The Philological Comparison of Semantic Denotation of "Justice" in Western and Islamic Political Philosophies

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Research Article

Abstract

The subject of the present article is the linguistic comparison of terms whose semantic foundation is linked with political 'justice', and the Muslim and European thinkers have used them in their opinions. This study aims at representing the lexical differences considered in 'coinage' and 'denotation' of any of these terms, making the status and structure of justice different in any semantic world. Paying attention to this fact can facilitate, and make precise, our understanding of the norms focused on justice as applied by the thinkers in this sphere. The main question is what the distinction between the items of the vocabulary network with semantic centrality of justice is. To answer, by relying on the philology method as a branch of interpretive methodology, we investigated the historical denotation of three words of 'justice', 'fairness' and 'equality'

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and explained the fundamental difference of the perception of the Muslim thinkers of 'justice', compared to the semantic world of western thinkers. The results showed that paradigmatic transitions are determinant in our perception of justice. This transition in the West has led the abstract perception of justice to the strategic level and practical equations. However, in spite of the change in political paradigms in the Islamic world and the alteration and evolution of the Muslims' philosophical system, the Muslim theorists have neglected the social extension of this fundamental concept.

Keywords

Introduction

Today, paying attention to the features of language has overshadowed the humanistic studies and has led to a growing consideration of perceptive approach and hermeneutic method (see: Dilthey, 2002; 2010; 1989; 1996). Two things have contributed to this state. First, "awareness of the executive role of language in understanding the man and the world" or "the linking role of language between the internal and the external worlds", and second, "discovering the delicacies hidden in the theoretic representation and construction of the *a priori* theories in the architecture of the social world". The consequence of this state is paying a serious attention to the historical structure of the humanities. Some even have proposed the idea that understanding is, basically, nothing except language and with the omission of language, understanding is closed, and with error in language, the link with the world is disrupted (Janicki, 2006). Humboldt says, "Understanding originates from the essential nature of human's language, and understanding itself is an internal and essential capacity, not an external one" (Sherratt, 2006, p. 100). Thus, without a right understanding of the denotations of words, the relationship with the worlds of objects and thoughts will be disputable and applying *a priori* theories for constructing social worlds will appear challenging.

In this study, we seek to investigate the scientific terms used in the 'theories of justice' with a semantic exploration through the philological method, and to answer the following question: What are the hidden semantic distinctions among the three terms of 'justice', 'fairness', and equality? This study aims at understanding the cultural versions of the theories of justice for clarifying the fundamental differences of this scientific term in the semantic world of Islam. Using the philological method for answering this question is preferred because it studies culture through language and meanings and can stress on the lingual feature of the culture to reread the intellectual

productions of thinkers in a critical way and focused on their cultural features. Although invaluable studies have been conducted regarding justice, the Persian speaking researchers have not, yet, dealt with the discussion on 'justice' from the angle of philology.

It seems that implicit attention of western theoreticians of justice to philological versions of terms such as 'justice', 'fairness' and 'equality' often remain hidden from the Muslim addressees. For example, this attention can be clearly pursued in John Rawls' *Justice as Fairness* and Michael Walzer's *Spheres of Justice: a Defense of Pluralism and Equality*. Rawls considers various images of the ideal of 'justice' and, in the above work, he seeks to control this diversity with the image he knows of 'fairness'. Rawls' perception of 'justice' is the same as 'fairness' and he thinks that, with this perception, one can achieve a society with just relations and structures. Walzer's view of that process is different. For Muslim theoreticians who have thought on justice, we may find the same differences. Expressing the linguistic versions hidden in these words make the norms advised in various semantic world understandable. The philological reading helps us, through representing cultural contexts, to approach the internal logic of the authors and understand them in the context of disputes wherein these theories and norms have been formed.

1. Methodology

The word 'philology' is composed of two ancient Greek words *philos* (φίλος) and *logos* (λόγος) and refers to loving words. Terminologically, philology is a science that investigates the meaning of lingual forms and explores the relationship between the signs and the context wherein they appear (Watkins, 1991, p. 24; quoted from Sharifi and Hajiyan-nejad, 1399 SH, p. 121). Philology, in Persian language, has been translated into *zabān-shinasī* and in Arabic into *fiqh al-lugha*. This old tradition is rooted in the interpretive school of Iskandariya. The classical

hermeneutic interpretive schools can be summarized into three schools of 'Pergamon', 'Iskandariya' and 'Antakiya'. Pergamon interpretive school was an adaptation of the Stoics' allegorical method of interpretation. Antakiya school was founded on the basis of literal and grammatical interpretation. And Iskandariya school gave importance to historical interpretation (Dilthey, 1996). Thus, philology – as a method – can be considered as the equivalent to historical interpretation of texts and scrutiny in their vocabulary depth, whose specific denotation has created distinct meanings in certain texts.

In ancient Greece, philology and history were coexisting and their common ancestor was poetry; and from this angle, it was separated from philosophy. This feature in the medieval ages, after translation of Bible into German by Martin Luther, was much considered by many Protestant theologians and prepared the ground for revival of that capsized tradition.

In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the Protestant theologians attempted to acquire a historical and philosophical perception of the scripture and reached, through an inquiry in the origins of the Old Testament, the Syriac, Hindi and most importantly Arabic sources. It was clear that for imposing the philological method on those sources, they would acquire a historical image of the abovementioned texts (Sharifi and Hajiyan-nejad, 1399 SH, pp. 121-122).

