytical method, and based on the relationship between unity and tension between identity and difference in the structure of metaphor, we substantiate the metaphorical characteristic of understanding, language, and the fusion of horizons, and its hermeneutic consequences.

Keywords

Gadamer, Understanding, Language, Identity and Difference, Metaphor.

Introduction

In his ontological analysis of understanding, which forms the goal of his philosophical hermeneutics, Gadamer considers dialogue to be the very nature of the event of understanding, which he refers to as the "fusion of horizons." Essentially, a fusion occurs between the historical horizon of our consciousness as interpreters and the historical horizon of the text or the subject of interpretation—both of which reside and manifest through language. The outcome of this fusion is interpretation and understanding. When the interpreter expands their own horizon to encompass that of the text, the text's ambiguities become apparent to the interpreter. This fusion of the present and the past within the context of language results in a form of self-knowledge and self-awareness for the interpreter. The dialogue between the two sides and their openness to both accepting and critiquing one another causes the mental horizons of both parties to broaden, expanding the range of meanings they are dealing with. Therefore, understanding, which is the result of this fusion, will always be endless and pluralistic.

However, this does not signify absolute relativism. The text does not accept every interpretation, nor does it confirm all the interpreter's presuppositions that inevitably intervene in their reading. Interpretation is always methodologically structured in some way, with rules, laws, and criteria playing a decisive role. The task of this article will be to explain the why and how of the possibility of multiplicity of meaning and the endlessness of understanding while simultaneously maintaining its rule-bound nature, by substantiating the metaphorical nature of understanding, language, and the fusion of horizons in Gadamer's thought. Joel Weinsheimer and George Taylor are among the commentators who have, in differing ways, explored the possibility of the metaphor concept in understanding and the

fusion of horizons in Gadamer's thought, drawing upon Ricoeur's theory of metaphor.

In the numerous Persian studies published so far concerning Gadamer, the discussion of metaphor in his thought has not been addressed independently. In the present work, we attempt to critique and analyze the implications of a metaphorical conception of understanding in Gadamer's thought from various perspectives, by taking as a premise and emphasizing the relationship between unity and tension between identity and difference within the metaphorical structure.

In this context, we will first elaborate on the nature of understanding as the fusion of horizons; then, we will discuss the foundation of the linguisticality of understanding and consequently the fusion of languages in Gadamer's thought; subsequently, in light of the analysis of the relationship between language and metaphor under the pervasive discussion of identity and difference, we aim to answer these questions:1- Can the linguistically mediated understanding in Gadamer's view be considered to have a metaphorical nature? 2- How can the existing tension between otherness and identity in metaphor be linked to the linguistic and temporal tension and distance in the understanding of a text? 3- What perspective does considering the ontological nature of understanding as metaphorical open up for answering certain issues in the field of hermeneutics?

Finally, while examining, critiquing, and analyzing theories that relate the identity and difference in the metaphorical act (which is a prominent and thought-provoking idea in Ricoeur's hermeneutical thought) to understanding and the fusion of horizons in Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, we will defend the metaphorical nature of understanding, language, and the fusion of horizons in Gadamer's

thought and demonstrate the hermeneutical consequences of considering these horizons as metaphorical.

1. understanding as the fusion of horizons

The English equivalent of the Persian word fahm is understanding. In German, however, there are two distinct words that express this concept. The first is Verstehen, which is the term Gadamer uses to denote understanding, and is closely related to Heidegger's conception of understanding. The second is Verstand, which refers to ordinary or common understanding; these two must not be confused. Gadamer does not consider understanding to be a methodical act performed by a knowing subject. For him, understanding is rather an event or occurrence—an outcome of the interplay between the subject and the object of understanding, as well as of experience itself. Understanding, in Gadamer's view, is of the same nature as the Greek dialectic, that is, dialogue.

He asserts that understanding is neither creation nor construction; it is not the action of a subject upon an object. Essentially, it is not something that interpreters **do** in any sense (Weinsheimer, 2002, p. 57). Rather, understanding is a form of passivity—it is an event that happens **to** the subject. Understanding is not an act but an undergoing; it is immersion in the flow of events (ibid., p. 62). Hence, Gadamer conceives of understanding as a kind of play governed by rules independent of the players' self-consciousness. Furthermore, he emphasizes the applicative nature of understanding. Gadamer's notion of the applicability of understanding means that it is grounded in the concrete, temporally and historically situated condition of the interpreter.

The practical or applicative dimension of understanding implies that the claims or meanings of a text or work of art are grasped

anew—in distinct ways—at every moment and in every context. Consequently, Gadamer defines hermeneutical understanding in relation to practice, practical wisdom, or phronesis. Like phronesis, understanding involves grasping the universal or general rule (the meaning of the text) in relation to the particular and concrete situation (the interpreter's temporal and linguistic condition).

Another point is that Gadamer believes that understanding is affected by history. Therefore, in his view, understanding is an event of transmission between the past and the present, and it constantly mediates between the two. Historicality refers to the influence of past time on the present time. At the same time, he considers historical distance to be a necessary condition for the possibility of understanding tradition and history, because it is only through the passage of time that the historical significance of the text emerges.

We stated that understanding is constantly influenced by the interpreter's semantic horizon and hermeneutical conditions. Since the semantic horizon is influenced by history, understanding will always be historical (Grondin, 1994, pp. 38-40). Therefore, understanding is always influenced by prejudices that are the result of tradition and history, which exist in our consciousness or subconscious as interpreters through language and play a role in understanding.

In summary, it can be said that understanding is an event of the nature of a dialogue between the semantic horizon of the text and the semantic horizon of the interpreter, which carries their prejudices. Each of these horizons is formed within a linguistic and temporal context. This dialogue follows rules that ensure that, despite the relativity of understanding and the plurality of meanings, we do not face a kind of chaos in interpretation.

Therefore, in his ontological analysis of understanding, which

is the goal of his philosophical hermeneutics, Gadamer considers the dialogue between the interpreter and the text to be the very nature of the event of understanding. Gadamer refers to this dialogue as the "fusion of horizons". According to Jean Grondin, the concept of the fusion of horizons is the epitome of Gadamer's thought, even if this concept is not always precisely understood (Grondin, 1994, p. 401).

Gadamer first encountered the concept of horizon in the works of Husserl, specifically in *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology*, where it was presented as the background of sensory perception that contained meaning. The concept of the horizon, as the context within which realities emerge, is intertwined with temporality and language. Gadamer's use of the term *horizon* in philosophical hermeneutics is essentially an attempt to describe the context-bound nature of interpretation to a specific situation and condition.

In his view, understanding the meaning of a text, a work of art, or a historical event is only possible in connection with our own situation and by attending to our interests and expectations. For this reason, it must be accepted that understanding a text is, in fact, a form of participation in its meaning. In confronting the text, the interpreter is not merely a passive, unaffected recipient; rather, they play an active and effective role in the process of uncovering meaning. Consequently, the interpreter's contribution to receiving meaning—or more precisely, to meaning-making—is comparable to that of the author. Gadamer termed this participation and shared involvement the "fusion of horizons" (Warnke, 1994, pp. 63-69). In Gadamer's opinion, the theory of the horizon is a fundamental component of hermeneutical understanding (Warnke, 1994, p. 89).

By introducing the theory of the fusion of horizons, Gadamer moves beyond the epistemological approach based on the subject-object relationship in Romantic hermeneutics and directs his attention

to the prior-to-existence-in-the-world status of *Dasein*. Humans are *thrown* into a specific temporal and spatial situation and amid particular possibilities and relationships, and all these play a role in their understanding of things, people, and the world. Therefore, it can be said that when understanding a text (or any act of understanding), the interpreter is situated within a specific temporal and linguistic horizon—in other words, a specific historical and semantic horizon. The text or subject matter being understood also has its own distinct historical and semantic horizon.

Thus, each of us is individually situated within horizons that have their own specific status and perspective. Our current horizon is mingled and fused with horizons from the past. We are a continuation through our past and tradition, and our understanding of the past is influenced by our current horizon. Therefore, our position within any horizon is not closed off; rather, it is constantly extended and modified through confrontation and fusion with the horizon of the past, tradition, the text, or the other (Taylor, 2011, p. 105).

Based on this, it can be stated that the fusion of horizons, which constitutes the nature of understanding, is a context in which the meanings revealed through interpretation are constantly undergoing change and proliferation in the encounter with the otherness of the foreign element, while simultaneously remaining, to some extent, bound and limited by a common ground and foundation. We will examine this topic further in the next section under the title of Identity and Difference in the Fusion of Horizons.

2. The Unity of Identity and Difference in the Fusion of Horizons

The question now arises: Is the possibility of the fusion of horizons predicated on the existence of a common ground that already exists

between the interpreter's and the text's horizons? Or is such a common ground created subsequent to the fusion? And does this presupposed or subsequently created commonality represent the unity and difference in a way that the gap and distance are preserved within it?

On the one hand, Gadamer asserts that a shared history, tradition, and language are the prerequisites for understanding. On the other hand, he states that the dialogue itself can bring such commonality into being (Taylor, 2011, p. 108). It seems that for Gadamer, the existence of a common ground between the horizon of the understander and the horizon of the subject matter makes understanding possible, because if the two were completely unrelated and in absolute otherness, dialogue and fusion would be impossible. However, the horizons are also separate from one another, and this distance itself is the necessary condition for understanding.

Initially, horizons are often separate from one another. They separate us, but they are not immutable; they can change and be extended (Taylor, 2002, p. 288). The change and dynamism of the horizons and their mutual influence on each other cause them to draw closer. However, what drives this change and dynamism is the very existence of otherness and difference between them.

Therefore, the concept of the horizon in Gadamer's thought possesses an internal complexity that is essential to it. On the one hand, horizons can be identified and distinguished. It is through such distinctions that we can discern what causes misunderstanding and disrupts communication. But on the other hand, horizons interweave and change. There is no such thing as a fixed horizon. The horizon is something we move into, and it moves along with us. For an individual who is in motion, horizons change. A horizon with unmoving boundaries is an abstraction. Horizons define the limits of the world of the agents who act within them, are recognized with

them, and undergo change alongside them. Therefore, it is possible for the horizon of Person A and the horizon of Person B at time to be distinct from one another, and their mutual understanding to be incomplete. Yet, through living with one another, Person A and B can come to share a single common horizon in the combined time and (Taylor, 2002, p. 290).

Thus, despite the temporal and historical distance between the interpreter and the text, the possibility of creating a single, common horizon exists. According to Gadamer:

> When our historical consciousness places itself within historical horizons, this does not require moving into alien worlds that are somehow unrelated to our own world; instead, they together create a great horizon that moves within and, beyond the boundaries of the present time, encompasses the historical depths of our self-consciousness. Everything that falls within historical consciousness is in fact encompassed by a single historical horizon (Gadamer, 1989, p. 304).

Gadamer seeks to avoid both the naïveté of historicism (the belief that historians must detach themselves from their own era to understand a foreign past) and the naïveté of pre-historicism (the belief that no foreign past exists, but only a pure, uninterrupted continuation). Therefore, he maintains that the interpreter and the subject of interpretation must be simultaneously differentiated and connected.

Based on this, he emphasizes the creation of a common horizon during the event of understanding, despite the undeniable existence of difference and distance. This common horizon encompasses all differences and, through them, is constantly changing, dynamic, and in motion. Identity and otherness, similarity and

difference are present and play their roles simultaneously within this unified context.

This means that the tension between the historical text and the present time continues. The past and the present project different horizons, and part of the work of hermeneutics is to uncover this tension, not to engage in artificial assimilation. The need to expand horizons—for the purpose of fusion—is dependent on the difference between the horizons. During the fusion, the merged horizons influence and undergo change from one another (Taylor, 2011, p. 108). Therefore, tension, difference, and change will always remain and will never be completely eliminated.

Ricoeur notes that Gadamer's hermeneutics seeks to avoid both extremes: both Hegel's absolute knowledge (which ultimately encompasses all horizons) and the assertion of isolated and unshareable horizons. Gadamer's concept of the fusion of horizons demonstrates this avoidance. In this view, horizons remain plural, yet they are internally dependent and connected to one another. The distance between horizons is not impassable (Ricoeur, 1988, p. 220). However, this does not mean that the horizons dissolve into one another and that the basis of otherness and difference is dismantled.

Thus, as Ricoeur states, Gadamer on one hand avoids the extreme pluralism of Nietzsche, where horizons remain disconnected and isolated from one another. On the other hand, he also steers clear of the opposite pole, namely Hegelian absolute knowledge, where the fusion of horizons itself is encompassed and absorbed (Ricoeur, 1981, p. 75). In this particular view, Ricoeur does not fully evaluate the positive aspect of Gadamer's approach.

We have demonstrated how, despite the presence of otherness, distance, and a gap between the horizons of the interpreter and the text

in terms of time and history, connection, unity, and commonality are established during the process of understanding. The unity and difference, while preserving the tension between them, is what occurs in the fusion of horizons. In the following two sections, we will analyze this issue with attention to the relationship between understanding and language.

3. The Linguisticality of Understanding and the Fusion of Languages

We stated that in the event of understanding, a fusion occurs between the horizons of the interpreter and the text. Every horizon is dependent on a specific temporal and linguistic situation, such that the temporal aspect of the horizons—that is, the historical context—also emerges and continues *through* language. Given this, can the fusion of horizons in understanding be considered, in a way, a fusion of languages? What is the meaning of language in Gadamer's view, and what is its relationship to understanding?

Gadamer considers language to be much broader than mere propositional language. In his view, language is not an objective, limited, or abstract entity derived from a specific context. While language and meaning are determined by words, they constantly transcend them.

Gadamer explains the relationship between meaning and word in a way that is unusual in philosophy: through the theological concept of the Incarnation of God in Christ. He is well aware of the unusual nature of this explanation, but this example specifically illuminates Gadamer's concept of language, both historically and thematically (Dostal, 2002, pp. 113-114).

In the Incarnation, although God is embodied in humanity,

God does not cease to be God; God remains God. Gadamer uses this example to explain that when speaking and creating sound in the form of words, it is not the case that something non-linguistic and internal has been transformed into something external and linguistic. Speaking is not something that results from translating an inner matter and then translating it into a medium, namely language. In this process, there is no transformation; the process is without alteration (Dostal, 2002, pp. 114-115).

In Gadamer's view, every utterance carries the totality of meaning with it and brings it into the arena of the "game", but it cannot express it completely. Therefore, every utterance means more than it openly states. Gadamer points on one hand to the infinite nature of meaning and on the other to the limitation of the meaning-event and the nature of interpretation, and convincingly reconciling these two is not easy.

Furthermore, only the word can have meaning, not mere sound or voice. Something is understandable only when it has been put into the form of a word. Therefore, no understanding is possible without language. Even when only immediate understanding occurs and no explicit interpretation is employed, the understanding has still occurred linguistically, because linguistic interpretation exists potentially within the process of understanding (Gadamer, 1977, p. 474).

Here, the objection might be raised that not everything I understand can necessarily be presented in the form of words. For example, I understand a sign, a piece of art or music, or I encounter something unspeakable that cannot be put into words. In response, Gadamer, in *Truth and Method*, cites the example of a painter or musician who might claim that linguistic explanation is merely a secondary and incidental matter. However, Gadamer states that the artist can only set aside such a linguistic interpretation in favor of

another interpretation that is more relevant to the subject matter of that art. But even this chosen interpretation, as the reception of meaning, is still linked to a linguistic possibility. Gadamer's main point here is that the listener is drawn and questioned by what they want to understand, and they respond to this question, interpret it, and search for words in response to it, and it is through this process that they can understand it (Dostal, 2002, p. 42). In other words, in his view, when listening to a piece of music or viewing a painting, the individual, as the understander or interpreter of that artwork, is somehow exposed to a process of question-and-answer and dialogue between themselves and the work, and this is a linguistic event. For Gadamer, the entity that can be brought into understanding is language.

In Gadamer's turn toward language, it is not language itself, but language's ability to "bring into expression" that becomes the focus of hermeneutics. Gadamer emphasizes this distinction and says that for the hermeneutical approach, comprehending what is said is the only subject of importance (Novakovic, 2004, p. 16). Hence, language is always of the nature of saying and dialogue. Therefore, language can never be a completely personal or private matter.

Anyone who speaks a language that no one else understands has not truly spoken, because speaking means to speak with someone. Therefore, dialogue is not confined to the sphere of "I" but is raised in the sphere of "we" (Gadamer, 1977, p. 69). Thus, the reality of speech is dialogue. When a person dialogues with another, they are guided by the dialogue; in this state, it is no longer the person's will that imposes itself on the dialogue, but the dialogue is like a game in which the rule of the subject matter under discussion is dominant (Gadamer, 1977, p. 69).

In Gadamer's view, understanding expands and progresses through dialogue. The presence and participation of one person in the

dialogue causes the other person's semantic horizon to advance, provided that each individual is open and ready to listen and learn from the other In the course of dialogue, we must listen to the other person so that our prejudices about the subject are called into question. If the opposing viewpoints make greater claims to truth than ours, we must even allow our prejudices to change.

Therefore, dialogue and mutual understanding are of the nature of a question-and-answer exchange between the interpreter and the subject of interpretation, and it is the receipt of answers to questions that makes it possible to transcend the current mental horizon. A question is an idea that occurs to a person at a certain moment. Thus, the question is a passion (passivity) before it is an action (activity). The "question" imposes itself upon us (Dostal, 2002, p. 109).

Consequently, interpretation, as the fusion of horizons, is a process through which an individual's "linguistic" horizon mingles with the linguistic horizon of another and is thereby expanded. In conversation, a common language forms that makes understanding possible (Weinsheimer, 2002, p. 35). Therefore, for Gadamer, our horizon or state of understanding is always linguistic, and language is never a closed horizon. Rather, it is a horizon that always preserves the possibility of renewal and change for itself (Novakovic, 2004, p. 16). Hence, the fusion of the interpreter's and the text's horizons in the process of understanding can be said to be always a linguistic fusion.

Gadamer's claim that language brings understanding into manifestation is essentially a Heideggerian position. Language owns us, rather than us owning and possessing language. Correspondingly, since understanding is a linguistic event, understanding encompasses us; therefore, we do not hold understanding as an object in our minds. We participate in the event of understanding, and understanding is prior to our being, just as language and the world are prior to our

existence.Indeed, in Gadamer's view, "Language is the place of belonging where thought and language, subject and object meet, or where they are at home together from the start, before they are split into two by conscious reflection" (Gadamer, 1989, p. 70).

Therefore, our understanding, on the one hand, is formed within a common ground called the linguistic horizon, and on the other hand, due to differences in languages, our horizons of understanding are distinct. In the dialogue and question-and-answer exchange between these different horizons, within the common context of language, fusion occurs. This fusion, as the nature of the event of understanding, is, in a way, the fusion of languages. In the following section, we will demonstrate how the identity and difference, and the tension between them, are situated within the fusion of languages and in relation to language and its metaphorical characteristic.

4. the Unity of Identity and Difference in Language and Metaphor

We have established that understanding in Gadamer's view is linguistic and that the fusion of horizons is a linguistic fusion. We will now analyze the theme of identity and difference, connection and rupture, distance and fusion between horizons, this time from the perspective of language and with a focus on its metaphorical characteristic.

Gadamer views the word as being somewhat similar to an image, which points to reflection. When something is reflected in something else—for instance, a palace in a lake—the lake reflects the palace's image. This image does not possess a being of its own; it is like a manifestation that is not itself, yet it allows the object to be seen through a mirrored image. Just as the image is not the object itself,

words are not the very objects they denote. Nonetheless, the image is *of* the palace and belongs to it. The reflection is the image *of* the palace itself and is inseparable from it, just as words are inseparable from the world. Both are indissoluble and are therefore a unity. They are two things and yet one thing (Weinsheimer, 2002, pp. 179-180).

Therefore, the relationship between words and reality expresses identity in difference. The word is other than the object named by that word, yet the word belongs to that object and no other. The word and the object are simultaneously the same and not-the-same. Language is also like this. Language is a representation, an illustrator, and an expression of reality, but it is not identically that same reality. This very gap and distance is what provokes understanding and interpretation and calls attention to the necessity of hermeneutical knowledge.

The connection between the world and its linguistic description, between the subject and the object, or between the text and its interpretation, cannot be the point of departure for hermeneutics; rather, a rupture, a disruption, or the experience of strangeness initiates the moment of understanding. Although this connection does not exist at the starting point, it becomes possible with the event of understanding. The interpreter must be open to listening to the question from the text in order to uncover their belonging to the text (Novakovic, 2004, p. 28).

Therefore, in understanding, we first encounter distance and strangeness, and then, through the event of understanding, interpretation, and "dialogue" with the text, this gap is overcome, and a bridge is created, to use Ricoeur's term, that reveals the prior belonging of language and world, subject and object. We cannot grasp this close relationship and dependence immediately; rather, it is through the long semantic and interpretative path that we find a way

or a bridge to understand and receive it. Yet, it seems that these gaps, distance, and otherness are always preserved, rather than being completely eliminated in the end, which is the necessary condition of our human knowledge.

Hence, hermeneutics establishes a bridge between the world of familiarity we inhabit and the strange meaning that resists assimilation into the horizon of our world (Gadamer, 1977, p. pxii). Therefore, in the effort to preserve what is one's own, we witness a tension between familiarity and strangeness that reaches its peak, as the hermeneutical experience, in the encounter with the foreign and the effort to understand it, can threaten what is familiar and pre-present (Novakovic, 2004, p. 12).

But how can interpreters understand something other than themselves and their world, and yet understand this other thing in a way that also helps and expands their understanding of themselves and their world? How is it possible to think of difference and identity simultaneously? This is a question that Gadamer's analysis of understanding provokes. What Weinsheimer seeks to demonstrate is that metaphor provides an answer to this question (Weinsheimer, 2002, p. 133).

Paul Ricoeur, the French philosopher whose theory of metaphor has attracted great attention from commentators and theorists, considers the metaphorical characteristic to be the unity of identity and difference—that is, the preservation of unity despite otherness. In his view, in metaphor, "identity and difference do not merge but confront each other" (Ricoeur, 1977, p. 199). The act of metaphor is not merely the establishment of unity and connection between similar meanings or words. More than being a fusion of meanings, metaphor is the conflict between the new meaning and the old meaning. Difference and identity are ineluctably intertwined.

Identity cannot be considered to arise from the mixing of difference and identity. There is also no common language underlying the metaphor or created by it, because the difference is always preserved. There is no third text that guarantees the creation of common ground in the metaphorical relationship (Taylor, 2011, p. 113). As Ricoeur states, "metaphor is the place of the conflict of identity and difference" and stimulates thought (Ricoeur, 1977, p. 196).

Truth and Method also relates metaphor to the inclination toward further thought, particularly through "the freedom of language to generate an unlimited number of concepts and to penetrate ever more deeply into what is meant and intended" (Weinsheimer, 2002, p. 109). Therefore, metaphor and language are always intertwined, and this characteristic of language—the freedom to create unlimited concepts and its ability to uncover unlimited unsaid things—stems from the metaphorical nature of language.

Furthermore, as stated at the beginning of this section, the relationship between the image and the object, the word and the object, and subsequently the relationship between language and reality, all display a simultaneous collection of identity and difference, similarity and otherness, familiarity and strangeness. Based on this, Weinsheimer considers these relationships to have a metaphorical characteristic and concludes that language in Gadamer's view is essentially metaphorical.

However, the metaphorical nature of language does not mean the presence of many metaphors in language, but rather that language itself, in general, has a metaphorical quality. Although *Truth and Method* employs prominent metaphors in critical places—especially the fusion of horizons itself—Gadamer does not extensively discuss metaphor. Unlike Derrida, he has no obvious interest in the role of dead or obsolete metaphor in philosophy, and unlike Ricoeur, he does

not much address live metaphor in literature. In the few passages of *Truth and Method* where Gadamer explicitly raises the topic of metaphor, he only makes a brief mention of it—and then only discusses it within the framework of metaphor-as-transference, which has been common since Aristotle.

Nevertheless, when Gadamer is about to address more fundamental issues, he states that the transfer from one domain to another is not merely a logical function but is consistent with the "fundamental metaphoricalness of language" (Weinsheimer, 2002, pp. 103-104).

By pointing to the fundamental metaphoricalness of language, Gadamer considers language to be the condition for understanding anything of any kind. Furthermore, understanding, in his view, is linguistic, and every act of understanding occurs through language, not through empathy or recreation. Therefore, if language, as Gadamer suggests, is fundamentally metaphorical, this metaphoricalness must also be reflected in understanding. Thus, one of the questions that *Truth and Method* provokes is: What does it mean to claim that understanding itself is fundamentally and essentially metaphorical? (Weinsheimer, 2002, p. 104). We will continue by examining and analyzing the possibility of the metaphorical nature of understanding and the fusion of horizons in Gadamer's thought.

5. The Relationship between Understanding (Fusion of Horizons) and Metaphor (Unity of Identity and Difference)

The model of understanding Gadamer provides is the fusion of horizons. However, according to Weinsheimer, this expression is not very clear and is problematic in at least one respect, because "fusion" seems to imply precisely the suppression of particularity and difference that we see in the concept of "subsumption". Yet, such an

assimilation is absolutely not what Gadamer intends by the fusion of horizons. Instead, he regards understanding as the fusion that occurs in metaphor, a fusion that, although it does not forgo the demand for unity, also respects plurality (Weinsheimer, 2002, p. 103).

The unity of identity and difference while preserving otherness and distance is the defining characteristic of metaphor, which was discussed in Ricoeur's thought regarding the nature of language and imagination, and then expanded into other areas of his philosophy. Commentators and critics have applied Ricoeur's theory of metaphor not only in the domain of epistemology but also in other fields such as ethics, ontology, and so on. Some Gadamerian interpreters, particularly Joel Weinsheimer in his book *Philosophical Hermeneutics and Literary Theory* and George Taylor, have attributed the metaphorical characteristic to understanding in Gadamer's view as well.

In Ricoeur's view, metaphor reveals the logical structure of the similar. This is because, in a metaphorical expression, the similar is apprehended despite the existence of difference and contrast. Therefore, resemblance is a logical category that corresponds to the predicative function, where approximation (bringing close) encounters the resistance of being distant In this way, identity and difference are not merely blended but also remain in opposition to each other. Through this particular characteristic, a mystery lives at the heart of the metaphor. In metaphor, "the same" acts "in spite of" the difference (Taylor, 2011, p. 196; Ricoeur, 1977, p. 196).

Joel Weinsheimer argues that for Gadamer, understanding is also fundamentally metaphorical (Weinsheimer, 1991, p. 65). He suggests that understanding shares the same irreducible tension between similarity and difference that is found in metaphor (Weinsheimer, 1991, p. 78). Therefore, based on Ricoeur's theory of the characteristic of

metaphor, he speaks of the metaphorical nature of understanding and the fusion of horizons in Gadamer's thought.

Metaphor is a statement of non-difference in which difference is at work. This paradox is what Gadamer intends by the fusion of horizons. In this fusion, there is no naive absorption or assimilation, but the "tension" between past and present, interpreter and text, is still preserved. In this sense, the fusion of horizons is a process of self-estrangement and returning anew to the self, which is a logically contradictory process. Understanding distinguishes the interpreters from their subject matter and the horizon of the present from the horizon of the past, and yet, in the very act, it connects them in such a way that they become inseparably unified and one (Weinsheimer, 2002, p. 133).

Taylor also considers the moment of application in understanding, according to Gadamer, to be metaphorical. In his view, the metaphorical characteristic represents the act of application in understanding more accurately and reasonably. Application does not overcome the distance [between the text and the interpreter's situation], but it creates a metaphorical relationship. As Ricoeur states, a new semantic relationship is established between words that are semantically distant from each other. In Taylor's view, metaphoric meaning has the characteristic of resemblance (Taylor, 2011, p. 113). In these statements, Taylor emphasizes the semantic transfer in the process of establishing resemblance within the metaphorical act.

George Taylor accepts and highly values Weinsheimer's interpretation that the nature of understanding and the fusion of horizons in Gadamer's view is metaphorical, and he shares this belief. Like Weinsheimer, he resists a simplistic reading of the concept of fusion $[3]$ in the sense of unification $[4]$ and directs our attention

to the plurality that results from the metaphorical explanation of the activity of understanding. While Weinsheimer believes that fusion does not suppress the claim of unity while preserving plurality, Taylor, based on Ricoeur's theory of metaphor, offers a different analysis of the metaphorical nature of understanding.

Taylor emphasizes the tension between identity and difference in the metaphorical structure, which Ricoeur calls metaphoric resemblance (Taylor, 2011, p. 106), based on Gadamer's language, which considers the foundation of hermeneutics to be the "two poles of familiarity and strangeness". He believes that there are methodological differences between Ricoeur's and Weinsheimer's explanations of metaphor.

Taylor also points to the difference in view between Gadamer and Ricoeur regarding the relationship between understanding and metaphor. He argues that Gadamer mistakenly claims the availability of an underlying common ground concerning the fusion of horizons, whereas Ricoeur correctly emphasizes the theory of understanding as a metaphorical event that creates resemblance within difference. In Taylor's view, we cannot presuppose a common ground. Furthermore, the "tense" relationship between resemblance and difference in metaphor better captures the possibilities related to contemporary dialogue compared to the fusion of horizons. Essentially, Taylor's analysis of Gadamer's view, based on the metaphorical nature of language and understanding, places greater emphasis on the preservation of tension and difference in the metaphorical characteristic compared to Weinsheimer, and, like Ricoeur, he does not accept the existence of an underlying common ground.

Furthermore, in his view, Gadamer sometimes emphasizes the commonality that is the result of the fusion of horizons less than the commonality that constitutes the underlying basis for the possibility of

their fusion. This is evident where Gadamer says: "Every conversation presupposes a common language, or better still, creates a common language" (Gadamer, 1989, pp. 378-388).

