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Humanism factors and Islam viewpoint from Motahri's point of view

Zargham Yousefi[1], Alireza Yousefy[2]* and Narges Keshtiaray[3]

[1]Department of Educational Sciences, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
[2]Medical Education Research Centre, Isfahan University of Medical Sciences, Isfahan, Iran.
[3]Department of Educational Sciences, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran.

The aim of this research is to criticize liberal humanism based on Islam viewpoint emphasizing Motahri's point of view. In this paper, the researchers tried to identify liberalism humanism factors with analytical look in order to present a new categorization called "main factor of liberal humanism". Then, each factor was studied and criticized based on Motahari's thoughts. This research was done with qualitative research approach, thereby, liberal humanism has been criticized based on freedom, individualism, and rationality. Motahari's critics on studied factors suggest that existed differences arise from Islam and liberalism view and attitude toward human and nature; however, there is a relative agreement in the importance of factors within human education arenas. According to Motahari's point of view, freedom has a religious base and it is considerable under divine will, not natural human situation. As his point of view, emphasis on individualism along with society gentility is not negating each other and it seems that there is an agreement in support of rationality factor. However as Motahari points out, (as opposed to liberalism view), wisdom is not the only resource of achieving knowledge, but there are other resources such as revelation, intuition, narration, and sense as the resources of achieving knowledge in Islam, and he knows the contrast between wisdom and religion as a result of western condition and distorted Christianity. In addition, it can be said that training divine human is an ultimate goal of divine education system which has been emphasized on material and mundane goals in liberal humanism arena.

Key words: Liberal humanism, Islam, individualism, freedom, rationality.

INTRODUCTION

Humanism is a philosophical and literary movement which originated from Italia in the second half of fourteenth century and was brought to other European countries. This movement contains one of a new cultural factors, which are valuing human beings and knowing it as a criterion of everything (Edwards, 1986). Humanism has originated with the purpose of creating motivation and a new tendency towards prominent Roman and Greek works. Rene Guenon believes that humanism (a philosophy that regards 'human' as a value criterion for

*Corresponding author. E-mail: z.yousefi1340@gmail.com

everything) was respected and validated in renaissance and then it was transformed into modern civilization. In fact, the purpose of this paper is to limit everything within humane pure norms and values and to make every principal and doctrine, which had a spiritual and sublime feature, to be abstract and immaterial. Although it can be said that the purpose was to turn away from sky instead of dominating the earth, in an allegory form (Gross, 2001).

Humanism is a way of thinking or a mental state ,which prioritizes human personality and his full growth over everything. It will follow an action that agrees with this state and way of thinking (Locke, 1971).

"Humanism" has been translated in Farsi as human gentility, anthropocentrism, humanity, and human manifestation. This doctrine puts man in the center of value; this means that gentility is given to his will and desire. In this doctrine, everything originates from man and terminates with him, as well, and there is not any fact superior to man. Therefore, humanism is in contrast with religious doctrine which is based on manifestation of God (Curriculum Development Centre, 2007).

Humanism is an approach which focuses on man's abilities and his troubles in the form of empirical experiments, social studies, philosophical research and artistic creations. Humanism, democracy, human gentility or human manifestation are doctrines which put man in the center of the universe and deprive God and religion or any other non-human phenomena of originality and authenticity, by giving man that very same attribute. This means that man is in the center of attention in all philosophical, political, economic, ethical, or social systems. Humanism considers man as the only truth and reality in creation and places him in the throne of God. In fact, humanism is to worship man (Muir, 2005).

The main centre of humanism thought system is to value human tendencies and values. Humanism view emphasizes present time experiences, total existential value of human, creativity, freeness, and human ability to solve his problem. Humanism is rooted in two philosophical views:

1. First: Existential Psychology which is an approach to perceive newer certain experiences, existential situations, and the need to practice freedom in a diverse world.
2. Second: Phenomenological approach which has stressed on personal experiences. In other words, each person has his world and the reality for each person is not anything but his special view (Maslow, 1995).

Liberalism is one of the philosophical views known in education arena, which is basically person-centered and human-oriented. The word "Liberalism" is derived from a Latin word "liberty". Liberalism is known as a combination of methods, thoughts, and policies with the aim of providing individuals with the upmost freedom and liberation possible (Bring, 2008).

Liberalism is a movement which is concerned with individual freedom of human. Therefore, human has thorough authority, regardless of any deterministic rule. Factors of liberal humanism include freedom, individualism, rationality, privacy, democracy, secularism, promotion and progress, justice, equality, individualism and natural rights, which explain a type of view toward human. Liberal philosophers claim to provide and honor equality rights for all citizens regardless of their religion, ethnicity, race, group or gender.

They claim that all human beings were granted equal rights and this benefit is with respect to their humanity which might not be limited to particular groups of individuals such as men, white people, Christians or rich ones (Heywood, 2000). Based on liberal humanism, human has a pure and good nature and there is no evil in his existence.

The goal of social life is only to provide individual interests and desires.

