

Transcendent Philosophy: Political and Civil Norms

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Abstract



The present study is formulated with the aim of elucidating the position and nature of political and civil norms within the framework of Transcendent Philosophy. It seeks to address the key question of how political norms—often regarded as purely conventional or mental constructs—can be linked to the ontological foundations of this philosophical school. The article's central problem stems from the traditional view that Transcendent Philosophy, due to its focus on existential realities and "matters of fact," is deemed incapable of studying political norms, which fall under the domain of "constructs"—matters of convention and human enactment. However, the author, employing a documentary method and analyzing the foundational texts of this philosophy, seeks to substantiate the claim that political norms are not merely arbitrary conventions disconnected from reality, but rather emerge from existential truths and are rooted in the perfections of the soul. At the outset, referencing the views of Wilhelm Dilthey, the structure of the human sciences is divided into three parts: assertions of fact, theoretical propositions, and value or normative judgments. It is emphasized that political science would possess an incomplete identity without its normative dimension. By bridging this classification with Transcendent Philosophy, the author introduces "social justice" as the primary source for constructing normative models. In this approach, social justice is not a pure convention; rather, it is rooted in ontological justice, defined as the reception of perfections proportionate to the potentiality of every being. To explain this process, the article refers to Allameh Tabatabai's views on the genesis of society; accordingly, in the course of his "substantial motion" and to satisfy his myriad needs, man first turns to the "employment" of others. However, his practical reason realizes that continued survival and the attainment of individual perfection are only possible through cooperation and a "cooperative society." This transition from the individual to the social realm is an urgent and innate necessity that leads to the construction of the norm of "social justice" to prevent

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conflict of interest and chaos. In fact, social justice, as a comprehensive virtue, provides the bedrock upon which political and legal norms are formed to prevent the collapse of society. Next, the article explains the norms of "ruling" and "being ruled." Since the instinct for utilization is permanent in human nature, autocratic individuals emerge within the political community who enact norms to maintain order. Nonetheless, through the persistence of autocracy, human practical reason reaches the understanding that to protect the public interest, norms must be established to limit the power of rulers and secure the interests of the ruled—what is known today as "civil society." The fundamental point and primary achievement of this paper is that although these norms are "constructs" at the level of enactment, they become ontologically united with the human "soul." Citing the doctrine of the "unity of the intellect and the intelligible," the author argues that when citizens internalize political norms and grasp "the oughts and ought-nots," they actually achieve an existential unity with that normative meaning. This implies that norms transcend a purely mental and conventional realm and become part of the non-material (imaginal) existence of citizens, guiding their substantial motion toward well-being and perfection. Accordingly, political science within the framework of Transcendent Philosophy—in contrast to positivist or behaviorist political science—does not perceive norms as relative entities or mere products of human volition. Instead, it regards them as indicators of the latent truths and inner realities of society, which are rooted in the system of actual human needs. Ultimately, this study concludes that by elucidating the connection between political constructs and existential truths, Transcendent Philosophy has paved a new path for theorization in the philosophy of political science and the social sciences. In this paradigm, politics is not merely a technique of management, but rather the sphere for the manifestation and emergence of human existential evolution within the context of collective life. This approach allows political science to study political phenomena not as illusory or purely conventional matters, but as objective realities with a tangible impact on the order of existence.

Keywords

Transcendent Philosophy, political science, political norms, constructs.

1. Statement of the Problem

Dilthey writes: "The human sciences as they are, and as they have been treated due to the factors operative in their history [...] contain three distinct classes of assertions. One group of these assertions describes the reality entered into perceptions; these assertions comprise the historical component of knowledge. The second type of assertions delineates the uniform behavior of the particular contents of this reality, distinguished through abstraction; these constitute the theoretical component of the human sciences. The third group expresses value judgments and prescribes rules; this group contains the practical component of the human sciences. The human sciences are composed of these three kinds of judgments: judgments regarding facts, propositions, and value judgments and rules" (Dilthey, 2009, p. 146). This passage from Dilthey points to the three components of the human sciences (particular, general, and value propositions). Contrary to the positivist ideal of the social sciences—which yearns for a value-free and neutral science—Dilthey argues that the normative component is an inseparable part of the human sciences, such that the relationship between these three parts characterizes the primary and common feature of these sciences. In this sense, Dilthey claims that to the extent that the human sciences have developed, they structurally include both cognitive elements and a system of value judgments that define values, ideals, rules, and the future (Dilthey, 2009, pp. 146-147). Regarding political science, Dilthey acknowledges the importance and role of normative judgments, writing: "A political judgment that condemns an institution is not true or false; rather, insofar as the tendency of that institution and its goal are being evaluated, it can be accurate or inaccurate. On the other hand, a political judgment describing the relationships of this institution with other institutions can be true or false" (Dilthey, 2009, p. 147). Although Dilthey does not believe in a single, unified human science that encompasses all human sciences, viewing each specific human science as a component dependent on others, he nonetheless distinguishes between judgments concerning facts and value judgments within political science, as he does for the human sciences as a whole. Marsh and Stoker not only consider normative judgments to be part of political science but also clarify that normative theory is one of the two pillars of traditional political science, continuing to make a pivotal contribution to this field (Marsh & Stoker, 2005, p. 31). Daryl Glaser also confirms their position, highlighting the pivotal role of normative theory in both its philosophical and objective applications within political science. According to him, in its philosophical application, norms manifest as political theorizing

