

A Comparative Study of Justice from the Viewpoint of Shahid Motahhari and Aristotle

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Abstract--

Introduction:*The concept of justice is one of the fundamental principles of development, human evolution and civilization. The purpose of this research is the comparative study of justice from the perspective of Shahid Motahhari and Aristotle.*

Method:*This research method was used in this study Library and data collection was done through taking note from the reference books, articles and valid manuscripts.*

Discussion:*The results showed that Aristotle, as a great Western philosopher and Shahid Motahhari as an Islamic thinker and philosopher, both regard justice as one of the central virtues; Aristotle defines justice, the final good of humans, as the soul's activity in accordance with virtue and regards it as "average" in opposed to going to extremes. In Aristotle's view, justice is a complete virtue. In Motahhari's view, justice has a spiritual and ideal face and is not subject to the taste or desire of human beings. In this approach, justice is defined and achieved in the strict conformity with the objective "right"; it is expressed as observance of an individual or object's entitlement. In the religious and Islamic view, it cannot be reduced to the satisfaction, desirability, or social contract which constitutes the epistemological basis of liberal justice".*

Conclusion:*Understanding the concept of justice by Aristotle as the "average" is rather conceptual and, in practice, its application is complicated and sometimes impossible; in Motahhari's view, justice is objective and a criterion that must become practically a norm. His view of justice in terms of objectivity and practicability is more useful.*

Keywords--*Shahid Motahhari, Aristotle, Justice.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In all human civilizations even primitive tribes, justice has been and still is fundamental and the basis of human action; justice as the center of human development, progress, and excellence, is a major concern of all thinkers, especially philosophers, who claim to design the "utopia" and a superior civilization. This attribute exists in all aspects of the Islamic system. Our leaders have sacrificed their lives for justice. A prominent example of this is Ali (justice), who martyred for "his justice" (Motahhari, 2006: 20). For Professor Motahhari, justice is "the right that every human being has acquired through his creation and his own work and activity." He sees the opposite of justice as oppression, which means that when two people are on equal footing, they should not withhold one gift from one

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and do not withhold another. In view of the above definition and its introduction, it seems that he also considers justice be derived from the human nature (Motahhari, 1993: 259). Marxists believe that justice is possible, but not by human means, because man is unable to bring about justice. They argue that educating the human desiring sincerely justice is not possible and, on the one hand, reinforcing the intellect and human knowledge to realize that as his good is not practical; justice must be achieved through the economic means. They believe that the economic transformations created by the economic instruments lead societies to capitalism and then to socialism in which justice is inevitably achieved (Motahhari, 1993: 264). The relation between justice and freedom was widely resonated from the past three centuries, following the Great French Revolution. The important proclamation of the French revolutionaries and the spread of liberal and socialist thoughts and the opinions of some scholars of social contract theory like Locke were also at the center of important political and social controversies (Locke, 2005: 384). Aristotle defines "justice in the specific sense of the word as considering persons and objects as equals It is important to balance the benefits, losses, duties, and rights of individuals. So in the definition of justice we can say: it is a virtue by which everyone must be given what is determined for him" (Ahmadi, 2013: 8). According to the discussion of virtue, Aristotle in his definition of justice refers to the concept of "average" and considers the foundation of justice to be modest in everything (Allam, 1997, 1: 134). Moreover, in his view, justice is a moral complete integrity, because acting on it is a practice of virtue altogether (Aristotle, 1985: 126). Majidi and Omidi (2018) in a research sought to compare the pattern of justice between the two intellectual movements of Neosadriyah and communitarianism with a focus on Shahid Motahhari and Michael Walzer's views. The result Showed, Shahid Motahhari considers the social rights prior to the individual and disagrees with the maximal relativism and pluralism in the principles of distribution, and Walzer insists on the independence of each domain of "domination" and "monopoly", by specifying eleven areas of justice. Therefore, considering the importance of the subject, the most important issue in the present research is a comparative study of justice from the perspective of Shahid Motahhari and Aristotle.

