



HUMAN FREEDOM: AN ANALYSIS OF THEORY OF JÜRGEN HABERMAS AND JOHN LOCKE

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ABSTRACT

Individual political philosophers have attempted to reduce the power of the political system and government and in contrast, to increase the individual liberties. In modern political philosophy, freedom has been elaborated more than other concepts and most political philosophers of different philosophical approaches have attempted to expand individual liberties. One of such philosophers is the John Locke, who has tried in work to design a limited and constitutional government to provide background for individual liberties. Further Experimental knowledge, individualism, tolerance, indulgence and other concepts of philosophical system of John Locke indicate that he intends to expand individual liberties. In the modern era, because of the emergence of totalitarian governments and domination of instrumental reason in the sphere of individual life, human freedom has been faced with major constraints. The dominance of political and economic system has subjected individual freedom to face a crisis. Jürgen Habermas who continuing the tradition of liberalism of John Locke is trying to prepare ground for liberation of individuals from domination of capitalism and the world of contemporary system. This research paper tried to analyze the attempts of these to thinkers as regards freedom and liberation within the framework of liberalism.

Keywords: Freedom, government, John Locke, liberalism, Jürgen Habermas, political philosophy

1. INTRODUCTION

Freedom is an issue that has been concern of the political philosophers over the past centuries. And the philosophy of John Locke and Habermas pays sufficient attention to this issue. It is one of the most important issues in the modern political ontology, Categories (freedom) in all its dimensions. Basically (freedom) can be called fundamental category of modern political philosophy and addressing the issue of study (human freedom) promptly enter from a political perspective to the field of political philosophy in this present text. Political philosophy as a way of philosophical thinking about politics is to understand and explain the nature of authority, obedience and subordination, the goal of society and the state, the government reasons, and the best way of organizing the political life of mankind in order to ensure freedom and justice basic goals of life. Each of the schools of philosophy in politics has explained these issues in a particular way (Bashiriyeh, 2007: 47). Further in other words, political philosophy is an intellectual activity which aims to address the social and political problems and solve them, and came to existence when the people began to focus on their rights versus state authority. at the beginning of the modern era by the validity of Philosophers such as John Locke and the philosopher Jürgen Habermas as a contemporary (and defenders of the Enlightenment and Modernity) In his philosophical system have been worked In addition to emphasis

on human freedom, providing some solutions in the political community. John Locke emphasized on the concept of freedom in the first few minutes and the early modern era and Jürgen Habermas emphasized on this matter as a contemporary and today human sympathy.

Moreover in modern times speak of rights and individual freedoms in the liberal form There has been a product of the work of John Locke, In response to political theory of his time about government (Divine Right of Kings) and its relation to the rights of individuals (citizens) defence the rights and freedoms and the role of the individual. According to the political theory of the Divine Right of Kings the rights and powers that Citizens have that is what the king can choose to grant them and they have no rights beyond what is not in the law. The king has earned his position from the divine right of kings (it is the basic human rights that Allah granted to the first king and moved to his descendants). The king position does not depend on the consent of those who are in subjection to him. So people have no right to challenge their king. In contrast the prevailing theory. Locke introduced theory of legitimate political authority. In other words, Locke theorized that what political authority and right to rule and is legitimate. Locke justified his political theory, relying on two basic concepts (natural law) and (natural rights). By which humans have rights and freedoms that are the same divine origin and will remain under any circumstances and who do not have even the king the right to abolish it. John Locke put emphasis on rights and human freedom, believed that we can theorized new political legitimacy for the ruling elite (government). This guarantees all the powers, rights and freedoms of individuals. Therefore political philosophers such as John Locke and Habermas have attempted in his philosophical system to focus and emphasis on human freedom

Moreover John Locke, the father of political liberalism in the West, has defended freedom in many ways. Jürgen Habermas as one of the latest living philosophers continues the liberal tradition of John Locke, and has made great efforts to expand freedom and individual liberty in the light of the communicative rationality. Jürgen Habermas by emphasizing on the concept of human freedom, offer understanding beyond the initial concept to John Lock. From the perspective of Habermas's intellectual tradition that belongs and the process of modernization in the West on the one hand has eliminated the old forms of domination and on the other hand has created its own forms of domination .Jürgen Habermas has worked on his project in that way he rebuild the concepts of subjectivity and self-determination and freedom in the philosophical tradition of humanism which is consistent with the social dimension of individual identity. It can be said Habermas, on the one hand is looking to live and description political modernity fundamental principles such as freedom, equality, humanism and critical rationalism. And the other hand critique of irrational distortions and strains of modernity. In this process, Habermas believes that positivist social science will become like a tool which enables some people to exert their power over others. Such an approach gave birth to positivistic wisdom in the formulation of modernity. In contrast to this kind of wisdom, Habermas emphasizes on critical and emancipatory modernity wisdom.