formulated around "what ought to be." Consequently, in this context, norms emerge as prescriptive propositions that guide the political sphere, whereas in their objective application, norms aid in understanding the moral and normative consequences and implications of political affairs (Marsh & Stoker, 2005, pp. 49-50). Furthermore, the application of norms in political theorizing is a method for examining the process of "governing arrangements," predicated on the idea that within academic circles, a distinct domain for theorizing about "what ought to be" has been, or should be, allocated (Marsh & Stoker, 2005, p. 50).

This paper aims to address the normative component of political science as utilized in political theory—specifically, the norms derived from Transcendent Philosophy that inform and enrich this field. Accordingly, the thesis of this article is twofold: first, that "social justice" serves as the primary source for constructing the normative patterns employed in political science; and second, that the norms of ruling and being ruled are derived from existential realities. In the first part of this argument, "social justice" is presented as a construct rooted in ontological justice, which nonetheless governs and directs numerous political science norms. The second part of the thesis focuses on the connection between these norms and objective realities. To examine this thesis, the levels of justice are first explored from the perspective of Transcendent Philosophy, followed by an explanation of the role of social justice in the formation of society and, specifically, the foundation of politics. Subsequently, the paper attempts to provide an ontological analysis of the norms of ruling and being ruled based on the doctrines of Transcendent Philosophy.

2. Social Justice and Politic Science

In his definition of normative political theory, Glaser characterizes it as a mode of discourse concerning institutions (particularly those related to public power) and the relationship between individuals and institutions. He claims that since the early 1970s, this theory has generally presented two categories of questions and content: the first category involves questions regarding the existence and purpose of the state, whether moral foundations can be conceived for its existence—and if so, which ones—as well as when one ought to obey or disobey state laws. The second category encompasses questions in the field of distributive justice and its implications for liberty, the relative moral importance of liberty and equality, the moral foundations of public policies aimed at achieving social equality, and whether such policies

are consistent with pluralism and individual autonomy and freedom (Marsh & Stoker, 2005, pp. 51-52). As Glaser's classification of the content of normative political theory indicates, its substance is formulated around specific concerns, including the relationship of ethics with liberty, pluralism, and individual autonomy. Similarly, in formulating the content and designing a normative political theory within political science, we address the role of social justice in generating political norms based on the doctrines of Transcendent Philosophy, paying particular attention to the ontological impact of these norms on political life.

2-1. The "Social Justice" Construct as the Source of Norms in Politic Science

Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai regards the two constructs of "society" and "social justice" as prerequisites for political constructs. He writes: "The construct of leadership [the political construct] has been brought about by the constructs of society and social justice" (Tabatabai, 2013, Vol. 6, p. 448). This is because human constructs follow a hierarchy whose essential priority and posteriority are determined by the human "system of needs." Consequently, political norms become realizable only following the establishment of society and the emergence of the concept of social justice. The construct of society is one of the two primary constructs that lead to the formation of political norms. In *Tafsir al-Mizan*, Tabatabai explains the emergence of the social construct from an ontological perspective, stating that every species of being, from the very inception of its existence, moves toward its own perfection and toward the goal intended for its creation. Man is no exception to this universal law and is in motion toward his perfection and felicity, both individually and collectively. Tabatabai clarifies that human perfection is not attainable in isolation, writing: "In our view, it is a necessary and self-evident matter that this perfection is not achieved by man alone; for the needs of human life are not merely one or two, and naturally, the actions he must perform to satisfy those needs are beyond count. Consequently, the practical reason that compels him to make use of everything possible—utilizing minerals, plants, and animals—this same practical reason necessitates him to utilize the actions of others, namely, the actions of all his fellow human beings" (Tabatabai, 1996, Vol. 10, p. 261).