Up to the end of eighteenth century, the title '*philologue*' was used for priests who were learning Eastern languages and would search for the semantic roots of the scripture in the languages of the Eastern lands. The end of the process for revival of that forgotten tradition was efforts made by August Wolf and Wilhelm Humboldt, leading to the establishment of the science of philology for studying the ancient ages. That science was established, in 1777, as a scientific discipline. Referring to that science as a method was due to the efforts made by the prominent disciple of Wolf, called August Bockh. He revised his

teacher's ideas and redefined that science, turning it into a method for hermeneutical rereading of texts. Bockh considered philology as the equivalent for the whole scientific heritage of the ancient times and maintained that the whole history and culture of the past – including the human behaviors in the public arenas, political institute, compiling laws, religious thoughts and ethical and metaphysical beliefs – have a live and constructive presence in the roots of the words. Bockh stressed on his idea that philology can reconstruct a whole historical era (Wikisource, 1911). Calvert Watkins, one of the prominent contemporary philologists, has called philology the art of reading a text slowly. In explaining his statement, Jonas Carlquist writes:

"By reading slowly, we can find explanations and answers hidden between lines – both in real and in metaphorical sense. In philology, we learn to understand the 'text' and the 'mentality' created through precise study. Basically, reading slowly has been the most important duty of any philosopher that repeats the past for the new addressees" (Carlquist, 2017, p. 75)

The present study stresses on the method of philology and seeks to represent the meanings hidden amid the theories of justice. That group of words employed in those theories whose central theme is justice refer to those implicit meanings. A brief look at the theories of justice in the West shows that three terms have been focus of attention in the center of those efforts: 'justice', 'fairness', and 'equality'. In this study, we try to pursue and show the historical and cultural roots of those words in ancient Greece and display the difference of their ontological and epistemological denotations compared to 'justice' in the semantic world of Islam.

2. The strait of mind and language in explaining justice

In Walzer's view, "The attraction of equality cannot be explained through its literal meaning... if equality cannot be understood in its

literal meaning, then what meaning can be imagined for it?" (Walzers, 1983, pp. 13-15). He tries to get away from 'equality' in its "Procrustes' bed"[1] meaning. Nevertheless, he is aware of the fact that by being satisfied with the appearance of the term, one cannot transfer its intended meaning. Thus, he writes:

> "The original meaning of equality is a negative one. In its origin, equality is a revocative policy. Equality does not aim at eliminating all differences in a society, but at eliminating a certain group of difference: a group of differences in various times and places… what is the point of dispute is the ability of group of people to dominate others… I aim at describing a society wherein no social blessing is used, or can be used, as the domineering tool" (Walzer, 1983, pp. 15-17).

It is a mistake to suppose Walzer's contemplation on the meaning of equality as merely a literary precision, because in the conceptual explanation he uses in scrutiny on his inner idea, he is seeking to present a certain definition of justice and tie the elusive nature of mental justice to a strategic project. His perception of justice is related to the semantic capacity of the term 'equality', which is not seen in the appearance of the term. Walzer does not go to those hidden aspects and does not reveal them, but choosing that term from among the terms belonging to the conceptual network of justice reinforces the abovementioned idea.

The cultural changes are among other effective sources in expanding the theoretical disputes about justice. A change in

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1. In Greek legend, a robber dwelling somewhere in Attica. Procrustes had an iron bed (or, according to some accounts, two beds) on which he compelled his victims to lie. Here, if a victim was shorter than the bed, he stretched him by hammering or racking the body to fit. Alternatively, if the victim was longer than the bed, he cut off the legs to make the body fit the bed's length. (Translator's explanations).

denotations of the term has changed the intention of the earlier theories. Samuel Fleischacker's concern in *A Short History of Distributive Justice* is representation of the difference between the Aristotelian concept of 'distributive justice' and the newly emerged meaning of 'social justice'. Today's concern of the theories of social justice is to answer the question of how one can distribute rare sources and products among the persons with contrasting needs and demands. This is while Plato and Aristotle's concern in dealing with justice was not focused on appropriating sources to contrasting individuals. In ancient times, when one spoke of distributive justice, the question was how the society's deserving members can enjoy a proper political status in proportion to their qualifications (Fleischacker, 2004, p. 2). Basically, people's enjoyment of justice was not an issue in the ancient times, while today it is believed that any individual deserves to live in a condition free from his basic needs, and enjoyment is not specified to the oligarchy class. Besides, the issue of justice in the ancient times was how to distribute political offices, but today, the issue of justice is how the state must distribute the sources and help the needy persons.

Anyway, we must not ignore the statement uttered by Fleischacker; rather, we must answer the question of how our understanding of human and the universe has altered that has publicized this great transition. He attributes that evolution to Hume's and Smith's works and writes:

> "By freeing themselves from silly medieval concepts related to just price, Hume and Smith made the new economics possible. In this way, the theoreticians of free economics happily accept that these thinkers' work in rejecting the ancient concept of distributive justice has been a new one." (Fleischacker, 2004, p. 5).

The more important question is how one can create such a great evolution in a concept. Can one impose any meaning to the previous

words? What semantic aspect he means when he describes the ancient perception as silly and medieval? We will investigate these question in the following sections.