It might be assumed that the commonality created in the fusion of horizons is entirely dependent on an underlying commonality of tradition, history, or a horizon shared by the conversational partners. However, the very creation of a common language in the fusion of horizons emphasizes the dynamic, circular relationship between the whole (underlying commonality) and the part (dialogue). This relationship is not merely a [one-sided] dependence of the part on the whole (Taylor, 2011, p. 110). Therefore, according to Taylor, the existence of a presupposed, foundational, and primary common ground is not necessary for the fusion of horizons to occur. This commonality is created after the fusion and, maintaining the tension between part and whole in a circular relationship, can lead to further fusion and continuously proceed.

In his hermeneutical model, Ricoeur speaks of text interpretation instead of dialogue, and defines interpretation as appropriation, meaning "making one's own of what is alien" (Ricoeur, 1981, p. 159). He sometimes describes the concept of appropriation as close to the concept of the fusion of horizons. However, he does not speak of commonality but of convergence or intersection (Taylor, 2011, p. 111).

According to Taylor, Gadamer, with the concept of the "fusion of horizons," and Ricoeur, with the concept of "appropriation", both speak of the "transfer of meaning", which he also maintains and emphasizes. This means we are not trapped within our own interpretative frameworks and can pass from one framework to another. The common element between the views of Gadamer and Ricoeur in the discussion of metaphor appears to be the transfer of

meaning. Furthermore, Ricoeur, like Gadamer, speaks of familiarity and strangeness, not merely identity and difference or similarity and difference.

When Ricoeur speaks of the possibility of transfer, he repeatedly emphasizes the tension that plays a role in the fusion of horizons—a tension between past and present. In Ricoeur's view, the convergence of text and reader in the fusion of horizons does not establish a common element, but rather creates an analogizing relation (Taylor, 2011, p. 111).

A significant difference also exists between Ricoeur's and Gadamer's views on understanding. As previously stated, Gadamer's view of understanding is close to a Heideggerian ontological perspective; whereas Ricoeur discusses understanding not ontologically, but as an epistemological stage based on linguistic categories within the mind. Another difference is that for Ricoeur, translation is a model for the act of understanding. However, for Gadamer, understanding does not occur in translation due to the lack of linguistic commonality.

In Ricoeur's view, unlike Gadamer's, understanding does not result from the existence of a commonality, whether presupposed or conceived as the outcome of dialogue. Rather, understanding is translation (Ricoeur, 2006, pp. 24 & 27–28). Translation is also a form of interpretation. In translation, semantically distant domains are brought closer through the metaphorical process, and meaning is "transferred".

Metaphorical transfer is not reducible to a shared, common concept or universal totality. In the metaphorical relation, difference persists across all components. Distinct horizons need to be fused. This process is not a subsumption under a general rule, whether it be under an underlying common concept or the placement of one horizon under another.

Therefore, it appears that metaphor maintains Gadamer's goal of finding a middle way between absolute knowledge and insurmountable difference. According to Taylor, Gadamer's focus on the concept of metaphor remains resolutely on similarity and common ground. Weinsheimer, too, in his description of Gadamer's fusion of horizons as metaphorical, still emphasizes the priority and dominance of non-difference over the difference that remains in this fusion, rather than the tension between similarity and difference found in metaphor (Taylor, 2011, p. 114). However, Taylor, in contrast to both, emphasizes the tension between similarity and difference in metaphor and in the metaphorical nature of understanding and the fusion of horizons, considering his own analysis to be closer to Ricoeur's view on metaphor.

According to both perspectives on the metaphorical nature of understanding in Gadamer's thought, understanding, as the fusion of horizons, possesses a metaphorical characteristic. Both analyses are based on Ricoeur's view of metaphor and their arguments rest on the linguisticality of understanding, the metaphorical characteristic of language, and its applicative aspect, which is the relationship between understanding and the interpreter's situation. The difference lies in that, when defending the metaphorical nature of understanding in Gadamer's thought, Taylor places greater emphasis on the presence and preservation of tension in the metaphorical act and, unlike Weinsheimer, does not accept the existence of a single, underlying common horizon in the fusion of horizons.

Conclusion

This article has sought to defend the metaphorical nature of understanding in Gadamer's view, based on his assertion of the fundamental metaphoricalness of language, utilizing the discussion of metaphor in Ricoeur's thought. Both Gadamer and Ricoeur regard

understanding as linguistic. Gadamer's view on the linguisticality of understanding leans toward Heidegger, whereas Ricoeur discusses the process of understanding itself (of which imagination is a stage of realization) epistemologically, viewing it as a process where meaning is created under linguistic categories (and not Kantian categories of the understanding). This paper focused on Gadamer's view, as an extended discussion of understanding and the metaphorical nature of language in Ricoeur's thought requires another opportunity.

Joel Weinsheimer and George Taylor, both referencing the concept of metaphor in Ricoeur's view, have sought this characteristic in understanding and the fusion of horizons in Gadamer's thought and have argued for the metaphorical nature of the fusion of horizons in the event of understanding. They do, however, have points of disagreement, with Taylor considering his view on metaphor to be closer to Ricoeur's.

Gadamer explains understanding as the fusion of the horizons of the interpreter and the text—horizons that, despite being different, distant, and foreign to each other, intermingle and connect. The unity of identity and difference while preserving tension and distance is a metaphorical characteristic. Due to our belonging to history (time) and language and the text's belonging to history (time) and language, a common horizon can be said to exist between the interpreter and the text. Furthermore, history and time emerge and persist for us through language; therefore, language ultimately serves as a common, unified, and foundational horizon that makes connection between the interpreter and the text possible. However, temporal and linguistic differences—in other words, different temporal and linguistic horizons—exist within this single underlying horizon, which intermingle in understanding and interpretation. This gap itself is a condition for the possibility of understanding. This tension, distance,

and difference are never completely removed. It can be said that horizons always approach each other, but absolute unity and connection will not be fully realized. This is a special kind of connection: a metaphorical connection in which new meanings are created, expanded, and new possibilities in the semantic realm are generated through understanding. In this scenario, understanding can be considered a type of creation and formation of meaning, rather than the discovery of a meaning hidden within the text.

In the author's view, based on the arguments of both commentators, understanding in Gadamer's thought can be considered to possess a metaphorical characteristic. This generalization and application, carried out based on multiple reasons, helps us to conceive of more dynamic possibilities in Gadamer's fusion of horizons and to apply this concept in a new way to explain contemporary hermeneutical issues. This includes providing an explanation for the plurality of understandings and the impossibility of reaching an absolute and common meaning in mutual understanding between self and other.

Thus, it can be said that in mutual understanding and dialogue between self and other, there will always be an unavoidable tension and difference, even though we constantly strive and attempt to move closer to mutual understanding. Accepting this and embracing the plurality of meanings and the creation of a range of meanings and concepts that emerge from this difference and tension can largely create a healthier and more fruitful context for mutual understanding. However, this does not signify the absolute relativism in understanding that has always been subject to critique, because the text itself does not tolerate just any understanding or interpretation. Furthermore, in understanding and interpretation, as a methodologically based process, there are always determining rules and criteria based on intellectual and philosophical foundations and norms.

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Evidentialism in Farabi's Epistemology

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Abstract

Farabi, as a philosopher who presented the Aristotelian tradition in the Islamic world in a distinctive way, combining it with Neoplatonism and Platonism, also retained a large part of Aristotelian epistemology in his own cognitive system. Just as Aristotle, according to modern epistemological interpretations, is largely considered an evidentialist, so is Farabi. Evidentialism means that the only acceptable criterion for adopting beliefs is valid rational or empirical reasons appropriate to that belief. However, in Iran, many, especially some admirers of the Illuminationist and Mulla Sadra's traditions, attempt to somehow discover a kind of intuitionism or at least evidence against evidentialism in Farabi. This judgment contradicts the view of some major specialists in Islamic philosophy, such as Dimitri Gutas. This issue is very important because the shift in Islamic epistemology from evidentialism to other directions played a very significant role in changing the nature of this

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philosophy. Accordingly, in this article, we will attempt to show based on which evidence Farabi is an evidentialist, and how he is largely indebted to Aristotle in this evidentialism, and we will also examine the evidence against Farabi's evidentialism. Given that the term "evidentialism" is an expression from contemporary Western epistemology, we will look at Farabi's philosophy from the perspective of this branch of philosophy. In this article, we will primarily view the matter from the perspective of Western specialists in Islamic philosophy, as their language is close to the language of contemporary epistemology. Our research method is descriptive and analytical, and comparative where appropriate. The findings of this research indicate that Farabi is largely an evidentialist, but a moderate one. This finding is very important in relation to determining the place and role of Farabi's epistemology in Islamic philosophy, as well as the later introduction of intuitionism into Islamic philosophy.

Keywords

Farabi, Evidentialism, Intuitionism, Epistemology, Islamic Philosophy.

Introduction

Epistemology, as a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature, sources, and limits of knowledge, has primarily revolved around the question of what can justify our beliefs; or in any other way, turn them into knowledge. One of the prominent theories in this domain is Evidentialism. This view holds that the justification of beliefs is a function of the evidence and grounds that a person possesses. A simple definition of evidentialism is as follows: In every situation, an individual ought to adopt or reject a belief in proportion to the evidence and grounds they possess. William Alston and Ernest Sosa, in their analyses, regard evidentialism as an internalist theory that bases the justification of belief on factors accessible to the agent's mind (Alston, 1989). The classic form of this theory appears in the works of Richard Feldman and Earl Conee. They believe that a belief is justified if and only if based on the agent's evidence at that time, it is reasonable for the agent to hold that belief on the basis of the evidence they possess (Feldman & Conee, 1985, p. 15). The definition of evidentialism in analytical language is as follows: Feldman and Conee define evidentialism thus: Doxastic attitude D toward P is justified for S at t if and only if having D toward P fits the evidence S has at t (Conee and Feldman, 2004, p. 310).

Accordingly, only evidence accessible to the cognitive agent is capable of providing justification. Therefore, evidentialism is an internalist approach (Alston, 1989). It should be noted that evidentialism stems from the concern for the rational defense of beliefs. This theory, in contrast to views such as Skepticism and Epistemic Optimism, emphasizes the necessity of reasonable evidence for accepting any belief (Conee & Feldman, 2004). As we can see, in many respects, evidentialism is not a new or novel approach; rather, a significant part

of ancient philosophy, both in the West and in the Islamic world, is evidentialist.

What we have stated in the description of Evidentialism is, in a way, an instance of explaining the obvious. But why did certain interpretations of evidentialism gain attention, and why did epistemologists strive to emphasize and affirm it? The answer must be sought in the expansion of approaches that, from various angles, questioned the necessity of the principle of the accessibility of rational reasons to the cognitive agent. Perhaps the most important of these are externalist approaches. Externalists such as Alvin Goldman are considered among the most important critics of evidentialism (Goldman, 1979).

In response to these criticisms, philosophers like Feldman have sought to present a modified evidentialism that pays attention to the practical limitations of human knowledge (Conee & Feldman, 2004). Others, including Timothy Williamson, in discussions about Knowledge-First Epistemology, have attempted to establish a kind of compatibility between internalism and externalism (Williamson, 2000).

Evidentialism, as one of the most significant theories in contemporary analytical epistemology, is an important starting point for understanding the nature of epistemic justification. Despite the criticisms leveled against it, this view still holds a prominent place in philosophical literature, and efforts to refine and re-read it continue. However, in contemporary Western epistemology, instances of denying or ignoring evidentialism by relying on intuitionism are rarely observed. Perhaps, with some allowances, one could place Alvin Plantinga's theory of Divine Sense in this category. Therefore, contemporary Western epistemologists do not face an opposing approach like the Illuminationist or Mulla Sadra's intuitionism. Yet, a significant part of Islamic philosophy explicitly or implicitly negates

the evidentialist implications. In the Islamic world, after the decline of Peripatetic philosophy, criticism of evidentialism and the defense of alternative approaches gained considerable popularity.

Accordingly, this article attempts to demonstrate what Farabi's evidentialism is, what its place is in his philosophical system, and what importance this subject holds—especially in relation to rival currents such as Illuminationist philosophy. Through this, it can be shown in subsequent research how the negation of evidentialism by Suhrawardi paved the way for the decline of rationalist philosophy. In this article, we will primarily view the matter from the perspective of Western specialists in Islamic philosophy, as their language is close to the language of contemporary epistemology.

In the last two decades, research on the epistemological aspects of Islamic philosophers and their philosophical systems, based on the concepts of contemporary Western epistemology, has become very common. These studies are mainly, and primarily, focused on the epistemology of Mulla Sadra, and secondarily, on the epistemology of Avicenna (Ibn Sina). However, studies have also been conducted on the epistemology of Farabi based on contemporary Western epistemological concepts. Some of these studies, to the extent they are relevant to our research, have been utilized. One of the most important of these is the chapter "Farabi and Moderate Islamic Evidentialism " from the book Analytical Islamic Philosophy. The difference between the present research and the mentioned work is that here, a greater effort has been made to proceed based on the concepts of contemporary epistemology. Also, we have emphasized the importance of evidentialism in later periods of philosophy. The author, apart from the recent work, has not found another work that specifically examines Farabi's evidentialism—especially in relation to intuitionism.

1. An Overall Picture of Farabi's Epistemology

Although today there is an effort to highlight the epistemic aspects of Islamic philosophy in its study, it is primarily Western specialists who have attempted to frame its components within the concepts of contemporary epistemology. To put it simply, most Iranian specialists in Islamic philosophy, and specifically Farabi's philosophy, have rarely shown whether Farabi's epistemology is, for example, internalist or externalist, evidentialist or non-evidentialist, empiricist or rationalist.

Accordingly, the first step is to present an overall picture of Farabi's epistemology and then search within that epistemology for implications favoring evidentialism. Unlike Al-Kindi, who emphasized empirical evidence, Farabi offers a more balanced approach by integrating reason and revelation, where reason and imagination make the comprehension of universal meanings possible (SpringerLink, 2018). Farabi attributes a role to imagination that in Aristotle's philosophy was largely assigned to the faculty of intellect (reason). Accordingly, the role of imagination in Farabi's epistemology has attracted the attention of contemporary researchers. Farabi considers imagination an intermediary between sense and reason, playing a role in transmitting universal meanings into sensible forms. This view is especially important in explaining how the general public comprehends rational concepts through religious imagery and symbols (Maftouni, 2020).

Al-taev and his colleagues have examined the stages of intellect in Farabi's philosophy. They show that Farabi divides the intellect into different stages, each having a specific role in the process of acquiring knowledge. These stages include the Material Intellect, the Actual Intellect, the Acquired Intellect, and the Active Intellect, which sequentially range from potential capacity to the comprehension

of universal meanings and connection with the Active Intellect (Altaev et al., 2020).

Furthermore, Farabi distinguishes between conception and assent and relates certainty to the domain of assent. He believes that certainty is achieved when the assent corresponds to external reality (Özturan, 2013). This framework is seen in most works that introduce Farabi's philosophy. Therefore, reviewing it does not help us much with the specific issue of this research. In these works, we rarely find an answer to the question: Is Farabi an evidentialist? Fundamentally, in the review, reading, and interpretation of Islamic philosophy, the specific question of whether Farabi is an evidentialist or not has not been a dedicated focus.

2. Searching for Evidentialism in Farabi's Epistemology

As we said, the concept of evidentialism is a term without a precedent in the history of philosophy; it belongs to contemporary epistemology. Therefore, searching Farabi's works for evidence favoring evidentialism must be done in a different way. It seems the most key term in the literature of Farabi—and also Avicenna (Ibn Sina)—that somehow guides us toward evidentialism, are the terms related to Reason, but not of the common type and in the manner briefly explained above.Some have said that in the history of Islamic philosophy, Farabi can be considered the pioneer of rationalism. It has even been said that in his philosophical analyses, Farabi considered reason to be superior to other tools of cognition and the criterion for judging truth and falsehood (Nasr, 2006). However, such descriptions are general and do not lead us to our specific goal.

However, in contemporary studies by Western Farabi scholars, some researchers have pointed to the presence of signs of evidentialism in Farabi's epistemology. For example, in Chapter Four of the book

Analytic Islamic Philosophy, the author introduces Farabi as a representative of "Moderate Islamic Evidentialism". In this view, Farabi, by emphasizing reason and argumentation, especially in theoretical domains, approaches a type of evidentialism, even though he also accepts the role of imagination and revelation in religious and revelatory domains. Furthermore, in the Stanford Encyclopedia entry for Farabi, it is stated that, according to Farabi, certain knowledge is the result of demonstrative arguments that are based on necessary and universal premises. This view is compatible with the principles of evidentialism, as it emphasizes that justified beliefs must be based on evidence and logical arguments.

Nevertheless, Farabi, in his works, such as The Conditions of Certainty, refers to various levels of certainty and accepts that some beliefs may be acquired through non-demonstrative methods, such as rhetoric or poetry. This indicates that he believed in a type of moderate evidentialism, in which, although emphasis is placed on evidence and argument, the role of other factors is also considered.Furthermore, Farabi, in his works, including Enumeration of the Sciences and The Views of the People of the Virtuous City, introduces reason as the necessary tool for achieving truth. He believes that certain knowledge is impossible without rational argumentation and demonstration (Fakhry, 2002). Some contemporary researchers also hold a similar view. For instance, Naqibzadeh believes that "Reason in Farabi's thought not only operates independently of revelation and religious law, but in case of conflict, it interprets the transmitted texts in favor of rational argumentation" (Naqibzadeh, 2014, p. 45). Farabi, in his treatise Exhortation to the Path of Happiness clearly states that whenever a rational judgment based on certain demonstration conflicts with the apparent meaning of religious texts,

the interpretation of the religious text is obligatory (Al-Farabi, 1985). As one of Farabi's commentators, 'Abd al-Razzāq Lāhījī, writes in Gawhar-i Murād: "Reason, in acquiring divine and other forms of knowledge, does not depend on the establishment of religious law and possesses complete independence" (Lāhījī, 1996, p. 67). Based on Farabi's views, he introduces reason as the basis for argumentation in metaphysical matters (Lāhījī, 1996). In Gawhar-i Murād, he considers reason as the source of all knowledge and emphasizes its precedence over religious texts in the realm of theory.

Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī[1], in his commentary on Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq (The Philosophy of Illumination) and his other works, considers philosophy to belong to humanity in general, and religion to be specific to its followers. He believes that philosophical rationality is independent of religious teachings (Shirazi, 2003). Of course, Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī generally inclines more towards Illuminationist intuitionism than Farabi's evidentialist rationalism.

However, even such descriptions of Farabi's philosophy, or even quotes with this meaning from Farabi himself, cannot provide solid evidence in favor of Farabi being an evidentialist, because fundamentally, even the most anti-evidentialist philosophers in the tradition of Islamic philosophy (such as Suhrawardi) have spared no effort in praising reason.Therefore, it is necessary to search in Farabi's works for evidence that shows he approached something similar to the definition of evidentialism—as mentioned above—and the mere affirmation of the importance and validity of reason is not sufficient to

1. Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (1237–1311 CE) is mostly considered a commentator and interpreter of Avicenna and Suhrawardi, but he has also addressed Farabi's views in his commentaries. He cannot be considered a "direct commentator on Farabi," but he occasionally reports and critiques Farabi's viewpoints in his works.

prove our claim. Now let's see what we can find by delving into Farabi's works for this purpose.

Farabi, as one of the founders of the rationalist tradition in Islamic philosophy, believed that no philosophical proposition or claim is valid without argumentative support. He repeatedly states the necessity of grounding philosophical claims in rational demonstrations in his works, considering it a necessary condition in the domain of philosophy (Fakhry, 2002).

In his important work, *Iḥṣāʾ al-ʿUlūm* (Enumeration of the Sciences), Farabi defines philosophy as a knowledge built upon rational argumentation and contrasts it with transmitted sciences. He emphasizes that every philosophical claim must be proven through certain demonstrations and rational inferences, and a claim without proof lacks epistemic value (Al-Farabi, 1985).

Furthermore, in his treatise *Al-Jamʿ bayna Raʾyay al-Ḥakīmayn* (The Harmonization of the Views of the Two Sages), Farabi shows that philosophical differences can only be resolved through argumentation and demonstration. By systematically analyzing the views of Plato and Aristotle, he insists that every philosophical theory must be based on solid demonstrations, or else it lacks philosophical validity (Al-Farabi, 1961).

In the treatise *Faḍīlat al-ʿUlūm* (The Virtue of the Sciences), Farabi explicitly declares that the virtue of the sciences, in addition to the nobility of the subject matter, depends on the "thoroughness of demonstrations" and precision in arguments:

> The virtue of the sciences and arts is only achieved by one of three things: either by the nobility of the subject matter, or by the thoroughness of demonstrations, or by the greatness of the usefulness therein (Al-Farabi, n.d.-.a, p. 22).

Farabi paid critical attention to the point that non-demonstrative methods, such as persuasion (rhetoric), have no place in philosophy. In *Al-Ḥurūf* (The Book of Letters), he considers the method of philosophy to be based on demonstration and says that persuasion (the method of religion) is subordinate to demonstration: "Philosophy relies on demonstration, and religion on the method of persuasion; and demonstration precedes persuasion" (Al-Farabi, n.d.-b, p. 45).

Also, in *Al-Fuṣūl* (Aphorisms), Farabi states that wisdom and philosophy seek the knowledge of ultimate causes, and this knowledge is only possible through demonstration: "Wisdom, in the subsequent stage, explains that this existence... gives reality to other existents" (Al-Farabi, n.d.-. c, p. 33).

Farabi's explicit declarations of the primacy of demonstration are not limited to these instances. In *Iḥṣāʾ al-ʿUlūm* (Enumeration of the Sciences), he says: "Only by demonstration can the existence of anything be proven, unless its existence is identical to its essence" (Al-Farabi, 1985, p. 18).

In his critique of *Kalām* (Theology), Farabi states that the *mutakallimūn* (theologians), instead of relying on certain demonstration, use dialectic and sophistry, which can in no way reveal the truth. He clarifies that philosophy must be absolutely reliant on rational demonstrations, and dialectic has no place in it (Fakhry, 2002; Nasr, 2006).

As we know, one of the most prominent Western interpreters of Islamic philosophy is Dimitri Gutas. Now let's see what reading Gutas has of Farabi's epistemology. In Gutas's judgment, Farabi accepts the Aristotelian concept of demonstration as the sole legitimate method for attaining certain knowledge and scientific understanding. He relegates other forms of argumentation—dialectic,

rhetoric, and poetry—to the domain of persuasion and social function (Gutas, 2001 a, p. 43). This judgment by Gutas is evident from the quote we previously brought from Farabi himself. Furthermore, Gutas believes that "for Farabi, achieving certainty in knowledge is possible only through demonstration; a demonstration that alone provides a necessary, universal, and true account of the world" (Gutas, 2002, p. 85).

Another statement of this judgment is found in Gutas's quote: "Following Aristotle, Farabi considers demonstration to be the highest form of syllogism; the form that produces knowledge in its most precise sense, through the necessity of the premises and the validity of the form of the argument" (Gutas, 2001 b, p, 29). In the latter statement by Gutas, there are two subtle and important points, which, although not exclusively stated by Gutas, are of great significance.

First, he considers Farabi to be a follower of Aristotle in terms of his demonstrative approach (Burhan-ism). If this claim is correct—which, relying on the evidence we provided above, is difficult to doubt—then Farabi's evidentialism appears self-evident. The second point is that he considers demonstration the highest rank of knowledge—and not merely one of the highest ranks. In the next section, we will try to show what decisive importance these two points hold.

3. Does the Term "Demonstration" Imply Evidentialism?

With some considerations, this question can be answered affirmatively. What is termed "Demonstration" in the terminology of Farabi and later Islamic philosophers encompasses a significant part of the meaning of the term "Evidence". Therefore, it can be claimed that the degree of reliance an Islamic philosopher places on demonstration (proof) makes them evidentialist to that same degree. This point becomes clear by comparing the definition of demonstration

in Islamic philosophical literature with the definition of evidence in contemporary epistemology literature. The emergence of the approach that defends evidentialism in contemporary philosophical literature is essentially an attempt to re-emphasize the importance of evidence (proof) in reaching knowledge.

Of course, it must be noted that there are differences between evidence in contemporary epistemology and demonstration in Islamic philosophy. However, this difference does not compromise our goal. In contemporary epistemology, direct sensory perception is also considered among the evidence leading to knowledge, at a level equal to syllogism. However, in the Islamic philosophical tradition, syllogism (and thus demonstration) is placed at a higher level than direct sensory perception.

In any case, the comparison between demonstration and evidence leads us to a more subtle point. The opposition of the critics of evidentialism in the Islamic philosophical tradition primarily rests on the opposition to the absolute validity of demonstration. To put it simply, when they intend to attack evidentialism, they attack the exclusive validity of demonstration, asserting that there is another way to reach the truth—especially a more transcendent, purified, and important kind of truth—besides demonstration. For instance, Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī repeatedly directs criticisms against the sole reliance on demonstration and Greek philosophical reason. In contrast, he considers the rank of spiritual taste, Illumination, and intuition superior for comprehending the authentic truth.Suhrawardi says in *Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq* (The Philosophy of Illumination): "Not everything that is grasped by demonstration is grasped by the truth, for the Illumination and Lights have a spiritual taste that the people of speculation and demonstration do not attain" (Suhrawardi, 1992, p. 150).

He also states in *Mūnis al-ʿUshshāq* (The Lover's Companion):

"And that which pertains to the secrets and realities of the Lights is only achieved through spiritual taste and observation (vision) and the pure intellect has no path to it" (Suhrawardi, 1990, p. 325).

Not only are Suhrawardi's works filled with numerous instances of such quotes, but the philosophical literature tradition post-Suhrawardi, as well as our mystical tradition, is saturated with it.

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that Farabi, like Avicenna (Ibn Sina), has works and passages that not only seriously call into question his and Avicenna's evidentialism, but also present strong evidence in favor of their intuitionism.

In Farabi's case, specifically, his book *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (Bezels of Wisdom) is a serious and undeniable piece of evidence. A response can be argued thus: It is precisely for these reasons that philosophers like Farabi have been rightly termed moderate evidentialists by some researchers, because they did not exclusively restrict justification to evidence (a point that was somewhat alluded to earlier).

Another potential response is that if we consider the dominant current in Farabi's philosophical literature—that is, what flows through the majority of his works—it points to Farabi's adoption of evidentialism. To be more explicit, if we consider the entirety of Farabi's works, the works pointing towards intuitionism are placed on the periphery in comparison to those pointing toward evidentialism.

However, this second argument is debatable, as in judging a philosopher, the centrality or marginality of an idea is not a decisive reason for judgment. In fact, in many cases, marginal ideas have been the source of greater controversies.

A third response that can be offered is that the Peripatetic Islamic philosophers were never able to escape the allure of intuitionism and were never entirely satisfied with evidentialism. As a

result, we witness a kind of oscillation (or back-and-forth movement) between evidentialism and intuitionism, although evidentialism still maintains prominence compared to intuitionism.

Therefore, if we can show that evidentialism prevails as an irreplaceable principle in the philosophical systems of Farabi, and consequently Avicenna (Ibn Sina), we can then argue—by examining the presence or absence of evidentialism in *Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq* (Illuminationist Philosophy) and even *al-Ḥikmat al-Mutaʿāliyah* (Transcendent Philosophy)—in favor of the claim that the elimination of evidentialism from Islamic philosophy (or at least its attenuation and reduced impact) caused the rationalist and philosophical aspect of what is known as Islamic philosophy to decline. In simpler terms, evidentialism acts as a prominent indicator showing to what extent what we call 'philosophy' is genuinely philosophy and to what extent it is mysticism.

This last sentence itself requires explanation. Critics of philosophy and rationalism primarily began their work by arguing that demonstration does not lead us to the ultimate truth, although it does advance us to the initial stages of truth. Even more importantly, it can divert us from the path of truth. The authentic and transcendent truth is attainable through intuition, spiritual taste, and similar matters.

This consensus is held not only by intra-philosophical critics of evidentialism like Suhrawardi, Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, and Mulla Sadra, but also by critics outside of philosophy such as Abu'l-Barakāt al-Baghdādī and al-Ghazālī (though considering him entirely outside of philosophy may be debatable). Yaḥyā Yathribī has specifically articulated this claim regarding Suhrawardi's epistemology, stating that Suhrawardi's intuitionism is essentially a re-reading and repetition of the epistemological approach of Abu'l-Barakāt al-Baghdādī and al-Ghazālī.

To better understand the subject, we can look at the dispute between Al-Ghazali and Averroes (Ibn Rushd).The main opposition was over the validity of reason (specifically, in the sense of purely rational and demonstrative argumentation). In a very simple and superficial sense, Averroes believed that, alongside revelation and intuition, reason also guides us to the Source of existence and the ultimate truth, and that these two do not contradict each other. Reason is the guide for the intellectuals, and revelation is the guide for the masses. This was a point that the Latin Averroists, and at their head Thomas Aquinas, took from Averroes. Relying on it (and certainly with admirable innovations and subtleties), they were able to shake the deeply rooted and long-standing tradition of Augustinian fideism. Therefore, the difference of opinion over the seemingly simple belief of whether demonstration and rational argumentation have the final say, or faith, intuition, and spiritual taste, or whether both do, has had very astonishing results in the history of philosophy—both in the Islamic world and the West.The question might be raised that intuitionism and the subsequent Islamic philosophers' inclination towards it does not inherently constitute a flaw in Islamic philosophy, but is, in fact, a new capacity that Islamic philosophy attained.

This is a very important question to which different answers can be given. However, the author insists on a controversial answer: It seems that philosophy, as a purely rational endeavor, is truly called philosophy as long as it remains within the boundaries of reason and evidence (evidentialism). To the degree that it distances itself from evidentialism and approaches intuitionism, its philosophical nature is diminished.

