

Dialogue among Cultures and Political Theory: Some Preliminary Notes

Seyed Ali Reza Hosseini Beheshti ¹

Arguments for the recognition of cultural diversity have led to a fundamental question in political theory: On what basis the process of political decision making should be formed to accommodate cultural diversity as a permanent feature of contemporary societies?

The aim of this paper is to examine whether 'dialogue' can be employed as a means in such a process. The first section of this paper is concerned with the nature and sources of cultural diversity. It is also important to see in what way cultural diversity implies problems which concern political theory. This is the concern of the second section. Next, I shall examine ways in which dialogue can be employed to aid the formation of political decision making process to accommodate cultural differences. In particular, I shall suggest that interpretations of dialogue such as Brenda Dervin's and David J. Schaefer's interesting discussion, which aims to transfer the burden of dialogue as a discipline from participants to procedures, may be useful so far as dialogue among cultures and civilizations is concerned.

Key words: Cultural Diversity, Political Theory, Overlapping Consensus, Modus Vivendi, Thick and Thin Moral Principles, Dialogue.

1. Assistant Professor Department of Politics, Tarbiat Modares University, E-mail: abeheshti2002@yahoo.com

Introduction

Over the last two decades or so, the recognition of the ever existing cultural diversity of human societies and different cultural communities has received the attentions it deserves. We observe nowadays, various arguments for theorizing the demand for the recognition of equal respect towards differences which for a long time had been ignored, or considered unimportant or arbitrary. Traditionally, cultural differences had been understood as a sort of commitment characterized as conservative and considered subject to assimilatory policies. Although to some extent, such arguments involve explaining the nature of such diversity and to explore why ways of life differ, they go much further and ask how we should respond to such differences. In this respect, the argument leads to a more fundamental question: On what basis the process of political decision making should be formed to accommodate cultural diversity as a permanent feature of contemporary societies?

The aim of this paper is to examine whether dialogue can be employed as a means in such a process. The first section of this paper is concerned with the nature and sources of cultural diversity. It is also important to see in what way cultural diversity implies problems which concern political theory. Next, I shall examine ways in which dialogue can be employed to aid the formation of political decision making process to accommodate cultural differences, particularly through

interpreting dialogues such as Brenda Dervin's and David J. Schaefer's interesting discussion, which aims to transfer the burden of dialogue as a discipline from 'participants' to 'procedures'. I do not claim that even in this respect the argument is conclusive, as my goal is to tackle the problem through shedding light on some of its different aspects for further investigation.

Our Changing and Diverse World

Contemporary states should be viewed as inhabited not by a single society but different societies with different cultures. The existence of cultural diversity and different cultural communities are not, however, new phenomena. It is probably as old as human social life itself. Various sources of cultural difference can be distinguished: some differences appear as the consequence of immigration, as in the case of the British Caribbeans or Asians; others are concerned with distinct territorially concentrated groups like Canadian Aboriginals and Kurds in the Middle East; and there are demands for the political recognition of some religious groups which wish to protect their community of faith, perhaps from what they conceive as the corrupted culture of the main society, like the Amish in the United States. All of these examples are related to cultural minorities. Yet there are cultures which cannot by any definition, be viewed as minorities, like feminists whose arguments concern a large section of society. I shall explain some of these sources of cultural difference a little further.

The first is the result of individual or group migration. Reasons for such migrations can vary: some seek somewhere to live a better life; others would escape the despotism and suppression of their native home, while still others may be forced to leave their own lands by an aggressive occupier. In many countries, immigrants are asked to adopt the way of life of the host country. They are expected to adjust themselves in such a way that the culture of the host country is not undermined. This means that when their traditions come into conflict with the dominant culture, they should either adjust or abandon those traditions so that the culture of the majority remains preserved.