In this sense, man alone is unable to satisfy his diverse and multifaceted needs and is thus compelled to utilize all beings in his environment. However, the crucial point here is that all human individuals are alike in this regard; the

practical reason and shared human consciousness drive every individual to exploit their surroundings to meet their own needs. This reality necessitates that human beings establish a "cooperative society." Such a society comprises a collective of individuals where everyone works for the benefit of all and, in turn, benefits from the labor of others. Consequently, each individual in this society profits from the work of others to the same extent that others profit from his own work. As is evident, the role of "necessity" (*idtirār*) is clearly manifest in the explanation Tabatabai provides regarding the process of establishing "society." He writes: "That we have said the foundation of human life is based on a cooperative society is an emergency and inevitable condition; that is, it is a state brought about for man by the exigencies of life on one hand and the strength of his rivals on the other. Thus, if man is social and cooperative by nature, it is in fact by a secondary nature, not a primary nature. For man's primary nature is to utilize everything from which he can derive benefit, even to the point of forcibly seizing the fruits of his fellow man's labor. The evidence that man's primary nature is such is that whenever an individual of this species grows powerful and becomes independent of others, while others become weak before him, he violates their rights and even enslaves and exploits them—meaning he utilizes their services without providing them with any compensation in return" (Tabatabai, 1996, Vol. 10, p. 261). In this manner, due to self-love and the necessity of fulfilling his needs, man finds no choice but to cooperate with his fellow human beings. This instinct of self-interest causes him to perceive his fellow man as himself, and since he loves his own essence, he extends that love to the other. In fact, Tabatabai contends that the mutual need of human beings for one another becomes the origin of an internal sense of affinity toward others, and this feeling is the seed for the establishment of human society (Tabataba'i, 2013, Vol. 6, p. 436). In other words, the spark for the formation of society is ignited by the sense of altruism, and it is this moral sentiment that brings human society into existence. Although the sense of altruism leads to the establishment of human society, man requires a more potent factor to ensure the continued existence of his community. As Tabatabai writes, while what man initially requires is society, this society—composed of numerous parts, each possessing a goal and will distinct from those of others—is prone to conflict and the clash of interests, such that every individual seeks to dominate others. The consequence of such a state is the emergence of a condition of chaos within society (Tabatabai, 1996, Vol. 3, p. 145).

Therefore, the continuity of social life depends on another construct, which

is "social justice." For the human being—who has thus far sought his own benefit under the guidance of his nature and constitution, and has realized that achieving his own gain is contingent upon others achieving theirs, thereby desiring the benefit of others for the sake of his own—now, guided by his innate reason, arrives at the conclusion that to achieve the benefit of all, he must adhere to the goodness of justice and the evil of oppression for all mankind. In this sense, the idea of social justice takes shape. Tabatabai regards the social justice in question as a form of "public judgment" that is consistent with the social hierarchy (Tabatabai, 2013, Vol. 6, pp. 436-437). One of the primary functions of such justice for human society is that it provides a framework which preserves the community from collapse and destruction. In this light, social justice paves the way for the establishment of the moral, social, political, and legal norms that society requires for its continued existence. However, social justice in Tabatabai's account—as Glaser might suggest—is a human construct and a product of convention or communal tradition (Marsh & Stoker, 2005, p. 52).

2-2. The Relation between Social Justice and Justice as an Ontological Entity

What is of significance for political science is whether, from the perspective of Transcendent Philosophy, social justice—as a fundamental construct upon which the foundation of human society is laid—possesses a distinct existential basis; and if the answer is affirmative, what the relationship is between justice as an ontological entity and social justice. In response to this question, Sayyid Mahdi Emam-Jomeh and Mahdi Ganjoor contend that, according to the doctrines of Transcendent Philosophy: first, existence possesses a tripartite hierarchy of the sensory, the imaginal, and the intellectual; second, these three aforementioned levels in fact constitute a single, continuous, and modulated (*mushakkik*) reality; and third, the shadow of justice is cast across all levels of existence (Emam-Jomeh & Ganjoor, 2013, p. 73). Accordingly, they believe that Transcendent Philosophy can be introduced as the philosophy of social justice—a justice that extends across various legal, judicial, moral, social, political, and ontological dimensions (Emam-Jomeh & Ganjoor, 2013, p. 65). However, if Transcendent Philosophy is indeed the philosophy of social justice, such that its traces can be followed through various dimensions of society, then it must be possible to establish a connection between the ontological dimension and the aforementioned dimensions (including the political one). Proving this connection is significant as it demonstrates the

claim that political science is informed and nourished by the doctrines of Transcendent Philosophy. Accordingly, what is of importance for us is to demonstrate that the construct of "social justice" mentioned in the discourse of Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i possesses a distinct, objective ontological foundation. According to Sayyid Mahdi Emam-Jomeh and Mahdi Ganjoor, ontological justice in Transcendent Philosophy refers to the principle "that every being receives, without discrimination, that which it has the capacity and aptitude to receive, thereby attaining its desired perfection" (Emam-Jomeh & Ganjoor, 2013, p. 81).