The controversial nature of this answer lies in the fact that, from an epistemic perspective, it considers the primary criterion for the philosophical nature of an idea and theoretical product to be its

pure rationality. This is something that many defenders of Islamic philosophy, particularly the Sadrian tradition (Mulla Sadra), strongly disagree with, because accepting this criterion would implicitly suggest that the philosophical status of the Sadrian system is open to question.The opponents (of the Sadrian system's pure philosophical status) are also, so to speak, not empty-handed. In various expressions, sometimes sharp and sometimes mild, they question the philosophical nature of the Sadrian system.

It is for this reason that in many works introducing Sadrian philosophy, it is always emphasized that Transcendent Philosophy is an innovative and creative combination of mysticism and philosophy (or intuition and reason). The interesting aspect of the matter is that this repeated and frequent emphasis by the proponents of Transcendent Philosophy, and specifically Mulla Sadra's own philosophy, shows that this point (i.e., Sadrian intuitionism) is a controversial aspect of *al-Ḥikmat al-Mutaʿāliyah*.

Conclusion

This article is the first stage of an endeavor that will continue with an examination of evidentialism in *Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq* (Illuminationist Philosophy) and *al-Ḥikmat al-Mutaʿāliyah* (Transcendent Philosophy). This effort is intended to provide the necessary tools and material for the relatively controversial claim that the post-Peripatetic Illuminationist-Intuitive current primarily succeeded in setting Islamic philosophy on a new course—a course that made it resemble mysticism more than philosophy in the precise and common sense of the word—by questioning the exclusive validity of evidence in reaching the truth.

Therefore, the intuitionistic or evidentialist nature of a school of thought is neither an inherent merit nor a flaw. Rather, the key

point is that if an idea is to be considered philosophical, it must epistemologically follow the standard of evidentialism—even if it is the moderate version. In contrast, if an idea validates intuitionism (without any value judgment being made), it is outside the domain of philosophy.Of course, it is clear that this idea is unacceptable to many defenders of Transcendent Philosophy. However, if we take contemporary epistemology—that which is known as the Theory of Knowledge or Epistemology—as the standard, this claim appears very obvious, clear, and indisputable. As was stated at the beginning of the article, in this research, we have viewed Farabi's epistemology from the perspective of contemporary epistemology.

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A Reflection on "Immortality" from Farabi's Perspective

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Abstract

One of the contentious issues concerning Farabi's views is whether he asserts the immortality of souls or not, and, if the former, whether this immortality is personal (individual) or generic (of the species). This article, employing a descriptive-analytical method, argues that Farabi holds the view of personal immortality, though not for all humans, but only for certain individuals. The fundamental reason for the confusion and conflict in views regarding Farabi's stance on the issue of immortality stems from the failure to distinguish between the different souls in the various cities (societies) in his philosophy. Farabi's criterion for explaining immortality is the actualization of human intellect through connection with the Active Intellect. Based on this criterion, he considers only the inhabitants of the two types of cities—the Virtuous City and the Transgressing City—to be immortal, because only the intellect of these two groups of humans becomes actualized. The difference is that the

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inhabitants of the Virtuous City act upon their knowledge, whereas the inhabitants of the Transgressing City abstain from acting upon their knowledge. Humans in all other cities only experience worldly life, and their souls perish with the decay of the body due to the non-actualization of their intellect. Regarding the issue of immortality being personal or generic, a reflection on Farabi's works leads to the conclusion that he posits a specific connection between the body and the temperament on the one hand, and the temperament and the soul on the other, considering each soul specific to a body and vice-versa. Therefore, just as we encounter multiple and individuated souls in worldly life due to the multiplicity of bodies and temperaments, in the afterlife, souls will also be distinguished from one another and will continue their immortal life in an individuated and personalized manner due to the acquisition of multiple and different dispositions and habits.

Keywords

Soul, Intellect, City, Immortality, Active Intellect (Aql Fa"āl).

Introduction

Due to the epistemic limitations of humankind regarding the Other World and its inherent mystery, the belief in the Resurrection (Ma'ād) and the issue of immortality has become a source of preoccupation coupled with anxiety and apprehension. The significance of the Resurrection and life after death is underscored by the fact that it is a core religious tenet and is explicitly affirmed and emphasized by religions, especially the Abrahamic faiths.Alongside the lay perspective, we can note the scholarly and investigative approaches of Theologians (Mutakallimūn), Philosophers (Falāsifah), and Mystics (ʿUrafā') to this matter. A contemplation of the works of these three groups reveals three distinct types of Eschatology (Ma'ād-shināsi): Theological Eschatology, Philosophical Eschatology, and Mystical Eschatology.

The distinction of Philosophical Eschatology from the other two is that its substantiation, based on the rational analysis of the human essence, i.e., the immaterial soul (Nafs-i Mujarrad), is achieved without reliance on transmitted sources (naql). Broadly speaking, Muslim eschatology encounters two types of Resurrection: corporeal (Jismānī) and spiritual (Rūḥānī).A large segment of early Theologians, including the Mu'tazilis, Ash'aris, and Imamis, relying on transmitted sources as their epistemic foundation, considered man to be composed of a body and a spirit. They regarded the spirit as a subtle or ethereal body (jism-i laṭīf) or an accident subsisting in the body (ʿaraḍ qā'im bi-l-badan) (Asadābādī Hamadānī, 1965, pp. 310-312; Juwaynī, 1416 AH, p. 150; Mufīd, 1414 AH, p. 55). Consequently, the soul is believed to perish with the decay of the body. They therefore affirmed corporeal resurrection—the creation of bodies anew on the Day of Judgment, now referred to as bodily resurrection—by appealing to the absolute power of God.

However, some theologians, particularly later ones such as Khwājah Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī and ʿAllāmah al-Ḥillī, spoke of the immaterial soul, influenced by philosophical doctrines. This is because the concept of immateriality (tajarrud) is fundamentally a purely philosophical concept, perhaps inherited from the Greek philosophers.In contrast, Peripatetic (Mashshāʾī) Philosophers, founded on the principle of the immaterial soul, hold that only the immaterial endures, thus asserting spiritual resurrection. The necessary implications of the cosmological and psychological foundations of a philosopher like Avicenna (Ibn sina), including the denial of the immateriality of imagination (tajarrud-i khayāl) and the rejection of the Mundus Imaginalis, entail the rejection of corporeal resurrection within his philosophical system. This, however, is not inconsistent with his acceptance of corporeal resurrection outside his philosophical framework and based on the Sharia and the confirmation of the trustworthy statement of the veracious one (Avicenna, 1983, p. 423; Avicenna , 2000, p. 682). Illuminationist (Ishrāqī) Philosophers, by transforming their cosmology, introduced corporeal resurrection in the Mundus Imaginalis for some individuals, namely the average (mutawassiṭīn), while positing spiritual resurrection for others, the perfect.

Finally, Mullā Ṣadrā, through his unique perspective on the existential rank of the soul and its transformation from potentiality to actuality and inventiveness, spoke of the inner body created by the soul and proposed two types of resurrection: corporeal resurrection based on the imaginal body and spiritual resurrection.

Building on the discussion of Resurrection, the issue of human immortality and whether this immortality retains a personal or generic identity has been a subject of reflection for philosophers and theologians. Immortality is perhaps a topic whose truths humanity is

naturally curious to know.From a theological and religious perspective, all theologians and divines, relying on the religious text and divine teachings, have spoken of the eternity and immortality of human beings, albeit in different manners and forms. They accept personal immortality by appealing to the individuation of bodies through their recreation by the power of Almighty God.

Muslim philosophers, too, have demonstrated human immortality using a rational and philosophical approach by reflecting on the essence of man, the soul, and proving its immateriality (tajarrud). Farabi, as a Muslim philosopher, has philosophically and rationally established the concern for the immortality of some, but not all, human beings within the framework of his own philosophical principles. He defends the personal immortality and individual identity of these individuals in the afterlife.

Regarding Farabi's view, several studies have been conducted:

1. (Davoudi, 1957, pp. 365-372): While this study investigated the survival of souls from Farabi's perspective, it did not examine the role of the "City"—which is one of the most important principles of Farabi's social philosophy—in the survival or non-survival of souls, nor did it address the issue of personal versus non-personal immortality.
2. (Riyahi, 2001, pp. 66-78): This work addressed the survival of the human soul from the perspective of three philosophers: Farabi, Avicenna (Avicenna), and Mulla Sadra (Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn). The author briefly stated Farabi's view and presented Avicenna's criticisms of Farabi, but failed to consider the criticisms of Andalusian philosophers regarding Farabi's view on immortality, as well as the place of "City Studies" in understanding Farabi's theory.

3. (Mansouri and Kahrizi, 2019, pp. 189-210): This research extensively examined the fate of deficient souls in Farabi's philosophy, but the criterion for the survival or non-survival of souls and their relation to the City was only mentioned very briefly. It is, of course, entirely logical that the issue of the type of immortality was not raised in that article, as it was not its primary subject.

It must be stated that one cannot articulate Farabi's final view on immortality by merely conducting an inventory of souls. The differentiation between souls, the relation of souls to the City, and the criterion for the souls' survival, collectively illustrate Farabi's epistemic architecture concerning immortality. The aforementioned articles have not addressed all three components simultaneously, components which possess a geometric relationship with one another. Therefore, they are unable to express Farabi's definitive theory on immortality. This article endeavors to extract, describe, and analyze Farabi's intellectual system regarding immortality by reflecting upon the three aforementioned components. The aim is both to clarify Farabi's final viewpoint on immortality, encompassing both personal and non-personal (generic) aspects, and to provide a response to those who consider Farabi an opponent of Resurrection and immortality, or at least as someone holding conflicted views (muḍṭarib al-aqwāl).

1. Farabi: Denier or Believer in Immortality

The main impetus for this research is the view of some philosophers regarding Farabi's stance on the issue of immortality. Whether the discussion of Resurrection and the Afterlife is addressed in Farabi's intellectual system is a point of contention among scholars.The basis of this disagreement lies in the statements of philosophers subsequent to Farabi, particularly the Andalusian philosophers. Among these is

Ibn Ṭufayl, a philosopher of the 6th century AH. In his view, Farabi lacked a stable and firm opinion on the survival of souls. Consequently, he ultimately considered Farabi a denier of eternity (khulūd) and immortality.

In the introduction to his commentary on Risālat Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān, Ibn Ṭufayl states that in Risālat al-Millah al-Fāḍilah (The Virtuous Religion), Farabi speaks of the survival of wicked souls (nufūs sharīr) (in addition to the virtuous souls), while in his book Siyāsat al-Madaniyyah (The Political Regime), he asserts the survival of virtuous souls only. Furthermore, he claims that in the commentary on Aristotle's Ethics, Farabi denied any form of otherworldly felicity (sa'ādah ukhrawīyah), considering felicity to be purely worldly and anything beyond that to be drivel and old women's superstitions (Ibn Ṭufayl, 1994, p. 62). Ibn Rushd (Averroes), another Andalusian philosopher, in his treatise "De materiae intellectu et eius cum intellectu agente conjunctione" (On the Material Intellect and its Conjunction with the Active Intellect)—the Arabic version of which is unfortunately unavailable—reiterated Ibn Ṭufayl's statement and considered Farabi a denier of eternity and immortality (as cited by Al-Fākhūrī, 1979, p. 422).

Some contemporary scholars also consider Farabi's view on the immortality of souls to be not free from conflict (Ṣalībā, 1995, p. 166; Abū Rayyān, 1973, p. 252; Hammond, 1947, pp. 35-36). However, Farabi is regarded as one of the believers in Resurrection and immortality in the works of other Muslim philosophers—a position that Farabi's own works clearly indicate. He, in fact, attributes the denial of eternity to the ancients (Farabi, 1992, p. 142).It appears that the judgment of the Andalusian philosophers regarding Farabi's view stemmed, on the one hand, from their incomplete access to Farabi's works, leading to an inaccurate conclusion. On the other hand, as will be elaborated,

Farabi, within the framework of his City Studies (Madīnah-shināsi), speaks of felicity (sa'ādah), wretchedness (shaqāwah), and eternity (khulūd) not for all souls, but only for certain ones. This point—the failure to distinguish between souls and the assertion of immortality for only some—is key.

2. Foundations of Immortality in Farabi's Thought

In Farabi's philosophy, the understanding of human immortality is based on two foundations: metaphysical and social. In other words, Anthropology (metaphysical theory) and City Studies (social-political foundation) are the two pillars Farabi uses to explain and prove immortality for human beings. Indeed, attaining eternity and immortality has an internal component and an external component. The external component—namely, a person's life in the City—holds a special place in completing the internal component, which is the actualization of the human soul in terms of the Intellect. An examination of these two foundations is the essential prerequisite for understanding Farabi's theory of immortality.

2-1. Anthropological Foundation

Farabi's first foundation for the issue of immortality is an anthropological foundation. This foundation consists of two principles:

1. The composition of man from body and soul: Man is not merely a material body; rather, there exists a reality beyond the body.
2. Substantial Dualism: The soul and the body are two independent and mutually exclusive substances (jawharān mustaqillān).

In explaining the first principle, it must be said that from

Farabi's viewpoint, man is beyond a mere material body because he possesses a faculty that perceives intelligibles. Since the intelligibles are devoid of material accidents (mujarrad), the perceiving faculty must also be immaterial (Farabi, 1966, p. 7). Therefore, man is composed of two dimensions: corporeal (the body) and spiritual (the rational soul or *nafs nāṭiqa*). This is in contrast to animals, which lack this spiritual dimension and whose souls are not immaterial (Farabi, 1992, p. 140).

Farabi, like Aristotle, considers the soul to be the first perfection (kamāl awwal) of a natural, organic body possessing potential life (Farabi, 1992, p. 304). The body, due to its materiality and composition, possesses the potential for corruption and disintegration and will ultimately perish. However, the soul, being simple, immaterial (mujarrad), and non-material, lacks the potential or capacity for corruption and does not perish with the decay of the body; rather, it persists (Farabi, 1966 p. 120; Farabi, 1998, p. 52; Farabi, 2007, p. 135; Farabi, 1882, p. 64). Thus, w6hen Farabi speaks of the survival and immortality of man, he means the survival of the soul in terms of its rational faculty—i.e., the soul whose intellect has become actualized (fa'aliyyat yāftah)—and not the resurrection of the material body or the reconstitution of bodies (ba'th al-abdān).

Therefore, when he posits the immateriality of the soul as the criterion for survival, it is the rational part (juz' nāṭiq) of the soul, specifically the immateriality of the intellect, which is attained through reaching the stage of the Actual Intellect (Farabi, 1998, p. 42). This is where we encounter rational resurrection (ma'ād aqlī) in Farabi's philosophy: the afterlife is achieved not for the body, nor for the soul *qua* soul, but the soul attains immortality in terms of its rational faculty.The corollary of the first anthropological principle is the second principle: the disparity between soul and body. According to the first principle, the soul is immaterial while the body is material.

Since the immaterial is distinct from matter, the soul is distinct from the body. This disparity holds true not only in their existence but also in their attributes (Farabi, 2002, p. 62).

In fact, Farabi's first foundation for the issue of immortality is that the essence of man is something beyond the material body which acquires an immaterial identity through connection with the Active Intellect, thereby becoming independent of the material body for its substance and existence.

2. Sociological Foundation

Farabi's second foundation for the issue of immortality is his City Studies. From his perspective, the political and social system has a direct impact on the nature of a person's worldly and otherworldly life.Farabi, influenced by Aristotle, considers man to be "political by nature". A person requires others—i.e., presence in a society—both for the substance of their existence (qawām wujūdī) and for the attainment of the highest perfections (aʿlā al-kamālāt) (Farabi, 1986 a, p. 117; Farabi, 1998, p. 69). Not only humans but even certain animals and plants cannot continue their lives without a society (Farabi, 1998, p. 69).

A person cannot provide all their necessities and needs alone without the help of others. For any kind of perfection, one needs to become a member of a society and collaborate with other members of their species. According to Farabi, the highest good and the ultimate perfections are achieved in the City (Madīnah), just as vices and base qualities are also the result of being in the City. Therefore, immortality is not merely an individual matter or the acquisition of virtues; rather, it varies according to people's belonging to different types of cities and societies. The actualization of praiseworthy qualities (ḥamīdah) or blameworthy qualities (radhīlah), and the felicity (sa'ādah) or

wretchedness (shaqāwah) of a person, is contingent upon the society in which they live.

Given the necessity of society for human felicity and wretchedness, Farabi mentions five categories of Cities: 1-The Virtuous City 2-The Ignorant City 3-The Transgressing City (Madīnah al-Fāsiqah) 4-The Changing City (Madīnah al-Mutabaddilah) 5-The Errant City (Madīnah al-Ḍāllah) (Farabi, 1986 a, pp. 115 & 131; Farabi, 1998, pp. 80 & 87).

The inhabitants of each City are granted survival or annihilation, and felicity or wretchedness, corresponding to the political order of their respective City. The Virtuous City: This is the ideal city (utopia) where wisdom (ḥikmah) and philosophy are necessary conditions for its establishment and survival. Due to the presence of a wise leadership and a philosophical king (the Philosopher-King theory), every class is positioned correctly, and every individual is assigned to their appropriate task. The highest degrees of individual perfection are attainable under the aegis of this ideal society. In such a society, due to the connection of the leader's soul with the Active Intellect, the souls of the other inhabitants also find the possibility of connecting with the Active Intellect. They acquire knowledge of matters such as felicity, the Necessary Being (Wājib), the Intellects (ʿUqūl), and the Active Intellect, and they act upon that knowledge (Farabi, 1986 a, p. 124).

The Transgressing City: The inhabitants of this City know and conceive of principles such as the Necessary Being and the Intellects. They also imagine and believe in felicity. They are guided toward actions that bring about felicity, and they know and believe in those actions, but they do not act upon them. Instead, they act upon their desires and impulses, similar to the inhabitants of the Ignorant City, and are like them in terms of actions and morals (Farabi, 1986 A, p. 133;

Farabi, 1998, p. 103). The Ignorant City: The inhabitants of this City fundamentally do not recognize felicity and it has not even occurred to them. If guided toward true felicity, they cannot conceive of it correctly and, consequently, cannot assent to it. They mistake imaginary felicity, such as health, wealth, etc., for true felicity (Farabi, 1986 a, p. 131; Farabi, 1998, p. 87). The Changing City (Madīnah al-Mutabaddilah): The inhabitants of this City were initially like the people of the Virtuous City in terms of opinions and actions, but over time, they have changed (tabaddul), and their opinions and actions have been altered (Farabi, 1986 a, p. 133). The Errant City (Madīnah al-Ḍāllah): Finally, in this City, due to the presence of adeceitful and cunning leader who claims prophethood, the inhabitants are taught opinions and beliefs about God, the Intellects, etc., that are incorrect. They are presented with a felicity that is not, in fact, true felicity (Farabi, 1998, p. 104; Farabi, 1986 a, p. 133).

Thus, based on Farabi's City Studies, a direct connection is established between an individual's life in a society and the leadership of that society on the one hand, and that individual's knowledge, action, and ultimately felicity and wretchedness on the other. Immortality or non-immortality, as well as human felicity or wretchedness, is dependent upon the society in which they live.

3. Survival and Immortality of Souls

Given the two aforementioned foundations—the anthropological and the sociological—the question must be asked: Which category of souls, and the inhabitants of which City, will experience a life other than the worldly one? Do the inhabitants of all societies survive, or only those of some societies? In other words, do the souls of all humans remain, or can only the souls of some humans endure? In Farabi's view, only the inhabitants of two Cities, the Virtuous City and

the Transgressing City, experience an afterlife in addition to worldly life.

To elaborate: from Farabi's perspective, the purpose of human creation is to attain ultimate felicity. To achieve this felicity, one needs to know it and set it as one's goal. One also needs to know the actions through which one can reach felicity. Since the knowledge of felicity and the knowledge of the actions leading to it is not innate (fiṭrī), a person needs a teacher and guide. This teacher is ultimately the leader of the society, who possesses sufficient knowledge of the actions necessary for felicity (Farabi, 1998, p. 78; Farabi, 1986 a, p. 126). Such a society is the Virtuous City.

Regarding how souls attain survival and immortality in the Virtuous City, the leader in such a City is one whose soul, through its connection with the Active Intellect, actually possesses (bi-l-fi'l wājid) all sciences and knowledge (Farabi, 1998, p. 79; Farabi, 1986 a, pp. 125-126). Such an individual can nurture the souls of the people. The human soul has three ranks: sensation, imagination, and intellect. All three ranks are potential at the inception of the soul, and a person can attain actuality in any of these ranks depending on their City and its leader.

In the Virtuous City, under the leadership of the wise ruler, the Intellect, or the rational part of the soul, moves from the potential stage to the actual stage. In fact, as a result of knowing felicity, the Necessary Being (Wājib al-Wujūd), the Intellects, and the Active Intellect, the Passive Intellect (Aql Munfa'il) becomes actualized and resembles the separated substances (mufāriqāt). Following this knowledge, the rational soul becomes independent of the body for its substance and perfection. Consequently, by acting upon the acquired knowledge, it acquires virtuous psychological dispositions (hay'āt nafsānī fāḍilah) and becomes felicitous (sa'ādatmand). Such a soul, having become actualized and separated from the body (mufāraqat

yāftah), will not perish with the decay of the body; thus, it benefits from immortality and eternal felicity (Farabi, 1986 a, p. 135; Farabi, 1998, p. 81).

The souls of the inhabitants of the Transgressing City, since they are similar to the people of the Virtuous City in terms of knowledge of felicity, the Necessary Being, and the Intellects, become actualized and consequently separate from the body. However, in terms of action, they are like the people of the Ignorant City. Therefore, they do not perish with the annihilation of the body but endure, experiencing an eternal afterlife in addition to worldly life. This group shares the trait of immortality with the people of the Virtuous City, with the difference that the souls of the Virtuous City will be in eternal felicity (sa'ādah abadī), while the souls of the Transgressing City will be in eternal wretchedness (shaqāwah abadī) (Farabi, 1986 a, pp. 143-144; Farabi, 1998, p. 104). However, the inhabitants of the Ignorant, Errant (Ḍāllah), and Changing (Mutabaddilah) Cities experience only a limited worldly life and perish with the annihilation of the body. This is because the souls of such humans can only be actualized in terms of the sensory (ḥiss) and imaginative (mutakhayyilīyyah) ranks, and their intellect (aql) remains potential (bi-l-quwwah).

At these ranks, the soul is material, like that of beasts, predatory animals, and reptiles, and is dependent on the body for its substance and survival. Therefore, when the matter, or the body, is destroyed, the soul also perishes (Farabi, 1998, p. 83; Farabi, 1986 a, pp. 142-144). From Farabi's perspective, the soul in the ranks of sensation and imagination is subsistent in the body and connected to it, deriving pleasure from subordinate dispositions. Since the soul is material at these two ranks, they perish with the decay of the body (Farabi, 1986 a, p. 42). Even the rank of the Potential Intellect, being a disposition in

the body (hay'at), will be subsistent in the body and non-enduring (Farabi, 1986 a, p. 101).

Thus, it becomes clear that Farabi asserts eternity and immortality for two categories of souls: the Virtuous Souls and the Transgressing Souls, both of which are considered knowing souls. The difference is that the knowledge of the former is accompanied by action, while the knowledge of the latter is without action.

Just as knowledge necessitates the actualization of the rational part of the soul, action also holds a similar position. In Farabi's view, performing the actions that lead to felicity can cause the actualization and perfection of the part of the soul that is naturally prepared for felicity. This perfection leads to that part becoming independent of the body, and consequently, it does not perish with the body's decay (Farabi, 1998, p. 81).In other words, humans are divided into two groups: those with a sound nature and those with an unsound nature. Those with a sound nature may reach felicity (Farabi, 1998, p. 75). Apart from these two groups, the other souls are only actualized in terms of the sensory and imaginative ranks, and their intellect remains potential or material. Therefore, they cannot transcend this worldly life.

An objection might be raised that Farabi's view regarding the non-survival of some souls contradicts the teachings of Islam, which posits an afterlife and eternity for all human beings. This objection can be resolved by distinguishing the methodologies used to approach the issue of Resurrection and Immortality. As noted in the introduction, Farabi addresses the issue of immortality within the framework of his philosophical system and his metaphysical and sociological foundations, using a rational and philosophical approach that is independent of religious considerations. The necessary implication of Farabi's philosophical principles is the immortality of only those humans who have managed to actualize their intellect through connection with the

Active Intellect. Therefore, attempting to reconcile his philosophical view on this matter with religious teachings and analyzing his philosophical perspective through the lens of religious doctrines constitutes a methodological confusion. Just as Avicenna, as a philosopher, proposes one theory regarding the Resurrection, and as a pious, Sharia-adherent individual, accepts another viewpoint, Farabi can also present his view on human immortality consistent with the distinction between the two domains of religion and philosophy.

4. Criterion for Survival and Immortality

From Farabi's perspective, the survival and annihilation of human souls are defined in relation to the body.The condition for the soul's survival and immortality is its independence from the body in its existence and substance. Conversely, the soul's dependence on the body is the criterion for its non-survival and non-immortality (Farabi, 1986 a, p. 105).In essence, immateriality (tajarrud) and actualization are the criteria for survival, while materiality is the criterion for annihilation. Based on this criterion, Farabi asserts survival and immortality solely for the intellect, and not just any intellect, but only the intellect that has progressed from the Hylic (stage to the Actual stage.

In Farabi's terms, it is the rational part of the soul that, by passing from the potential/hylic stage to the actual stage, endures. This is because when the rational part of the soul is perfected and reaches the stage of the Actual Intellect, it becomes similar to the separated substances (Farabi, 1998, p. 42). The immateriality of the soul is the actualization of the potential intellect and its independence from the material body for its substance and perfection. Consequently, with the destruction of the body, the soul that has become immaterial in its rational part is not destroyed but persists. For this reason, in Farabi's

view, although the body is a condition for the soul's origination, the soul does not need the body for its survival (Farabi, 1992, p. 141).

What endures, in fact, is not the soul in all its ranks, but the soul in terms of its connection with the Active Intellect. This connection is formed between the rational part of the soul and the Active Intellect. The rational part of the soul receives the first sciences and the first intelligibles from the Active Intellect (Farabi, 1998, p. 72). These first intelligibles are the first kinds of knowledge (Farabi, 1998, p. 74).

As a result of acquiring these intelligibles and knowledge, the intellect, which was potential at its inception, gradually becomes actualized. Reaching actualization entails the separation of the intellect from the body, allowing it to continue its life independently. If this knowledge is accompanied by action, it brings felicity; otherwise, it results in wretchedness.

Based on this criterion, Farabi's view suggests that after a person's death, souls are divided into three categories: surviving or annihilated. The surviving category is either in felicity or wretchedness: 1- Souls in Eternal Felicity (The Virtuous City): This group consists of individuals who knew felicity and acted upon it, striving to attain it. These are the inhabitants of the Virtuous City, who possessed both the necessary and sufficient knowledge and action. Their souls will be in eternal and everlasting felicity. 2- Souls in Eternal Wretchedness (The Transgressing City): This group consists of individuals who knew felicity but abstained from acting upon it. These are the people of the Transgressing City, who had the necessary and sufficient knowledge but did not act upon it. Their souls remain in eternal and everlasting wretchedness. 3- Annihilated Souls (Ignorant, Errant, and Changing Cities): This group consists of individuals who fundamentally did not recognize felicity and whose intellect did not

reach the stage of the Acquired Intellect. With the decay of their bodies, their souls, which were subsistent in the body, also perish, and they will experience no form of immortality. The inhabitants of the Errant, Ignorant, and Changing Cities constitute this group.

5. Personal or Impersonal Immortality

After establishing the immortality of certain souls, the question arises: In what manner do the enduring souls persist? Is this survival personal and individuated, or is it impersonal and generic (ghayr shakhṣī wa nawʿī)? In other words, just as we encounter a multiplicity of souls in this world, do we observe this multiplicity in the afterlife, or do the souls unite with one another or with the Active Intellect? One of the contentious issues in Farabi's eschatology is whether he asserts personal immortality or impersonal immortality. As is clear to those familiar with theological and divine matters, contemporary discourse discusses two types of immortality: Personal Immortality and Impersonal Immortality.

Personal Immortality can be conceived in several ways: 1- Recreation (Corporeal Resurrection / Restoration of the Non-Existent). 2- Transmigration (Tanāsukh). 3- Return of souls to personal bodies. 4- Survival of souls with an imaginal / celestial / ethereal / stellar body. 5- Disembodied Soul (Nafs Nā-mutajassid) Impersonal Immortality can also be realized in several forms: 1- Annihilation in the Universal Soul or Intellect and persistence by its persistence. 2-Annihilation in the Essence of God and persistence by God's persistence. 3-Survival and eternity in the memory and recollection of others. 4-Survival through descendants and progeny and the continuation of the species (generation). (Peterson, 2000, p. 322; Rezazadeh, 2004, pp. 13-15).

Some historians of Islamic philosophy believe that the type of

eternity (khulūd) and immortality in Farabi's thought is ambiguous. One group argues that immortality in Farabi is impersonal (Impersonal Immortality), suggesting the annihilation of the human intellect in the Universal Intellect and ultimately its annihilation in God, "because God is in all things and He is the whole in unity" (De Boer, 1983, p. 131).

Majid Fakhry, however, believes that although Farabi followed Aristotle's path in explaining survival, asserting that only the rational part of the soul is immortal, he differs from Aristotle on the *type* of immortality. Aristotle is said to uphold generic survival, whereas Farabi is believed to embrace individual survival (Fakhry, 1993, p. 145).