The second source of cultural difference concerns territorially concentrated minorities. Again, the origins of a minority vary from one case to another. What they have in common, however, is that they have been settled in certain region(s) of a country for a considerably long time. The French Quebecois movement is an interesting example in this respect. It has resulted in changes in the divisions of power in Canada. As a result, the province of Quebec, with 80 percent francophone, has extensive jurisdiction over issues that are significant to the survival of the French culture, including education and language. However, many of such minorities, too, have been subjected to assimilation. The issues concerning the protection of the indigenous people of Canada, the Aboriginal people of Australia, and Indian Americans, are examples of this kind. It should be noticed,

however, that while in these democratic societies assimilatory policies were suggested (in most cases by liberals), such proposals often were supposed to work against discrimination, and therefore, viewed as affording the members of such minorities the very fundamental freedom of association, as a right to be guaranteed to individuals in a colour-blind constitution. This was the case when, for instance, in 1969 the Canadian government released a White Paper on Indian Policy which recommended an end to the special constitutional status of Indians. Accordingly, the government proposed that the reservation system, which had protected Indian communities from assimilation, should be dismantled [1].

Assimilation, therefore, was a way of dealing with those with a different cultural identity. However, there have been occasions when cultural groups have been granted partial autonomy. For instance, when the Ottoman Turks conquered much of the Middle East, North Africa, Greece and Eastern Europe during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, through the 'millet system' they allowed Jewish and Christian minorities not only the freedom to practice their religions, but a more general freedom to govern themselves (though in purely internal matters) with their own legal codes and courts [2].

There are some cases, however, which do not fit easily within the two categories mentioned above. For instance, when the culture of an individual or group is identified by religion, it is hard to consider

it as a case of either ethnic minority (e.g. the Afro-Caribbeans in Britain) or national minority (e.g. the Canadian Indians). For instance, although the *Satanic Verses* affair in Britain mainly concerned British Muslims from an Indian background, the publication of such literature may concern any British Muslim citizen regardless of his or her ethnic background. Another case which cannot be considered in either of the two categories is the feminist critique of the male-oriented structure of contemporary societies. It seems, therefore, more adequate to speak of diversity which result from different cultural identities.

Theorizing Politics for a Pluralizing World

Although the fact of cultural diversity has recently received recognition, it has taken place in a variety of forms as there are different views on the nature of such diversity and, consequently, different attitudes towards it: some consider it as a fact, and hold that although it is an inescapable characteristic of our societies, is not necessarily desirable. Others also accept it as fact, yet see many advantages which it can produce. Some groups consider it as a ground for demanding 'equal respect' for their identity which they feel they have had not received in the past; while others intend to use it as a means to assert the value of their own culture over others'. In the academic world, too, the problem has received much attention and it has been viewed from different angles and within different disciplines or in interdisciplinary studies. In

political theory, for instances, the different implications which cultural diversity has brought about have resulted in strong criticism of liberalism. In response, liberal thinkers have tried to accommodate it within their theories [3]. As Tariq Modood points out, the new pluralism means that the status quo needs to be reviewed in order to give proper institutional expression and political legitimacy to the pluralism:

Yet in order to do this we have to, not despite but because of the pluralism, re-think what we have in common and how to give that, too, an institutional and symbolic recognition and to let it have its due integrative weight [4].

The problem may lead us to more fundamental questions concerning the force of principles like toleration in determining the kind of politics in multicultural societies. In the *Satanic Verses* affair, for instance, the demand was not concerned with whether the Muslims way of life should be tolerated by the rest of the society, but whether and how far their demand to restrict the freedom of speech was legitimate. If the British Muslim community is to be considered as a group of citizens with a distinct cultural identity, should their demand be granted? A question which follows is on what ground can cultural communities make their demand for equal respect? And when it comes to the politics of multicultural societies, on what ground should

political decisions be made so as not to undermine the cultural identity of their different cultural communities? Can and should the state be neutral towards different cultures? If not, to what extent can the state meet the demands for cultural plurality?