If we are to utilize this claim to establish its connection with social justice, it must be noted that in the anthropology of Transcendent Philosophy, it has been proven—based on the doctrine of substantial motion (*al-ḥaraka al-jawhariyya*)—that among all beings in this world, the human "soul" possesses an unlimited capacity for perfection. Consequently, the identity of every human individual, in terms of their relation to the natural world, is characterized as that of an imperfect, limited, and needy being. Through substantial motion, human reality traverses a series of interconnected stages and levels, each of which is more perfect than the preceding stage and more imperfect than the one that follows. In this sense, man gradually passes through his natural, imaginal, and intellectual existential stages. Indeed, it is due to man's substantial motion that, in his lower existential stage, he tends toward the exploitation of minerals, plants, and animals to satisfy his needs, and subsequently, at a higher stage, he considers the exploitation of his fellow human beings. In other words, the construct of "exploitation" becomes possible for man at this specific stage of his existential motion. However, his substantial motion does not halt at this stage; in the ongoing progression of its substantial motion, his practical reason realizes that the continuation of natural life through one-sided exploitation is impossible. This is because, in this form of exploitation, he either becomes subjugated by his fellow man—who dominates him to sustain his own natural life, thereby obstructing the fulfillment of his own needs—or he exhausts his faculties in conflict with others; the result of both scenarios is failure in satisfying his requirements.

While explicitly stating that social justice is a type of social construct, Abolhasan Hasani explains its origin through natural needs and writes: "The source of every construct is a human need for which that convention is formulated. It was previously mentioned regarding the origin of human society that, on one hand, man possesses a natural inclination to employ his environment and makes no distinction between fellow humans and other

beings in this regard. On the other hand, his natural inclination to live with his fellow man compels him to grant concessions to others. These two natural inclinations constitute the instinctive pillars of human society. Man is caught between these two natural drives; however, there is no instinct to create a balance between them, nor do these two instincts possess an inherent order within themselves. This situation leads to an imbalance between the scales of exploitation and service in the state of nature within human society, leaving man wavering between exploiting others and granting them concessions. Social justice is thus 'posited' to resolve the problem of balancing the scales of exploitation and service" (Hasani, 2011, pp. 274-275). In this light, it can be said that as a result of its substantial motion, man's practical reason reaches a level of existential growth where, instead of conflict with fellow humans, it inclines toward cooperation to fulfill mutual needs; consequently, reaching this existential threshold makes the establishment of "society" both possible and attainable for him. Similarly, in the continuation of his substantial motion and by the aid of his practical reason, man realizes that the sustained survival of "society" depends on every individual within this constructed community receiving, without discrimination, that which they are entitled to possess. This realization of practical reason makes the construct of "social justice" possible for man, and thus, social justice is constructed as the solution to the problem of balancing the scales of employment and service. Now, with the explanation provided regarding the construction of the three constructs—exploitation, society, and social justice—one can observe the trajectory of man's practical reason from justice as an ontological reality to social justice.

In the pre-social stage, human existential needs consist of requirements such as food, clothing, and shelter; these are natural and real needs upon whose fulfillment the continuity of his existence depends. However, as previously noted, the fulfillment of these needs is contingent upon the creation of the three aforementioned constructs. In fact, it is man's practical reason and the substantial motion of his soul that establish the connection between these constructs and those natural, real needs. Thus, the preceding explanation has demonstrated the link between justice as an ontological reality and social justice. In summary, social justice is of paramount importance in the founding of political science and the study of political phenomena. According to the analysis provided, the origin of the three constructs—"employment," "society," and "social justice"—is the substantial motion of the human soul toward its own perfection; a perfection that, in this context, signifies the remedying of its deficiencies and needs. The construct of social justice is the

achievement of man's practical reason, which guarantees the fulfillment of his basic needs through cooperation with his fellow human beings. Consequently, social justice plays a fundamental role in the continued life of society and the possibility of satisfying human needs in worldly life. In the following discussion, we shall address the role of this construct in the creation of the constructs of "rule" and "subjugation" in general, along with their associated norms.