The scope of cultural evolutions leading to the modern era is broader than what Fleischacker has stated. In referring to some facts about the 'just prince', Michael Sandel pays attention to the evolution in the origins of logics and methodologic foundations in the age of tradition and writes:

> "In the medieval ages, philosophers and theologians believed that transaction of goods must be with a fair price determined on the basis of tradition or the essential value of something. However, today's economists say that in the societies based on market, the prices are determined on the basis of supply and demand, and there is no just price." (Sandel, 2009, p. 10).

Sandel has deeply paid attention to the methodological considerations of that civilizational transition, and has investigated three foundations attracting the attentions of those who research justice: "maximizing welfare", "respecting freedom", and 'promoting virtues' (Sandel, 2009, pp. 13-43). Sandel's statements and Fleischacker's expressions in explaining the alteration in the meaning of distributive justice, from the medieval ages up to the present age, enjoy deep philosophical precisions as well. Without exploring these aspects, one cannot get a right perception of these theories and compare the Islamic theories of justice with them. In principle, we must search for the distinction of words in their philosophical foundations.

To understand what the theorists of justice mean, we must investigate three distinct layers. The first one is "advantages and necessity of justice". Any philosopher has produced some literature regarding the goodness and importance of justice from a certain perspective. Nevertheless, if we ask him how one can achieve that justice, he will lead us to the second layer of his view. The second

layer is specified to the 'parameters of justice'. These parameters lead the theory of justice from the level of mind and language to the objective level of action. The third layer is revealed with the following question: 'Why should we consider these parameters authentic and justified for specifying justice? Stating 'preferences' refer to the epistemological and methodological aspects of his discussion and shows what the theorist, basically, considers as knowledge and how he has defined the way to acquire it. With some degrees of ignorance, we can consider these three layers as 'descriptive', 'strategic' and 'fundamental' layers of theories of justice. The fundamental layer of theories of justice can be represented through philology.

2-1. Paradigmatic transitions in philosophy

Sometimes, a change in our understanding of the denotation of words originates from the paradigmatic transitions in philosophical systems. For instance, some Iranian thinkers have considered transition from analytical philosophy to continental philosophy and pragmatism of great importance, regarding it as causing an evolution in theories of justice. While paying attention to the discussion of social contract and the essential difference of Kant's transcendental view from Allamaeh Tabataba'i's conventional ideas, Davari Ardakani writes:

> "In stating his theory of justice, Rawls refers – just as Locke, Rousseau and Kant – to one of the major foundations of modernity, i.e. the social contract and conventionality of the rules and laws of the life. The late Allameh Tabataba'i, firstly, considered conventionality as opposed to truth and being conformed to reality. Secondly, he did not consider convention as merely equal to human convention… when we speak of social contract, human beings usually think that a group of people have gathered together and agreed upon some rules to

act accordingly. But none of the parties of the contract had this in mind. Rawls has asserted that no such event has occurred in history. In stating the reports given by Kant and especially John Locke, it is not known how people have achieved an agreement before having a historical existence" (Davari Ardakani, 1387 SH, p. 2).

Davari says that following Kant, John Rawls has made use of imagination, without using axiom, and has created *a priori* conditions that are conditions for knowledge and practice. Nevertheless, there is a difference between Kant's transcendental theory and Rawls' method of imaginative construction. Rawls has accepted that the conditions for judgment and agreement among human beings existed in their reason and perception before issuing the judgment. He explains how human beings can, in an imaginative condition, achieve principles that guarantee the just relationships in the society and among them and remove their disagreements. This aspect of Rawls' theory has been explained through the enigmatic title of "curtain of unawareness". For Davari, "there is no individual human being outside the culture and language and free from interests and relations, who sits and creates law and culture" (Davari, 1387 SH, p. 4).

With this in mind, some questions arise as follows: "How is justice in Rawls' view linked with his understanding of knowledge? Is human's position in the curtain of unawareness justified with his epistemological foundation? What are the cultural and historical origins of that perception?"

2-2. The dualistic figure of 'object/ mind' and 'existence/ becoming'

Objectivity and mentality have a dualistic relationship. One side of this Janus twofold is 'being' and 'existence', and the other side is 'becoming' and 'getting'. Evolution in understanding this relationship can alter the fundamental layer of understanding justice. Human's perceptive faculties are the media of his relationship with natural and

social worlds. Just as human's relationship with nature is evolved in the course of time, the processes of socialization are also evolved. This has overshadowed human's understanding of justice and the way it is implemented in the society. To understand the philological distinctions of justice, fairness and equality, we must pay attention to the evolutions in the Greek intellect in understanding 'being' and 'becoming'.

The Greek intellect has been born in human's transition from *cosmocenter* and passing through *mythos* to *logos*. The Greek man would formulate his surrounding world and his society on the basis of myths. The Greek heroes – including the gods and the man – were depicting the horizons of their favorite community and the mothers would educate their children on the basis of those images. Heraclius was the first thinker who spoke of a jewel called *logos* and substituted it for *muthos* (Zamiran, 1379 SH). This jewel could identify the general rules governing various phenomena and change the human's world as affected by those laws. "This reason is more like the divine fire or even divine light… it is the life of the universe and its law, and humans' soul is a flame of that fire and general law running in the nature and ruling over it" (Haji-pur, 1391 SH, p. 151). Unlike Heraclius' Unitarian view, who considered logos and nature intermingled and melted, Anaxagoras spoke of another type of intellect and called it *nous*. For this pre-Socrates philosopher, the universe consisted of plural, but separated and scattered, entities whom *nous* could get out of the running state and give a certain form. This view found a logical form in Aristotle's philosophical thoughts and, virtually, turned into the thought of the pre-renaissance world. Since in the Greek civilization, people thought the nature to be consisted of separated and free entities whom the *nous* or *logos* would organize, the Greek intellect was considered as the perceptive essence of causes that wanted to find out the reasons for 'becoming' and perceive the system

existing among the things. This evolution and transition was repeated in various eras and altered the Western man's perception of natural and social concepts.