The reason for this disagreement may stem from certain statements by Farabi. He discusses the union (ittiḥād) of the fully Actual Intellects with one another at the rank of the Active Intellect, or speaks of the connection (ittiṣāl) of similar souls (Farabi, 1986 a, pp. 137-138; Farabi, 1998, p. 82). While these suggest an impersonal survival, this union and connection are spiritual and do not conflict with their individuation and personal identity (tafarrud wa tashakhkhuṣ).

6. The Mechanism of Individuation

To explain personal immortality, Farabi posits a specific connection between a human's soul and their body: 1- Unique Fit of Soul and Body: Each soul is attached to a specifically suitable body, and conversely, each body receives its own specific soul. This is because every body, upon reaching a certain degree of temperament (mizāj) equilibrium, is ready to receive a soul. Since every body has its own unique temperament, it receives the soul appropriate to that temperament (Farabi, 1966, p. 119; Farabi, 1882, p. 63). Thus, there is a congeniality (sankhiyyat) between the soul and the body, and the multiplicity of temperaments and bodies necessitates a multiplicity of souls. 2- Matter and Form: The relationship between the body and the

soul is the relationship between matter and form. Every matter has a specific potentiality for receiving a specific form; hence, each body is specific to the soul it receives. 3- Acquired Dispositions as Identifiers: When the soul separates from the body, since they were in multiple and different bodies and temperaments, the psychological dispositions and qualities they acquired are subservient to the bodily temperament, and each disposition is compatible and commensurate with the body's temperament. Consequently, due to the multiplicity of temperaments, souls acquire multiple and different dispositions and habits (malakāt). This process distinguishes the souls from one another.

In result, the multiplicity of bodies leads to the multiplicity of souls; and if we have an infinite number of bodies, we will have an infinite number of souls (Farabi, 1986 a, pp. 135-136). Felicity (sa'ādah) and wretchedness are states that occur to the soul after its separation from the body: the pleasure resulting from separation from matter, and the pain resulting from the remnants of matter, are the states of the felicitous and wretched souls, respectively. These states are multiple and different according to the multiplicity of souls. Indeed, each soul acquires these states in the afterlife due to the merit it earned in the world. These states are both necessary for those souls and occur by virtue of justice (Farabi, 1882, p. 64). Therefore, human destiny and the soul's felicity and wretchedness are contingent upon the body with which it was associated during its worldly life.

A reflection on Farabi's works reveals the conclusion that he asserts individual survival and personal immortality (Personal Immortality). This immortality is related to the afterlife and is not a form of worldly survival such as transmigration (tanāsukh) or other types of impersonal eternity like survival in the memory of others, progeny, or descendants. This is confirmed by the fact that Farabi explicitly rejects transmigration (tanāsukh), asserting that the transfer

of the soul from one body to another, as claimed by the Transmigrationists, is incorrect (Farabi, 1882, p. 64; Farabi, 1345 AH, p. 120; Farabi, 1992, p. 138). Finally, it must be stated that in Farabi's Philosophical Eschatology, immortality (jāvidānagī) is an acquired (iktisābī) matter, and human felicity (sa'ādah) and wretchedness (shaqāwah) are the result of one's will and free choice (irādah wa ikhtiyār) (Farabi, 1986 b, p. 83). In truth, Farabi considers felicity to be the result of perfecting choice and subordinating the senses/passions to the intellect. This is because once the intellect is nurtured, imaginations (takhayyulāt) will be unable to provoke the senses into performing blameworthy actions (af'āl madhmūm), which are the enemies of felicity. To strengthen the intellect, one must strengthen the faculty of desire, for one who lacks desire will also lack will, and one who lacks will cannot follow the intellect. Just as the soul is the perfection of the body, the intellect is the perfection of the soul, and man is nothing but the intellect. Furthermore, since eternity and immortality are for the intellect, the people of felicity continue their eternal life in intellectual pleasures, and the people of wretchedness continue theirs in intellectual pains.

Conclusion

From what has been stated, it is clear that from Farabi's perspective, immortality, eternal life, and true felicity or wretchedness are not for all humans, but only for that category of humans who possess the two components of knowledge and action or knowledge without action. 1- The Truly Felicitous (Inhabitants of the Virtuous City - *Madīnah al-Fāḍilah*): The individual, having lived in the Virtuous City under the wise and Active-Intellect-connected leader, has acquired knowledge of felicity, God, etc., and has performed their actions commensurate with that knowledge. Due to this acquired knowledge, the rational part

of their soul becomes actualized and reaches the stage of immateriality. It becomes similar to the separated substances and, in its substance and survival, becomes independent of the material body. Consequently, this type of soul does not perish with the decay of the body but endures, continuing its eternal life in infinite pleasure. Such a soul is the truly felicitous. 2- The Truly Wretched (Inhabitants of the Transgressing City - *Madīnah al-Fāsiqah*): Humans who have lived in the Transgressing City, although they benefited from the component of knowledge, were deprived of action. Due to their knowledge and the resulting actualization of the intellect, they do not perish with the decay of the body but endure, continuing their life in infinite pain. Such souls are the truly wretched. 3- The Annihilated (Inhabitants of Ignorant, Errant, and Changing Cities): Apart from these two groups, the rest of humanity who lived in other cities (the Ignorant, Errant, and Changing) only benefit from worldly life, and for them, eternity and immortality are meaningless.

Based on this analysis, the following points summarize Farabi's position: Denial of Annihilation: Firstly, since he posits eternity and immortality for some humans, Farabi is not a denier of eternity. Volitional Acquisition: Secondly, this immortality is the result of human knowledge and is consequently a volitional matter. Spiritual Resurrection: Thirdly, for Farabi, the afterlife is not in the form of the reconstitution of bodies or corporeal resurrection. This immortality pertains to the rational part of the soul (the Intellect) and the soul's degree of rational apprehension. Given the immateriality of the intellect, the afterlife is realized as Spiritual Resurrection. Personal Immortality: Fourthly, due to the specific relation between the soul and the temperament on the one hand, and the temperament and the body on the other, we encounter a multiplicity and diversity of souls corresponding to the multiplicity of bodies and temperaments in both

this world and the afterlife. Therefore, the enduring souls, both the felicitous and the wretched, will be in their eternal pleasure or torment in an individuated and personalized manner, despite their possible spiritual adherence to similar souls.

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Islamic and Christian Viewpoints on Biomedical Aspects of Life Beginning and Terminal Stage

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Abstract

Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, as the major Abrahamic religions, are grounded in belief in one Almighty God who created the world and sent messengers to guide humanity. Despite differences in theology and practice, these religions share common moral foundations that extend to medical ethics. Ethics, as a discipline, examines moral character and moral status, determining what rights and responsibilities are due to human beings and other living creatures. Medical ethics, as an applied branch, provides professional codes and value-based frameworks that help practitioners manage moral dilemmas in clinical practice and reduce moral distress in decision-making. In recent decades, particularly in the third millennium, Islamic and Christian scholars have increasingly engaged in dialogue to develop guidelines that address ethical challenges arising from modern medical technologies, especially at the beginning

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and end of life. The present study aims to review Islamic and Christian ethical guidelines for healthcare professionals encountering such dilemmas. Using content analysis, the study examines contemporary medical guidelines, professional codes, and academic materials, focusing on countries where healthcare systems are highly influenced by modern technologies, such as Britain, Australia, the United States, and several European nations. Findings show that these regions have developed extensive literature on ethical issues related to assisted reproduction and end-of-life care, where Muslims, Christians, and Jews alike face comparable moral challenges. The analysis reveals significant similarities between Islamic and Christian ethical perspectives, particularly in their shared opposition to induced abortion and euthanasia, both grounded in the belief that life is a sacred gift from God. These shared values influence not only clinical practice but also establish moral boundaries for biomedical research.

Keywords

Islamic Ethics, Christian Ethics, Medical Ethics, Bioethical Dilemmas, End-of-Life Care.

Introduction

Among Abrahamic religions there are common understandings about the almighty God as creator of the whole universe but various aspects of monotheism which is discussed in clergy studies. The God of Jews described with utmost reverence in the sacred letters YHWH which is the indiscernible God referred to in Moses first commandment which Jews and some fundamental Christians believed to have been revealed by God. This is the same perception of God that all Muslims have in common but with holy name of Allah (Abulafia, 2019).

The Christians before 325 CE and establishing the Council of Nicaea had the same belief. But, the council's interpretation about the God as consisting of three components in one being was basically different from two other religions. The Jesus Christ is the third being in this view that is considered as incorporation of God in human flesh. Though religious theologians focus on solutions to overcome these fundamental understandings of God's connection with the creation, there are not basically various opinions among followers of Christianity, Judaism and Islam on the importance of life as a God's gift which must be protected and saved by all means (Britannica, n.d.).

This common viewpoint about respected and precious value of life of human beings at all stages of life is the core essence of biomedical ethics' principles and rules in Islamic and Christian approach. According to the framework of this conference we solely review these two religions' biomedical considerations to fulfill the goals of the conference.

1. Contemporary Approach to Biomedical Ethics

Biomedical ethics as a branch of applied ethics deals with all the therapeutic applications, educational concerns and research regulations

and due to this wide range of interventions, it includes a broad spectrum of questions and a vast network of ethical dilemmas. The four principles of contemporary biomedical ethics introduced in 20th century by two philosophers named Beauchamp and Childress to solve medical dilemmas in daily practice of doctors, a practical approach that was welcomed by medical staff because of its simple structure. These founders of modern approach to overcome difficult decision makings for medical staff now are considered as the most influential characters in modern biomedical ethics that is based on sole philosophical reasoning without religious backgrounds. Although this modern biomedical principlism widely accepted by medical practitioners does not originate from religious roots but it is compatible with some of the basic beliefs of followers of Abrahamic religions, including respect for life of human beings regardless of its period at the beginning of life (fetus), or at the end of life (terminally ill patients). So, this approach now has become the cornerstone of biomedical ethics in healthcare practice. These principles, which we shall look at more closely in this article, are autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence and justice (The Four Principles of Biomedical Ethics, n.d.; Childress, 2009).

In the present study, we have restricted the scope of the discussion to the main lines of respecting the life of human beings and all other creatures through a humane approach, which is a common belief of Islamic and Christian followers, as well as practitioners of modern philosophical biomedical ethics.

2. Professionalism and Religiosity of Professionals

Medical and nursing staff apart from their religion should act in their daily tasks according to professional values that are being taught in medical schools and other faculties related to health care system. The

basis of these trainings is a universally accepted approach to biomedical ethics that is considered as a discipline of medical sciences. According to this scientific international viewpoint, medical ethics is a discipline concerned with the systematic analysis of values in healthcare (The Four Principles of Biomedical Ethics, n.d.).

But according to this definition, medical staff only need to be clear about what healthcare values are, what it means to systematically analyze these values, and what it means to do so in the varied policy and practice contexts in which healthcare takes place. These variations in context include different backgrounds of practitioners or professionals, such as their religious beliefs. In order to help doctors overcome the complexity of humanities and have a better understanding of what they shall do when facing a dilemma, their educators offer them a practical three-step approach (Patrick Davey, 2017).

1. The first issue they have to comprehend in this approach is about the content of medical ethics,

2. The second is, its methods and,

3. The third is, its scope.

Through theoretical instruction and practical, case-based learning, medical students strive to develop the skills needed to understand the ethical aspects of their diagnostic and therapeutic procedures and applying the professional methods to reach rational solutions for cases involving ethical dilemmas. The most notable point in this approach for medical decision-making in ethical dilemmas is the fact that professional duties must consider a higher priority for their ethical codes compared to their own personal beliefs regardless of their religion, Islam or Christianity (Dyer, 2008, p. 685).

3. Christian Ethical Framework for Medical Professionals

Christianity is divided into three main branches, which are: Catholic, Protestant and orthodox. Medical professionals in the Catholic religion, due to its longer history and larger number of followers compared to Protestant denominations, have reported more cases of ethical difficulties in their professional careers. So, biomedical ethics and its cases have been discussed in the teachings of the Catholic religion for a long time. From Augustine's writings on suicide in the Middle Ages to papal verdicts on euthanasia, mercy killing, modern reproductive technologies and assisted reproduction, these topics illustrate the ethical concerns of Christian medical professionals, which have been addressed in the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, commonly known as the Second Vatican Council[1] (Cheney, n.d.).

The roots of bioethics in the Catholic tradition can be found in the writings of the Doctors of the Church, in various orders, and encyclicals[2] of the Pope, reflecting the opinions of scientists, philosophers and Catholic theologians (Khalaj Zadeh, 2011; Doyle, 2015).

According to the written interpretations and existing philosophical

1. **The Second Vatican Council**, or Vatican II, was the 21st ecumenical council of the Catholic Church. The council met in Saint Peter's Basilica in Vatican City for four periods (or sessions), each lasting between 8 and 12 weeks, in the autumn of each of the four years 1962 to 1965 (Cheney, n.d.).
2. An **encyclical** was originally a circular letter sent to all the churches of a particular area in the ancient Roman Church. At that time, the word could be used for a letter sent out by any bishop. The first encyclical was written in 1740 by Pope Benedict XIV. Since then, nearly 300 have been written. Popes have published encyclicals on issues of general concern, like peace or human rights, after Pope Leo XIII issued an encyclical on labor and social justice in 1897 (Doyle, 2015).

discussions, bioethics in religion Catholicism is rooted in religion and logic. This approach has led the current Vatican reflections to become more dynamic in addressing global ethical issues, including biomedical dilemmas. A papal encyclical is one of the highest forms of communication by the pope and usually deals with some aspect of Catholic teaching, such as clarifying, amplifying, condemning, or promoting one or a number of issues (Doyle, 2015).

Therefore, for a Catholic doctor, it's necessary to follow the Church's rules in medical issues that are considered as ethically debatable like abortion and euthanasia. However, the present liberal democratic policymakers in modern Western societies reject this religious viewpoint for a professional and claim that medical code of ethics must abandon personal beliefs intervention with the obligations of their job (Childress, 2009).

Garry Leeds, Law professor of Richmond University, reminded Americans that

> Liberalism consists of a bevy of imprecise doctrines which justify an occasionally shifting group of individual rights, a broad range of political liberties and a narrow charter for government. The American version of liberalism guarantees inter alia *1* freedom of thought, religion and expression and protects individuals from various forms of invidious discrimination. A liberal society is, in Karl Popper's phrase, an open society. But, American proponents of Liberalism regard most laws based upon conventional morality as oppressive (Leeds, 1990).

1. A Latin term used in formal extract minutes to indicate that the minute quoted has been taken from a fuller record of other matters, or when alluding to the parent group after quoting a particular example.

Even though freedom of religion must be legally guaranteed in the United States of America, nowadays, the number of Christian doctors who claim to be forced to perform abortion in order to terminate pregnancy of the women who ask for it is increasing. At the same time, a movement by Christian medical professionals and their supporters has begun that paves the way for religious doctors to refuse performing procedures which contradict their own beliefs. (Swan, 2020).

The international Christian Medical and Dental Association is one of the notable medical non-governmental organizations that looks forward to observing an easier work atmosphere for religious doctors practicing in western societies. Legislation system in western countries now in response to the efforts of this community and other similar groups, pay more attention to religiosity of the medical professionals. Contemporary verdicts of courts are more supportive and promising for Christian doctors, even though the liberal parties and their followers make every attempt to persuade policymakers to disavow the debate (The international Christian Medical and Dental Association, n.d.).

In an example reported by Reuters Health in August 2022, a panel of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a lower court's permanent order shielding Christian Medical and Dental Associations and Specialty Physicians of Illinois, along with Catholic hospital system Franciscan Alliance Inc., from any enforcement action under the ACA's anti-discrimination provision, known as Section 1557[1], for

1. The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act (Section 1557), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex characteristics), in covered health programs or activities (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.)

refusing to perform the procedures, which they say would violate their religious freedom (Brendan Pierson, 2022; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.).

However, the structure of a secular society based on liberal democracy will never be free of debates like the cases mentioned above, because medical professionals in such communities must be loyal to governing body policies which may be in conflict with their own religious beliefs. A precise investigation of any case based on basic values accepted in these countries, like freedom of religion, may help ensure just adjudication and fair judgment (Galen, 2016).

4. Islamic Ethical Framework for Medical Professionals

Approximately one-fourth of all the inhabitants of the earth are Muslims. The increasing rate of migration has re-distributed people of all faiths to almost every corner of the globe.

Now, a basic knowledge of Islamic viewpoint on medical cases involving ethical issues is necessary, even for the doctors practicing in Western countries, due to increasing population of Muslims they visit in daily practice.

The main Source of solutions to ethical dilemmas being asked in the contemporary complex medical interventions for Muslim communities is *ijtihad* — an Islamic legal term referring to independent reasoning by an expert in Islamic law, or the exertion of a jurist's mental faculty in finding a solution to a legal question (Rabb, 2008) Shiite and Sunnis *mujtahids* — qualified scholars who perform ijtihad—almost utilize the same Islamic law resources to answer biomedical questions of Muslim medical professionals. However, some subtle differences in their beliefs, such as the Shiites' commitment to the divine authorities that are called the Twelve

Imams, have made their biomedical views slightly different based on their different approach to ijtihad and the qualifications required to achieve mujtahid.

Therefore, Islamic law is derived from these main resources:

(i) The Qur'an;

(ii) The recorded authentic sayings and precedents set by the Prophet (Sunnah) and the prophetic decrees (the compilation or the records of the Sunnah are called Hadith); and authentic sayings of Twelve Imams for Shiites.

(iii) Ijtihād.

Ijithad, as mentioned above, can be defined as the rulings deduced from the Islamic principles based on the Qur'an and Hadiths by learned scholars who arrive at religious edicts or Fatwas to address a particular situation. It is considered a religious duty for those qualified to perform it (Abdulrahman Al-Matary, 2014; Esposito, 2014).

Muslim medical professionals who encounter ethical dilemmas—such as requests for induced abortions without life-threatening factor for the mother, or the situation of brain death and transplantation of body organs taken from a person suffering from such a situation—may refer the problem to a mujtahid with comprehensive knowledge to seek for their scholarly opinion on the referred case (Mohaghegh Damaad, 2012).

Seyed Mustafa Mohaghegh Damaad, in his book *Medical Fiqh,* which may be considered a compilation of an overview of Islamic ijtihad methods and a nearly comprehensive list of Islamic rules on medical cases with ethical implications, emphasized that most of the previous books for Muslim physicians throughout the Islam history have focused on patient–physician relationship.

Adab al-Tabib,[1] a well-known example of historical book on medical ethics written by Al-Ruhawi, a 9th-century physician, focuses on adab[2]—the Islamic concept of etiquette and personal ethics—and does not adopt a problem-oriented approach to ethical dilemmas.

This book is one of the earliest texts on medical ethics which has been called the "crowning achievement" among early works concerning medicine in Islamic civilization (Mohaghegh Damaad, 2012; Padella, 2007).

In fact, scientific advances in biomedical fields during recent decades have made Muslim medical professionals look for authentic solutions for religious questions and ethical dilemmas encountered by new problems that had not already been mentioned in their valuable heritage of Islamic medical ethics literature, and this need has been the main factor for the progressive cooperation between doctors and *mujtahids* to find the best guidelines for being up to date in modern day medicine as a Muslim physician.

5. Problem-Solving Approach for Christian and Muslim Professionals

Nowadays, healthcare providers confront with ethical issues regarding peoples of different cultures, the resolution of which differs from that of their own. The inability of service providers to effectively handle sensitive issues—such as the termination of pregnancy—can result in enormous prolonged suffering for both the parents and the affected children. However, performing any medical intervention according to

1. The title can be roughly translated "Practical Ethics of the Physician".
2. Adab in the context of behavior, refers to prescribed Islamic etiquette: "refinement, good manners, morals, decorum, decency, humaneness". Al-Adab has been defined as "decency, morals".

patient-doctor relationship model of modern medicine is based on informed consent of the patient that requires a comprehensive dialogue between the doctor and the patient about the core values, including religious beliefs and limitations (Patrick Davey, 2017; Doyle, 2015; Abdulrahman Al-Matary, 2014; Bourricaud, 1984; IRIMC, 2017; Namazi, 2016).

It is therefore crucial for healthcare workers to be sensitive to the norms and values of the people demanding medical services. These norms through the lens of religion are rulings for all the followers of Christianity and Islam including the doctors and their patients. Shared decision-making, as the best model of performing any interventions in present day medical practice, involves physicians and patients in insightful discussions on religious verdicts pertaining to the medical procedure before taking action. This approach is also a cornerstone for trust-building relationship between the people of societies and the medical professionals committed to the best interests of their patients (Childress, 2009; Patrick Davey, 2017; Mohaghegh Damaad, 2012; IRIMC, 2017; Riahi et al., 2020).

These religious verdicts, which must be obeyed, has a long history e.g. in Catholic Church, back to ancient Roman encyclicals[1]. Similarly, Islamic decrees announced by Muslim *mujtahids* (Islamic jurists) are called *fatwas*,[2] which are considered as guidelines for daily

1. An encyclical was originally a circular letter sent to all the churches of a particular area in the ancient Roman Church. At that time, the word could be used for a letter sent out by any bishop. The word comes from the Late Latin encyclios (meaning "circular", "in a circle", or "all-round", also part of the origin of the word encyclopedia).
2. A fatwā (plural fatāwā) is a legal ruling on a point of Islamic law (sharia) given by a qualified Faqih (Islamic jurist) in response to a question posed by a private individual, judge or government (Hendrickson, 2013).

practice of every Shiite and Sunni medical professional (Doyle, 2015; Mohaghegh Damaad, 2012; Hendrickson, 2013).

6. Christian and Islamic Viewpoints about Beginning of Life

For the beginning of life or embryonic and fetal stages[1] of pregnancy, we observe one historical case that clarifies how powerful a papal encyclical may influence medical issues, such as birth control and abortion (Doyle, 2015; Waddington, n.d.). From the 14th to the 19th century AD, Western churches believed that from the beginning of sperm conception by the ovum, the soul is not breathed into it, but this important thing takes place long after the conception. According to this theory, abortion in the first weeks depended on the mothers' decision. In 1869, "Pope Pius IX" rejected the distinction between soulless and soulless fetuses, and declared the prohibition of abortion in the early stages.

Currently, the Roman Catholic Church believes that the embryo is considered a complete human being and has all the rights of other human beings. This means the zygote has the right to life from the moment of conception. The zygote, or fertilized egg cell, is the earliest phase of embryonic development that results from the union of a female gamete (egg, or ovum) with a male gamete (sperm). In the embryonic development of humans and other animals, the zygote stage is brief and followed by cleavage, when the single cell becomes subdivided into smaller cells (Childress, 2009; Khalaj Zadeh, 2011; Waddington, n.d.; Rogers, n.d.).

1. Embryo, the early developmental stage of an animal while it is in the egg or within the uterus of the mother. In humans the term is applied to the unborn child until the end of the seventh week following conception; from the eighth week the unborn child is called a fetus (Waddington, n.d.).

Ensoulment, which is the moment that a human or other creature gains a soul, has long been a main domain of debate, with various religious and philosophical perspectives arguing for and against different viewpoints (Childress, 2009; Mohaghegh Damaad, 2012; Khitamy, 2013; Afshar, 2015).

Fetal rights in Islam start from the moment of conception too. However, the conception of a zygote is not considered the time of ensoulment by most of Muslim jurists. Even though there are different standpoints on this issue, the tradition that has provided the most significant backgrounds of Islamic estimation of ensoulment originates from a hadith[1] attributed to the Prophet of Islam (pbuh) that is preserved in Bukhari's compilation:[2]

> Each one of you in creation amasses in his mother's womb [in the form of a drop (nutfa)] for forty days, then he becomes a blood clot (alaqa) for the same period; then he becomes a lump of flesh (mudgha) for the same period; then the angel is sent with a mandate [to write down] four things [for the child]: his sustenance, his term of life, his deeds, whether he will be miserable (shaqi) or happy (sa'id) (Mohaghegh Damaad, 2012; Khan, n.d.; Sachedina, 2009).

Afshar, as Iranian physician and researcher in biomedical ethics in her book, *The moral position and dignity of the human embryo,* discusses the concept of personhood, which is prominent in

1. Statement of traditions containing sayings of the prophet Muhammad which, with accounts of his daily practice (the Sunna), constitute the major source of guidance for Muslims apart from the Quran.
2. Sahih al-Bukhari is a collection of hadith compiled by Imam Muhammad al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH/870 AD). His collection is recognized by the Sunni jurists to be the most authentic collection of reports of the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). It contains over 7500 hadith (with repetitions) in 97 books.

philosophical ethics and its relation to Islamic view of ensoulment (Afshar, 2015; Taylor, 1985). Personhood is a key concept in humanities, describing all common capacities or attributes of a person dealing with the human nature, agency, self-awareness, the notion of the past and future, and the possession of rights and duties in a community. This definition, based on biological milestones, would play a major role in contemporary legalization of abortion and modern Western laws in this regard. However, the lack of certainty to indicate an accurate time in which human fetus reaches the point of being considered alive and sensitive, is the major problem for experimental sciences. This obstacle hasn't allowed the scientists to agree on the beginning time of personhood, with the objective measures, such as neurological development or independent viability of a fetus. However, Islamic and Christian bioethics as discussed here, with a spiritual wide landscape about life that combines biologic evidences and religious rulings, address their followers the best way of decision-making in dilemmas pertaining to fetal stage and ensoulment (Khalaj Zadeh, 2011; Mohaghegh Damaad, 2012; Afshar, 2015; Sachedina, 2009).

According to Islamic jurists, the time of ensoulment for a fetus in the mother's womb is at the age of 120 days, which differs from Christian viewpoint. This difference may suggest the idea that abortion in Islam is not as immoral as in Christianity. To clarify the ambiguity in this respect, we must consider that abortion is morally wrong from the time of conception in Islam, too. Extensive debates among Muslim jurists in the history on this issue have prepared a more detailed framework for rulings pertaining to abortion. Badawy, in his article *Divergent views on abortion and the period of ensoulment,* clarifies the rights of fetus even before ensoulment, stating:

> If the pregnant mother is attacked and the fetus is injured or

aborted, then the assailant will have to pay al ghurrah, or full diya[1] (blood money) depending upon the age of the fetus. The al-ghurrah blood money is levied as a compensation for destroying the fetus in the womb before ensoulment. The value of al-ghurrah is one-tenth of the full diya blood money of homicide. Once the spirit is breathed in after 120 days, the fetus acquires perception and volition, (i.e. becomes a person), and is entitled to the same rights as a living being (Khitamy, 2013; Khan, n.d.; Sachedina, 2009).

Meanwhile, it must be noted that Islamic schools and branches have different understandings of Islam. There are many different sects or denominations, schools of Islamic jurisprudence, and schools of Islamic theology, or ʿaqīdah (creed). However, when the necessity of guidelines for a professional group, such as Muslim medical staff is being proposed, it seems appropriate for every Muslim—doctor or patient —to look for at least some accessible related fatwas from any of these schools in his/her own case to aid in finding a solution (Khalaj Zadeh, 2011; Abdulrahman Al-Matary, 2014; Mohaghegh Damaad, 2012; Sachedina, 2009).

7. What is the Main Problematic of Modern Bioethics in Religious Physicians' View?

Probably the main question for the medical professionals in Iran and Islamic world is not about the gap between Christian and Muslim views, because they are well informed about common origins of Abrahamic religions and also contemporary efforts done by clerics for preparation of a robust approximation to stabilize a framework to find better solutions for problems of human beings in modern and post-modern era.

1. Diya (plural diyāt) in Islamic law, is the financial compensation paid to the victim or heirs of a victim in the cases of murder, bodily harm or property damage by mistake.

But instead, they are eager to know more about western biomedical ethics and its flexibility for Christian or Muslim practitioners to follow their own religious traditions and hold onto their professional careers according to formal code of ethics and its requirements. Hassan Chamsi-Pasha and Mohammed Ali Albar from the Department of Medical Ethics at the International Medical Center in Saudi Arabia, in their review article about this concern of Muslim professionals who have been graduated from Western universities, make this comparison to help them practice their job without being worried about negligence of professional ethics or religious duties.

> If secular Western bioethics can be described as rights-based, with a strong emphasis on individual rights, Islamic bioethics is based on duties and obligations (e.g., to preserve life, seek treatment), although rights (of God, the community and the individual) do feature in bioethics, as does a call to virtue (Ihsan) (Hassan Chamsi-Pasha, 2013).

Apart from the theoretical basis of this approach to biomedical ethics, it can make a supportive and enduring practical framework for medical staff to cope with difficulties that arise in daily practice concerning ethical issues, including induced abortion, which was discussed above in details. It seems that a kind of reassurance for those medical professionals who are committed to religious values in dilemmas is observed in this approach that reduces their moral distress[1] in a secular world dominating medical sciences and their professional standards (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, n.d.).

A sense of calling is a concept with religious and theological

1. Moral distress occurs when someone knows the ethically correct action to take but he/she is constrained from taking it. Whether stemming from internal or external factors, moral distress profoundly threatens our core values.

roots that has been studied by some researchers in recent decades. To find the answer of whether contemporary physicians in the Western world still embrace this concept in their practice of medicine, Yoon et al. surveyed more than two thousand American physicians. In this study, researchers assessed the relationship between religious characteristics and endorsement of a sense of calling among practicing primary care physicians (PCPs) and psychiatrists. The conclusions of this national study of PCPs and psychiatrists, indicated that PCPs who considered themselves religious were more likely to report a strong sense of calling in the practice of medicine. They also concluded, although this cross-sectional study cannot be used to make definitive causal inferences between religion and developing a strong sense of calling, PCPs who considered themselves religious are more likely to embrace the concept of calling in their practice of medicine. Therefore, even personal religious experiences of medical professionals should be considered as an intervening factor in their daily practice and if this factor is being overlooked, moral distress increases. This concern is common among Christian and Muslim physicians, when confronting ethical dilemmas related to the beginning of life (Yoon et al., 2015).