3. Norms of Rule and Subjugation in Political Science

The claim of the present paper is that within political science, social justice serves as the source for the construction of political norms. To examine this claim, we have thus far demonstrated, first, the mechanism for the establishment of society and social justice, and second, how these two constructs are grounded in ontological justice according to the teachings of Transcendent Philosophy. Emphasizing the grounding of human constructs in objective realities is significant for political science because, without assuming such a connection, political science cannot be studied from an existential perspective. Now, in continuing the argumentation for the claim of this article, we seek to examine the mechanism by which the construct of "politics" is fashioned based on the construct of social justice, so that we may speak of the birth of politics and "the political" in human life. Investigating the emergence of politics and the political from the construct of social justice brings us one step closer to the study of political norms within political science. To explore the possibility of the realization of politics and the political in political science, it must be noted—in light of what was previously stated—that the construct of "social justice," with its norms that serve as an effective measure for the proper fulfillment of human needs, is a destination to which the growth of human practical reason has led. However, additional constructs are required to safeguard it, for the conflict of "interests" among members of society poses a serious threat to the construct of social justice. Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai writes: "Inasmuch as humanity is never free, in any state or even for a single moment, from the thought of exploiting others, and [...] since every human being constantly seeks to bring other humans into his service, history knows of no society in past ages that was devoid of autocratic men dominant over the other members of that society" (Tabatabai, 1996, Vol. 3, p. 145). Although the dominance of these men—who called themselves kings—was coupled with autocracy, it nonetheless prevented the aggression of outsiders against the community and provided the conditions for the continuity of social

life for its members. Consequently, within human society, following the emergence of the concept of "needs," another concept termed "interests" arose, which divided the members of the society in question into two categories: "rulers" and "subjects." Around this division, a set of norms—or in the words of Allameh Tabatabai, customs and traditions (Tabatabai, 2013, Vol. 6, p. 448)—laws, structures, and organizations took shape to protect the interests of the rulers.

However, as Tabatabai writes, with the persistence of monarchical autocracy, human practical reason eventually arrives at the understanding that the rule of a single individual over society yields nothing but despotism and tyranny. Consequently, it began to conceive of constructs that would limit the autocracy of rulers and ensure that, in accordance with social justice, the interests of the subjects were also somewhat secured within society. Tabatabai notes that, historically, this was realized first through making the monarchy hereditary and subsequently by replacing it with the republican form of government (Tabatabai, 1996, Vol. 3, p. 146). In Tabatabai's argument, the role of the concept of "interests" in creating the constructs of rule and subjugation, its conflict with the concept of "need," and the significance of the construct of "social justice" are elucidated. Elsewhere, regarding the constructs of rule and subjugation and their origins, Tabatabai writes: "As a result of this construct [of rule], the natural requirements of this reality [...]—such as the governance of society, collective and individual submission, and a series of regulations, customs, and etiquettes that signify the leader's position and serve as manifestations of respect and veneration for him (including various forms of greetings, prostrations, and acts of reverence, both great and small, in a manner suited to the current level of social perfection)—have been posited and conceptualized. On the other hand, since the convention of leadership was brought about by the convention of society and social justice [...], a series of corresponding conventions in favor of the subordinate and against the leader—which in fact correspond to those conventions favoring the leader and opposing the subordinate—stand in inverse proportion to the strength and weakness of the leader. The more powerful the position of leadership, the weaker the influence of the conventions and rights of the subordinate, and the weaker [the leadership], the stronger [those rights]. Likewise, the strength or weakness of the subordinate has an inverse effect on the conventions pertaining to the leader" (Tabatabai, 2013, Vol. 6, p. 448).

Based on this passage, social justice necessitates that, on the one hand, to protect society, a set of institutions, rules, laws, and norms be established,

which in turn lead to the creation of the construct of rule. On the other hand, to prevent the autocracy of rulers, another set of institutions, rules, laws, and norms must emerge to safeguard the interests of the ruled—what is referred to in contemporary literature as "civil society." In this passage, Tabatabai also explicitly states the crucial point that the emergence of the concepts of governance and politics is logically and ontologically secondary to the understanding of the concepts of "society" and "social justice." The significance of this assertion lies in the fact that the concept of politics and its related concepts must be understood within the framework and implications of the concepts of society and social justice. The application of this point to our present discussion is that we must interpret the semantic and denotative scope of political norms within the conceptual and denotative framework of "society" and "social justice." In other words, the rights, duties, institutions, structures, functions, and laws pertaining to rulers, on the one hand, and those pertaining to the ruled, on the other, are formulated and regulated with due consideration for the conceptual and denotative implications of social justice. Therefore, in the present study, it is necessary to consider that the norms of governance and subjugation possess a criterion for evaluation and a standard for critique, which is social justice itself. In this light, the grounding of politics in social justice and the latter's influence on the former have been explained from the perspective of political science. Moving forward, having explained the mechanism for the creation of the construct of "politics" and its ontological posteriority to "society" and "social justice," we shall pursue our discussion in two directions: first, demonstrating the relationship between the norms of governance and subjugation and social justice; and second, examining the norms in question from an ontological perspective.