In this regard, to examine the modern concept of political and national identity provide a good starting point. Within the context of modern politics, as citizens of a certain state, we usually tend to think of our nationality as a singular cultural identity. Most modern nations, however, consist of disparate cultures. Such a cultural diversity and the growing demands for equal respect could be in part a result of the process of globalization. According to S. Hall, there can be three possible consequences of globalization on cultural identities: (i) that national identities are being eroded as a result of the growth of cultural homogenization; (ii) that particularistic identities such as national identity are being strengthened by the resistance to globalization; and (iii) that national identities are declining but new identities of hybridity are taking their place [5]. Hall argues further that "globalization does have that effect of contesting and dislocating the centered 'closed' identities of a national culture"[6].

To identify one's cultural identity with national identity was partly due to the modern conception of human nature and partly due to the kind of rationality on which modernity relies. As for the conception of man, the concept is changing and many interpretations are offered as more adequate and more acceptable ways of understanding the

actual characteristics of man. For instance, against the modern atomistic concept of the self which views persons as rational individuals who freely choose their own way of life, regardless of their attachment to the communities of which they are members, contextualist arguments underline the significance of the social matrix in the formation of the self. The self is now viewed as situated, a narrative animal, a cultural creature and possessing dialogical identity [7]. Or according to the post-modern account, the post-modern subject, in contrast to the Enlightenment subject, is seen as having no fixed, essential or permanent identity [8].

And so far as the modern conception of man is the fruit of modern rationality, with its claims on universality and generality, it has been challenged by the critique of modernity since far from representing universal moral principles, it reflects a particular kind of human reasoning. Contrary to the modern project, which undertakes providing rational frameworks applicable to human society as such, critics have shown the difficulties, which undermine achieving such universal frameworks. It has been argued that moral terms have minimal and maximal meanings, that we can standardly give thin and thick accounts of them, and that the two accounts are appropriate to different contexts and serve different purposes [9].

Hence, the argument of universality versus particularity which underlines the contradictory nature of modern politics: it has come to be a politics of universalism with the aim of equalizing

rights and entitlement on the one hand; and the politics of difference which concerns the recognition of the unique identity of individuals or groups and their distinction from others, on the other [10].

Multiculturalism and widespread demands for the recognition of differences have increasingly focused on criticism of the nature of knowledge, philosophical articulation and scientific research methods. The idea of decolonizing methodologies, for instance, urges the awareness researchers of the force of cultural imperialism supported by institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imaginary and doctrines [11].

Facing the controversies mentioned above, perhaps the concept of theorizing politics is itself in need of re-conceptualization [12]. Departing the illusionary image of political theory as a scientific discipline whose task is to articulate universally valid claims based on moral and political philosophy, we may now think of two kinds of politics and consequently of two different level of theorizing political concepts: one at which cultural particularities are of central importance so that the distinction between different traditions of moral inquiry is at its fullest extent; and the other at which universally acceptable principles, though very thin, are required. The former forms the politics applicable within cultural communities since it is capable of securing the conditions for their self-determination as engaged in activities that constitute their conceptions of the good life; in the absence of

a shared conception of the good, the latter is doubtful value in providing any moral foundation thickly conceived for politics, yet suitable for relations between communities [13].

We may ask then: what kind of consensus is possible in a culturally diverse world such as ours? In order to answer this question, one possible way is to think of a kind of overlapping consensus which has been suggested by John Rawls and which is valued and accepted for moral, not prudential, reasons [14]. However, since it is based on liberal conceptions and, therefore, a process that may be experienced as coercion by those who do not share such conceptions, it is open to serious challenge by non-western cultures.

Another alternative is a *modus vivendi*, i.e. a prudential peace treaty among cultural communities. Divorced from thick moral arguments such as justice or freedom, it is to rely on thin principles. The most important of such principles, it may be said, is the maintenance of peace without which the very existence of human species is severely undermined. According to this view, the ultimate, and perhaps the only achievable, aim of such a political order is to maintain peace. An objection raised against this view, however, maintains that stability on the *modus vivendi* account is always fragile because a shift in the distribution of power would give a party an incentive to rewrite the terms of the contract so as to benefit him most.