One of the other important evolutions in the Western intellect was the emergence of 'modern intellect'. The most important feature of the modern intellect was defining the intellect as a tool for manipulating the nature. This definition of intellect is a disruption in the history of the Western intellect with the Greek background. The central point in that definition is separating 'intellect' from 'nature' and placing the man and his subjects of study in the 'object-subject' relationship (Hall, 1993). In the ancient Greek civilization, the intellect and the nature were considered intermingled. Descartes put an end to that idea and formulated it in another form. In this way, the two elements of 'thought' and 'extension' appeared as the main pillars of the Western intellectual system. Following this separation, the laws of intellect and the laws of nature – while distinct – would become harmonious due to God's will. Descartes, in this rational adjustment, passed through logic to method and specified method as the tool for perceiving the universe. In other words, modernity understands intellect as the method and does not accept the *logos* perception.

Transition from *logos* to method happened through a multistage process. Kant negated the role of divine will in harmony between the law of intellect and the law of nature, and substituted mathematical logic for it. In Kantian intellect, "certain recognition and consistency between the intellect and the system of nature is gained according to what the experience grants to the intellect and the help given by empirical data to the intellect" (Haji-pur, 1391 SH, p. 152). The intellect has the duty to discover the law of nature. The experience also serves as a laboratory and specifies the sphere of right perception. After Kant, Hegel completed the process of reconstruction of the new intellect. Unlike his predecessors, Hegel opposed the renewal of the sphere of

cognition as signed by experience and stated that whatever is real is rational and whatever is rational is real. In his view, whatever lacks a rational interpretation does not find a possibility for coming to existence. This view necessitated yielding to the dominance of causal determinism over the evolutions. Hegel did not hesitate to accept this. Thus, modern intellect was a deterministic rationality, whether he speaks of this in construction of the world of politics or hides it in the depth of his philosophical constructions (Beiser, 2005).

These transitions have influenced the modern human's perception of social issues including justice. Distinguishing Aristotelian distributive justice from the social justice must be pursued in the context of these evolutions. This alteration can be seen in the denotations of terms related to justice. For understanding the difference in objective denotations of theories of justice between the Western world and the Muslims' semantic world, it is very critical to pay attention to these transitions.

## 3. The philological construction of 'justice', 'fairness' and 'equality'
3-1. Justice

Oxford dictionary shows three phases of evolution in writing the word 'justice' as follows:

Table 1

Latin *iustus*	Latin *iustitia*	Old English *justise*	English Just	**Justice**

'Just behavior or treatment', 'the quality of being fair and reasonable' and 'the administration of the law or authority in maintaining this' are three definitions stated in Oxford Dictionary. The trending diagram shows the popularity of the word 'justice' in the early 19th century. This declined in the second half of that century, but

in the 21ˢᵗ century, it was again popular (Collins Dictionary, s.v. justice).
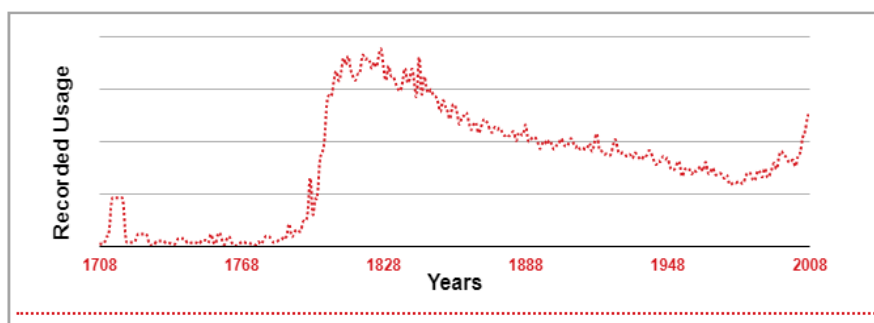
Figure 1

In 11ᵗʰ century, in the French-speaking world, justice entailed a legal meaning, while in about the same century, in the English-speaking world, justice was considered – along with being political and companionship with power – a moral attribute. The word *iustitia* from the Greek root of the word 'justice' denoted 'righteousness' and 'equity'. The oldest root of that word was *iustus,* which was translated into 'upright' (etymonline, s.v. justice).

Iustitia was a roman myth and the Lady of 'justice'. That statue is seen in front of the European courts, a Lady with a mask on her face, a sword in one hand and a scale on the other hand. Iustitia's mask is the witness of her innocence and highlights the doctrine that justice must be along with impartiality (Smith, 1880). John Rawls' intellectual test refers to this point. Some believe that Iustitia's mask denotes *prudentia* or 'prudence'. Aristotle regards a great role for prudence in politics and highlights it in his practical philosophy. He believes that one cannot administer the sphere of politics just by relying on his mental faculties.