3-1. Relationship between Rule, Subjugation, and Social Justice

Having explained the possibility of the realization of politics and "the political in light of the implications of social justice, it is now time to examine the normative dimensions of political science. This is because the norms related to the phenomenon of rule and subjugation are constructed following the establishment of politics and the possibility of the emergence of the political. Regarding this matter, Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai writes: "As a result of this convention [the construct of politics], [...] a series of regulations, customs, and etiquettes that signify the leader's position and serve as manifestations of respect and veneration for him—including various forms of greetings, prostrations, and acts of reverence, both great and small, in a

manner suited to the current level of social perfection—have been posited and conceptualized" (Tabatabai, 2013, Vol. 6, p. 448). In this sense, social justice, as a social virtue, has led to the creation of norms within the realm of politics that enable the realization of a politics free from extremes (excess and deficiency). Abolhassan Hasani explains the relationship between social justice and every political act in a manner that can be applied to clarifying the normative dimensions of political science. He writes: "Social justice can be counted as one virtue alongside others; however, insofar as it places all social rights and duties, and all socio-political virtues, in their proper position, it is the 'comprehensive sum' of social virtues. For an Exalted Government, the implementation of justice is not an act independent of other actions. Rather, it is a general policy that must be observed in every political act. In fact, the relationship of justice to other social acts is like the relationship between existence and essence. Essences are independent of one another, but existence has no separate subject in external reality apart from the existence of the essence itself. Similarly, justice has no separate subject in external reality apart from other acts. This is precisely the comprehensiveness of justice in relation to all virtues" (Hasani, 2011, pp. 278-279). Based on his argument, we can assert that the priority of social justice over politics in terms of rank implies that all norms pertaining to governance and obedience in political science must coexist while maintaining their respective positions. This ensures that society remains immune to both the autocracy of rulers and the tyranny of the ruled. However, it is significant for political science to explain how these norms arise from inherent human characteristics. This subject will be addressed in the following discussion.

3-2. Norms of Rule and Subjugation from an Ontological Perspective

Hasani (2011) writes: "The origin of every conventional construction is a human need, for the fulfillment of which that construction is established" (p. 274). Based on this claim, the reason for the social construction of norms of governance and obedience is to achieve "interests" such as social order, the establishment of security, and the enforcement of law—all of which are impossible without the institution of politics. However, to explain this matter from the perspective of political science, we shall first provide an explanation regarding the nature of political norms in general and specific political norms in particular. For this purpose, we refer to Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1996), who define the nature of norms as habitualized action within a society, writing: "All human activity is subject to habitualization. Any

action that is repeated frequently becomes cast into a pattern, which can then be reproduced with an economy of effort and which, ipso facto, is apprehended by its performer as that pattern. Habitualization further implies that the action in question may be performed again in the future in the same manner and with the same economical effort" (p. 80). What is significant from this quotation for the purpose of this section is that the repetition of actions performed by both the rulers and the ruled to achieve interests within a society causes those actions to evolve into a series of customs and traditions that hold a specific meaning for them. Consequently, these habitualized actions are applied to forthcoming situations, leading to the regulation of the behavior of both the ruler and the ruled in new contexts. The result of this process is the emergence of behavioral patterns within the society that must be observed by the ruler and citizens alike—patterns that have been established in light of the rules of social justice to secure the interests of the members of society. Drawing upon the quotation from Berger and Luckmann (1996), the origin and the mechanism behind the emergence of political norms are well-explained; it becomes clear that the habitualization of the behaviors of both rulers and the ruled creates patterns that bring political life under a specific, regulated order that must be observed. However, what distinguishes political science from the interpretative sociology of Berger and Luckmann is that political science, despite the close connection between political life and the norms of governance, does not reduce political life to a mere set of political constructions. Rather, in the analysis of political life, it attends to the ontological foundations of the norms in question and provides an ontological interpretation of political norms.

Therefore, it is necessary to further explain our claim regarding the grounding of political norms in ontological realities within political science. To prove the assertion that political norms are based on the ontological truths of human existence, we need to elucidate three premises. First, as Berger and Luckmann (1996) correctly state, the norms of governance and obedience, as habitualized actions within an individual, contain sets of 'dos and don'ts' that are stored in the individual's knowledge and used for their future political behaviors (p. 80). Second, based on Khani's (2016) interpretation of the doctrine of the unification of the intellect and the intelligible, when the individual reaches an understanding of the 'dos and don'ts' of an internalized political norm, they in fact achieve an ontological union with that understanding (p. 219). The third premise in the present argument is that, according to the ontological doctrines of Transcendent Philosophy, as Khani

(2016) writes, intellectual realities possess expansive universality. In our argument, this doctrine implies that citizens who have attained the meaning of an established political norm have, in fact, all achieved an ontological union with that meaning. Indeed, that meaning is stored and exists in their minds as a single, expanded existence. The conclusion of this third premise is that the citizens in question, who all share the understanding of a political norm, achieve a kind of ontological union with one another to the extent that the aforementioned meaning has been internalized within them (Hasani, 2011, p. 126). Now, in light of these three premises, it can be stated that established political norms—which have evolved into patterns governing the behavior of both rulers and the ruled—contain specific binding meanings. These meanings are collectively internalized among all citizens, who have been not only socialized but also cultivated in relation to them. Consequently, from an ontological perspective, each of these citizens possesses a non-material existence in addition to their material existence. The distinction lies in the fact that while the material existence of each citizen is unique to themselves, their non-material existence is one that is shared among all citizens, such that all members of the community share and participate in that single non-material existence.