In turn, it has been rightly pointed out by some

critics that even if it is granted that a Hobessian *modus vivendi* model would provide no guarantee against this occurrence, it is difficult to see how any other model does provide such a guarantee [15]. Moreover, even if a *modus vivendi* cannot be viewed as intrinsically moral, it is a precondition of moral life.

Indeed, what distinguishes Rawlsian ‘overlapping consensus’ from the *modus vivendi* model is not that former is necessarily more stable than the latter. The difference lies in the explanation that the former can provide for the undesirability of using forceful assimilatory means in moral terms; an explanation the latter cannot provide, since it is not involved in any moral claim but prudence.

There can be other alternative models too, such as appealing to a purely political ideal in form of the ‘civil association’ model proposed by Michael Oakeshott, or models offered by John Gray or Chantal Mouffe [16], which, as I have shown elsewhere [17], fall too short in staying out of cultural disagreement. As I mentioned above, however, my intention is not to represent a comprehensive survey or to suggest an exclusively acceptable model here, but to explore some significant aspects of the problem. The brief review presented above, therefore, may sufficiently serve my purpose.

Why Dialogue?

Now that the nature of existing cultural diversity in contemporary societies and its implications for

political theory is briefly sketched above, it is time to turn to the status of dialogue in the formation of politics in such societies. Before proceeding further, however, two precautions are in order:

The first concerns the scope of my argument. It has been argued above that when facing the existing cultural diversity of modern societies, we may think of two kinds of politics: one which provides an adequate understanding of the relationship *within* cultural communities, the other appropriate for governing the relation *between* such communities. Here I shall be concerned only with the latter. Thus I do not wish to deal with the ongoing dialogue within every culture.

And secondly, when talking about the relationship between cultural communities, it is important to avoid a possible misunderstanding. Since by cultural communities I do not mean formal entities such as states, my discussion about the relations between them do not necessarily refers to international politics. Whether or not an artificial entity like the existing nation-state system, even after an extensive critical re-evaluation, is capable of accommodating legitimate claims of cultural communities for autonomy, fall well beyond the purpose of the present essay, though the line of argument persuaded so far *does* reveal strong implications for alternative models; and rethinking the concept, role and functions of governments seem to be an unavoidable task for any theory which seeks effective accommodation of cultural diversity in the real world.

Whatever model of consensus we choose to adopt (Rawlsian "overlapping consensus", Hobbesian *mudos vivendi*, or some other models which were mentioned above), what follows is the means through which it can be achieved, and 'dialogue' can be considered as one such means. It can be argued that the importance of dialogue lies in the underlying acknowledgement of the recognition of existing diversity of cultures and civilizations and the right of being heard for those voices which has been ignored until very recently. Dialogue can also be considered as a means for mutual understanding. Although it may not transcend entirely certain obstacles like untranslatability and incommensurability as the consequences of deep differences between cultures, dialogue can be useful in clarifying the limits and nature of such problems [18]. Or from a more Hobbesian view, one may argue for the significance of dialogue for the maintenance of peace and order as the necessary condition of the existence of civil society. The important question, however, is to ask what kind of dialogue would be more appropriate in the dialogue among cultures.

Employment of dialogue in philosophical enquiries has a long history, perhaps as long as the history of philosophy itself. In the western tradition, it reminds us the Socratic way of philosophical deliberations, allowing for more systematic treatment of contrasting position of a person who continually presses his objection to the protagonist's case. From Plato's *Republic* in the ancient Greece to

contemporary Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* and Maurice Cranston's *Political Dialogues*, the dialogue form is used to approach philosophical questions in a dialectical spirit.

While the exercise of dialogue is as old as culture and civilization itself, in recent times a profusion of practices, techniques, and definitions has arisen around the term 'dialogue'. Before the linguistic and hermeneutic turn, the main purpose of using the dialogue form was the discovery of truth, the construction of arguments, and the clarification of minds [19]. The hermeneutic approach, however, upholds a dialogical conception of the grounds and context of knowledge in the human sciences. Hans-Georg Gadamer and Jurgen Habermas, for instance, view the process of understanding as a dialogue between the researchers of other cultures and the subjects whose lives and actions they study.