Jürgen Habermas claims that the abandonment of instrumental rationality and promoting understanding and dialogue between citizens can provide the groundwork for the expansion of individual freedom. In view of the importance of freedom for the people and philosophers, this paper then tried study theories of Jürgen Habermas and John Locke on human freedom from the perspective of political philosophy.

1.2. Conceptual provisions: Definition of Freedom

One cannot say that freedom is new concept but is as old as human history (Mill, 2006: 25). So there are as many definition of freedom as the number of people who define it. The concept of freedom is a term with many instances and a signifier with a lot of signified. Dual, triple and quadruple definitions have been provided for freedom. The dual ones involve the positive and negative aspects of freedom, which are accepted by many thinkers including Isaiah Berlin (see: Berlin, 1999).Further Triple concepts involve trilateral relations of freedom based on which the factor (a) is freedom from constraint, factor (b) is freedom to act freely and factor (c) is free. This relationship that was proposed by McCallum is widely accepted by scholars. At last, the quadruple concept of freedoms that was proposed by Feinberg consists of four kinds of freedom (outer, inner, positive and negative) (Khalili, 2008: 504).Therefore, triple and quadruple categorizations were criticized, and it seems that the dual concepts of positive and negative freedom are more acceptable.

1.3. Concept of Negative freedom

Some scholars hold a view, such as Isaiah Berlin and Constantine, that the negative freedom is a new concept that is more in tune with modern times. So for them, this concept of freedom is even older than positive concept of freedom. Isaiah Berlin defined negative freedom as negation and lack of intervention, or freedom from intervention of others (Gary, 2002: 34). Negative freedom has a long history in liberalism and is one of the issues that have received special attention from liberal intellectuals. Yet negative freedom can prepare ground for the creation and consolidation of pluralism based on acceptance of diversity and commensurability of the human goods, thus preventing the formation of the monistic view that underlies the formation of authoritarianism (Gary, 2000: 23).

1.4. Concept of Positive freedom

Positive freedom involves individual autonomy, acting according to rational requirements and participation in public power. Negative liberty requires non-intervention as much as positive freedom involves the rationality of the human mind. Positive freedom means authority and autonomy and is quite different from the negative freedom that means non-intervention of others (Berlin, 1999: 250). Therefore the positive freedom can be called or the freedom of the powerful. John Locke was a thinker who analyzed freedom in the light of liberation from the government and reduction of government's power.

1.5. Liberation

The concept of liberation is an amalgamation of the concepts of positive and negative freedom. However it is not simple synthesis of negative and positive freedom but it is broader and more extensive, and rather than relying on individual needs, it focuses on the lack of restriction and resistance to human needs as well as a critique of instrumental rationality that is the cause of metamorphosis of freedom. Therefore, the concept of liberation must be considered in connection with critique of instrumental rationality and criticism of the nation-state. Further the concept of liberation is one of the essential concepts of theories based on critical approach. It arrives at a new concept of rationality and freedom (communicative rationality and liberation) (Bozorgi, 1998: 247). The most complete and accurate critical view of the link with the concept of communicative rationality and liberation is found in the thought of Habermas. By reconstructing views of Marx, Weber, Lukacs and the Frankfurt School, Jurgen Habermas completes the unfinished project of modernity by going beyond the realm of necessity of domination to the realm of liberation and complete freedom (Habermas, 2002: 617-644). Consequently, there are three concepts of freedom, negative, positive and liberating freedom, and this paper tried to analyze views of John Locke and Habermas with respect to these concepts.

1.6. John Locke, Constitutional Government and Freedom

John Locke is an empiricist philosopher that addressed various issues including freedom. This paper aimed at to discuss the political philosophy of Locke with particular focus on the concept of freedom. John Locke believed that to reach certainty in knowledge, one must first and foremost know human faculty of knowledge and its validity and boundaries. The human is the focus of theory of John Locke, his descriptive-psychological method simultaneously makes his theory of knowledge into cognitive psychology (see: Sanaei, 1992). Therefore to understand political thought of John Locke on freedom, one must consider such topics as human nature, the state of nature, the social contract and the manner of rise of government. This is because it is from the study of such topics that manner of rise of government and the level and type of human freedom from such government are identified. Locke's political theory is based on the human nature. Therefore to Locke, humans are moral beings who are subject to moral and social rules. According to John Locke, man hears and heeds the call of duty. For John Locke, man is an altruist creature (Jones, 1991: 230).