A part of this non-material existence, which encompasses political norms, exists in continuity with the material existence of the citizens. Regarding this, Ibrahim Khani (2016) writes: 'Accordingly, what is observed at the most external level of social life—in the form of institutions, organizations, and other social orders—constitutes the "elemental body" of society. This is, on one hand, the most outward level of the manifestation of social reality and, on the other hand, like the elemental body [of an individual], it serves as the preparative factor and the substrate for the evolution of social life. Yet, at the same time, that dimension of the sphere of the society's ontological union [such as norms], which has taken a specific determination in every member or institution of the society and has become the organizing factor of that institution, governs and disposes the "imaginal body" (*badan mithālī*) of the society, and stands in longitudinal alignment with the society's elemental body' (p. 219). Therefore, according to this passage, political norms constitute a portion of the non-material existence of human beings, providing the ground for their substantial motion toward well-being in political life. Through this articulation, the relationship between political norms and the human soul is explained from the perspective of Transcendent Philosophy. Based on the teachings of this school of thought, the norms of governance and obedience

achieve an ontological union with the human soul and are regarded as an extended dimension of its existence. In other words, the concept of 'internalization' in psychology or 'socialization' in sociology is interpreted, according to this explanation, as the ontological union of the internalized or socialized norm with the soul.

4. Contributions of the Idea of “Political Norm as an Ontological Entity” for Political Science

Having articulated the idea of the 'political norm as an ontological entity,' the fundamental question now arises as to what achievements this idea can offer to political science. Conceiving of the political norm as an ontological entity yields, in a sense, two major achievements for political science: the first is that it presents the political norm as a real and objective entity, possessing an independent existence that is extramental, beyond human construction, and distinct from the interpretation one might have of it. This stands in contrast to various forms of cognitive political science, where the only objective reality is the individual actor, and other political and social phenomena are regarded as unreal entities. Consequently, in this category of political science, a methodological individualist approach is employed, primarily utilizing rational choice theories to examine political norms. In other words, these branches of political science regard political norms as having idealistic existences—dependent on the minds and interpretations of political actors—which are constructed through rational choices within political interactions. In contrast, in [our] political science, the political norm is considered a real entity, the impact of which cannot be overlooked in political phenomena and interactions (Bayani, 2022, p. 59). However, the divergence of [this] political science on this subject is not limited to cognitive political science; it also differs from political behaviorism. To explain further, as David Sanders correctly states, although the philosophical roots of the behaviorist movement lie in the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle, it is incorrect to assume that political behaviorism accepts all the philosophical premises of positivism. Sanders emphasizes that despite the adoption of behaviorism by social and political scientists in the 1950s, positivism remained under relentless philosophical critique. Among the criticisms leveled against positivism during this period was its emphasis on empirical observation and testing as the two defining characteristics of behaviorism in social and political research. Consequently, this analytical approach replaced the principle of verification with the principle of falsification (Marsh & Stoker, 2005, pp. 108-111). Yet, despite all these

developments, political behaviorism has not philosophically abandoned the denial of universal entities in the social and political spheres; so much so that Popper's work considers the only way for the social sciences to progress is for these disciplines to move toward the denial of social and political universals (Bayani, 2022, p. 59). Through this articulation, it becomes clear that behaviorism presents political norms as constructed and subjective phenomena arising from the interaction among political actors. The second achievement of this political science in understanding political norms as real entities is that it does not regard them as relative. To elaborate, both political behaviorism and cognitive political sciences draw from a relativistic ontology. This is because, in the aforementioned political sciences—where political phenomena are seen to lack universals independent of the mind and the construction of actors—political norms are viewed as representations that are products of the mind and individual construction, and the content of a norm is deemed significant solely because it has been the subject of will and consensus. In this view, a norm is a product of the actor's construction, and the meanings and contents of political norms, as well as the interpretations provided for them, are all devised and developed by individuals. Consequently, a relativistic ontology leads political behaviorism and cognitive political science to the conclusion that political norms are understood as intangible psychological constructs—grounded in social and political matters—with local and specific natures that depend on the form and content of political actors and groups (Bayani, 2022, p. 60). In contrast, in [this specific] political science, the political norm—while being a constructed phenomenon—refers back to something true and real. This is because political norms are constructed to attain a certain end and purpose, and they are revelatory of a meaning and content latent within the conscience of a society. As Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai correctly points out, by transmitting this meaning and content to the members of society, this constructed matter is transformed into something real. This is because it unveils an internal meaning, and 'the disclosure of the internal hidden realities of a society is itself a real matter, not a constructed one' (Tabatabai, 1996, Vol. 14, p. 249).