This exploration can be furthered up to the linguistics in Avesta and its deep roots can be searched for in Ancient Iran. The closest

Iranian root for 'justice' is the word DĀTA or DĀD. The phonemic affinity of the word 'judge' and Dād as well as the similarity of goddess Rashan/ Rashanu (Zarshinas and Rashnu, 1396 SH) with Iustitia and, finally the attention paid by some prominent scholars to that claim reinforces that hypothesis. As the encyclopedia Iranica writes, DĀTA was the term used in ancient Iran for law. That term was derived from the root dā meaning 'putting' and it had a record in Avesta texts and the inscriptions in Achaemenid era (Koch & Hinz, 1987; quoted from Iranicaonline, s.v. data). In Achaemenid inscriptions, the word law has been used in two senses: first, it means the king's law for creating guaranteed order throughout the empire; second, it means Ahura Mazda's law for achieving felicity in the world after death. Application of the law for Ahura Mazda shows accompaniment of the order of universe and heavens (see: Iranicaonline, s.v. data). This accompaniment can be seen also in Torah (Daniel, 6: 9; 6: 13; 6: 16; Ester, 9: 1). The sublunary/super-lunar worldview of the ancient times is also a reflection of that doctrine. This had certain consequences for pre-Socratic materialists who substituted physical order for logical order (Safari, 1387 SH). With the collapse of this meaning in Copernic's revolution, not only the perception of the universe's physics, but also perception of justice and the way to achieve it changed in the West.

According to the beliefs of Mazdeyasnaʾo belief, justice cannot be known without enjoying wisdom. Wisdom is the source of justice, and without knowing the nature of things, persons and actions, we cannot implement justice about them (see: Iranicaonline, s.v. DĀD). Just a wise person can implement justice. Using the term 'dada' in Turkish or 'dad' in English for 'father' displays a just and wise image of father. The same image was considered in Plato's view and the idea of 'philosopher king' or running 'justice'.

As a sum, we can consider that term as an equivalent for justice and administering the society with observance of moral and heavenly

aspects, which naturally calls for prudence of the just rulers on the one hand, and obedience of subjects on the other hand. In this sense of justice, there is no discussion of equality and even we can consider it ruled out. The axis of this reading of justice is the just ruler who, while observing impartiality, refers to an everlasting law and judges among people. In the depth of 'justice', the law and judgment lie. It is the judgment that specifies the position of anything and organizes the affairs. The one who has the power to promote justice – whether he is Ahura Mazda or a just king – is beyond judgment and law. He is like a teacher who writes on the board: "No one has the right to write anything on the board". This perception of judgment, which the French call '*jugement*', is better palpable. *Jugement* is the name for the day of final exam of a semester – especially in art discipline – wherein the person must present his/her performance to be judged by others.
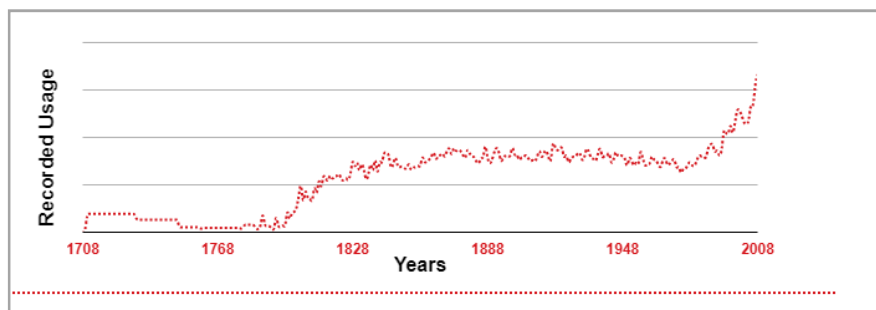
3-2. Fairness

Another common word in the theories of justice, use – for instance – by John Rawls, is 'fairness' derived from the root 'fair'. In old English, this term was used in *fæger* form, and was the name of something with pleasant appearance and referred to the pretty and attractive persons. Later, it was also used for someone with good temper (see: etymonline, s.v. fair). The origin of that term returns to the old German *fagraz* and *fagar* used for 'beauty'. Now, it is used for blond (fair-haired) persons with clear eyes.

Since 14th century, the term 'fair' has been employed in the sphere of justice. Even the sportsmanlike and fair behavior of football players is called fair play. The first usage in this regard was recorded in 1856. The word 'fair' is used for a certain market active in a given city in a certain time for transactions. The commercial exhibitions are also called 'fair' (see: etymonline, s.v. fair). Another meaning of that term, used

since 14th century, refers to a line and extension. A straight path is called 'fair'. Due to equality and parallel position of the flanks of a square, this geometrical shape is called a 'fair'.

Since the beginning of 19th century, especially the last decades of the 20th century, referring to the term 'fair' has grown increasingly. It is probable that a part of this be attributed to the affluence of Rawls' works.