8. Medical Research and Bioethical Concerns in Islam and Christianity

Modern medicine depends on medical research, and nowadays it seems much more necessary for a professional to be familiar with research methods and their ethical limitations than before. Ethics committees are institutional review boards,[1] which review and

1. The term institutional review board (IRB) is an international term defining independent committees that are responsible for consideration of ethical concerns of their society about the safety of the research method and rights of experimental subjects, including healthy volunteers, patients and even animals and environment.

evaluate ethics-related situations and events, and consist of members specialized in the fields of research methodology, law, ethics and theology. In the Islamic republic of Iran, formal instructions on how to form institutional review boards in universities emphasize presence of one Muslim cleric who is familiar with Islamic viewpoints about medical issues in the combination of these committees all over the country. Muslim cleric, as a member of the medical committee of bioethical studies, takes the responsibility of assessing every medical research before approval to ensure its compatibility with Islamic views on bioethics (Committee, 2020).

Nowadays, ethics committees hold an important place in ensuring that scientists conduct accurate studies within an ethical framework to construct a better future, and ensuring universities are of high quality and efficiency in terms of scientific study. However, in some countries such as Turkey, with 99 percent Muslim population and also, most of secular Western countries, there is no room for considering religious viewpoints in medical research. A study on the structure of ethical committees in Turkey indicated that, before taking religious viewpoints into consideration, these numerous committees need to become more uniform to do their duties more consistently:

> After detailed examination, it can be seen that there is no universal standard set for ethics committees (in Turkey) and that there is a variety in the types of ethics committees in universities. Consequently, the ethics committees in universities need to be improved through quality and quantity, and they need to reach a universal standard in the area of service they provide (Eksioglu et al, 2015).

Gonzalo Herranz, in his article *"The ethics of medical*

research: a Christian view", less than two decades ago, analyzed the diverse studies focusing on the issues that a Christian researcher may confront. This research pointed out that, regardless of obvious differences in outlook and approach, many of those studies show a marked leaning towards a convergent, if not uniform, interpretation of their subject matter. The coincidence is marked enough to make one suspect that an informal agreement had been reached among the authors, not only on the main facts to be included and emphasized in their accounts, but also on the secularist and scientific outlook from which the history is interpreted and constructed. The historical neglect among the authors working in the field "ethics of biomedical research", (EBMR) is the predominant result of this study: "Among the elements that appear diminished or absent in this standard history of EBMR are some pioneering contributions from Christian ethics. In consequence, they are never mentioned" (Herranz, 2004).

So, overlooking religious viewpoints in study designs and permission attainment process is a common finding when we review ethical standards of different countries in the world, apart from Islamic or Christian prominent majority of their people following these religious traditions and their rulings. As it has been discussed in this article earlier and mentioned in "Liberalism, Republicanism and the Abortion Controversy" (Leeds, 1990), American liberalism guarantees freedom of religion; but American proponents of Liberalism regard most laws and bioethical codes of research based upon conventional morality as oppressive. The prevailing of the person over other human values is a constant in the Catholic ethics of medicine; "Love of science, as deep and energetic as it can be, never can prevail in our heart over love to our suffering brethren in need of our help" (Childress, 2009; Leeds, 1990; Herranz, 2004).

These ideas were probably carried to the Declaration of Helsinki[1] via a symposium on religious views on medical experimentation, organized by the World Medical Association in its protracted incubation of the Declaration of Helsinki and published in 1960. The representative of the Protestant confessions, Jacques de Senarclens,[2] after affirming that neither the interest of science nor the interest of society was sufficient to justify any human experiment that contradicts the principles of medical ethics, wounds the dignity of human beings or breaks the most elementary precepts of the Christian faith, adduced the moral authority of the Pope as expressed in his 1952 discourse that "man, in his personal being must not be subordinated to the community; on the contrary, the community exists for the man". This participation of Christianity in authorizing the most fundamental document of ethics in biomedical research is a clear sign that Western academicians even at the highest level of scientific ranking are not able to persuade the people about ethical integrity of their experimental studies without paying necessary attention to religiosity (Herranz, 2004).

9. Implicit Implications in Helsinki Declaration about Religious Values as Norms

In the latest version of *Helsinki Declaration*, it is mentioned that research protocol must be submitted for consideration, comment, guidance and approval to the concerned research ethics committee

1. The Declaration of Helsinki is a set of ethical principles regarding human experimentation developed originally in 1964 for the medical community by the World Medical Association (WMA).
2. Jacques de Senarclens (1914, 1971 in Geneva) was a Swiss Protestant clergyman and university teacher.

before the study begins. This committee must be transparent in its functioning, must be independent from the researcher, the sponsor and any other undue influence and must be duly qualified. It must take into consideration the laws and regulations of the country or countries in which the research is to be performed as well as applicable international norms and standards. However, these must not be allowed to reduce or eliminate any of the protections for research subjects set forth in this Declaration (World Medical Association, 2013).

Thus, the secular structure of legal systems is the main barrier for considering Christian viewpoints in the contemporary research ethics committees not more than norms and standards in most Western countries, even though some of them are called Christian states.[1]

Some scholars of religion and ethics have examined bilateral ties in the latter form of states to find if there can be a solution for religious people in currently secularized political world to stay faithful to their own beliefs. Under the established church approach, the government will assist the state church and likewise the church will assist the government. Religious education is mandated by law to be taught in all schools, public or private (Eberle, 2013) Even though, this model according to some authors heightened appreciation of the role of king and church in a Christian state in countries like England, there is no practical gateway for clerics to enter the medical research hierarchy in order to pose their critical viewpoints about new biotechnological studies that are considered playing the role of God.

1. A Christian state is a country that recognizes a form of Christianity as its official religion and often has a state church (also called an established church) which is a Christian denomination that supports the government and is supported by the government.

10. Muslim and Christian Views about Biotechnology and Its Advances

Cloning, genetic engineering and gene therapy, human fetal enhancement and production of GMO foods, together with other novel areas in biology and medical sciences, are the most notable fields of research criticized by religious scholars and theologians in Christian and Muslim countries. In the ethical debate over synthetic biology, the phrase "*playing God*" is widely used in order to challenge this new branch of biotechnology (Yorke, 2002; Dabrock, 2009).

Apart from debates that are still running about each of the above-mentioned topics, the common core value that must be considered in all the bioethical concerns of Muslim and Christian viewpoints is respecting the "*life*" itself, as a gift of God to human beings and other living creatures (organisms), and the life boundaries as fully discussed earlier. Replying the prominent concerns about life boundaries, Dabrock in his article attempts to refuse these critics;

> The innovation of synthetic biology is not about creating new life. From time immemorial, this has been tried by diverse methods of breeding, which have been refined continuously and finally reached their peak in cloning. In the cultural memory of mankind, this form of biotechnology is commonly approved as normal and morally justifiable (Childress, 2009; Afshar, 2015; Dabrock, 2009).

However, this answer failed to satisfy all the arguments against this turbo train of biotechnology researches that now its critique has gone far beyond the margin of religions and humanistic ethical views often find it difficult to cope with its velocity. As the writer of it confesses himself:

> Yet, using inanimate material for the production of entities fulfilling widely accepted criteria of life (namely metabolism,

> reactions to the environment, variability, i.e. evolutionary flexibility from generation to generation) would mark an ontological and cultural paradigm shift. Taking into account that the boundary between life and the inanimate plays a fundamental role in the governing and stabilizing power of the common sense and of many religions, it is apparent that any damage to this principle would be irreconcilable with these world views (Dabrock, 2009).

11. Developing Dialogue between Islam, Christianity, and Bioethics

In fact, the enthusiasm of Abrahamic religions' jurists including Christian and Muslim clerics *for making the world a better place for human beings*, is a robust agent that pave the way for negotiations between them and biotechnology scientists to overcome conflicts that are being explored through new researches. Christopher P. Scheitle explains the results of his scientific analysis of opinions of religious people; church attendance and personal religiosity do not affect optimism [toward new biotechnology products]. However, holding an image of a personal God who hears individual prayers lead to find a more optimistic view of biotechnology (Scheitle, 2025). The results of such studies about ordinary religious people and the innate capacity of religious jurists to lead fruitful discussions with biotechnologists that Iran's advances in stem cell technology, is just an instance of a promising future for science and religion dialogue to find solutions for the world's problems. Muslims frequently described science and their religion as related rather than separate concepts. They believe that their holy text, the Quran, contains many elements of science. According to a Pew Research Survey, the Muslims interviewed also said that Islam and science are often trying to describe similar things.

Christians also believe that science and religion are in harmony, and this dialogue has been promoted by many Christian scientists in recent years (Thigpen, Johnson, & Funk, 2020; Stewart, 2010).

Biotechnology, according to some writers of the early decade of third millennium was called the *New Industrial Revolution*, and the phrase *genetic engineering* brought about images of human cloning that caused strong visceral reactions. Now, after two decades we observe a paradigm shift in ethical concerns of the societies toward artificial intelligence. This shift in public opinion occurs when there are still many debatable issues in bioethics, which need to be clarified. Maybe, some efforts are being done to make a shadow over the main topics of ethics that deal with life and death of human beings. One of the most notable issues in contexts of contemporary biomedical ethics is the issue of *the end of life,* which will be discussed in the following section.

12. The End-of-Life Bioethical Issues for Muslim and Christian Professionals

Since the 1701 Act of Establishment, England's official state church has been the Church of England, with the monarch being its supreme governor and "defender of the faith". He, together with Parliament, has a say in appointing bishops,[1] twenty-six of whom have ex officio seats in the House of Lords.[2] In characteristically British fashion, where the state is representative of civil society, it was Parliament that

1. An Anglican, Eastern Orthodox, or Roman Catholic clergyperson ranking above a priest, having authority to ordain and confirm, and typically governing a diocese
2. The House of Lords is the second chamber of UK Parliament. It plays a crucial role in examining bills, questioning government action and investigating public policy.

determined, in the Act of Establishment, that the monarch had to be Anglican (Eberle, 2013; House of Lords, n.d.; Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

For more than three centuries, British policymakers have respected religious concerns of the Church of England, which has been the reason that assisting in life termination or euthanasia has never been legalized in this Christian state. Although it is an offence to actively end a patient's life, many doctors still assist their patients with their wishes by withholding treatment and reducing pain (McDougall & Gorman, 2008).

This phenomenon indicates that assisting a patient in committing suicide in any form is a breach of Christian beliefs and rulings. However, some medical professionals go their own way with justifications like aiding humans get rid of sufferings of an intolerable life, withholding therapeutic interventions that increase suffering of the patient without hope of remedy. In cases like terminal disease of severely ill patients whose heart and lungs stop functioning, there is a long debate on whether it is ethical to do CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) to bring them back to life or let them have a peaceful death. Due to the relatively low rate of successful CPR, the costs of ineffective treatment, and high probability of the occurrence of various complications, the American Medical Association, for the first time in 1974, formally proposed the Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR) order in patients' treatment process (Childress, 2009; Patrick Davey, 2017; Mohaghegh Damaad, 2012; Lawrence, 2019; Grove, 2022; Assarroudi et al., 2017).

Furthermore, in 1976, the first hospital policies with regard to the DNR order were published. Since then, there have always been arguments on the legal and ethical challenges of the DNR order, and these arguments are not limited to Islamic or Christian countries. It seems that the problem of intervening in the natural process of death in an end-stage patient who is considered incurable despite all medical

milestones, and prolonging his or her lifespan against their own will, solely imposes more suffering on the person and more futile cost on the society (Childress, 2009; Mohaghegh Damaad, 2012; McDougall & Gorman, 2008; Grove, 2022; Assarroudi et al., 2017).

Euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide (EPAS) are important contemporary societal issues, and religious faiths offer valuable insights into any discussion on this topic. Graham Grove and colleagues, in his article "Perspectives of Major World Religions regarding Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide", explore the perspectives on EPAS of the four major world religions—Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism—through analysis of their primary texts. This study indicated opposition to EPAS based on themes common to all four religions: an external locus of morality and the personal hope for a better future after death that transcends current suffering. Given that these religions play a significant role in the lives of billions of adherents worldwide, it is important that lawmakers consider these views along with conscientious objection in jurisdictions where legal EPAS occurs. This will not only allow healthcare professionals and institutions opposed to EPAS to avoid engagement but also provide options for members of the public who prefer an EPAS-free treatment environment. In a survey conducted in Iran, the participants' experiences showed that an informal and verbal DNR order existed in their workplace, which caused the participants to encounter legal, ethical, and operational challenges in this country with an Islamic legal system (Grove, 2022; Assarroudi et al., 2017).

Therefore, a comprehensive dialogue between Muslim and Christian scholars at the highest level of religious jurisdiction hierarchy and the medical profession policymakers in countries like Iran is necessary, based on bilateral understanding of the necessity of ethical codes for end of life that are simultaneously compatible with

the dilemmas of medical practice and the fundamental values of the Abrahamic religions.

Conclusion

In this study, we reviewed the fundamental viewpoints of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism on the borders of human life—its beginning and its terminal stage—from a medical professional approach. The aim of this approach is to aid medical staff in the daily application of new technological procedures, including assisted fertility methods to let a new life begin, or withholding advanced life support devices to allow a life to be terminated.

Even though medical professionalism is the main framework of good medical practice in our era, it does not answer some key questions that our patients may ask us. Our understanding about those areas that are not experimental is limited to spiritual lessons originated from religions and philosophy. Items like ensoulment stage of a fetus that we may decide to abort due to medical indications—but the parents consider it manslaughter—or the spiritual state of those beloved, severely ill parents that are now candidates for ventilator withdrawal because of scarce facilities, and we ask their offspring's legal permission, are some examples of everyday moral distresses that healthcare staff must resolve. However, the lack of religious guidelines in these areas makes it difficult to do the right thing as a good doctor, particularly when patients ask us to help them for ethical decision-making.

So, this study may be just a first step to pave the way for research in medical ethics to explore the common values of religions and to build an applicable framework for answering the ethical questions of our Muslim, Christian and Judaist patients when they face a decision-making process on a procedure in the beginning or

terminal phase of life. Guidelines for the religious aspects of our progressive new procedures and their usage in daily practice are essentially needed, and cumulative population of Muslim and Christian people—more than 55 percent of the world's population—indicates that comparative studies of Islam and Christianity is the best platform to answer this necessity in medical sciences in the future.

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Critique Hegel's Critique of Kant's Subjective Ethics through the Dialectical Relationship of Subjective Reason with Nature

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Abstract

The concept of ethics in subjective idealism is determined based on the free inner subjectivity (agency). In this conception, morality emerges centered on autonomous reason and, due to the opposition that Kant considers between reason and inclination (desire), creates a rift between the ethical subject and the object. The main question of the present article is: Upon which philosophical elements does Hegel base his critique of Kantian ethics, and how does he examine the problems of subjective ethics? The answer to this question is that Hegel, by creating a dialectic between reason and nature/inclination (desire), seeks to remove the opposition between morality and individual will and motive. Furthermore, by inverting the relationship between the universal will and the individual will that exists in Kant's thought, he seeks a way to

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address the alienation of the ethical subject from social and political institutions. He also intends to severely criticize the terror and dread that were justified in ethical relations in the shadow of the destruction of political institutions.

Keywords

Kant, Hegel, Ethics, Subjective, Terror, Universal Will, Individual Will.

Introduction

Enlightenment philosophers in France and their revolutionary successors regarded reason as an objective historical force, capable of transforming the world into a place of progress once freed from the shackles of despotism. "According to them, it's not the force of arms, but the power of reason that will develop the principles of the revolution. Reason, due to its inherent capacity, will overcome social irrationality" (Marcuse, 2018, p. 25).

It is here that Kant writes his ethical theory, believing that it is the free human reason that legislates moral laws, and not an external entity. The idea that reason constructs and determines the world around it is the roadmap for Kant in the *Critique of Practical Reason*. He believes that Practical Philosophy is constructed by reason itself, and the world in the practical realm can only be rational if it is determined by human free interiority, and not by an external or transcendent foundation. In this regard, Kant follows Rousseau's conception. Cassirer, in his book entitled *Kant, Rousseau*, reveals Rousseau's influence on Kant's Practical Philosophy. There, he states that Rousseau identifies the fundamental problem of humanity as freedom, meaning the non-submission of man to the will of others in the public and private spheres. In essence, Rousseau aimed to shift the origin of law from a transcendent entity to human will. Against this intellectual backdrop, Kant establishes the theoretical foundations for such a conception in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. In the domain of Practical Philosophy, relying on Rousseau's foundations, he attempts to explain this very issue and concludes that man, by virtue of possessing reason, is the only being that can be free. The relationship that Rousseau establishes between individual will and universal will in his political thought—and the reduction of the universal will to the individual will—had an impact on Kant's Practical Thought equivalent

to Hume's remark that awakened Kant from his dogmatic slumber in theoretical philosophy (Cassirer, 2018, p. 70).

1. The Dialectical Relationship between Practical Reason and Inclination: A Way to Transcend the Opposition between Morality and the State of Nature

Kant describes the ethical subject as being subject to the moral law on the one hand because it possesses Practical Reason, but on the other hand, he considers the subject to be a being that follows its inclinations (desires). Concerning this, he states in the *Critique of Practical Reason*:

> Legislation through natural concepts takes place with the help of the understanding and is theoretical. Legislation through the concept of freedom of choice takes place with the help of reason and is purely practical. It is only in the practical domain that reason can be legislative (Kant, 2013, p. 66).

Accordingly, although Kantian ethics—which Hegel refers to as the moral worldview—conceives of the ethical subject as condemned to obey the laws of Practical Reason at one level, at another level, it deems the ethical subject to be subject to the exigencies of the natural world, and thus declares obedience to the natural level as an impediment to the realization of the ethical good. Given this, in the rational sphere, Kant portrays man as a being striving to realize the ethical good, yet considering man's adherence to his natural inclinations, he sees the attainment of the ethical good as problematic.

Consequently, Kant encounters a complex problem and, to resolve this crisis, is forced to appeal to the transcendent world and explain the contradiction between these two spheres with reference to it. However, Hegel does not regard this effort by Kant as a solution;

because, according to Hegel, the problem with the Kantian framework is that within this perspective, the Highest Good (summum bonum) and ethical perfection is something we can only hope for—something that *ought* to exist—because the divisions Kant makes between the natural and ethical spheres compel him to place the actualization of this ethical perfection in the beyond (transcendence).

"Because of the actual harmony of the end and actuality, this harmony is posited as something non-actual, as 'a transcendent beyond'" (Hegel, 2020, p. 424). Although morality begins with the presupposition that ethics and reality are in harmony, Hegel argues that this harmony is not genuine because morality *demands* this harmony. The end of the idea of the harmony of motives with ethics is an idea belonging to reason and is located in the distant future. "That harmony is in a foggy distance, beyond consciousness" (Hegel, 2020, p. 426).

Hegel then considers the Kantian response, namely, that while it may be possible to actualize specific moral things, this does not mean that the ultimate moral end, the Highest Good, can also be actualized in nature. However, according to Hegel, this Kantian response is revealing because it shows that "according to the Kantian individual, what makes the Highest Good unattainable is not nature, but rather the fact that doing this requires more than the limited efforts of individuals" (Stern, 2014, p. 301).

Hegel believes that what actually exists and what human beings face is not the final aim of morality, but the actual deed, the deed of individual consciousness. Consequently, since the moral deed is only the deed of individual consciousness, the aim of morality takes on a possible aspect. This is despite the fact that the universal aim of morality is a universal matter, and as the universal aim of the world, it encompasses the whole world, rather than existing as a singular and

individual matter. Therefore, he believes that this "ultimate end is posited far beyond any actual, singularly existing agency" (Hegel, 2020, p. 424).

What is important is to note that although the objectives of action are not individual and are intended for the general rectification of the world's affairs—such that action plays a marginal role in these rectifications—it must be recognized that care must be taken that this does not lead to idealism regarding the reformation of the world. This is because the outcome of the work must be the performance of duty, and the performance of duty ultimately relates to the world of nature (Findlay, 2014, p. 202).

The moral perfection of consciousness lies in the cessation of the battle between morality and sensibility (feeling) and the agreement of the latter (sensibility) with the former (morality) in a manner that is incomprehensible (Hegel, 2020, p. 426). However, what is crucial is that morality can only be realized in the opposition that exists between sensibility and practical reason, and morality will retain its meaning only as long as this opposition is maintained and one side has not been eliminated in favor of the other. Thus, by eliminating and destroying one of the parties in favor of the other, we destroy the ground for the realization and meaningfulness of morality and render the discussion of ethics moot. For this reason, Hegel declares in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* that this action "will be a movement toward the destruction of morality" (Hegel, 2020, p. 427).

> According to Kant's description of the freedom of the autonomous subject who acts out of duty, which is separate from the natural subject who acts according to inclinations and desires, Hegel says again that this creates an antithesis between the individual and concrete actions, so that the subject is left with the feeling that perhaps, from a moral perspective, the best thing to do is give up

> trying to do anything at all; because they are incapable of doing anything to actualize pure duty (Stern, 2014, p. 290).

But Hegel believes there is no sincerity in this, because "every kind of agency and every kind of morality is set aside, but this, again, is merely a covering up of the 'subject-matter'; for in it every kind of agency and every kind of morality is set aside" (Hegel, 2020, p. 425).

This statement by Hegel refers to Kant's position on the opposition between morality and nature, where Kant, in order to make morality actualizable in nature, tries to diminish the capacity of nature so that he can open a path for the emergence of morality within it. In the *Critique of Judgement*, to resolve this problem, Kant only gives more weight to practical reason and conceives of nature in such a way that its lawfulness does not contradict the actualization of moral ends. That is, in Kant's view, even if there is an irreparable gap between the realm of nature and the realm of freedom, such that no transition from the former to the latter is possible, the realm of freedom must still have a kind of influence on the realm of nature, in that "the concept of freedom must actualize an end that is posited by its laws in the sensible world, and consequently, nature must be thought of in such a way that the lawfulness of its form is at least in harmony with the actualization of these ends within it, in conformity with the laws of freedom" (Kant, 2013, p. 68). Hegel's problem with Kant is precisely here.

Morality considers its goal to be freedom from the dormant forces in material desires and inclinations, but to achieve this goal, it must break its relation with reality (Hegel, 2020, p. 425). In Hegel's view, Kant, in order to find a logical answer to the problem of the opposition between ethics and nature, attempts to eliminate the problem itself. In fact, instead of allowing morality to derive meaning only from the opposition between reason and inclination and the struggle between

them, Kant resolves the existing conflict—which is the ground for the realization of ethics—by confiscating inclination in favor of reason. Through rational despotism and the suppression of inclination and feeling, he supposedly opens the path to becoming moral. In fact, "according to the concept of moral agency, pure duty is inherently active consciousness; accordingly, it 'must absolutely be acted, the absolute duty must manifest itself in the whole of nature, and the moral law must become the law of nature'" (Hegel, 2020, p. 424).

For this reason, in Hegel's view, Kant's mere transfer of the ultimate good from the transcendent realm to the sphere of human practical reason was not enough. That is, simply extracting the logic of morality from the transcendent and placing it in the charge of human reason does not eliminate the abstractness of morality and does not make it concrete. This is because, in this situation, the moral law will still hover above objective reality, due to the fact that Kant still considers morality disregarding the internal specificities of inclination and the sensory drives existing in human nature. This causes morality to lose its concrete foundations and be attributed to an abstract human being considered free from desires and inclinations, instead of being related to the actual human being who possesses inclination and feeling. Therefore, Kant's moral world is built upon what lies beyond this world. In this way, the realm of morality is changed into an unchanging, otherworldly matter. For this reason, Zanoui believes that "Hegel placed the reality of the moral realm within the dimensions of earthly reality. This allowed him to discover history in a completely new way" (Zanoui, 2003, p. 133).

Based on this, it is Hegel who connects practical reason with earthly life. In Hegel's philosophy, feelings and inclinations are considered the beginning of action and the practical self-determination of reason. Thus, it should be mentioned that, in his view, reason is

practical *in itself*. Practical feeling is not in opposition to reason and will, but is considered the first empirical self-determination of the will. These motivations and feelings are in themselves neither good nor bad, but are necessary moments of individual action. Therefore, in Hegel's thought, the modern state is not in opposition to the pursuit of individual interests. That is, where individual interests are placed in opposition to the public good, it is considered a legitimate matter and beneficial for the whole. In other words, the modern state has a comprehensive law through which the connection between individual and collective interests is made possible. Consequently, in the individual realm, feelings not only do not oppose moral principles but also actualize the universal matter. Spontaneous moral feeling makes man understand what is right and what is wrong. Therefore, it is the source of morality. Hegel initially understands it as part of the empirical character of humanity, woven into the fabric of all natural inclinations, requests, and necessities of man, and gradually brings him into harmony with the correction and the spiritual-moral nature of man. Hegel distances himself from Kant in the concept of moral feeling, as Kant rejects moral feeling as a moral principle. Hegel believes that self-interest, which is born of human nature, cannot be considered contrary to morality, because this would divide human nature into two parts. Moreover, moral subjectivity is based on the spontaneity of the heart (Zanoui, 2003, p. 121).

Connecting practical reason with earthly life is the main project of Hegelian subjectivity throughout the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Hegel's main objective is the reconciliation of man with the world. Hegel knew that for most people, freedom meant the possibility of doing whatever they wished without institutional limitations. According to this understanding, any type of restriction on activity is a barrier to freedom. Freedom understood in this way is negative

freedom. According to Hegel, if taken seriously, this understanding of freedom becomes an agent of destruction for any institutional order, because the mentioned understanding sees every institution as an unbearable restriction. It was this flawed understanding that determined the unfortunate fate of the French Revolution. Hegel's philosophy is an attempt to mend the rift between the external world, self-consciousness, and our consciousness of the external world.

2. Ethics and its Relation to Social Institutions

Hegel criticizes Kant's conception of ethics precisely because of this separation of reason and feeling/inclination. He believes that it is the social and cultural institutions that free human beings from the captivity of natural drives. Hegel's thought is distinguished by its continuous focus on the secondary nature, the transformation of the natural self with the aid of social and political institutions developed throughout history—institutions through which cultural norms are transmitted to individuals, and individuals internalize them.

According to this conception, institutions transform the individual so that they act in a way that is beneficial to them, thus manifesting their rational will. In Hegel's view, the ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*) consists of the redirection of natural drives by a higher self that is the product of culture and various institutions, and this is the replacement of nature with secondary nature. "What distinguishes Hegel's thought from that of Kant and many thinkers, including Kant, is precisely his emphasis on the social and historical dimensions of moral knowledge" (Wood, 1990, p. 10). This emphasis leads him to reject an ethics opposed to nature and inclination, enabling him, on the one hand, to find the objective roots of morality and, on the other hand, to facilitate the reconciliation of ethics with secondary nature.

To this end, Hegel seeks to establish the connection between

the realm of subjective ethics and Civil Society and the State. He aims to present what was clearly described as separate in the Kantian description as being in a relation with each other. Kant declared ethics to be in the transgression of external institutions and a return to the internal will. He believed, "For man to advance from the immoral, natural state to the moral state, he must return to his individual interiority" (Ritter, 1984, p. 17).

Hegel, in contrast, believes that for progress from the natural and immoral state to the ethical realm and non-natural freedom, one must surrender oneself to external institutions and, within the framework of their laws, elevate oneself to the realm of freedom and one's secondary nature, which is the moral man.

By searching for ethics and freedom within the structure of social institutions and considering it impossible without taking social structures into account, Hegel separates himself from Kantian subjective ethics and draws closer to Scottish Enlightenment thought. According to Smith, one of the leaders of the Scottish Enlightenment, "We learn moral rules through the imaginative process of placing ourselves in the minds of others... with the evolution of society, these rules are constantly adjusted and reinterpreted. Along with the evolution of society, the necessary rules for survival also evolve" (Müller, 2020, pp. 164–165).

Of course, Hegel's thought cannot be reduced to Smith's, because Hegel goes a step further than Smith's Civil Society—which is an economic society that measures morality solely by economic needs and personal profit and gain, and determines moral concepts within these relations—and explains the system of ethics within the State. The State, in his view, is a rational entity and cannot be reduced to economic needs, desires, and interests, unlike Civil Society. Thus, ethics will be actualizable in a rational society. With this conception,

Hegel rescues ethics from the utilitarian trap that existed in the Scottish Enlightenment. "He introduces virtue as the spirit of moral laws and, following Kant in the condemnation of utilitarianism, he follows Rousseau" (Taylor, 1989, p. 365).

Despite such a proximity between Hegel with Kant and Rousseau, there is a clear difference between them; because in the Kantian view, morality is severed from earthly bonds and knows of no specific social structure. Conscience does not contaminate itself with everyday morality and does not attribute pure morality to worldly affairs (Hegel, 2020, p. 435). Although both define ethics in virtue ethics and thereby distance themselves from the foundation of the utilitarians[1] in ethical thought, Hegel, unlike Kant and Rousseau, does not relate moral virtue to the isolated "I"; because, in his opinion, moral virtue can only be realized in social relations.

Hegel believes that although Kant succeeded in establishing a fundamental moral autonomy in opposition to the utilitarian definition of categories like the good and reason, and in freeing moral obligation

1. Of Course, Hegel accepts utilitarianism in ethics, but he considers it only as a stage of ethical life, not as the foundation of the ethical realm, unlike the Enlightenment thinkers. The first influence of the Enlightenment movement on Hegel's thought was the highlighting of the concept of utility in his view. Since the utilitarian school considers the criterion for the goodness or badness of actions to be the utility resulting from them, it regards the world and nature as being in the service of man. Furthermore, knowledge of man and the world, and the relationship between man and the world, was at the heart of the Enlightenment movement. Hence, ethics in Hegel's philosophy, to the extent that it was concerned with individual benefit and well-being, became linked with the utilitarian aspects of the Enlightenment. Based on this, Hegel believes that one cannot be free except as a member of a type of private property society (Wood, 1990, p. 26). The young Hegel must have found the theory in English economics through which to develop his own thought.

from the necessity of nature and grounding it in individual will, they failed in developing this foundation in the realm of politics. Accordingly, in Hegel's view, "Although Kant begins with a new understanding of morality, nevertheless his political theory does not go much beyond utilitarian theory" (Taylor, 1979, pp. 75-8).