In Gadamer's view, to understand means for two people to understand one another and understanding is primarily agreement or harmony with another person. Even where there is no direct dialogue, as Austin Harrington describes, for Gadamer "[t]radition pre-structure the self-understanding of each present age and thereby binds us into dialogue with our collective past"[20]. And Fred Dallmayr points out, "[w]hat is particularly important in Gadamer's view of dialogue is its radically non-instrumental sense: dialoguing here involves not only an act of questioning but also the experience of being "called into question"- often in unsettling and disorienting ways"[21].

Habermas's 'Discourse Ethics' too is meant to settle differences through an on-going dialogue. "If we keep in mind the action-coordinating function that the normative validity claims play in the communicative practice of everyday life", he writes, "we see why the problems to be resolved in moral argumentation cannot be handled monologically but require a cooperative effort"[22]. He distinguishes his approach from Rawls's where the latter put the moral judge into "a fictitious 'original position' where differences of power are eliminated, equal freedom for all are guaranteed, and the individual is left in a condition of ignorance with regard to the position he might occupy in a future social order"[23], the former requires a "real" process of argumentation in which individuals concerned cooperate [24].

Gadamer's and Habermas's dialogical approach, however, have been criticized from different aspects. It has been argued, for instance, that since for them the term 'subject' of interpretation includes the thing produced and actions performed by these persons, and no verbal exchange is possible with inanimate things and actions, the majority of persons with whom dialogue might be conceivable will not be available for interrogation and, therefore, the term 'dialogue' should not be understood in any literal sense [25]. Another critique of Habermas maintains that "[b]y making validity claims the yardstick of proper communication, his model marginalizes or excludes modes of interaction and broad domains of human experience not

subsumable under argumentative reason"[26]. Taylor has observed pointedly the segregating boundary which, motivated by hypergoods, procedural ethical theories draw between moral goods. In Habermas's case,

"[T]he boundary between questions of ethics, which have to do with interpersonal justice, and those of the good life is supremely important, because it is the boundary between demands of truly universal validity and goods which will differ from culture to culture. This distinction is the only bulwark, in Habermas's eyes, against chauvinistic and ethnocentric aggression in the name of one's way of life, or tradition, or culture"[27].

I am not going to evaluate such criticisms here, because to do justice to hermeneutical ethics and in particular recent developments of Habermas's thought is beyond the purpose and limits of this paper. But even though it offers a more adequate understanding of the process of ethical argumentation within each culture, it seems to me that the failure of the communicative ethics in including a relatively large number of traditions of moral enquiry (to use MacIntyre's term) whose rationality differ from western modes of rational enquiry (including postmetaphysical views), or as Dallmayr describes as a "tendency to exclude or

'excommunicate' voices not congruent with Western style rationality"[28], makes it less attractive to be used in understanding possible ways of inter-cultural relations. As has been mentioned above, what is required here is a common ground formed by thin moral requirements. Any form of consensus which requires something more than our common moral sense about what is good, would fail as soon as it starts to articulate such moral sense in order to offer rationally defensible moral principles.

It is for this reason that I think arguments such as Brenda Dervin's and David J. Schaefer's in their 'Beyond Rhetorical and Representational Dialogue' [29] may be more useful in this respect. The aim of their discussion is to transfer the burden of dialogue as a discipline from 'participants' to 'procedures'. In order to do this, they offer a criticism on the idea of innocent dialogue, i.e. that dialogue is assumed to be a process which inherently makes better communication possible and inherently makes it easier to negotiate differences between contending interests. They proceed then to classify two modes of conceptualizing dialogue: 'rhetorical' and 'representational'; the former positions dialogue more as means to an end, whereas the latter views it as end in itself. Central to the rhetoric concept of dialogue is the assumed monistic concept of the truth and, accordingly, the purpose of dialogue as rhetoric is to persuade the uninformed and uninitiated as to the correctness of statements and arguments. In contrast, the aim of dialogue as representation is to include the voices of all relevant

parties as it holds that there is no one truth that can govern collective life and that divergent parties must advance their positions and then jointly negotiate and seek consensus and agreement.