Figure 2

In pursuing the probable roots of 'fairness' in ancient Iran, some speculations can be proposed. The axis of this affinity are FARR, FARRAH or XᵛARƎNAH, which are the key concepts in political thoughts of Mazdeyasna. The Iranian kings documented their legitimacy with the enjoyment of Farrah, and this enjoyment would grant the possibility of promoting justice to the king. Today's word 'KHAYR' (meaning 'goodness') has an equal phonemic order with the word 'FARR'. In that era, FARRAH or KHARRAH denoted divinely given 'grandeur' or 'splendor'. Such an individual, in Mazdeyasna religion, was pioneer in the struggle between goodness or light and evil or darkness. This term would even be used in pre-Achaemenid era in Medes age. It was also adopted in the Greek culture. Thus, '*farnah*', which is used in Greek names and words, is adopted from the Iranian culture (Mayrhofer, 1968).

The main root of that word in the ancient Persian language was '*farnah*' and in the Middle Persian was '*farrah*'. In New Persian language, these forms turned into '*farr*'. The semantic expansions of that term are strongly related to 'fortune' in English, '*nūr*' (meaning 'light') in Arabic, and '*doxa*' (meaning 'grandeur') in Greek. In his book entitled *Zoroastrian Problems*, Bailey assumes that the word 'fortune', meaning happiness, has been derived in an etymological transportation from that Iranian term (Bailey, 1943). The same meaning existed in the Middle Persian as well, and the form of '*farrokh*' denoted happiness and joy. Today, the same meaning is common for the word '*farrokh*'.

Some of the linguists believe that the word FARR was constructed from 'xu̯ar' with the neutral noun suffix '-nah' whose main meaning is brilliance and brilliant. The words Khorshīd (the Sun) and Khorasān (the land of the Sun) have been constructed on that old root. A reference to the text of Avesta shows that the word FARR denotes a magical force with brilliant and fiery nature. The Avesta and Pahlavi meanings of that word refer to a spiritual force that existed before creation of the body or the person. That force incites and guides any creature or group of creatures towards performing their duties. If 'Farrah' in Persian or 'fortune' in English are translated as 'happiness', it is because some force helps the person [with those features] to further his/ her task rightly and orderly so that he/ she may achieve success (see: Iranicaonline, s.v. FARR). The sign of FARRAH in ancient Iran on the royal crown indicates this.

Initially, it seems that the semantic denotation of the word 'justice' to the wide range of justice is more than other words. But if we note the aspect of emergence of justice and its clear light and eye-catching, and if we shift our look from the mental and theoretical aspect of justice to its practical aspect, then the word 'fairness' will gain more importance. Justice is pretty, balanced and eye-catching, leading to the

man's brilliance of mind, inner joy and happiness. These aspects of justice in English are represented by the word 'fairness'.

3-3. Equality

Another common term in theories of justice is equality. The newest human consideration in the sphere of justice must be pursued in the inner side of that term. In the term 'equality', the attention focused on the objective aspects of justice has replaced the attention to the descriptive and normative aspects of it. Thus, when that term is applied in the subject of justice, it is expected to pay attention to the processes and trends of justice. The trending diagram also shows two historical eras in paying attention to that term. The first in at the end of 18th century and the second is at the beginning of the 21st century.
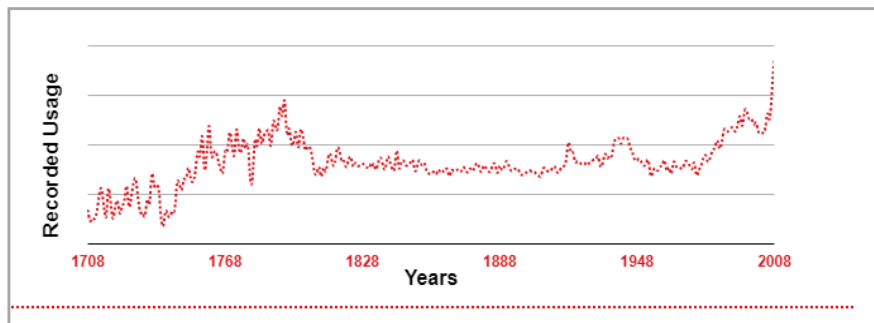
Figure 3

The term 'equality' can be considered as the twin of modernity, which indicated the objective aspect of justice. Nevertheless, it must be returned to the doctrine of 'democracy' and 'isometric man'. In this regard, Collins Dictionary writes, "*Equality* is a situation or state where all the members of a society or group have the same status, rights, and opportunities." (Collinsdictionary, s.v. equality).

Using equality in discussions of justice has led to a mathematical look at justice. In principle, such a consideration is essential for

procedural view and going beyond the mentality and being limited to description in order to turn to equational reading and explaining the way justice is implemented in the outside world. 'Equality' is a term used in mathematics and refers to "the two sides of an equation that are equal". This delicate sense has been intended whether in its old Latin function or its modern form (table 2).

Table 2

Latin *aequālis*	Latin *æqualitas*	Old French *égalité*	English equal	**equality**

Other old Latin roots of that word, such as "*aequālitātis*", "*aequitātem*" and the adjective "*aequus*" refer to being 'even', 'parallel' and 'level' (see: etymoline, s.v. equality).

The paradigmatic transition has been of great importance in turning to 'equality'. In this transition, which followed enlightenment, 'mechanism' has substituted 'description' in the center of science. Heidegger, while referring to Kant's philosophy, believes that the beginning of this transition was with the question of what relationship exists between '*essentia*' and '*existentia*'. His answer to that question is from the phenomenological perspective. He first looks at the philological structure of those two words and goes to its two roots '*quid*' and '*qua*' for equality. Like Kant, he distinguishes 'existence' from 'reality', but considers reality the same as essence (*essentia*) (Heidegger, 1976, pp. 105-106).