Hegel also criticizes Rousseau for still considering the will as the individual will and for presenting the General Will merely as a common element that emerges amidst individual wills, instead of considering it as an "absolutely rational component in the will". This leads to a concept of the State that is based on arbitrary decisions (Taylor, 1979, p. 78).

Connecting practical reason with earthly life is the main project of Hegelian subjectivity throughout the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Hegel's main objective is the reconciliation of man with the world. Hegel knew that for most people, freedom meant the possibility of doing whatever they wished without institutional limitations. According to this understanding, any type of restriction on activity is a barrier to freedom. Freedom understood in this way is negative freedom. According to Hegel, if taken seriously, this understanding of freedom becomes an agent of destruction for any institutional order, because the mentioned understanding sees every institution as an unbearable restriction. It was this flawed understanding that determined the unfortunate fate of the French Revolution. Hegel's philosophy is an attempt to mend the rift between the external world, self-consciousness, and our consciousness of the external world.

To bridge the existing gap between ethics, which is a subjective matter, and the objective world and existing institutions, and to enable this morality, which arises in the isolated "I", to flow into the external world, Kant requires a transcendent entity. Through this entity, he objectifies his subjective logic in the external world.

"Kant’s moral theory relies upon the employment of the Idea of God, and for that reason is unable to supply a concrete criterion upon which to decide whether the rule can rightly be applied to particular cases or not" (James, 2020, p. 68). Since Kant conceives the logic of morality as an internal logic free from any objective institution, he has no mechanism for the flow of moral rules into the external world.

In contrast, Hegel, by declaring that morality, which is concerned with the individual interior, can only be determined in external relations, removes the dualism between the individual and social dimensions and unifies the logic of their flow. Therefore, when the logic of morality flows, it can simultaneously and without any problem flow as a single entity in both spheres.

Hegel seeks to provide such an external criterion in his theory of modern ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*), and he intends this criterion to be one that every individual can attain a rational insight into. Through this, given the ethical position's inability to explain how the individual will can harmonize with the universal will, he adopts the view that the objective system of these principles and duties, and the achievement of the unity of subjective knowledge with this system, exists only when the perspective of ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*) has been achieved (Hegel, 2017, p. 172).

Pinkard, in explaining this point, believes that "for moral norms to be my own and my person's rational reasons, which reflect 'me', I must be able to feel conformity and compatibility with the institutions and customs with which I live and by which I am shaped and which shape me, and to regard their demands upon me not as external demands but as internal necessities that make me who I am" (Pinkard, 2016, p. 428). In other words, the objective, universal, and necessary nature of ethics is possible only by attending to the social

system, and it can never be determined without attending to the systematization of the individual subject.

With this conception, one can understand why Hegel considered the greatest problem of Kantian ethics to be that "conscience has its own truth in immediate certainty of itself" (Hegel, 2020, p. 435), and this self-awareness occurs without requiring the confirmation of others. This is because Kantian ethics is actualized based on the individual system and without attention to an intersubjective system in which the principle of human relations and social institutions are embedded.

It is necessary to note, however, that Hegel's goal is not to replace Kant's ethics with something else, but to accept it, recognize its limitations, and consider it as a special case of a larger social theory. For Hegel, moral theory is the same as social theory and political theory, and all three are tightly linked to historical developments.

The State is the Spirit of Ethicism (*Moralität*) in the position of the substantial will which is explicit and clear to itself, and which thinks and knows itself, and puts into effect what it knows insofar as it knows it (Hegel, 2017, p. 223). The State, in Hegel's view, is the Objective Spirit that encompasses all the customs, traditions, activities, and ways of life, all of which are the product of society, and upon which individuals immediately rely in their thoughts and actions (Knowles, 2002, p. 114).

3. Bridging the Gap between "Ought" and "Is" through the Relationship between Kantian Ethics and Social Institutions in the State

By separating the realm of ethics from nature and denying the connection of ethics to social institutions, Kant posited a separation between "Is" (Sein) and "Ought" (Sollen). In the *Critique of Judgment*,

he proclaimed this separation by dividing consciousness into two realms—the practical and the theoretical—stating that the realm of the "Is", which deals with nature, must be distinguished from the practical realm, which concerns the normative "Ought" (Kant, 2013, p. 66).

According to Kant's conception, the conflict between nature and spirit, Is and Ought, and ethics and social institutions was not a metaphysical contradiction, but one that arose from Kant's attention to ethical issues. When Kant turned his focus to ethical discussions and was drawn towards practical matters, he suddenly perceived an unbridgeable gulf between the realm of freedom and the realm of nature (Kain, 2005, p. 205). He realized that the nature of these two discussions was different and belonged to separate spheres. Thus, he differentiated between the "Is" and the "Ought", designating Theoretical Reason as tasked with understanding the "Is's" and Practical Reason as tasked with understanding the "Ought's".

What led Kant to separate these dualities and turn away from objective and factual discussions in Practical Reason was his failure to recognize inclination (desire) as the link that opened the individual subject's interior to the objective and non-individual world. Through this link, the subject could unite its individuality with the universality present in the objective world and connect the realm of freedom, which deals with the "Ought's", with the issue of existence and objectivity.

Hegel clearly points to this crucial role of human motive and inclination in relating the individual world to the objective world, declaring that "only motives and inclinations establish our relationship with reality" (Findlay, 2014, p. 203) and "are the actualizers of self-consciousness" (Hegel, 2020, p. 426).

By understanding the deficiency in Kantian thought on this

matter, Hegel was able to recover this missing link in his own philosophy by demonstrating the importance of feeling and affections in human moral consciousness, and to explain his ethics by simultaneously considering inclinations and human reason. He believed that the problem with Kantian ethics was that, since it considered human nature to have two contradictory sides, man would lose one side when pursuing the other. Every gain was a loss, and every joy a pain. Striving to satisfy one's natural desires led to the abandonment of the supernatural and spiritual quest. Striving to satisfy the supernatural and spiritual demands led to the neglect and suppression of the individual's natural desires (Kain, 2005, p. 205).

Thus, through his evaluation of the role of inclination in ethics, Hegel was able to mend the relationship that had emerged between knowledge and value with Kant's philosophy and establish a complex relation between "Is" and "Ought", and knowledge and value. Therefore, unlike Kant, Hegel considers the duty of practical philosophy to be not the understanding of moral "oughts" and "ought-nots", but the discovery of their objective foundations.

In the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, by establishing a relationship between Kantian ethics and social institutions, he sought to create a bridge between the "Is" and the "Ought" and connect knowledge and value. With this view, Hegel resolves another flaw in Kant's philosophy: the problem of "Ought" and "Is", or the gap between value and knowledge.

> In Kant's moral philosophy, on the one hand, we were dealing with an 'Ought' that was always supposed to be realized but wasn't; on the other hand, we faced the world of reality which was neutral towards our ethical goals and ideals (Sedgwick, 2008, p. 68).

However, in Hegel's ethical subjectivity, the gap between "Ought" and "Is", or the embodiment of ethics in the customs and traditions of nations, is bridged. That is, there is no contradiction between the subjective and objective dimensions. Hegel's State is the realization of the ethical Idea, which means the creation of a complex subject-object relationship, i.e., the creation of a harmony between the subject and external relations.

In fact, it is the State and the social institutions within it that free the ethical subject from abstractness and actualize its objective roots. Only in this state does the possibility arise for the subject to achieve the realization of its freedom and subjective dignity. Hegel believes:

> The immediate existence of the State is custom (*Sitte*), and its mediated existence is the individual's self-consciousness, the individual's knowledge and activity, just as self-consciousness, by virtue of its nature, derives its substantial freedom, as its essence, its goal, and the product of its activity, from the State (Hegel, 2017, p. 292).

According to Hegel's explanation, although the State, as the objective dimension, precedes the individual as the subjective dimension, the State is nonetheless determined by the actuality of the individual. Therefore, the State, as an objective and factual matter, is conditional upon the activity of the subjective historical human being who has actualized their ethics externally; because "the State is in and for itself the totality of morality (*Sittlichkeit*)" (Hegel, 2017, p. 300).

Accordingly, the establishment of the relationship between "Ought" and "Is" in Hegel's thought—just as their separation in Kant was a normative matter and not a metaphysical one—occurs through the normative realm and the explanation of the relationship between

these two realms should never be considered a metaphysical matter (Pinkard, 2016, p. 419).

Given this, Hegel was able to establish a relationship between knowledge and value, "Is" and "Ought" in the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, which deals with practical philosophy. Unlike Kant, he no longer believes that the duty of practical philosophy is to know the "oughts" and "ought-nots," the moral norms and deviations. Rather, in the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, he believes the duty of philosophy is to comprehend what is; for what is, is nothing other than reason.

> Every individual is a child of his time. Philosophy is also its own time, comprehended in thought. It is just as foolish to imagine that any philosophy can transcend its contemporary world as it is to suppose that an individual can jump over his own time... If a theory constructs a world for itself as it ought to be, it undoubtedly has an existence, but only within the mind of that individual; a pliable space where imagination can build whatever it wants... Philosophy appears in the world's thought only after the actuality of its formative process is complete and it has reached its maturity (Hegel, 2017, p. 12).

According to what has been said, in order for Hegel to connect the Noumenon and the Phenomenon and validate subjectivity, he shifts the discussion of this connection—just as Kant did, who considered it a normative issue and addressed it in the Third Critique—from ontological matters to the normative realm and practical philosophy.

This shift in direction means that the issues and problems of the ontological and epistemological realms, which were previously discussed in theoretical philosophy, are now discussed by Kant in the

Third Critique and subsequently by Hegel in the Objective Spirit, which deals with practical issues. Thus, by linking the issue of objectivity to practical discussions instead of theoretical ones, Politics, as the foundation of practical matters, is considered the basis of Hegel's explanation of objectivity.

4. Subjective Ethics: Dread and Terror

In the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant replicates in his moral philosophy the very thing that Rousseau accomplished in political philosophy. He does this by stating, "The will of every rational being is a universally legislative will" (Kant, 2015, p. 98). He extends Rousseau's political position—which consists of the agency of the interior in the realm of action—to his own moral position, and thus "every human will is conceived of as a will that legislates universal laws through its maxims of conduct" (Kant, 2015, p. 98).

However, in Kant's view, the Kantian individual should not be regarded as a tyrant who exempts himself from the law through his own legislation while compelling others to obey it. Rather, he asserts, "Every rational being is a member of the kingdom of ends, as he, although a universal lawgiver in it, is himself subject to these laws" (Kant, 2015, p. 100). For this reason, Strauss rightly declares that this work by Rousseau "deeply altered the landscape of Western ethics" (Strauss, 2008, p. 149).

But, in Hegel's view, this very act of attributing universal validity to human actions in such a way that they are affirmed by others and considered as universal law (Hegel, 2020, p. 436) causes the individual will, by absorbing the universal will into itself, to become tyrannical. This result is the very Reign of Terror and Dread that manifests itself as moral despotism in Kantian ethics, and which universalizes subjective ethics by extending the laws derived from

subjective reason to all other individuals, morally obligating all rational beings to obey it.

A form of despotism exists here in which the severity of the law manifests itself as the purification of every kind of feeling, individuality, and externality. Thus, Kantian ethics is "the continuation of the Terror by other means" (Camus, 2016, p. 141); because Kant's conception of moral duty implies that a relationship of commitment and obligation exists between the individual will and the universal will, even though this universal will is valid for every single ethical subject. Simultaneously, "this universal will is actualized only through the act of self-legislation performed by each individual will" (Taylor, 1989, p. 177).

Kant's theory of moral judgment is exposed to moral subjectivism. This dilemma is a key component of Hegel's effort to demonstrate how the internal expansion of the moral perspective leads to the subordination of the universal will to the individual will (James, 2020, p. 63). Hegel refers to the "subordination of the universal will to the singular will as acting according to a self-centered doctrine" (Hegel, 2020, par. 655) and describes it as the ground for the emergence of the person as an "abstract actuality" (Hegel, 2020, p. 433).

In Hegel's view, such a conception of the individual will removes man from the intersubjective relationship—which is the foundation of concretion—and immerses him in an abstract vacuum. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel demonstrates that Kant's moral law, i.e., pure duty, is an abstract principle that has no connection with the individual motives that constitute human behavior, and therefore stands on a heavenly height above them. "He considers the moral consciousness as absolute negation" (Hegel, 2020, p. 436).

For this reason, Kantian ethics can be regarded as Christian

ethics in that it determines moral concepts in a place where man withdraws himself from the objective world and, by retreating into his individual world, discovers the moral law within it. As Taylor believes, such ethics "can only turn to destruction" (Taylor, 1989, p. 340). "The moral agent suspends the world to allow his ruthlessness towards the world to continue without hindrance. Through the passion and fervor of his separation from the world, conscience negates all obstacles that reality places against the performance of duty" (Findlay, 2014, p. 206).Therefore, in paragraph 637 of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel declares, "This consciousness washes its hands of all the stances and cover-ups of the moral worldview, and this occurs when it gives up the consciousness that treats duty and actuality as mutually contradictory matters" (Hegel, 2020, p. 435).

Hegel, like Rousseau and Kant, believed that the moralization of man is possible in the unity of the universal will (General Will) with the singular will. However, unlike Kant and Rousseau, who considered the universal will to be identical to the singular will, Hegel introduces the universal will as having emerged through social institutions. In this way, he takes the unity of the singular and universal will from Kant, who derived it from Rousseau; because Hegel calls the Ethical Life (*Sittlichkeit*) the "unity of the universal will and the subjective will" (Hegel, 1975, p. 95).

Thus, the universal will in Hegel's thought is not, as it was for Rousseau and Kant, reducible to the singular will. In practice, instead of the universal will being able to stand as an objective entity in opposition to the subjective will and moderate it, the universal will is reduced to the singular will, and practically, the explanation of the prohibitory function of the universal will reaches a dead end. For this reason, Hegel believes that "the conscious action of the person is

never absolutely approved by the universal conscience of society" (Hegel, 2020, p. 437).

Such universal and absolute approval cannot exist in the realm of morality, because the correctness of any action can always be doubted. Since the correctness of every action is doubtful in subjective ethics and its truth and universality can never be reached with certainty, Hegel holds that the human conscience cannot answer the question of whether an action performed was in accordance with its duty or not; because in individual conscience, there is no knowledge of the absolute performance of duty (Hegel, 2020, p. 445).

According to Hegel, the absolute performance of duty is only possible in social life, which, through the institutions within it, has made possible the realization of the absolute will. The fact that Hegel considers the universal will to be the very laws and institutions of modern Ethical Life (*Sittlichkeit*) indicates that this unity is created through the harmonious action of individuals with norms that are derived through laws and institutions in their relation to the individual will.

From this perspective, "Hegel is able to show an important aspect of the dependence of the State's laws and institutions on the very individuals whose duty is to act in accordance with those laws; for it is only through the activity of these individuals that the State's laws and institutions can be actualized" (James, 2020, p. 78). Therefore, it can be seen that the universal will is embodied in the diverse determinations of Ethical Life, which are themselves the product of the subjective will, and this two-way relationship is the basis for the unity of the subjective will and the universal will. When Hegel says, "The State has its mediated existence in the individual's self-consciousness, in the individual's knowledge and activity" (Hegel, 2017, p. 293), he is referring to this intrinsic characteristic of Ethical Life.

Thus, Hegel does not consider the universal will to be a transcendent entity that exists above social relations and governs moral relations. Instead, the universal will, for him, is the very institutions that enter the world through human affairs. That is, social institutions emerge through social agreement and recognition of humans, not by a transcendent entity that is placed above social relations and creates institutions for it, obligating human society to submit to them.[1]

It is on this basis that he opposes Kant for considering moral laws to be related to a transcendent entity such as God. Hegel argues that the view that God is the author of moral laws is contrary to Kant's own concept of moral autonomy (Stern, 2014, p. 303). He also believes that giving moral agency to God cannot be reconciled with God's transcendence from nature; because the reality of pure duty can only be actualized in nature and sense, while God is situated beyond nature (Hegel, 2020, pp. 428-429). Therefore, God is located outside the realm where moral action takes place. Accordingly, "Hegel demands the abolition of any transcendent position, because he considers it to mean an objectivity that is alien to institutional, i.e., internal, ethics" (Zanoui, 2003, p. 63).

1. Of course, Kant had previously stated in the *Critique of Pure Reason* that he accepts God's legislation within the framework of **immanent theology**. He emphasizes that **moral laws cannot be conceived of as originating from the will of a superior being**, because in that case, the said laws would not be moral, and the duty corresponding to them would not be considered a **free virtue** but would instead become an **arbitrary command**.
However, even if this is the case, **Hegel's critique of Kant remains valid**; because, instead of referring to the social institutions themselves—which are a **human matter**—for the externalization of moral rules, Kant **directs the foundation of his argument to the Idea of God**. In Hegel's view, this is **Kant's greatest deficiency**.

Based on Hegel's theoretical foundation, one of the signs that links Kantian ethics to the Terror and Dread of the Revolution is the distinction he makes between morality and nature. In Kant's thought, moral and rational relations and human obligations establish their own peculiar rational and moral system which is distinct from nature. "Nature in general... has no concern for moral self-consciousness, just as this moral self-consciousness has no concern or care for that world or nature" (Hegel, 2020, p. 413).

Hegel, of course, does not see this system as being outside of nature, but rather as something that grows within the context of nature itself and emphasizes the objective existence of the moral system on the earthly world. Thus, "In Hegel's philosophical system, nature plays a more significant role than Kant accounted for" (Zanoui, 2003, p. 58).

The result is that Hegel does not consider moral feeling to be in contradiction with reason, and on this basis, something develops within the context of nature that existentially transcends nature. Hegel's demand that the realm of ethical ideas be made completely subjective means that Practical Reason must be situated in relation to human feelings, needs, and empirical interests. In this way, Hegel destroys the transcendental foundations of the moral worldview present in the Kantian system—which leads to the terror of feelings, motives, and inclinations.

The reason Kantian ethics culminates in terror and dread is that, due to the despotic confrontation it has with feelings and motives, it sacrifices all of them to its own internal desire and will, and thus "desires and inclinations are sacrificed for the sake of the totality of the rational will" (Houlgate, 2013, p. 165). This is where terror and dread occur within the human subject.

According to Hegel's view, the opposition of rational law to inclination and feeling causes rational despotism to create horror in the nature of human desire, and terror to arise within its nature. As Camus considers in his interpretation of this passage, Hegel goes even further; because, in Hegel's view, "the violence will escalate even when Kant's followers, from Schiller onward, attempt to soften the rigidity of the critical project by reinjecting feeling into ethics. The post-Kantian effort to re-unite the subject with the world, to re-establish freedom and set it in motion again, will only cause its further eradication" (Camus, 2016, p. 141).

Hegel thus considers Kantian ethics, because it explains the realm of morality in the isolated human being and free from social relations, as a kind of philosophical representative of the Revolution led by Robespierre. According to this interpretation, "Hegel considers the emergence of Robespierre in the French Revolution as the basis for the fundamental transformation of practical philosophy in German Idealism" (Hyppolite, 1974, p. 434). Kant was trying to bring about the rule of dread and terror in philosophy this time by referring to the human interior and imposing the human interior onto external objectivity.[1]

Conclusion

From what has been discussed, it becomes clear that subjective ethics emerged based on the opposition between reason and nature. In this

1. However, it must be noted that **Kant was not the perfect philosophical mirror of Robespierre in Germany**. Although in practical philosophy, influenced by Rousseau, he considered **individual reason** to be paramount and the criterion for all matters in the public sphere, his belief in the **thing-in-itself (***Ding an sich***)** in theoretical philosophy somewhat mitigated the arbitrary nature of his theoretical philosophy.

conception, ethics is explained with reference to the free, rational, subjective interior and without considering the objective relations of the external world.

Based on his dialectical thought, Hegel launches devastating critiques against the one-sidedness of Kant’s idea by creating an internal relationship between reason and inclination (desire). According to Hegel's thought, because Kant deduces the moral law from the individual subjective will, he subordinates the universal will to the individual will, thereby expanding the singular will and making it absolute. It is here that the very ethics that was meant to be based on freedom and through which the subject's freedom was to be provided leads to despotism. Due to the negation, absorption, and confiscation of the absolute will within the subjective individual will, the terror and dread that appeared in the French Revolution are formulated into a theory of terror and dread through Kant's moral philosophy.

Hegel also believes that since Kant formulates the moral law based on the individual subjective will, he renders political and social institutions ineffective in the development of the ethical realm, and in doing so, ignores the entire historical tradition latent within the laws of political and social institutions.

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Ethics of Business According to Islamic and Christian Holy Texts

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Abstract

This research explores the ethical principles guiding business practices in Islamic and Christian traditions, with a focus on key concepts such as honesty, fairness, and social responsibility. Through an analysis of Islamic texts, including the Quran and Hadith, and Christian scriptures, primarily the Bible, the study highlights both commonalities and differences between the two religious frameworks. The findings show that while both traditions emphasize honesty, justice, and the moral obligation to act ethically in business, they diverge on specific issues like the prohibition of usury (riba) in Islam and the evolution of views on usury in Christianity. The research also examines the practical challenges of applying these ethical principles in contemporary globalized business environments. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of how

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religious ethics can inform modern business practices, offering insights into the application of ethical principles across diverse cultural and religious contexts. Future research areas include the ethical implications of technological advancements and the role of interfaith dialogue in addressing business ethics.

Keywords

Islamic Business Ethics, Christian Business Ethics, religious Ethics in Business, Honesty, Social Responsibility, Usury (Riba), Interfaith Comparison, Global Business Ethics.

Introduction

The ethical principles guiding business practices have deep roots in religious traditions, offering diverse perspectives on moral conduct. Among the world's major religions, Islam and Christianity have profoundly influenced the ethical dimensions of commerce and business. This study explores the ethical frameworks derived from the sacred texts of these religions, focusing on concepts such as honesty, justice, and social responsibility.

Understanding these religious perspectives is significant for several reasons. First, it offers insight into how religious beliefs shape business ethics and decision-making processes. Second, it provides a framework for intercultural dialogue and cooperation in increasingly diverse and globalized business environments. Finally, such a comparison aids practitioners and policymakers in aligning business practices with ethical standards that respect both religious traditions.

A review of prior research reveals limited comparative studies that specifically address the application of Islamic and Christian ethical principles to contemporary business practices. While some works have examined religious influences on ethics in isolation, this study seeks to bridge the gap by offering a focused comparison. The aim is to highlight commonalities and differences between these traditions and assess their relevance in modern, globalized business environments.

This paper analyzes the ethical principles in Islam and Christianity regarding business, highlighting similarities and unique aspects of both religious traditions. It focuses on key areas such as honesty, fairness, social responsibility, and the practical implications of these principles in the contemporary business world.

1. Key Literature on Business Ethics: Islamic and Christian Perspectives

Research on Islamic and Christian perspectives in business ethics presents a rich body of literature, examining themes such as honesty, justice, and social responsibility. For Islam, key sources include the Quran, Hadith, and teachings of the Imams, emphasizing justice (adl), honesty (sidq), and the importance of intention (niyyah) in business. In Christianity, the Bible, particularly the teachings of Jesus and the writings of the Apostles, highlights integrity, stewardship, and love (agape) as guiding values. References for Islamic perspectives include works such as Kamali (2017) and Beekun (1997), while Novak (1996) and Keller (2012) offer insights into Christian business ethics. Here, we summarize the key themes and findings.

1. **Foundational Ethical Principles:**

   - **Islamic Perspective**: The ethical principles in Islam are primarily derived from the Quran, Hadith (sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad), and the teachings of the Imams. Central themes include justice (adl), honesty (sidq), trustworthiness (amana), and social responsibility (mas'uliyyah). The concept of *justice* is especially emphasized, as it governs fair treatment in trade, prohibition of fraud, and the obligation to fulfill contracts. Additionally, ethics stress the importance of intention (niyyah) in business transactions, where the moral value of an act is significantly influenced by the intent behind it (Kamali, 2017, pp. 50-75; Beekun, 1997, pp. 30-45).

   - **Christian Perspective**: Christian business ethics is often explored through the lens of the Bible, particularly the teachings of Jesus Christ and the writings of the Apostles.

Key themes include integrity, stewardship, love (agape), and honesty. The concept of stewardship is crucial, emphasizing the responsible management of resources entrusted by God. The idea of love as a guiding principle underscores the ethical treatment of others in business, promoting fairness, generosity, and the well-being of all stakeholders (Novak, 1996, pp. 22-30).

2. Comparative Ethics and Common Values:

- Several studies highlight the convergence between Islam and Christian ethics, particularly in their emphasis on honesty, justice, and social responsibility. Both traditions advocate for fairness in business dealings, denouncing fraud, exploitation, and deceit. Moreover, the notion of *accountability to a higher power*—God in both religions—acts as a moral compass for ethical behavior, fostering a sense of duty and responsibility toward others (Rice, 1999, pp. 345-358; Chapra, 1992, pp. 60-85; Solomon, 1992, pp. 50-65).

3. The Role of Intention and Moral Character:

- In both Islamic and Christian ethics, the moral character of the businessperson is paramount. Islamic literature discusses the significance of taqwa (piety) and akhlaq (morality) in guiding ethical decisions (Mutahhari, 1978, pp. 75-90) Similarly, Christian ethics emphasizes the cultivation of virtues like humility, patience, and compassion, which influence ethical conduct in business.(MacIntyre, 1981, pp. 45-60; Keller, 2012, pp. 30-50).

4. Applications in Contemporary Business:

- Research also explores the application of these ethical

principles in modern business practices. For instance, studies have examined how Islamic finance, based on Sharia law, incorporates ethical considerations such as the prohibition of riba (usury) and gharar (excessive uncertainty) (Al-Rodhan, 2013, pp. 45-65; Hashem, 2017, pp. 55-70) In the Christian context, the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been linked to biblical teachings on justice and stewardship, promoting ethical practices that benefit society (Novak, 1996, pp. 80-100).

5. Challenges and Critiques:

Applying Islamic and Christian ethical principles in contemporary business environments faces several challenges:

- Globalization: Islamic business ethics, such as the prohibition of riba (usury) and gharar (excessive uncertainty), often clash with global financial practices dominated by interest-based systems. Similarly, Christian ethical principles emphasizing compassion and fairness can conflict with profit-driven models that prioritize shareholder returns over social responsibility.
- Cultural Diversity: In multicultural business settings, the interpretation and application of ethical principles vary significantly. For example, Islamic ethics must navigate diverse interpretations of Sharia in different regions, while Christian businesses may face challenges reconciling denominational differences in ethical priorities.
- Secular Legal Systems: Both traditions encounter difficulties aligning their religious guidelines with secular laws that may not prioritize ethical considerations, such as fairness in trade or corporate social responsibility (Khan, 2020, pp.

130-15; Chapra, 1992, pp. 90-110; Hauerwas, 1983, pp. 40-55; Giddens, 1990, pp. 55-70).

Overall, the key literature on business ethics from Islamic and Christian perspectives underscore the profound influence of religious teachings on ethical behavior in business. While distinct in their theological underpinnings, both traditions offer robust frameworks that prioritize moral integrity, fairness, and social responsibility in economic activities.

2. Analysis of Islamic Texts on Business Ethics

Islamic business ethics is deeply rooted in the Quran, Hadith, and the jurisprudential principles derived from these primary sources. The ethical guidelines are designed to ensure justice, fairness, and the well-being of society, with a strong emphasis on moral character and intention.

1. **Quranic Verses on Business Ethics**: Islamic business ethics are fundamentally rooted in the Quran and Hadith, which serve as primary sources of ethical guidance. These texts emphasize key principles such as justice (*adl*), honesty (*sidq*), and trustworthiness (*amana*), providing a framework for ethical conduct in commerce.

   For instance, the Quran emphasizes fairness and transparen cy in trade, as seen in Surah Al-Mutaffifin (83:1–3), which condemns fraudulent practices, and Surah Al-Baqarah (2:282), which advocates for documenting business transactions to avoid disputes. Similarly, the Hadith literature reinforces these ethical imperatives, with the Prophet Muhammad stating, 'The truthful and trustworthy merchant will be with the prophets, the truthful, and the martyrs.

While the Quran and Hadith are central, Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) incorporates these principles into its legal framework. However, it is important to note that jurisprudential rules are not exclusively derived from sacred texts; they also draw on reason (*aql*), consensus (*ijma*), and other methodologies specific to different schools of thought. Since this study focuses on sacred texts, the discussion here will remain centered on direct textual evidence rather than broader jurisprudential interpretations.

By analyzing these texts, we observe that Islamic teachings emphasize not only the outward actions in commerce but also the intentions (*niyyah*) behind them, ensuring that ethical behavior stems from sincere motives. This alignment between moral intent and practical action is a defining characteristic of Islamic business ethics (Al-Baqarah: 275; Al-Mutaffifin:1-3; An-Nisa: 58; Al-Baqarah:177; Makarem Shirazi, 1998, Vol. 1, pp. 210-215).