John Locke believed that man doesn't naturally live in the state of perpetual war or fear of each other, but they are morally equal and free to do according to the law of nature. Locke believed that state of nature is based on the law of reason, and that that law teaches all how to live together equally and independently in peace and that no one is entitled to harm life, health, liberty, and property of other people. In John Lockian mental construct that is in the state of nature, man has natural rights to life and freedom and everybody shall not only respect his own rights but also others' right to life, liberty, and property, and everybody considers such rights and obligations as those provided for by the law of nature (Alem, 2008: 191). Although the Lockian state of nature involves

moral duties but there is a situation where there is no complete and guaranteed peace; although the rights are specified, but there is no final arbiter to ensure people's rights. So the state of nature has conditions in which although humans enjoy freedom, but they are at permanent risk of others infringing their rights. Moreover according to Locke, people who live in state of nature face three major problems: 1. the rules are not clearly defined, (2) there is no public authority that will guarantee enjoyment of natural rights, 3. finally, there is no generally accepted known referee to settle the dispute between people (Locke, 1988: 351). Hence, people who live in the state of nature agree for the purpose of getting rid of this pathological state to establish a government or civil society to preserve and protect their rights, including the right to life, freedom and property, all of which were considered by Locke as "property rights". John Locke says in this regard: "Although the human enjoys the right to freedom in state of nature, access to it is not certain, and such right is always subject to infringement by others, because like him, all are kings and equal. Thus, in such state, enjoying such property is not guaranteed at all. This causes the human to abandon that state despite it is close to freedom because it is affected with permanent fear, and to try to join other communities where his life, freedom and property would be placed under public security. The main reason to obey the government is protection of property and such rights as the right to life, liberty and property. The social contract of Locke is concluded between people, with no one excluded, because people conclude it between themselves. Under these conditions, people agree to transfer their executive power to the benefit of an authority that will then be responsible for maintaining social order. So people don't transfer all of the natural rights they had in the state of nature, but they only transfer the right to interpretation and application of natural law or the right to delimitation of natural rights to the newly established government.

Moreover the establishment of the government is according to Locke the natural result of the emergence of a competitive society and is a sign of evolution of the wisdom potential existing in the human. Consequently, the rational nature of man makes him institutionalize his natural rights or property (right to life, liberty and property) by the social contract (Sabzei, 2008: 79- 81). The basis of such contract that is aimed at ensuring the individual freedom according to law is property, property that according to John Locke is always associated with freedom. The Freedom means having the individual's power of taking action with no one having the right to violate or limit it. To John Locke, the first right is the right to property, without which no other right may be sustainable (Colletti, 1999: 39). John Locke's theory of property is the heart of his political theory. In his view, the main purpose of the government is to protect property and property precedes the political society and hence the legitimacy of the government should support and protect the property, that is, the right to life, liberty and property (Pouladi, 2005: 85-116).

It can be seen from the above discussions that the John Locke was concerned focused on freedom limited and constitutional government. John Locke is the philosopher of reason and freedom and his political thought started in the seventeenth century with viewing man as a rational and free creature. Therefore, Locke's view of freedom originates in the human decision-making reason. . Finally so it is obvious that John Locke is the philosopher of freedom, and is rightly called the father of liberalism and liberal tradition.

1.7. HABERMAS, COMMUNICATIVE RATIONALITY AND LIBERATION

The remarkable thing is that in the light of recent conceptual developments in the social sciences, including political science, the scope of the concept of freedom has encountered with another new concept called "liberation", which concept has received the attention of many scholars and critical schools, including a thinker called Jurgen Habermas. Further believing in the continuation of the Enlightenment beyond postmodernism, Habermas seeks to solve the problem of modernity and postmodernism skeptical objections through a systematic theory of communicative action in public space (Asgarkhani et. al, 2009: 293 -294). Actually, criticizing some aspects of modernity, Habermas has a sympathetic understanding of it, and calls it "unfinished project", which is capable of reconstruction. More clearly speaking, Jurgen Habermas argues that modernity has gone in two directions, one being cultural and communicative rationality and another being instrumental rationality and technical communication. Man in the modern era claim to domination of nature and nature and instrumental rationality affected the human as well, the creature of the human, technology, took control of the human. However Habermas believes that Western modernity has yet aspect, which is communicative rationality. So if cultural – communicative rationality had continued, the human

beings would have become rational and conscious, but in the middle of the way, cultural - communicative rationality was overcome by instrumental rationality. In other words, the system prevailed over the life-world.