Heidegger, in principle, has no belief in that philosophical schema to say that any being has an essence and an existence (Heidegger, 1976, p. 107). Initially, he objects to the distinction of those two, taken for granted since Aristotle, and askes, "How can one specify the distinction between existence and essence?" Of course, this question has its roots in Kant's question. When Kant goes to the way the limited being

perceives the unlimited being, finds the distinction between existence and essence as an issue and extends it to the way the mental categories (like justice in mind) are distinguished from the objective phenomena (such as justice in realization). This is a serious question that how the human can, basically, find out a being whose essence necessitates existence directly and intuit the being in the broadest sense.

Aquinas, Scotus, Suarez and some other Spanish scholastics, in opposition to religious reforms, contemplated on this and prepared the ground for an important transition in epistemology: transition from 'description' to 'change' or transition from 'philosophy of what' to the 'philosophy of how' (see: Khaki Qaramaleki, Sadeqi Marasht and Taheri Khosroshahi, 1400 SH). This thought was developed in the school of French Jesuits, and prepared the ground for the enlightenment age. The ultimate point of this fact is manifested in Descartes' thought. Although Suarez, who spoke of systematizing the ontology, was the one who took the first step of this transition, it was Hegel who completed that idea. After that, distinguishing between the public metaphysics and private metaphysics became common and titles such as rational cosmology, ontology of nature, ontology of mind, and rational theology (ontology of God) were considered under it (Heidegger, 1976, pp. 107-109).

One of the words used by scholastic philosophers to name the essence and refer to reality of something was the Latin word '*quidditas*' from the root '*quid*'. '*Quid*' meant 'what' and was related to the Aristotle's doctrine of 'the whatness' of something. Aristotle said, "*quod quid erat esse*" (= what was it to be). He meant what something was based on its reality before achieving actualization, because just in this way it can be thought of. Heidegger said, "the meaning of *quidditas* is what is initially conceived of something, not in terms of findings of the thing out of its essence, that we can initiate with" (Heidegger, 1976, p. 116). That is, when we face some phenomenon out of our mental habit and are seeking to know it, we initially describe it

with some features that are out of its essence and appear to us before anything else. These features are not quiddities or *quidditas*; rather, they specify the limit of distinction of the thing, which are called '*definito*' or definition. This distinction and demarcation specify the form of a phenomenon, and are called, more precisely, the *forma* or 'form'. *Forma,* unlike *quidditas,* refers to its essence, and calling it *forma* is stating one aspect of its various aspects of manifestation, which is stated in accordance with a certain interpretation of the essence, and reflects the special reading of it. Such a consideration in the enlightenment era, which was concomitant with transition from essence to form of the phenomena, put considering the quality of emergence of phenomena in the center of the modern human's attention. This can be called transition from *quid* to *qua.* Naming and pursuing 'justice' under the title of 'equality' refers to the same fact. That is, instead of pursuing the essence and quiddity of justice, one thinks of the quality of emergence of it and the process of the rise of justice in its worldly manifestation. This fact is palpable in Michael Walzer's works.

The medieval thought is essentialist and searches for features inside the things. What is explored is the phenomenon's intention. *Tention* or the internal contrast of a phenomenon, which is originated from its motion, specifies where a phenomenon must move. In the enlightenment age, this question faded away and turned into the following question: "Which qualities of a phenomenon can be extracted and how can one do that?" Thus, scientists considered and explored the *extention* aspect of the universe. They went away from the philosophy that was merely satisfied with whatness and description, and finding a way to change the manifested forms of things turned into an important concern.

One of the most important impulses that broke down the attention to essence and inner side was Duns Scotus' attention to internal

intention of things. Previously, the dominant idea was that inside something there is nothing except its essence. But Scotus noted that inside something there is an intention. This idea was transferred from Scotus to William of Ockham, leading to the birth of Nominalism. Intentionalism prepared the ground for us to speak of social contracts instead of pursuing one single and essential pattern – which determines moral rules and law and regulations – for achieving felicity.

In this way, if 'quality' is taken as meaning quality, 'equality' means that two or more things enjoy the same quality. Applying this sense in the theory of justice constructs the image of justice that says human beings enjoy equal qualities and are isometric. This view is the spirit of democratic thought, a democracy that, on the one hand, escapes the effects of capitalism and, on the other hand, does not yield to the ancient traditional view of justice; that is, it does not return justice to the individuals' essence to confirm the class society. Naturally, this reading can be found in the communalism.

The point that can be inferred from the philological understanding is paying attention to the difference between 'homogeneity' and 'synergy' in transition from *quid* to *qua*. This fact distinguishes the view of community in the ancient era and the modern age. In an era that things are known by their essence, homogeneity leads to static unity. When two things have a common essence, they will be united and perform the same task. Naturally, in such a milieu, one cannot define the division of social work and establish an organic society. Social justice cannot be implemented in such conditions. Fleischacker had noted the same fact, and he distinguished between Aristotle's distributive justice and Rawls' social justice.

Noting *qua* and the way things appear as well as the processes leading to the different manifestations of something in a single appearance in the modern age have caused the processes and

structures of justice to gain importance. This is because the human beings are no longer equal essences; rather, they are equal qualities with various appearances. Having the same quality while being in different appearances prepares the ground for giving importance to synergy in the social life, and creates a developed society with a collective division of tasks. This requires a good command of 'mechanism'.