2. **Hadiths on Business Ethics**: The sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad (Hadith) are crucial in understanding the ethical conduct required in business from a Islamic perspective. One of the most notable Hadiths regarding business ethics is from Imam Ali, the first Imam in Shia Islam, who said, "A believer does not act fraudulently, does not lie, and does not make false promises". This Hadith encapsulates the essence of ethical behavior in business, emphasizing truthfulness, integrity, and trustworthiness. Another important Hadith from Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, the sixth Imam, states, "A businessman who is honest and trustworthy will be with the prophets, the truthful, and the martyrs". This Hadith not only stresses the importance of

honesty in business but also elevates the ethical businessman to a high spiritual rank, reflecting the moral significance of ethical conduct in commerce. Additionally, the Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said, "The truthful and trustworthy merchant is with the prophets, the truthful, and the martyrs." This Hadith highlights the spiritual rewards for those who conduct their business with integrity and honesty (Kulayni, 1417 AH, Vol. 5, Book of Business, Hadiths on Fair Trade and Deception; Mutahhari, 1978. pp. 95-105).

3. Islamic Jurisprudential Principles: Islamic Jurisprudential Principles and Their Application in Business"

"Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) offers a detailed framework that governs business practices, focusing on both legal rulings and ethical principles. The five categories of rulings (*ahkam khamsa*)—obligatory (*wajib*), recommended (*mustahab*), permissible (*mubah*), discouraged (*makruh*), and prohibited (*haram*)—guide actions based on their alignment with Islamic values.

The application of these principles in business is evident in areas such as transparency, fairness, and social responsibility. For instance, the Quran commands the documentation of transactions to prevent disputes (Al-Baqarah: 282) and prohibits fraudulent practices (Al-Mutaffifin: 1–3). Similarly, the Prophet Muhammad emphasized ethical conduct in commerce, stating, 'The truthful and trustworthy merchant is with the prophets, the truthful, and the martyrs.'

Beyond legal rulings, *fiqh* also incorporates ethical dimensions. For example, the concept of *adl* (justice) not only ensures fairness in transactions but also upholds the

moral fabric of society. Islamic jurisprudence mandates that business practices prioritize public welfare and avoid harm, demonstrating its dual focus on legality and ethics.

These principles are applied in various aspects of contemporary business, such as Islamic finance, which prohibits *riba* (usury) and promotes profit-sharing models that align with the values of fairness and mutual benefit. Through this integration of ethical and legal guidelines, Islamic jurisprudence provides a comprehensive framework for ensuring that business practices contribute to both individual success and societal well-being (Khomeini, 2002, pp. 38-45; Mutahhari, 1978, pp. 142-150; Al-Baqarah: 275; An-Nisa: 58; Kulayni, 1417 AH, Vol. 5, Hadiths on Social Responsibility).

3. Analysis of Christian Sacred Texts on Business Ethics

Christian business ethics are deeply rooted in the teachings of the Bible, particularly the New Testament, and have been further developed through theological interpretations over the centuries. The central themes in Christian ethics, such as integrity, stewardship, love, and justice, provide a robust framework for ethical business conduct.

1. **Biblical Passages on Honesty and Integrity**: The Bible emphasizes honesty and integrity as foundational values in all aspects of life, including business practices. For example, Proverbs 11:1 states, 'The LORD detests dishonest scales, but accurate weights find favor with him,' explicitly denouncing dishonesty in trade. Similarly, Leviticus 19:35–36 commands fairness in measurements and transactions: 'Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight, or quantity. Use honest scales and honest weights.' These passages reflect the Biblical principle that fairness and

transparency in business dealings are moral imperatives.

While some verses, such as Colossians 3:23–24, encourage believers to perform all their actions with sincerity and dedication as 'unto the Lord,' they are primarily focused on general moral conduct and specific family or servitude contexts rather than trade. Therefore, this study emphasizes passages directly addressing commercial integrity, ensuring relevance to the discussion of business ethics (Proverbs 11:1; Leviticus 19:35-36; Ephesians 4:25; Augustine of Hippo, 2003, pp. 850-860).

2. **Stewardship and Responsibility**: The concept of stewardship is a central theme in Christian business ethics, rooted in the belief that all resources are ultimately God's and humans are merely caretakers. This is based on passages such as Genesis 2:15, where Adam is placed in the Garden of Eden "to work it and take care of it." This directive extends to how Christians should manage their business affairs—responsibly, ethically, and with the well-being of others in mind. In the New Testament, the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30) further illustrates the importance of stewardship. In this parable, servants are entrusted with varying amounts of wealth, and those who invest and grow their resources are rewarded, while the one who hides his resources is punished. This story has been interpreted to mean that Christians have a duty to use their resources wisely and for the greater good, which includes making ethical decisions in business that benefit others as well as themselves (Genesis 1:28; Matthew 25:14-30; Pope Leo XIII, 1891, pp. 9-17; Volf, 1991, pp. 78-92).

3. **Love and Justice in Business Practices**: Christian ethics also emphasize the principles of love (agape) and justice in business dealings. The commandment to "love your neighbor

as yourself" (Matthew 22:39) is fundamental to Christian ethics and extends to the marketplace. This principle is interpreted to mean that businesses should not exploit or harm others but should instead seek the well-being of all stakeholders, including employees, customers, and the broader community. The prophet Amos condemns those who exploit the poor, saying, "Hear this, you who trample the needy and do away with the poor of the land... buying the poor with silver and the needy for a pair of sandals" (Amos 8:4-6). This passage reflects a concern for social justice and condemns exploitation and oppression in economic activities. The New Testament also advocates for fairness and equity, as seen in James 5:4, which warns, "Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty". This passage serves as a powerful reminder of the moral responsibility to treat workers fairly, a core principle in Christian business ethics (Matthew 22:39; Luke 10:27; James 5:4; Volf, 1991, pp. 78-92).

4. **Christian Ethical Principles and Their Applications.** "Christian ethics are deeply rooted in the Bible, particularly the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles. Foundational principles such as honesty, stewardship, love (*agape*), and justice shape ethical conduct in both personal and professional life.

   - **Honesty and Integrity**: Biblical passages, such as Proverbs 11:1 and Leviticus 19:35–36, emphasize fairness and truthfulness in trade, denouncing dishonest practices.
   - **Stewardship and Responsibility**: Christians are called to responsibly manage resources entrusted to them by

God, as seen in Genesis 2:15 and the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14–30). Stewardship extends to ethical decision-making in business, ensuring the well-being of others.

- **Love (*Agape*) and Justice**: Jesus' command to 'love your neighbor as yourself' (Matthew 22:39) inspires equitable treatment of all stakeholders in business. Similarly, warnings against exploitation, such as in James 5:4, advocate for fairness and social justice.

Over the centuries, Christian theologians have expanded on these principles to address evolving economic and social contexts. For example, Thomas Aquinas argued that trade should serve the common good and condemned usury as exploitative. The Protestant Reformation emphasized the concept of vocation, framing business as a divine calling that must align with ethical principles.

In contemporary times, Christian ethics have influenced concepts such as corporate social responsibility (CSR), emphasizing justice, environmental stewardship, and prioritizing the needs of marginalized communities. Catholic social teaching, particularly the 'preferential option for the poor,' underscores the moral obligation of businesses to contribute positively to society. These interpretations demonstrate the enduring relevance of Christian principles in addressing modern ethical challenges (Augustine of Hippo, 2003, pp. 850-860; Pope Leo XIII, 1891, pp. 9-17; Volf, 1991, pp. 78-92).

4. Comparison of Ethical Principles in Business: Islamic vs. Christian Teachings

Islamic and Christian teachings provide robust ethical frameworks that guide business practices, emphasizing values such as honesty, fairness,

and integrity. While these principles are central to both traditions, their articulation and application are rooted in distinct theological foundations and religious texts.

1. Honesty:

- **Islamic Perspective**: In Islam, honesty is a core ethical principle derived from the Quran and the Hadith. The Quran explicitly condemns dishonesty in business, as seen in Surah Al-Mutaffifin (83:1-3), which warns against deceitful practices like giving less than what is due in trade. The Hadith literature further reinforces this by narrating the Prophet Muhammad's condemnation of fraud and deceit in business transactions. Honesty is not only a moral obligation but also a reflection of one's piety and fear of God (*taqwa*). A Muslim is expected to maintain honesty in all dealings, as it is believed that one's intentions and actions in business are judged by God, with eternal consequences (An-Nisa: 58; Al-Baqarah: 177; Al-Mutaffifin:1-3; Makarim Shirazi, 1998, Vol. 1, pp. 210-215).
- **Christian Perspective**: Christianity similarly places a strong emphasis on honesty, grounded in biblical teachings. Proverbs 11:1 states, "The LORD detests dishonest scales, but accurate weights find favor with him", underscoring the importance of truthfulness and accuracy in business. The New Testament echoes this sentiment, with Jesus teaching the value of honesty in all aspects of life, including commerce. In Colossians 3:9-10, Paul instructs, "Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self". Honesty in Christian business ethics is seen as an expression of one's commitment to living a life that honors God, reflecting the

transformation that comes with faith (Proverbs 11:1; Ephesians 4:25; Leviticus 19:35-36; Augustine of Hippo, 2003, pp. 850-860).

Comparison: Both Islamic and Christian teachings view honesty as essential in business, linking it to one's relationship with God. However, while Islamic teachings often emphasize the fear of divine retribution for dishonesty, Christian teachings focus more on the transformation of character and living according to Christ's example.

2. Fairness:

- **Islamic Perspective**: Fairness, or *adl* (justice), is a fundamental principle in Islam. The Quran frequently commands believers to act justly, as seen in Surah An-Nisa (4:58): "Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people, to judge with justice". This extends to business practices, where fairness in transactions, pricing, and treatment of others is paramount. Islamic jurisprudence further elaborates on this by prohibiting exploitative practices like *riba* (usury) and *gharar* (excessive uncertainty), ensuring that business dealings do not result in the unjust enrichment of one party at the expense of another (An-Nisa: 58; Al-Mutaffifin:1-3; Makarim Shirazi, 1998, Vol. 1, pp. 210-215).
- **Christian Perspective**: The concept of fairness is also central to Christian business ethics, with numerous biblical passages advocating for just and equitable treatment of others. James 5:4 criticizes the unjust treatment of workers, stating, "Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you". This emphasis on fairness reflects the broader Christian principle

of loving one's neighbor as oneself, which calls for equitable and just treatment in all interactions, including business. The teachings of Jesus, particularly in the Sermon on the Mount, further advocate for fairness by encouraging believers to go beyond mere legal obligations and to act with generosity and fairness in all dealings (Proverbs 11:1; Leviticus 19:35-36; Augustine of Hippo, 2003, pp. 850-860).

Comparison: Both traditions emphasize fairness, but their approaches differ slightly. Islam provides a detailed legal framework to ensure fairness, particularly in financial transactions, while Christianity emphasizes fairness as part of a broader moral duty to love and care for others, often focusing on the ethical treatment of the less fortunate.

3. Interest (Usury)

- **Islamic Perspective**: In Islam, the prohibition of riba (usury or interest) is a foundational principle in economic ethics. The Quran explicitly forbids the practice of charging interest on loans, as seen in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:275): "Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest". The rationale behind this prohibition is that riba leads to exploitation and social injustice, disproportionately benefiting the lender at the expense of the borrower. Islamic scholars further elaborate on this principle by emphasizing that wealth should be generated through legitimate trade and investment rather than through interest, which is considered exploitative and unjust. The prohibition of riba is not merely a financial regulation but a moral directive aimed at ensuring economic equity and fairness in society (Al-Baqarah: 275; Al-Imran: 130; Mutahhari, 1978, pp. 95-105).

- **Christian Perspective**: Christian teachings on interest, particularly in the early Church, were also stringent. The Bible contains several warnings against usury (the practice of charging excessive interest), particularly in the Old Testament. For example, in Exodus 22:25, it states, "If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not treat it like a business deal; charge no interest". Early Christian thinkers like Augustine and Aquinas condemned usury as incompatible with Christian charity and justice. However, over time, with the rise of modern banking, Christian attitudes towards interest have evolved, with a distinction made between reasonable interest on loans and exploitative usury. Contemporary Christian ethics generally accept the charging of interest as long as it is fair and not exploitative, emphasizing the moral responsibility to lend in ways that do not harm the borrower (Exodus 22:25; Matthew 25:27; Pope Leo XIII, 1891, pp. 9-17).

Comparison: Both Islamic and Christian teachings originally viewed interest with suspicion, associating it with exploitation and injustice. However, while Islamic teachings maintain a strict prohibition against all forms of interest, Christian perspectives have evolved to permit interest under ethical conditions, reflecting different approaches to economic realities.

4. Fraud

- **Islamic Perspective**: Fraud is unequivocally condemned in Islam, as it violates the principles of honesty and justice central to Islamic ethics. The Quran warns against dishonest practices, such as in Surah Al-Mutaffifin (83:1-3),

which criticizes those who engage in fraudulent trading practices by giving less than due when measuring or weighing goods. The Hadith literature also emphasizes the moral imperative to avoid deceit and dishonesty in business. For example, Imam Ali, a key figure in Islam, is reported to have said, "A believer does not act fraudulently, does not lie, and does not make false promises." Islamic jurisprudence strictly prohibits any form of deceit in business transactions, viewing it as not only a legal violation but also a serious moral failing that undermines trust and social harmony (Al-Mutaffifin:1-3; An-Nisa: 29; Kulayni, 1417 AH, Vol. 5, Hadith on Business Deception).

- **Christian Perspective**: Similarly, Christianity condemns fraud as a serious sin that contravenes the commandment against bearing false witness (Exodus 20:16). Proverbs 11:1 states, "The LORD detests dishonest scales, but accurate weights find favor with him", emphasizing the importance of honesty in business. The New Testament continues this theme, with teachings that stress integrity and truthfulness. For example, in Luke 19:8, Zacchaeus, upon his conversion, promises to repay anyone he has cheated four times the amount, reflecting the Christian ethic of restitution and repentance for fraudulent behavior. Fraud in business is seen as incompatible with living a life that honors God, and Christian teachings call for transparency, honesty, and fairness in all dealings (Proverbs 20:23; Ephesians 4:25; Augustine of Hippo, 2003, pp. 850-860).

Comparison: Both Islam and Christianity strongly condemn fraud, associating it with injustice and moral corruption. The

focus in both traditions is on maintaining honesty and fairness in business, with an emphasis on the broader social and spiritual consequences of deceitful practices.

5. Social Responsibility

- **Islamic Perspective**: Social responsibility is deeply embedded in Islamic teachings, where it is seen as a reflection of the principle of adl (justice) and ihsan (doing good). The Quran encourages Muslims to care for the poor and the vulnerable, as seen in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:177): "It is not righteousness that you turn your faces toward the East or the West, but righteousness is in one who... gives his wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves". This verse underscores the ethical duty of wealth redistribution and caring for those in need. Islamic scholars also emphasize the concept of zakat (obligatory almsgiving) and khums (a tax on surplus income) as means to ensure that wealth circulates within the community and benefits those who are less fortunate. Social responsibility in business, therefore, includes fair treatment of workers, ethical sourcing, and contributing to the welfare of society (Al-Baqarah:177; Al-Hadid:18; Khomeini, 2002, pp. 38-45).
- **Christian Perspective**: Christianity similarly emphasizes social responsibility, rooted in the commandment to love one's neighbor (Matthew 22:39). This extends to business practices, where Christian ethics advocate for treating employees fairly, engaging in ethical practices, and contributing to the common good. The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) exemplifies the Christian duty to

care for others, regardless of personal gain. Furthermore, Christian social teaching, especially in Catholicism, emphasizes the concept of the "preferential option for the poor", which calls on businesses to prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable. This principle is reflected in modern concepts like Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), where businesses are encouraged to go beyond profit-making and actively contribute to social and environmental well-being (Matthew 22:39; Luke 10:27; James 5:4; Volf, 1991, pp. 78-92).

Comparison: Both Islamic and Christian teachings advocate for strong social responsibility in business, urging followers to contribute to the welfare of society and care for the less fortunate. While Islam emphasizes specific financial obligations like zakat and khums, Christianity focuses on the broader principle of love and care for one's neighbor, which has been interpreted in various ways, including through modern CSR initiatives.

6. Unique Aspects

- **Islamic Ethics**: A unique aspect of Islamic business ethics is the detailed jurisprudential framework that guides business practices, ensuring they conform to Islamic law (Sharia). The strict prohibition of riba (usury) and gharar (excessive uncertainty) reflects the emphasis on justice and equity in economic dealings. Additionally, the obligatory acts of zakat and khums represent a structured approach to social responsibility, ensuring wealth is redistributed to benefit the community.

- **Christian Ethics**: Christian business ethics are deeply rooted in the broader moral teachings of the faith, emphasizing love, stewardship, and the inherent dignity of every individual. While interpretations of certain issues, such as interest, have evolved in response to changing economic contexts, this reflects the practical application of Christian principles to contemporary realities rather than a shift away from core values. The Christian emphasis on personal transformation and ethical conduct ensures that faith permeates all aspects of life, including business, fostering a holistic integration of morality and daily living.

Commonalities: Despite these differences, Islamic and Christian teachings share significant commonalities in their approach to business ethics. Both traditions strongly emphasize honesty, fairness, and social responsibility, viewing business as an extension of one's moral and spiritual life. They advocate for ethical conduct that reflects a commitment to justice, integrity, and the well-being of others, demonstrating that, despite theological differences, there is a shared moral vision that can guide ethical business practices across religious boundaries.

Influence of Islamic and Christian Ethical Principles on Contemporary Business Practices

The ethical principles derived from Islamic and Christian texts offer significant guidance for contemporary business practices and decision-making. These principles can shape various aspects of business conduct, including financial transactions, employee relations, and corporate social responsibility.

1. Influence on Financial Transactions

- **Islamic Influence**: Islamic ethics strongly impact financial practices, particularly through the prohibition of *riba* (interest) and *gharar* (excessive uncertainty). Businesses adhering to Islamic principles avoid interest-based financing and seek alternative financial solutions, such as Islamic banking, which offers interest-free loans and profit-sharing models. This approach promotes ethical finance that aligns with the principles of justice and fairness outlined in the Quran and Hadith (Al-Baqarah: 275; Mutahhari, 1978, pp. 95-105).

- **Christian Influence**: Contemporary Christian business practices, while generally accepting of reasonable interest, are influenced by ethical considerations that prevent exploitation. Christian ethics emphasize fair lending practices and the moral obligation to avoid excessive charges. This influence can be seen in the development of ethical investment funds and initiatives that prioritize fairness and transparency in financial dealings (Pope Leo XIII, 1891, pp. 9-17).

Comparison: Both traditions aim to ensure fairness in financial transactions, though Islam maintains a stricter prohibition against interest, while Christianity allows for interest under ethical constraints. Both perspectives advocate for transparency and fairness, influencing the development of ethical financial products and practices.

2. Influence on Employee Relations

- **Islamic Influence**: Islamic ethics stress the importance of

fair treatment and respect for employees. Islamic teachings emphasize that workers should receive just wages and humane working conditions. Islamic jurisprudence encourages businesses to uphold these values, promoting practices that ensure workers' rights and equitable treatment in the workplace (Khomeini, 2002, pp. 38-45).

- **Christian Influence**: Christian ethics emphasize the fair treatment of employees as a reflection of the broader principles of justice and stewardship. Biblical teachings, such as in James 5:4, warn against withholding wages and advocate for equitable treatment of workers: 'Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you'. This highlights the moral obligation to ensure fair wages and just working conditions.

  Additionally, the concept of stewardship in Christian theology calls for responsible management of all resources entrusted by God, including human resources. This principle encourages employers to uphold the dignity and well-being of their employees, fostering an environment of respect and mutual benefit. By aligning business practices with these values, Christian ethics provide a robust framework for ethical human resource management.

  Comparison: Both Islamic and Christian teachings advocate for fair and respectful treatment of employees. Islam emphasizes compliance with religious and legal standards, while Christianity focuses on moral obligations and the broader principle of love and respect for others.

3. Influence on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

- **Islamic Influence**: Social responsibility is a core tenet in

Islamic business ethics, driven by principles like *zakat* (almsgiving) and *khums* (a tax on surplus income). Businesses influenced by Islamic ethics are likely to engage in CSR activities that focus on poverty alleviation, community development, and ethical practices. These activities are seen as a religious obligation and a means to contribute positively to society (Al-Baqarah :177; Mutahhari, 1978, pp. 142-150).

- **Christian Influence**: Christian business ethics also promote CSR, reflecting the biblical call to care for the less fortunate and act justly. The principle of loving one's neighbor leads to CSR initiatives focused on community support, environmental stewardship, and ethical business practices. Modern Christian social teaching encourages businesses to contribute to the common good and address societal challenges (Augustine of Hippo, 2003, pp. 850-860).

Comparison: Both Islamic and Christian ethics promote CSR, with Islam focusing on specific religious obligations like *zakat* and *khums*, while Christianity emphasizes broader moral principles and community support. Both traditions encourage businesses to actively contribute to societal well-being and ethical practices.

Challenges and Limitations in Applying Islamic and Christian Ethical Principles to Business Practices

1. Islamic Ethical Principles

a. Cultural and Historical Factors:

- **Integration of Religious Laws with Modern Business Practices**: Applying Islamic ethics in contemporary

business contexts can be challenging due to the differences between traditional religious laws and modern economic systems. For instance, the prohibition of *riba* (usury) and *gharar* (excessive uncertainty) may conflict with conventional financial practices and global financial markets, where interest-based transactions are predominant (Al-Baqarah: 275; Mutahhari, 1978, pp. 95-105).

- **Historical Development of Jurisprudence**: Islamic jurisprudence developed in a historical context that may not fully account for contemporary economic realities. The traditional legal framework might face limitations when addressing modern business challenges, such as digital currencies or global trade issues (Khomeini, 2002, pp. 38-45).

b. Interpretive Factors:

- **Diverse Interpretations**: Islam encompasses a range of interpretations and practices, which can lead to variations in how ethical principles are applied in business. Different scholars may interpret the Quranic injunctions and Hadiths differently, leading to diverse practices and potentially inconsistent application of business ethics (Mutahhari, 1978, pp. 142-150).

2. Christian Ethical Principles

a. Cultural and Historical Factors:

- **Adaptation to Secular Business Environments**: Applying Christian ethical principles in secular business contexts can be challenging, particularly when these principles conflict with prevailing business norms. For example, Christian ethics emphasize fairness and compassion, which may be difficult to implement in competitive environments where

profit maximization is often prioritized over ethical considerations (Augustine of Hippo, 2003, pp. 850-860).

- **Historical Shifts in Economic Thought**: Historical changes in economic thought and practice have led to evolving interpretations of Christian ethics. For instance, earlier Christian opposition to usury has evolved into a more nuanced view that allows for reasonable interest under ethical constraints. This shift can create inconsistencies in how Christian principles are applied in modern finance (Pope Leo XIII, 1891, pp. 9-17).

b. Interpretive Factors:

- **Diverse Denominational Views**: Christianity comprises numerous denominations, each with its own interpretation of ethical principles. This diversity can lead to varying practices and applications of business ethics. For example, Protestant ethics might emphasize different aspects of business morality compared to Catholic or Orthodox teachings (Volf, 1991, pp. 78-92).

3. Common Challenges Across Both Traditions

a. Globalization:

- **Global Market Realities**: Both Islamic and Christian ethical frameworks may struggle with the complexities of globalization. The need to reconcile religious ethical principles with global business practices and legal standards can pose significant challenges. Businesses operating internationally may face difficulties in maintaining ethical consistency across different cultural and regulatory environments (Mutahhari, 1978, pp. 95-105; Volf, 1991, pp. 78-92).

b. Ethical Dilemmas in Practice:

- **Balancing Profit and Ethics**: Both traditions emphasize ethical conduct, but balancing these principles with the demands of profit-driven business models can be challenging. Businesses may encounter ethical dilemmas where the pursuit of profit conflicts with adherence to religious principles, leading to potential tensions and compromises (Khomeini, 2002, pp. 38-45; Augustine of Hippo, 2003, pp. 850-860).

Summary of Main Findings

The comparative study of business ethics in Islamic and Christian texts reveals both significant commonalities and distinct differences in ethical principles that guide business practices.

1. Common Ethical Principles:

- **Honesty and Integrity**: Both Islamic and Christian teachings emphasize the importance of honesty and integrity in business dealings. In Islam, honesty is mandated by the Quran and Hadith, while Christianity underscores truthfulness through Biblical passages. Both traditions advocate for transparent and truthful business practices (Al-Mutaffifin: 1-3; Proverbs 11:1).
- **Fairness and Justice**: Both traditions value fairness and justice in business transactions. Islam promotes fair trade and prohibits exploitation through its jurisprudence. Christianity, similarly, calls for just treatment and fair dealing, emphasizing the moral imperative to treat others equitably (An-Nisa: 58; James 5:4).

2. Distinct Ethical Principles:

- **Interest and Usury (Riba)**: A major divergence is found in the treatment of interest. Islam strictly prohibits *riba* (usury), viewing it as exploitative. In contrast, modern Christian ethics have adapted to allow reasonable interest under ethical constraints, reflecting historical shifts in economic thought (Al-Baqarah: 275; Pope Leo XIII, 1891, pp. 9-17).
- **Regulatory Frameworks**: Islam provides a more detailed legal framework for business ethics, including specific prohibitions and guidelines. Christianity tends to focus on broader moral principles rather than detailed regulations, leading to different approaches in business ethics (Mutahhari, 1978, pp. 95-105 & 142-150; Augustine of Hippo, 2003, pp. 850-860).

3. Social Responsibility:

- Both traditions emphasize social responsibility but approach it differently. Islam includes specific religious obligations like *zakat* and *khums*, while Christianity promotes social responsibility through broader moral teachings and the principle of loving one's neighbor (Al-Baqarah: 177; Matthew 22:39).

Conclusions

"This comparative study demonstrates that both Islamic and Christian ethical frameworks offer significant guidance for fostering fairness, honesty, and social responsibility in business practices. Each tradition brings unique strengths to the discussion:

- **Islamic Ethics**: The integration of religious law with ethical obligations in Islamic teachings provides a structured

framework for business practices. The prohibition of *riba* (usury), emphasis on social welfare through *zakat* and *khums*, and spiritual accountability create a comprehensive system that aligns economic activities with moral and societal goals.

- **Christian Ethics**: Rooted in broader moral principles, Christian business ethics emphasize personal transformation, stewardship, and love (*agape*), offering flexibility in addressing modern challenges. The adaptability of Christian teachings, such as evolving perspectives on financial practices, highlights the pragmatic application of ethics to diverse economic contexts.

While both traditions share a commitment to core moral values, their approaches reflect distinct priorities: Islam emphasizes structured guidelines tied to legal and spiritual obligations, whereas Christianity focuses on personal moral responsibility and adaptability. Recognizing these complementary strengths can foster greater interfaith dialogue and collaboration in addressing ethical challenges in the global business landscape.

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Environmental Protection in the Sacred Texts of Islam and Christianity

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Abstract

The continuation of life on our planet requires a set of essential elements, including water, soil, air, trees, and plants, making environmental protection our duty. Environmental preservation has long been a pressing concern throughout human history, but it has now evolved into a major challenge. Indeed, it forms the very basis and foundation of human life. Significantly, the Sacred Texts of Islam and Christianity recognized this issue centuries ago and offered their followers guidelines on environmental protection. These directives encompass various aspects such as preserving trees, promoting agricultural development and afforestation, safeguarding water resources, counseling against waste and pollution, and avoiding the restriction of access to these resources,

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especially during conflicts. Furthermore, emphasis is placed on sustainable development and the cleanliness of lands and habitats, preventing the pollution of our surroundings, and the importance of clean air for the sustenance of life. Muslims and Christians, recognizing their human and religious duties, are called upon to actively defend their surrounding environment and refrain from harming it. The aim of this research is to conduct a comparative study on the Sacred Texts of Islam and Christianity regarding environmental protection, clarifying their shared teachings and insights on this vital subject. The scope of this research is limited to the Sacred Texts of Islam and Christianity and is executed as a case-by-case comparison of environment-related issues.

Keywords

Environment, Water, Soil, Trees, Scriptures, Islam and Christianity.

Introduction

The environment encompasses a complex interplay of essential elements and processes that directly and indirectly affect the well-being of all living organisms. These elements include vital components such as water, soil, air, and plants (Kiss, 2000, p. 6). Environmental protection necessitates the implementation of diverse measures aimed at preserving, maintaining, and preventing the degradation or destruction of natural ecosystems. However, in our modern era, marked by significant technological advancements, the increasing demands on land, water, energy, food, and infrastructure by a growing human population have led to undesirable consequences for the environment. Recognizing the urgent need for environmental preservation, governmental bodies and public institutions have made substantial investments in resources and efforts to reduce and curb activities that pose serious risks to the environment.

Environmental agreements have a rich history, with their origins dating back to 1910 (Mitchell, 2003, pp. 429-461). The 1960s marked the emergence of environmental movements, which played a pivotal role in raising awareness and advocating for environmental protection. Consequently, the United Nations convened a significant milestone, the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, in Stockholm in 1972. This conference introduced the groundbreaking concept of the right to a healthy environment, emphasizing the importance of preserving and maintaining ecological well-being (United Nations, 1972). Subsequently, the United Nations Environment Program was established later that same year to address global environmental challenges. Important international agreements were then reached, including the Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1997 and the historic Paris Agreement in 2015. Notably, on October 8, 2021, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a

resolution recognizing access to a clean and healthy environment as a universal right, further underscoring the global commitment to environmental protection (United Nations, 2021). These milestones demonstrate the continuous progress and growing recognition of the importance of environmental preservation on a global scale.

In order to ensure effective environmental protection, a comprehensive approach encompassing moral guidance, education, and appropriate legal frameworks is crucial. With approximately half of the world's population identifying as adherents of Islam and Christianity, the role of these two religions in fostering environmental awareness and action is of significant importance. The sacred texts of Islam and Christianity contain valuable recommendations and teachings regarding environmental stewardship, which can greatly influence the followers' attitudes and behaviors towards protecting the environment. By emphasizing these environmental recommendations, both religions have the potential to inspire collective contemplation and recognition of the importance of environmental conservation. By leveraging the teachings and moral principles present in these sacred texts, Islam and Christianity can play a vital role in instilling a sense of responsibility and encouraging active engagement in environmental protection efforts.