Dervin and Schaefer then show a number of contradictions as dialectical paradoxes of dialogue, such as objectivity versus subjectivity, collectivity versus individuality, uncertainty in reality versus uncertainty in knowing, outcome versus process, thinking versus being, consensus versus resistance and creation and innocent dialogue versus negotiation of self-interests. They proceed to state briefly their own approach which they call 'dialogue as proceeding' which, as they claim, can transcend such contradictions. Accordingly, the modes of dialogue must move from attention to nouns to attention to verbs, i.e. from the *whats* and *whose* of dialogue to the *hows*. Central to this approach is the idea that what humans most universally share is the verbing of their life journeys and struggles.

It is still early to see the exact consequences of this approach and its precise distinctions with the other approaches since, as Dervin and Schaefer argue, their theory is in its early stages of development. Yet we may begin with their useful arguments and classifications even though we could arrive at different consequences. There are number of points which make the representational model of dialogue useful to the politics between cultural communities. First, since it opposes the monistic concept of the truth, the model acknowledges cultural plurality in a way compatible with cultural diversity as a permanent feature of the

contemporary world. Second, because the aim of this kind of dialogue is to include the voices of all relevant parties, unlike the liberal understanding of cultural difference, it does not suffer from excluding non-liberal cultures. Third and most significantly, it does not presume any thick moral principle as the basis of consensus among different cultural communities.

Conclusion

As I mentioned above, the politics between cultural communities cannot be understood in terms of thick moral principles. What is required is a non-moral basis on which different cultures can agree. I also argued that such a morally neutral basis is more like a Hobbesian *modus vivendi* than the Rawlsian 'overlapping consensus'. We may, for instance, argue that to believe in the sanctity of human life provides such a universally acceptable basis. We may also argue that peace and order, as the precondition of such a belief, would result in strong commitments to the stability of the proposed *modus vivendi* and, therefore, although not a moral principle in itself, could be considered as the precondition of a life morally valuable. As argued above, since it transfer burden of dialogue from participants to procedures, the 'dialogue as proceeding' model of dialogue may be employed to achieve such a *modus vivendi* among diverse cultural communities. However, whether or not the proposed model would pass all the tests, is an answer which is in need of further examination.

Notes & References

- [1] For an interesting discussion on the issue see for example W. Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community and Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), in particular chapter 7.
- [2] For a critical account of this system see for example W. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp.156-158.
- [3] Raz's 'Multiculturalism: A Liberal Perspective', *Dissent*, Winter 1994 and W. Kymlicka's *Multicultural Citizenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) are good examples of such revisions in the liberal thought.
- [4] T. Modood, 'Establishment, Multiculturalism and British Citizenship', *The Political Quarterly*, 1994, p.64.
- [5] S. Hall, 'The Question of Cultural Identity' in S. Hall, D. Held and T. McGrew (eds.), *Modernity and its Future* (Oxford: The Open University Press, 1992), p. 300.
- [6] *Ibid*, p. 309.
- [7] I have in mind here arguments offered by Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael Walzer and Charles Taylor respectively.
- [8] Cf. S. Hall, 'The Question of Cultural Identity'.
- [9] See M. Walzer's *Thick and Thin: Moral Arguments at Home and Abroad* (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).
- [10] See C. Taylor's 'The Politics of Recognition' in A. Gutmann (ed.), *Multiculturalism and 'The*