Jurgen Habermas provides a different perspective from those of other members of the Frankfurt School, a new vehicle for the transition from modernity crisis and unlike them, taking into account the possibility of transition from system to life-world, he considers the possibility of liberation from the power and capital and achieving freedom, knowledge and individuality (Nazari, 2004: 390-391). The failure of modernity lies in the fact that influence of power and wealth through the ideology has reduced the role of man and his freedom and disrupted liberating inter-subjective communication. Therefore seeking to address these shortcomings and find solutions to this situation, Habermas suggests dialogue in public sphere, communicative rationality and deliberative democracy, and it is these areas that will provide for human liberation (Alem & PourpashaKasin, 2011, 154). Moreover the main problematic Habermas is that of modern society has deviated from its original path of rationality; the society that sought to bring freedom to human but was caught in the trap of domination and oppression, while it seemed modernism and enlightenment should necessarily lead the human to freedom and progress (Habermas, 1989: 106). Thus, Habermas places economic and social reality in the context of historical and philosophical idea to show how modern capitalist state undermines genuine social relations through injecting false consciousness into the bourgeois civil society, thus suppressing the historical and philosophical truth of the modernism so that the modern subject experiences domination rather than freedom at this historic moment in modern Western society.

Deviating from freedom of enlightenment, capitalist system brought about domination. Habermas's solution to get rid of this situation is to focus on the communicative rationality. Habermas's communicative rationality has two main characteristics: first, the limiting of reason to instrumental rationality is not acceptable; second, he provides a two-level conception of society, with one of them being based on the life-world, and other on system. Given the communicative rationality, Habermas believes in full defense of liberation potential of reason in continuing struggle for freedom. Communicative rationality involves the interaction between human minds and involves multilateral dialogue on rules about the truth that has a bilateral logic. According to Habermas, the existential and main core of communicative rationality is optional and causes unity and consensus in the two-sided dialogue. It is by engaging in a debate that people can become aware of each other's views and debates involving participation are based on equality and are free (Habermas, 2005: 49-50).

Therefore it can be said that Habermas is a thinker who is still thinking in the modern age and, unlike the post-modern philosophers who believed in the transition from modernity, he sees modernity as an unfinished project that should be rethought and completed. He believes that the instrumental rationality led to domination crisis led for modern humans and deprived the humans of freedom. To flee from the said crisis, Habermas focused on rationality of action and dialogue in the public sphere. Jurgen Habermas considered mutual understanding and dialogue as being liberating.

Conclusion

Freedom is not a new concept, but it is as old as the human history. This concept of freedom somehow divided the human. John Locke tried to provide philosophical argument in support of freedom through emphasis on human nature, natural conditions, social contract and constitutional government while Jurgen Habermas seeks to cause human liberation from the domination of the modern capitalist economic system through criticizing enlightenment, instrumental and mathematical reason, and by focus on such concepts as communicative reason, deliberative democracy and public sphere. The critical tradition tries to along with constructive criticism Enlightenment and also criticized the negative aspects of modern society, maintain element of liberating enlightenment. It is obvious that John Locke is the philosopher of freedom, and is rightly called the father of liberalism and liberal tradition, because he tries to justify constitutional government and prepare ground for freedom of individual from government. Critical thought in the contemporary world is the continuation of unfinished Enlightenment projects, and its aim not only is to eliminate shaped of dominance in pre-modern but also all forms of domination. Additionally, Locke looks to the meaning of human freedom from the Maximum concept of ownership that includes the right to the exclusive use of all the assets and belongings.

So it can be said in Locke's view concept of ownership, in broad terms, it is equivalent to the concept of freedom and this concept has proceeded of the government and any political organization. As for as narrative of human freedom is concerned Citizens of political community have exclusive right to own property as long as they do not infringe on the rights and property of other citizens of the community. In John Locke's view, what makes a government legitimate is the concept of universal consent that means consent of all nationals and citizens of rulers. Habermas tries to prepare ground for individual freedom in the era of capitalism. Criticizing instrumental reason, Habermas tries to highlight the liberating aspect of action rationality. Overall they both have certain commitment and concerns as regards the freedom and their political philosophy is an attempt to revive human freedom. However there is constant tension between individual liberty and authority of state. But one thing is clear that these political philosophers attempted a lot to balance the exercise of freedom and use of authority. Finally there is nothing like an ideal exercise of freedom and also there is nothing like just use of power.

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