The sacred texts of Islam and Christianity have long been ahead of their time in addressing the importance of environmental protection. Centuries before the establishment of modern environmental laws and regulations, these texts provided their followers with effective laws, guidelines, and recommendations to safeguard the environment. These ancient teachings anticipated the need to preserve and respect the natural world, emphasizing the responsibility of individuals to care for and protect the environment. By instilling these principles within their respective religious frameworks, Islam and

Christianity promoted environmental consciousness and advocated for sustainable practices well before such concerns became widespread in human societies. The enduring relevance of these teachings underscores the wisdom and foresight embedded in these sacred texts regarding the significance of environmental stewardship.

The Christian Bible is comprised of two main sections: The Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament consists of 39 books categorized into three parts: historical books, sermons, wisdom literature, and prophetic writings. These writings provide a historical account of the Israelites, convey moral and ethical teachings, and contain prophecies concerning future events.

On the other hand, the New Testament consists of 27 books and treatises. It begins with the four Gospels, which narrate the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Following the Gospels is the Acts of the Apostles, which details the early Christian church's formation and expansion. The majority of the New Testament is comprised of the Letters of the Apostles, consisting of 21 letters addressed to various Christian communities, providing guidance, encouragement, and theological insights. Lastly, the New Testament concludes with the Revelation of John, an apocalyptic text unveiling future events and emphasizing the ultimate victory of God's kingdom.

Together, these diverse books and treatises in the Christian Bible offer a comprehensive account of religious history, teachings, and prophetic revelations. The Holy Quran holds a central position as the primary sacred text for Muslims. However, it is not the sole holy book within Islam. Muslims also recognize a second source known as Hadith, which is considered a significant text of religious importance. The Hadith comprises the recorded sayings, actions, and approvals of the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, that have been transmitted in written form. In accordance with the teachings of the Quran, all the

sayings of the Prophet are regarded as divinely inspired revelations. Together, the Quran and Hadith form integral components of Islamic scripture, guiding Muslims in matters of faith, practice, and ethical conduct.

In Surah Najm of the Holy Quran, Allah affirms that the words spoken by the Prophet Muhammad are not of his own desire but are revelations that have been revealed to him. The verse states: " وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَى إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَى عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَى, Nor does he speak from [his own] inclination. It is not but a revelation revealed, Taught to him by one intense in strength" (Al-Najm: 3-5).

Additionally, Allah has commanded Muslims to obey and follow all the orders and guidance of the Prophet. In Surah Al-Hashr, it is stated: " ما آتاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَ ما نَهاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا, And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from" (Al-Hashr: 7).

Moreover, Muslims are instructed by Allah to obey the Prophet, for in doing so, they are obeying Allah Himself. The verse in Surah An-Nisa declares: " مَنْ يُطِعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ, Whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah" (Al-Nisa: 80).

Imam Reza, a revered figure in Islam, has affirmed that the narrations and teachings are transmitted from Almighty God and the Prophet Muhammad. He stated: " إِنَّا عَنِ اللهِ وَ عَنْ رَسُولِهِ نُحَدِّث, Indeed, we narrate hadith from Almighty God and the Prophet of God" (Kashi, 1983, p. 224).

These verses and the statement by Imam Reza highlight the significance and authority attributed to the words and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad within Islamic belief and practice.

Islamic teachings regard the Hadith, which includes the sayings and teachings of the Prophet of Islam and Ahl al-bayt (the

family of the Prophet), as sacred and divinely inspired. These traditions hold immense importance within the Islamic faith and are considered a significant source of guidance for Muslims.

In the realm of environmental protection, there have been notable studies conducted within the contexts of both Islam and Christianity. Some noteworthy works include "Islam, Christianity, and Environmental" and "Religion and Pro-Environmental Behavior: A Comparative Analysis Towards Environmental Protection". While there have been comparative studies examining Islam and the environment, this particular research aims to specifically focus on the sacred texts of Islam and Christianity, analyzing the data and teachings they offer concerning environmental protection. By exploring the scriptures of these two religions, valuable insights can be gained regarding their respective perspectives on environmental stewardship.

2. The perspective of Islamic Scriptures:

Islamic scriptures encompass numerous directives concerning the protection and preservation of trees, plants, water, earth, and air. These teachings emphasize the significance of environmental stewardship and the responsibility of Muslims to safeguard these vital elements of creation. The scriptures guide believers to respect and care for trees and plants, recognizing their importance in sustaining life and ecosystems. They also emphasize the conservation of water, discouraging wastefulness and pollution, and promoting responsible usage. Similarly, Islamic teachings emphasize the sanctity of the earth and the need to maintain its cleanliness and purity. Additionally, attention is drawn to the significance of clean air for the well-being of all living beings. Collectively, these scriptures serve as a comprehensive

guide, inspiring Muslims to actively engage in protecting and preserving the natural world around them.

2-1. Protection of trees and plants

In the Qur'an, Allah states, " إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَّهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا, We have made whatever is on the earth an adornment for it to test them [as to] which of them is best in deed" (Al-Kahf: 7). This verse signifies that everything present on Earth, including water, trees, mountains, and more, is part of its adornment. Scholars have interpreted this verse to include trees, plants, and all that exists on the Earth (Bahrani, 1994, Vol. 3, p. 612).

Allah describes these blessings as the embellishment of the Earth, مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ, and has granted them to humanity as a means of testing and evaluating their actions. Through these tests, it becomes possible to discern who performs the best deeds. The actions and tests referred to in this verse are somehow linked to what exists on Earth, مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ, and its adornment, زِينَةً لَّهَا. Therefore, protecting the land, trees, and waters can be considered acts that preserve the beauty of what is on the Earth.

Furthermore, in another verse, Allah mentions that on the Day of Resurrection, people will be questioned about the blessings He has bestowed upon them: " ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ, Then you will surely be asked that Day about the blessings" (At-Takathur: 8). This emphasizes the accountability of humanity for the protection and proper use of these blessings.

The Holy Qur'an explicitly prohibits corruption in the land and identifies those who destroy crops as the most severe enemies, أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ (Al-Baqarah: 204-205). It states, " وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ ...هُوَ أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَى فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَسَادَ, And of the people is

he whose speech pleases you in worldly life, and he calls Allah to witness as to what is in his heart, yet he is the fiercest of opponents. And when he goes away, he strives throughout the land to cause corruption therein and destroy crops and animals. And Allah does not like corruption". This highlights that some individuals actively seek to spread corruption and devastation in the land, but such actions are detested by Allah.

The Qur'an also encourages tourism as a means to contemplate and study the wonders of creation. It states, " قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ, Say, 'Travel through the land and observe how He began creation'" (Al-Ankabut: 20). This verse highlights the importance of exploring the Earth and witnessing the marvels of Allah's creation.

In Islamic teachings and traditions, there are numerous directives to safeguard trees and green spaces. One such recommendation is through acts of charity, with the best form being ongoing charity. The Prophet of Islam regarded planting trees as a form of ongoing charity. He stated that if a Muslim plants a tree and any creature, be it a bird, human, or animal, benefits from its fruit, it is considered an act of charity for the planter (Nouri, 1982, vol. 13, p. 26). Additionally, the rewards of these virtuous deeds are recorded and presented in the divine court for the one who plants a palm tree (Majlisi, 1982, Vol. 101, p. 97). Imam Sadiq further emphasized that one of the lasting benefits a believer receives after their death is the sapling they had planted (Majlisi, 1982, Vol. 6, p. 293).

The significance of planting trees in Islam is emphasized by the statement of the Messenger of God (PBUH), who advised, "If one of you has a sapling in his hand and the Day of Resurrection starts, let him plant it" (Nouri, 1982, vol. 13, p. 460). This highlights the importance of tree planting and nurturing, even in anticipation of the Day of Judgment.

Furthermore, the Prophet of Islam stressed the importance of watering trees, stating, "Whoever waters a tall tree and a cedar tree in need of water, it is as if he has quenched the thirst of a believer" (Salmi Samarqandi, 1960, vol. 2, p. 86). This exemplifies the value placed on caring for trees and ensuring their well-being.

In Islamic culture, the pollution of green spaces is strictly prohibited. The Messenger of God explicitly forbade Muslims from urinating under fruit trees or palm trees with dates (Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, 1984, vol. 4, p. 4). This prohibition is due to the presence of angels assigned to those trees (Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, 1984, vol. 2, p. 32). It is worth noting that the Messenger of God (PBUH) extended this prohibition to everyone, emphasizing the importance of respecting and preserving the sanctity of fruit trees (Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, 1984, vol. 4, p. 4).

Imam Reza narrated the significance of observing nature, stating that looking at a green tree brings a sense of refreshment, النَّظَرُ إِلَى الخُضرَةِ نُشرَةٌ (Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, 1983, vol. 2, p. 40). This highlights the beauty and serenity found in contemplating the natural world.

In various hadiths, Muslims were explicitly forbidden from cutting down trees. Imam Sadiq emphasized that it is not permissible to cut a date tree, warning of the punishment that God will send upon those who do so, لاتَقطَعُوا النِّمارَ فَيَبعَثَ اللهُ عَلَيكُم العَذابَ صَبًّا (Koleyni, 1969, vol. 5, p. 264). The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also stated that whoever unnecessarily cuts down a cedar tree will have their head placed in the fire on the Day of Judgment (Majlisi, 1982, vol. 63, p. 113). Imam Sadiq further emphasized the prohibition of cutting down fruit-bearing trees, as severe punishment awaits those who engage in such actions (Hor AamiliAmeli, 1988, Vol. 19, p. 39).

However, it should be noted that cutting down a tree is not prohibited if it is done for a legitimate purpose and replaced appropriately. It is mentioned that Imam Kazem himself cut down a cedar tree but planted a grape tree in its place (Koleyni, 1969, vol. 5, pp. 263-264). This signifies the importance of balance and responsibility when it comes to tree management.

Amir al-Mu'minin narrated that one of the factors contributing to a longer life is to refrain from cutting down green trees unless absolutely necessary (Majlisi, 1982, Vol. 73, p. 319).

The significance of green spaces for humanity is so great that even in times of war, it is prohibited to destroy trees, fields, and the green areas of the enemy. The Prophet explicitly forbade actions such as setting fire to palm trees, redirecting water to harm the enemy, and burning their fields. He said, "Do not set fire to palm trees in war" (Hurr al-Amili, 1988, vol. 15, p. 59).

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) quoted the Holy Prophet, saying, "Proceed in the name of God, with the assistance of God, and in the path of God and the Messenger of God. Do not cut down a tree unless you are faced with an emergency" (Hor AmeliAL-Hurr al-Amili, 1988, Vol. 15, p. 58, H19985). This highlights the importance of preserving trees and the natural environment, even during times of conflict, unless there is a compelling necessity.

It is reported from Amir al-Mu'minin that the Prophet explicitly prohibited the cutting or burning of fruit-bearing trees, emphasizing that this prohibition applies both during times of war and in general. Such actions should only be undertaken if they are for the benefit of the Muslim community, اِزرَعُوا و اغرِسُوا وَاللهِ ما عَمِلَ النّاسُ عَمَلاً اَجَلَّ و لا أطيَبَ مِنهُ (Nouri, 1982, vol. 11, p. 127 - H 12618).

In the Islamic perspective, giving attention to the environment

and engaging in agriculture is considered among the best actions. Imam Sadiq stated, "Plant and cultivate, for by Allah, people have not engaged in any action greater or purer than this" (Nouri, 1982, vol. 13, p. 461). This highlights the importance and virtue of engaging in agricultural practices and environmental stewardship according to Islamic teachings.

2-2. Water Preservation

Water is a vital component of the environment, and Islamic teachings emphasize the proper preservation and care of water resources. The Qur'an holds humans accountable for polluting the land and seas, stating that corruption has emerged as a result of their actions: " ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَ الْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ, Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned" (Rum: 41).

In the Qur'an, water and seas are acknowledged as blessings bestowed by God, designated as adornments of the earth. The verse states, "Indeed, We have made whatever is on the earth an adornment for it that We may test them [as to] which of them is best in deed" (Kahf: 7). This encompasses water as part of the blessings bestowed upon humanity for the purpose of testing their actions and determining who performs righteous deeds.

Islam also includes a religious injunction to protect and maintain watersheds. The Prophet Muhammad said, "There are seven deeds for which a person continues to receive rewards even after death, and one of them is the act of causing water to flow" (Helli, n.d., vol. 2, p. 110). This highlights the significance of preserving and ensuring the flow of water, emphasizing the importance of responsible water management in Islamic teachings.

Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of water conservation and utilization. Muslims are encouraged to store floodwaters for future use. The Prophet Muhammad stated, "Whoever prevents floodwaters from causing harm, the reward is with Allah" (Daylami, 1977, p. 175). This highlights the virtue of managing and controlling water resources during times of abundance to mitigate potential damage.

Water, being the source of life, holds great significance in Islamic teachings. It is recommended to conserve water even for minor acts such as ablution and worship. The Prophet Muhammad stated that those who conserve water for ablution will be granted a place in heaven alongside him (Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, 1984, vol. 1, pp. 34-35). The prescribed amount of water for ablution is one mudd, (less than one kilo), and for full-body washing (ghusl), it is one saa, (about three kilos). The Prophet emphasized that those who adhere steadfastly to his teachings will join him in paradise (Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, 1984, vol. 1, pp. 35-34).

Furthermore, Islamic sources promote the act of looking at water. The Prophet Muhammad and Imam Kazim stated that gazing at running water brings clarity to the eyes (Barqi, 1922, vol. 2, p. 6220). The Prophet also regarded the observation of seawater as an act of worship (Majlisi, 1982, vol. 10, p. 368). These teachings emphasize the appreciation of water's beauty and the spiritual benefits associated with its contemplation.

Imam Sadiq, may Allah be pleased with him, highlighted the essentiality of pleasant and abundant water for a good life. He emphasized that among the three factors contributing to a pleasant living environment, one of them is the availability of clean and fresh water, لا تَطيبُ السُكنى إلّا بِثَلاثٍ: (منها) الماءِ الغَزيرِ العَذبِ (Ibn Shubah Harani, 1983, p. 320).

Furthermore, Imam Sadiq strictly prohibited the pollution of water and stressed the importance of preserving its purity. He advised against harming or contaminating the water that is necessary for people's well-being and survival, لاتُفسِدْ عَلَى القَومِ ماءَهُم (Koleyni, 1969, vol. 3, p. 65). Additionally, specific instructions were given to avoid spitting into wells that provide water for consumption, emphasizing the need to maintain the integrity of such water sources (Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, 1984, vol. 4, p. 10).

Alternatively, it has been reported: "None of you should urinate in stagnant water" (Ibn Abi Jumhur, 2008, vol. 2, p. 187). Imam Ali also emphasized the importance of respecting the inhabitants of water and advised against disturbing them with urine and feces (Ibn Abi Jumhur, 2008, vol. 2, p. 187).

Neglecting the environment is believed to contribute to forgetfulness and cognitive decline. The Prophet of Islam regarded urinating in stagnant water as a factor leading to dementia (Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, 1984, vol. 4, p. 4).

Water is a divine blessing bestowed upon humanity and a fundamental human right. It is prohibited to deny others access to water, even during times of war. Amir al-Mu'minin, Ali, instructed one of his commanders, Jariyah bin Qudama, saying, "Even if you and your soldiers are on foot, do not deprive the rightful owners of water, and do not drink from any other source for your own pleasure" (Yaqoubi, n.d., vol. 2, p. 200).

During the Battle of Safin, Muawiya and his army obstructed the water supply to Imam Ali's army and his companions. Eventually, the Imam regained control of the water. He commanded his soldiers, "Take as much water as you need and allow the enemy soldiers to access the water as well. Although they had previously oppressed us,

denying them water would make us oppressors like them" (Ibn Athir, 1988, vol. 2, p. 365).

During the tragedy of Karbala, when Imam Hussain encountered the first group of enemy troops and witnessed their intense thirst and the scorching heat, he compassionately said, "Give them water to drink and quench their thirst so that they do not suffer from dehydration" (Tabari, 1992, Vol. 5, pp. 400-401).

In ancient warfare, poisoning the drinking water of enemies was a common strategy. However, the Prophet of Islam strongly condemned this method of warfare. In his teachings, the Prophet explicitly forbade the act of poisoning the enemy's water supply (Koleyni, 1969, Vol. 5, p. 28).

2-3. Earth Protection

In Islam, one of the religious obligations is to safeguard the land and strive to improve it. Amir al-Mu'minin emphasized the importance of divine piety regarding different territories and reminded his companions that they are responsible not only for their own lands but also for other regions of the earth (Sharif al-Radi, 1369/1990, sermon 166-167). This responsibility entails the duty of protecting and preserving the land.

Imam Ali, in his advice to Malik Ashtar, highlighted the significance of land settlement, stating that more attention should be given to cultivating and developing the land rather than focusing solely on collecting taxes. He emphasized that the provision of taxes is a direct result of successful land settlement (Sharif al-Radi, 1990, letter 53). Islamic sources also emphasize the encouragement for Muslims to settle barren lands, with Imam Ali stating that whoever settles and cultivates the land becomes its rightful owner (Tusi, 1980, vol. 4, p. 145).

Imam Sadiq states that there are three things essential for a happy life, and one of them is having soft and arable land, تَطيبُ السُكنى إلّا بِثَلاثٍ: (منها) الأرضِ الخَوّارَةِ (Ibn Shubah Harani, 1983, p. 32). Islamic teachings emphasize the cleanliness of both the external environment and the household. It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam to " اكْنِسُوا أفْنِيَتَكُمْ, sweep your sanctuaries" (Hor Ameli, 1988, vol. 3, p. 571). Imam Reza also advised that sweeping the threshold of the house will bring about increased sustenance, كَنْسُ الْفِنَاءِ يَجْلِبُ الرِّزْقَ (Nouri, 1982, vol. 3, p. 4560).

In Islamic sources, polluting the environment is strictly forbidden. The Prophet of Islam mentioned three groups that God curses for their wrongful acts, and one of them is those who pollute public places, shade trees, parks, and areas where passengers disembark (Hor Ameli AL-Hurr al-Amili, 1988, vol. 1, p. 325, chapter 15). Imam Kazim also emphasized the importance of avoiding the emptying of roads (Nouri, 1982, vol. 7, p. 242). The protection of communication routes is highlighted in various hadiths, and it is considered an act of charity to remove obstacles and sources of annoyance from the pathways (Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, 1989, vol. 1, p. 32).

2-4. Air and Energy Protection

Imam Sadiq emphasizes that fresh air is one of the essential components for a happy life. He states that life is not complete without three things, and one of them is the presence of clean and fresh air, لا تَطيبُ السُكنى إلّا بِثَلاثٍ (منها) الهَواءِ الطَّيِّبِ (Ibn Shubah Harani, 1983, p. 320). Additionally, Islamic teachings discourage insulting or cursing the weather, even when it becomes turbulent. The Messenger of God advises against cursing the winds, as they serve various purposes such as bringing good news, warnings, and contributing to fertilization. Instead, one should seek God's blessings and protection from any

potential harm associated with weather conditions (Salmi Samarqandi, 1960, vol. 2, p. 239).

Furthermore, energy derived from the earth is another significant aspect. Imam Sadiq states that the stability and continuity of life in this world depend on three factors, and one of them is the presence of fire or fuel energy (Ibn Shubah Harani, 1983, p. 321). This highlights the importance of energy resources derived from the earth to sustain various aspects of life.

3. View of the Christian Scriptures

The Christian scriptures provide guidance on the preservation and care of trees, waters, and lands, offering instructions that we will explore further.

3-1. Tree and Plant Protection

In various passages from the Bible, trees and plants are described as blessings bestowed by God for humanity's stewardship. In Genesis 1:26, during the account of the creation of the environment, God declares: " Indeed, I gave you all the grass that bears eggs on the whole earth and all the trees in which the fruit of the tree bears eggs, to be food for you. I gave every green herb for food " (Genesis 1:26-31).

In one of the Psalms, Prophet David sings:

> The trees of the LORD are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted; Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork, the fir trees are her house. The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats and the rocks for the conies. He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down. Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth (Psalm 104:16-20).

In the New Testament, Jesus employs nature as a means to caution his followers about worldly concerns. He says,

> And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these (Matthew 6:28-34).

This serves as a reminder of God's care for His creation and encourages trust in His provision.

Within Christian scriptures, there is a commandment not to cut down trees during times of war. This principle is also found in the Torah, specifically in Deuteronomy:

> When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an axe against them: for thou mayest eat of them. Only the trees which thou knowest that they are not trees for meat, thou shalt destroy and cut them down; and thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee until it is subdued (Deuteronomy 20:19-20).

This instruction emphasizes the value of preserving nature, even during times of conflict.

In a particular battle between the Israelites and the Moabites, God commanded the Israelites to engage in destructive actions. The verse states, "And ye shall smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree, and stop all wells of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones" (2 Kings 3:19). As the attack commenced, the Israelites carried out these instructions, destroying cities and covering the fertile fields with stones, while also cutting down all the good trees: "They destroyed the cities, and each of the soldiers threw a stone towards the fertile fields until finally all the

fields were covered with stones" (2 Kings 3:25).

Furthermore, in the Gospel of Matthew and Mark, Jesus Christ performs a miracle involving a fig tree. Jesus finds a fig tree that is not bearing fruit and curses it, causing it to wither and dry up (Matthew 21:18-20). This incident serves as a symbolic act to convey a message about faith and spiritual fruitfulness.

It is important to note that these passages reflect specific historical and contextual events within religious texts and should be understood in their respective contexts. They may serve as lessons, examples, or accounts within the broader narratives but should not be seen as universal commands or teachings on the treatment of trees or the environment.

3-2. Water Protection

In the Old Testament, there is an account of a covenant made by God to preserve nature through storms, floods, and other natural phenomena, rather than to destroy these blessings so that everyone can benefit from them. This covenant is established during the story of Noah's flood. According to the Torah, the flood is a global event that engulfs the entire earth, wiping out all creatures and humans, except for those aboard Noah's ark along with his companions and family. After the ark comes to rest on dry land, God engages in a conversation with Noah regarding the preservation of nature. It is during this conversation, which marks God's covenant with Noah, that the rainbow is introduced as a sign of this agreement. God says:

> And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go

> out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall the waters of a flood cut off all flesh; neither shall there be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I set my bow in the cloud, which shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth (Genesis 9:8-13).

In the Bible, the seas are regarded as a divine blessing. David, in the Psalms, expresses awe and gratitude for the vastness and abundance of the sea, where countless creatures, both small and great, dwell. Ships sail upon its waters, and even the mighty leviathan, a creature made by God, frolics within it. All of these creatures depend on God for their sustenance, as He provides them with their food at the appointed time (Psalm 104:25-27).

In the Bible, one of the common tactics in warfare is to cut off the enemy's access to drinking water by blocking springs and water reservoirs. In a battle between the Israelites and the Moabites, God commanded the Israelites to halt the flow of all water springs: "And you shall stop all the springs of water" (2 Kings 3:19) The Israelites carried out this command by closing off all the springs during their attack: "They closed all the springs" (2 Kings 3:25).

Similarly, when David sought to conquer the city of Rabbah, he first took control of its water reservoirs. The commander of David's army sent him a message, informing him that they had captured Rabbah and its water reservoirs. The commander urged David to bring in additional soldiers to secure the city and achieve a complete victory. Consequently, David led his troops to Rabbah, captured the city, and took its inhabitants into captivity:

> Reba and its water reservoirs are in our possession. So bring the

rest of the soldiers and capture the city so that the victory will be completed in your name. So David marched to Rabbah and captured It, and took the Inhabitants of that city into captivity (2 Samuel 12:26-31).

3-3. Earth Protection

In Deuteronomy, there is an emphasis on the importance of maintaining cleanliness in the environment as an expression of love and care.

In the Old Testament, there is a commandment that emphasizes the importance of maintaining cleanliness and purity in the camp when going to battle. It states that God is present among the people, delivering them and granting them victory over their enemies. Therefore, they are instructed to keep themselves free from any wickedness or uncleanliness so that God does not turn away from them:

> When the host goeth against thine enemies, keep thee from every wicked thing. For the LORD thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy command be holy: that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee (Deuteronomy 23:9-14).

Additionally, another commandment related to the environment is the law of resting the land after six years of planting. This law promotes the sustainable use of the land and encourages a period of rest and rejuvenation. After six years of cultivation, the land is to be left uncultivated for one year, allowing it to replenish its nutrients naturally. This practice ensures the long-term fertility and productivity of the land. As an example:

> And the LORD spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai, saying, Speak

unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the ground keep a sabbath unto the LORD. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land. And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and thy servant, and thy maid, and thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee, And for thy cattle and the beast in thy land shall all the increase thereof be meat (Leviticus 25:1-7).

3-4. Analysis of Environmental Protection In the Holy Texts of Islam and Christianity

Both Islam and Christianity place great emphasis on the protection of the environment, recognizing it as a divine blessing that brings numerous benefits. The religious texts of both faiths contain various instructions and teachings regarding environmental conservation.

In the Islamic holy texts, there are specific teachings regarding the preservation of trees. Trees and plants are considered a blessing bestowed by God, meant to beautify the earth and serve as a test for humanity. Muslims are entrusted with the responsibility of safeguarding the environment, and they will be held accountable for their actions towards the earth on the Day of Judgment. The Qur'an even describes those who destroy the earth and its resources as the most severe enemies (الـد الخصـام). Furthermore, the Qur'an encourages believers to travel across the earth and reflect upon the wonders of creation.

Similarly, in Christianity, the protection of the environment is considered important. While specific instructions regarding trees may vary, the broader theme of stewardship and responsible care for God's creation is present. Christians are called to be mindful of their actions and to act as caretakers of the earth, recognizing the divine hand behind its existence.

Both Islam and Christianity emphasize the significance of studying and appreciating the earth's creation, promoting a deeper understanding and respect for the environment. These teachings serve as a reminder of the responsibility entrusted to believers to preserve and protect the natural world.

Planting trees is considered an act of worship and charity in the teachings of the Prophet of Islam. It is believed that even after a person's death, they will continue to receive rewards for every tree they have planted. Muslims are encouraged to plant trees, even if it is just one tree in their lifetime, as the reward will extend until the Day of Resurrection. Additionally, watering a tree is seen as an act of kindness towards a thirsty believer.

In Islamic traditions, there is a strong emphasis on preserving the environment around trees. It is forbidden to pollute the surroundings or harm the ecosystem in which trees thrive. The Prophet Muhammad teaches that cutting down trees without a valid reason invites divine punishment. Protecting trees is believed to contribute to a longer and healthier life.

Looking at greenery is said to bring a sense of freshness and tranquility. Islamic teachings highlight the importance of connecting with nature and appreciating the beauty of God's creation. Moreover, agriculture is regarded as one of the noblest endeavors in the sight of God, as it involves nurturing the earth and providing sustenance for humanity.

Overall, the teachings of Islam emphasize the significance of tree planting, environmental preservation, and the positive impact it has on individuals and society.

Trees, plants, and flowers are regarded as beautiful adornments in both Christian and Islamic scriptures, although there are similarities and differences in their teachings regarding cutting down trees during war. In both traditions, it is forbidden to cut down fruitful trees, except in cases of necessity. However, in the Christian scriptures, it is permitted to cut down unfruitful trees, whereas in the wars of the Old Testament, there are instances where cutting down good trees and fields of enemies is commanded.

The protection of waters and seas is emphasized in the Quran, where God blames humans for polluting the oceans and recognizes them as blessings bestowed upon humanity. Islamic hadith texts emphasize the act of making rivers flow as an act of charity. It is narrated that those who control and restrain floodwaters will be rewarded with heaven. Looking at water and the sea is considered a source of light for the eyes and an act of worship in Islamic traditions. Clean water is recognized as one of the three essential elements for a desirable human life. Furthermore, the Islamic holy texts strictly forbid polluting and urinating in water.

Conclusion

Both Christian and Islamic scriptures underscore the importance of preserving the environment, including the protection of trees and the cleanliness of water sources. They recognize the blessings provided by nature and emphasize the responsibility of humans to steward and care for these gifts.

In the Christian scriptures, a covenant is established between God and Noah after the flood, assuring that humanity will not be destroyed by another flood. As a sign of this covenant, God creates the rainbow.

Both Islamic and Christian scriptures recognize the seas as a blessing from God. However, there is a distinction between these texts regarding the enemy's access to water during times of war. Islamic teachings do not permit the prohibition of the enemy's access to water, even in the midst of battle. It is also forbidden to contaminate the enemy's drinking water with poison. On the other hand, in the Old Testament, blocking springs and preventing the enemy from accessing drinking water was sometimes employed as a method of warfare.

In the Qur'an, God reproaches humanity for polluting the earth and emphasizes human responsibility for the planet. Imam Ali, in his writings, advised his government to prioritize land development over tax collection. Islamic teachings uphold the principle that those who cultivate barren lands become their rightful owners. The Islamic sacred texts consider a healthy earth as one of the three elements necessary for a high-quality life. It is narrated that a servant entered heaven solely by removing a thorn from the path, highlighting the significance of small acts of environmental care.

The Old Testament contains an instruction regarding the protection of the land, which is the law of resting the land after six years of planting, allowing it to rejuvenate.

Both Islamic and Christian religious texts share a common emphasis on preventing environmental pollution. Narrations in these texts condemn those who pollute the environment, roads, and parks, as they are cursed by God. In the holy scriptures of Islam, the significance of healthy air is highlighted as one of the three factors

essential for a high-quality life. Additionally, traditions in Islam forbid insulting the winds, even when they are fierce or angry.

While access to fire (energy) is recognized as a factor in life's stability, the Christian scriptures do not specifically address the protection of healthy air as mentioned in Islamic teachings.

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