Method

This research method was used in this study Library and data collection was done through taking note from the reference books, articles and valid manuscripts, by rational and logical analysis of issues based on two thinkers' viewpoints.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

Justice is one of the internal and innate desires of human beings, and, according to his own healthy nature, every human being disgusts inequality and discrimination. Justice has a higher status than some spiritual values, as we read in an Islamic tradition: They asked Imam Ali (AS): which is superior justice or forgiveness? He said: "Justice puts everything in its place, while forgiveness takes it away. Justice is the public management of the people, while forgiveness involves a specific group, so justice is noble and superior" (Nahj al-Balagha, Wisdom 427). Throughout the history of human thought, many scholars have taken note of it and each presented a concept appropriate to their views. In this article, we briefly compare justice from the viewpoint of Motahhari and Aristotle

Justice from the perspective of Shahid Motahhari

According to Shahid Motahhari, the idea of justice is one of the essential and general human considerations, because it emphasizes two other principles that are both essential and general, namely "good and evil" and "natural civilization and employment". He therefore considers the true meaning of human social justice to be the observance of human rights. In his view, justice relies on two things: one's rights and priorities, that is, human beings receive a right and priority over one another; the other is that human beings are created so that in their work they employ necessarily some kind of considerations as an instrument and use it to achieve their natural ends. Those ideas are a series of "performative" ideas specified by the "musts" (Motahhari, 1994: 81).

Professor Morteza Motahhari offers three meanings for the word justice:

1. Being balanced

If we consider a set or a compound that has different components and has a specific purpose, to achieve that goal, certain conditions should be met in terms of the amount of components needed and the quality of the components' relationship to each other, and only in this way, that set or compound can remain, make the desired effect and play the desired role. If a thing is proportionate, it is justice.

2. Equality and rejection of any discrimination

Usually when we say someone is just, it means that there is no difference between people, so justice is equality.

3. Observance of right

Observance of entitlements and granting to every rightful person what he / she deserves (Motahhari, 2001, 1: 78).

One of the important debates about the concept of justice is the question of the absolute and relative meaning of justice; in Islamic culture, the meaning of justice is absolute, because it is based on the real and innate human rights. Therefore, in all times and places it is not one, because human entitlements are always constant, uniform and absolute (Motahhari, 1993: 312).

Shahid Motahhari believes that justice has a direct impact on people's morality and therefore it is essential in thought and belief, individual morality and public behavior. In fact, the existence or absence of justice in society is effective in various aspects including:

1. Influence on thoughts and beliefs: One of the effects is that in the absence of justice in society, people turn to luck and any belief in it is rooted in the oppressions and injustices of society. Whenever the social justice is weakened and the entitlements are not respected, the rights of individuals are not respected, it is effective in exchanging jobs, personal accounts and parties, thereby the idea of chance reinforces in society (Motahhari, 2006: 94). Another effect of justice on thoughts and beliefs is pessimism, as a complaint about the times and the "part". It actually comes from

the fact that the speaker, despite the oppression around him, did not dare to express it and expresses pessimism (Motahhari, 2006: 95).

2. Influence on individual morality: Moderate morality is formed only in the light of societies in which organizations, regulations, and social rights are balanced. Because otherwise the individual and personal morality will not be balanced and in addition to the public, that particular class that benefit more will suffer too. The source of many moral corruption, mental distress, malice, and so forth begins here. Discrimination in societies also makes the souls of those injured, annoyed and revengeful, and transforms the souls of others into a traitor, jobless, helpless and wasteful. (Motahhari, 2006: 96).

3. Influence on public behavior: It will be much worse if injustice accompanies a sense of embarrassment and regret for the luxuries of others. As one suffers from seeing the benefits of others, so he/she is thus driven to theft, embezzlement, betrayal of public property and other sins in the public behavior scene (Motahhari, 2006: 97).

Justice from Aristotle's View

Aristotle, on the one hand, subjugates justice to the moral virtues and considers ethical virtues as acquired, in the sense that the moral virtues and justice are essentially acquired ones and are not resulted from our nature. On the other hand, the law he proposes, the "nomos", is not in its original sense, but the nomos means the laid down rules (Aristotle, 2014). Aristotle offers four reasons for the superiority of theoretical (contemplative) life: 1. Theoretical life in accordance with moral virtue results in the happiness of the lower stages, and this is the end of life as philosophy; 2. Reflection does not need for the external goods, and both (rational and moral) virtues equally require the essential benefits of life; 3. Theoretical activity is the only activity that is conceivable for the divinity; 4. Theoretical and reflective activity distinguishes human from animal (Aristotle, 1989, 2: 276-272). Aristotle is one of the thinkers who have a different division of justice.