5. Conclusion

The claim of the present paper is that political norms, as a component of political science, are founded upon the existential realities of human beings and social justice, despite their constructed nature. In examining this claim, it was first stated that Transcendent Philosophy is presented as the philosophy of

social justice. This is because, according to its teachings, ontological justice refers to the principle that every being receives whatever it has the capacity and potential to accept, without discrimination, thereby attaining its optimal perfection. Extending this concept of justice to human life means that human practical reason, as a result of its substantial motion, reaches a stage of existential growth where it inclines toward cooperation with fellow humans to fulfill common needs rather than engaging in conflict; consequently, upon reaching this level of existential development, the establishment of 'society' becomes possible and feasible for man. Furthermore, in the course of his substantial motion, man realizes through his practical reason that the continued survival of 'society' depends on every individual in this constructed community receiving whatever they are entitled to without discrimination. This realization of practical reason makes the construction of 'social justice' possible for man; thus, social justice is constructed as a solution to the problem of balancing the two scales of employment and service. In the second step of examining the claim under discussion, it was stated that social justice is the source for the construction of political norms. As previously noted, the construction of 'social justice'—along with norms that serve as a sound provision for properly meeting human needs—is a path to which the growth of human practical reason has led. However, in human society, following the emergence of the concept of 'need,' another concept termed 'interests' arises, which divides the members of society into two categories: rulers and subjects. Around this, a set of norms, laws, structures, and organizations takes shape to protect the interests of the rulers.

However, in the face of the enduring autocracy of monarchs over the long term, human practical reason reaches the realization that the rule of a single individual over society yields nothing but tyranny and despotism. Consequently, it seeks to devise constructs that limit the autocracy of rulers and, in accordance with the requirements of social justice, ensure that the interests of the subjects are also met within society to some extent. Historically, this is achieved first through the establishment of hereditary monarchy and subsequently by its replacement with a republican form of government. Through this articulation, it becomes clear that social justice is the criterion that manages the conflict of 'interests' among the members of society through various mechanisms, including the creation of appropriate norms. From the discussions in this article, it has also become clear that the emergence of the concepts of governance and politics is, in terms of priority, subsequent to the understanding of the concepts of 'society' and 'social justice.'

The significance of this point lies in the fact that the concept of politics and its related concepts (including political norms) must be situated within the light of the implications of the concepts of society and social justice. In the third step of evaluating the claim of the present article, it was stated that the origin of every construction is a human need; therefore, the construction of norms of governance and subjection is for the purpose of attaining 'interests' such as social order, the establishment of security, and the enforcement of law—all of which would be impossible without the establishment of politics. What is significant from the perspective of political science, however, is how these norms are extracted from the desired interests. In response to this question, it was stated that the repetition of actions performed by both rulers and subjects to achieve interests within a society causes those actions to evolve into a series of customs and traditions that carry specific meanings for them. Consequently, these habituated actions are applied to future situations as well, thereby regulating the behavior of the ruler and the subject in new circumstances. The result of this process is the emergence of behavioral patterns in society that must be observed by both the ruler and the citizens—patterns that have been created in the light of the rules of social justice to secure the interests of the members of society.

In this sense, the habituation of the behaviors of rulers and subjects leads to the creation of patterns that bring political life under a specific rule and order that must be observed. In view of the three aforementioned steps, the grounding of political norms upon human existential realities is explained as follows: Firstly, the norms of governance and subjection, as habituated actions within an individual, come to embody prescriptive 'oughts' and 'ought-nots' that are stored in the individual's knowledge and utilized for their future political conduct. Secondly, based on the doctrine of the Unification of the Intellector and the Intellected, when a citizen attains an understanding of the 'oughts' and 'ought-nots' of an internalized political norm, they actually achieve an existential unification with that understanding. Thirdly, according to the ontological teachings of Transcendent Philosophy, intellectual realities possess an expansive universality. Accordingly, those citizens who have grasped the meaning of an established political norm have, in truth, all achieved an existential unification with that meaning. In summary, established political norms—which have taken the form of patterns governing the behavior of rulers and subjects—carry specific binding meanings that have been commonly internalized by all citizens; moreover, all citizens have not only been socialized but also 'cultivated' with respect to these meanings. Thus,

it can be said from an ontological perspective that each individual citizen possesses an immaterial existence in addition to their material existence. The distinction lies in the fact that while the material existence of each citizen is unique to them, their immaterial existence is one that is shared between them and all other citizens, such that everyone participates and shares in that single immaterial existence.

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