4. Justice in Muslims' semantic world

Most Muslim thinkers who have theorized on justice have analyzed this fact in link with the human's divine nature. For early thinkers, justice is 'any rightful person's achievement of his/ her own right'. This definition refers to some requisites inside things that specify their path towards perfection. Thus, tendency towards justice is tendency towards the internal requisites of phenomena and creatures. In defining justice, Allameh Tabataba'i has made an innovation by relying on 'conventional perceptions', and in the sixth article of *Principles of Philosophy and Method of Realism,* he has considered justice as one of the conventions after [creation of] community. From this perspective, any individual can achieve his own right when all members of society have achieved their own rights. From this angle, tendency towards fulfilling individual interests has become the origin for perception of justice. Justice is a set of arrangements in society that benefit all members of the society. Sayyid Mahdi Mir-Baqeri, while criticizing the theories of justice, defines justice as follows: "justice means tendency towards realization of monotheistic arrangements in the whole universe, including the human's social life. This tendency has been deposited in human's nature" (mir-Baqeri, 1399 SH, pp. 27-30). He criticizes the definition of justice following the material development in the capitalist system and says:

"In the divine view, justice – in its most fundamental concept –

means that the creatures receive their proportional rights, which is the divinely granted right and the right to achieve proximity to God. Thus, we consider 'right to proximity' as the central right of a man, as opposed to the right to development. All creatures must achieve the position of proximity [to God], and justice is the way to achieve proximity. Justice is the set of arrangement for realization of proximity in the whole universe" (ibid, pp. 43-44).

Ahmad Wa'ezi, one the contemporary Muslims researchers of justice, while having an essentialist view of justice, believes that "Understanding and applying the term 'justice' is subordinate to the backgrounds and features that are the origins and sources of abstraction and understanding justice and injustice… That is, the concept of justice is a simple concept, but perceiving and abstracting it from various and numerous origins is also possible" (Wa'ezi, 1401 SH, p. 10). In his view, various expressions presented by Muslim thinkers regarding justice such as 'granting the right of the rightful person', 'lack of discrimination', 'enforcing equality', 'observing deserts', 'taking qualifications as bases', 'establishing equilibrium and proportionality', and 'moderation and avoiding negligence or exaggeration' do not fall in the semantic and conceptual sphere of justice. Rather, these expressions merely denote an aspect of the semantic aspects of justice and do not express the invaluable essence and simple concept of justice (ibid.). For Wa'ezi, desirability of justice in the semantic world of Islam returns to three pillars. First, 'value and moral desirability'; second, 'essential desirability'; and third, 'absolute unconditioned desirability'. Firstly, the desirability of justice in the semantic world of Islam is a value and moral desirability, not individual or functional. Secondly, this value is related to justice itself, not due to desirability of something else. That is, it is essentially similar to argument whose value is proved without intermediation of something else. Thirdly, justice is − in any conditions and in any time

and place – desirable (Wa'ezi, 1401 SH, pp. 22-23).

Muslim thinkers' opinions have vivid differences from the Western thinkers' perception of justice:

"The literature of social justice in the West has basic contrast with the social justice in Islamic view, for it has no commitment to truth and legitimacy. It is not connected to the world of meanings and is not mainly in a position to make a social system. The existing literature regarding the social justice from the Islamic viewpoint also has no concern for making a system and merely seeks to define the keywords related to justice. Going beyond the hard stages of justice depends on understanding the complexity and various levels and stages of the concept of justice" (Torab-zada et al., 1399 SH, p. 26).

Conclusion

The following points can be concluded from this study:

1. According to the semantic denotation of 'justice', the wise person can recognize the nature and actions of individuals to put them in certain positions and adjust their relationships. Thus, the depth of the meaning of 'justice' is related to the judgment, law and adjustment. The person who promotes justice can also compose the laws. 'Justice' also denotes virtue-centrism and is closer to Muslims' idea of justice. This term, common in the writings of Plato and Aristotle, is now considered by Michael Sandel.

2. 'Fairness' refers to the practical aspect and objective function of justice in the daily life. Whenever we want to get away, in theorization, from abstract aspect of justice and look at its strategic and practical aspects, it is better to use the word 'fairness'. This usage has well been considered in John Rawls' works.

3. 'Equality' is a more modern scientific word that seeks to

understand, instead of the essence of things and actions, their manifestations. It is the reading that says how plural processes can lead us to the just society in proportion to various milieus and different times. This reading of justice is closer to the pluralistic view of communitarianists such as Michael Walzer.

The present study shows that paradigmatic transitions can affect our perception of justice and specify our image of just society. This difference has not merely occurred in the level of theological and philosophical descriptions. Rather, by appearing in the level of methodology and lowering the sacred concepts from the sky of abstraction to the strategic and equational level, it has led to generation of more practical theories. Despite transitions that have occurred in the political paradigms of the Islamic world, leading even to evolution and alteration in Muslims' philosophical system, the extension of those transitions has been neglected. The missing link in the Islamic theory of justice must be searched for in the lack of such an approach – the link whose lack hinders the rich Islamic ontology and epistemology from its social function and reduces it to moral pieces of advice in the sphere of justice.

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