1. Justice as the complete virtue

Aristotle defines happiness, the ultimate good of human actions (Aristotle, 2004, 1: 175), as "the activity of the soul in conformity with virtue" (Aristotle, 2004, 1: 189) and considers justice being at the top of the virtues that realize human happiness. For Aristotle, justice is a complete virtue, for justice requires the application of all virtues. Justice is also a complete virtue in which one can realize it not only in himself but also in relation to others (Aristotle, 2004, 2: 62).

2. Interpretation of justice

Aristotle interprets justice as the average between the extremes (Aristotle, 2004, 2: 55).

3. Social justice

Aristotle defines social justice in two general and specific terms: in general sense the justice means all respect for the rules and equality of citizens (Aristotle, 2004, 2: 62). In specific sense, two distributive and corrective

types constitute justice; in the distributive justice, the human dignity, money and other influential elements of society are shared among citizens. In the corrective justice, the transactions and relationships between individuals in society are corrected (Aristotle, 2004, 2: 77).

4. Justice as proportion

According to Aristotle, justice is not equality but proportion, and argues that everyone's position in society in terms of right must be as good as his or her competence (Enayat, 1972: 111).

In Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle raises an independent discussion of virtue. In the beginning of his second book, he divides virtue into two categories: "Intellectual virtues and moral virtues. Intellectual virtues emerge and grow through 'education' (meaning they require experience and time), while moral virtues are the result of 'habit' (Aristotle, 2014).

From Aristotle's point of view, as every virtue is the average of the two vices, in all instances of justice, we are confronted with the phenomenon of average, and the just person has in fact meticulously observed the average of two vices. Aristotle considered part of social justice to be natural and the other part to be legal. Natural justice (natural rights) has equal power everywhere and is not dependent on the agreement and disagreement of people; but in the case of legal justice the rules may change. On the relationship between our understanding of social justice and the purpose of the development of political society, Aristotle states that the purpose of the political society is not only to live but to live well (Vaezi, 2009).

III. CONCLUSION

The concept of justice is one of the most familiar words. It is also one of the most complex and debatable concepts; because of this complexity, it causes numerous analyses. In Aristotle's view, virtue has intrinsic value, and its goodness is not dependent on the likes and desires of individuals. Happiness means acting in accordance with virtues or the best of virtues. Aristotle seeks to re-establish the moral force of political laws. He wants to show that a deep faith in obedience to the laws that becomes his/her character as a result of the proper training of the citizen, makes him a good and faithful man. Shahid Motahhari points to aspects of the effects of justice in a number of cases, including influence on thoughts and opinions, influence on personal morality, and influence on public behavior. In his view, if the mass of the nation are loyal to the rights of the state and the state observes the people's rights, then the signs of justice manifest themselves. Justice is also based on the practice of law with the support of Islamic spirituality, which also avoids discrimination in society by creating a race for survival. In this system, people should be willing to give their rights to others willingly; of course, the government is also required to bring about justice in society. Thus, any system that fails in establishing properly the justice in society certainly provides the conditions for a revolution and another system.

Aristotle and Shahid Motahhari both regard justice as one of the primordial virtues and believe in its preference for the social system; however, there are subtle and important differences in their attitudes. Aristotle, like Shahid Motahhari, who considers the solidity of moral foundations as an important factor in the growth and prosperity of the individual and society, calls justice a moral virtue; for him in the shadow of the rational virtues, the man can bring about happiness for himself and society. In the moral system of Aristotle and Shahid Motahhari,

social justice is possible only if the society members have spiritual habits. Shahid Motahhari and Aristotle first introduce justice as an individual virtue through which one attains social justice. Finally, the administration of justice in different areas requires individual justice and human adherence to the moral values and acceptance of the general principles set by religion and reason. In Aristotle's view, justice in the realm of action and fulfillment is incomplete and in some cases impossible to access because it is not plausible to determine average for the ideal matters such as science, chastity, etc. However, for Motahhari, since justice is objective and real, is more observable, more measurable, more pathological, more futuristic; generally speaking, because the entitlement of the individual is objective and factual, the realization of justice is easier, more useful in practice, more effective in the social system.

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