- Politics of Recognition*', (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).
- [11] A good example of works in this respect is Linda Tuhiwai Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies* (London: Zed Books, 1999).
- [12] Two interesting examples of such reconceptualization of academic disciplines are Wanda Teays's *Second Thoughts: Critical Thinking from a Multicultural Perspective* (California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1996) and Brian Fay's *Contemporary Philosophy of Social Science: A Multicultural Approach* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996).
- [13] I have discussed this point at a greater length in my *Theoretical Foundations of Politics in Multicultural Societies* (Tehran: Bogheh, 2002), (in Persian).
- [14] I have referred to the more developed model offered in John Rawls's *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992).
- [15] For the full argument see P. Neal, 'Vulgar Liberalism', *Political Theory*, Vol. 21, No. 4, November 1993, p. 636.
- [16] M. Oakeshott, *On Human Conduct* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957); J. Gray, *Post-Liberalism* (London: Routledge, 1993); C. Mouffe, *The Return of the Political* (London and New York: Verso, 1993).
- [17] See my *Theoretical Foundations of Politics in Multicultural Societies*, Ch 10.
- [18] For a discussion on these two problems see my article 'Theoretical Obstacles of Dialogue Between Civilizations' in Masuod La'li (ed.) *What Khatami is Talking About?* (Tehran: Nashre Ekhlas & Nashre Azadi Andishe, 1998), pp. 144-155. (in Persian)
- [19] For a detailed argument on this matter see Richard McKeon's 'Dialogue and Controversy in Philosophy' in (ed.) Maranhao, Tullio, *The Interpretation of Dialogue* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990) which examines the status of dialogue within the history of the western tradition.
- [20] Austi Harrington, *Hermeneutic Dialogue and Social Science* (London: Routledge, 2001), p.31.
- [21] Fred Dallmayr, *Dialogue Among Civilizations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p.27.
- [22] Jurgen Habermas, 'Discourse Ethics: Notes on a Program of Philosophical Justification' in his *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1999), pp.66-67.
- [23] *Ibid*, p.71.
- [24] *Ibid*, p.72.
- [25] Austin Harrington, *Hermeneutic Dialogue and Social Science*, p. 110.
- [26] Fred Dallmayr, *Dialogue Among Civilizations*, p.43.

[27] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p.88.

[28] Fred Dallmayr, *Dialogue Among Civilizations*, p.4.

[29] Brenda Dervin and David J. Schaefer, 'Beyond Rhetorical and Representational Dialogue', *Peace & Policy*, Vol. 6, No, 2001, pp. 29-33.

گفتگوی بین فرهنگها و نظریه سیاسی: برخی تأملات مقدماتی

سید علیرضا حسینی بهشتی^۱

امروزه مباحثی در خصوص به رسمیت شناختن گوناگونی فرهنگی پرسش بنیادینی را در نظریه سیاسی مطرح کرده است: فرایندهای تصمیم‌گیری سیاسی باید بر چه بنیانی استوار شوند تا بتوانند با تفاوت‌های فرهنگی، به‌عنوان خصلت ماندگار اجتماعات معاصر، سازگار باشند؟

هدف این مقاله ارزشیابی کاربرد گفتگو در این فرایندهاست. بخش نخست این مقاله به بحث درباره ماهیت و منشا گوناگونی فرهنگی اختصاص دارد. اینکه گوناگونی فرهنگی چگونه به پیدایش مسایلی در خصوص نظریه سیاسی منجر می‌شود، حایز اهمیت است که در بخش دوم مقاله مورد بررسی قرار می‌گیرد. بخش سوم معطوف به ارزیابی راههایی است که در آن گفتگو می‌تواند به‌عنوان وسیله‌ای برای این هدف به خدمت گرفته شود. در این بخش، بویژه بحث جالب توجه برندا دروین و دیوید جی. شافر مطرح خواهد شد که هدف آن انتقال مفهوم گفتگو، به عنوان یک رشته از مشارکت کنندگان به فرایندهاست. در بخش نتیجه‌گیری بعضی از نتایج حاصله مورد بررسی قرار می‌گیرد.

واژگان کلیدی: گوناگونی فرهنگی، نظریه سیاسی، مصالحه موقت، اجماع همپوش، اصول اخلاقی فربه و نحیف گفتگو

۱. استادیار، گروه علوم سیاسی، دانشگاه تربیت مدرس