In modern times, liberalism emphasizes more on individualism. In modern liberalism, man is his own and the universe's savior, who does so by relying on his logic with no need of God or any other divine being. As the modern philosopher, Isaiah Berlin states "what our nowadays age needs is not stronger faith, but in actuality, the opposite of it. In modern liberalism, less messianic fervor, more intellectual skepticism, materialistic plea- sures, even those which are loathsome, are considered of high importance, due to the reason that in this doctrine, all that passes the mind is considered so" (Walzer, 1995).

Regarding education, experts believe that true education should always seek human evolution, and in this way create educated man and "noble man" as Newman said (Peters and Hirst, 1978). Hirst (1974) believes that liberal education is training special and superior mind activity to seek knowledge . Whatever distincts liberal education from non-liberal education is that mind limitations are removed in liberal education, mind seeks knowledge for its intrinsic value, and external purposes play no role in seeking knowledge (Kimball, 1998).

According to resulting developments in communication industry and technology as well as communities moving toward globalization, it makes more effectiveness and interaction of social and cultural systems as possible. Liberalism view toward human will impress education system of Islamic countries.

Based on Islamic thoughts, therefore, reviews of the principles of liberal humanism as Islams hold. Educational thoughts help to upgrade awareness level of young generation in the contemporary world. A prominent personages of Islamic thought in Iran, Motahari, reviews liberal education and the concept of human while recognizing Islamic education doctrine. His point of view is respected in this research.
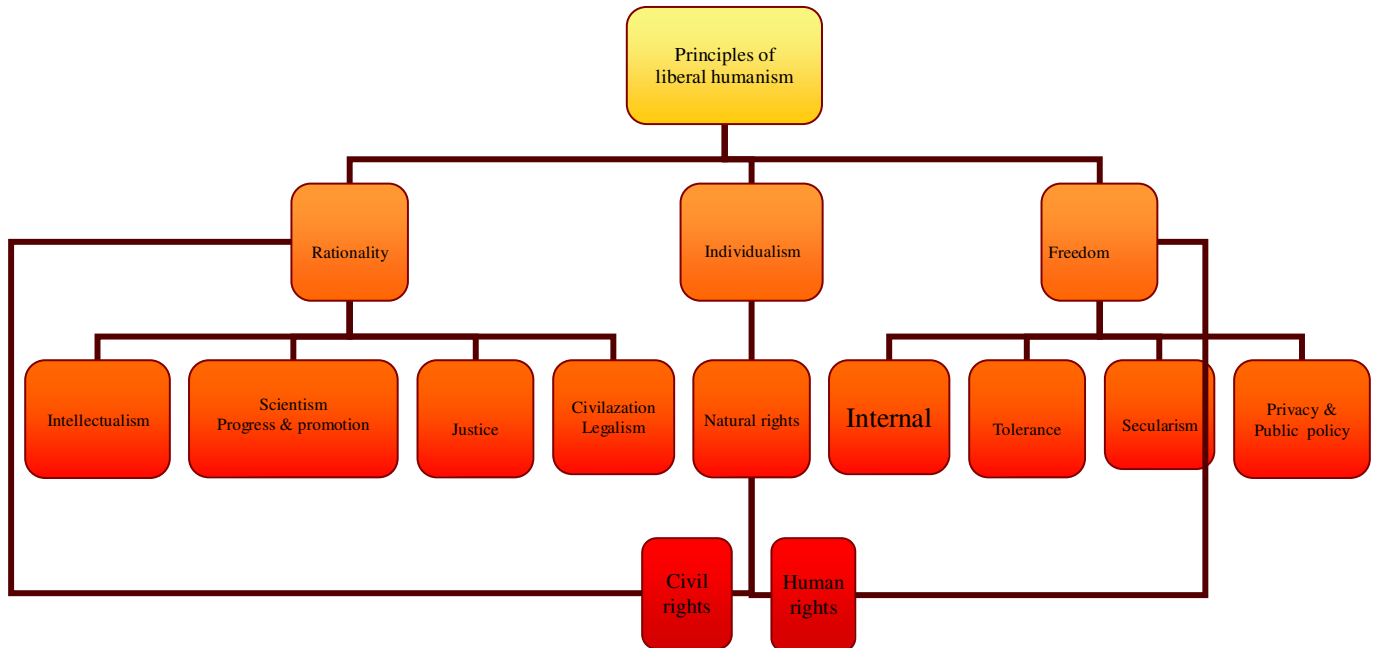
Figure 1. Factors of liberal humanism.

FACTORS OF LIBERAL HUMANISM

The principles of liberal humanism are based on human and natural rule. In the history of liberal humanism, the basis of this doctrine is established on three factors: freedom, individualism, and rationality. Freedom factors explain equality, secularism, tolerance and forbearance, with attention to privacy and public policy. Also, rationality factor explains civilization or legalism, justice, scientism, or progress and promotion which are requisite for individuals and social life. On the other hand, what justifies the main core of liberal humanism is to empha-size on individual and his natural and civil rights; of these two individual rights relate to three factors- rationality, individualism, freedom. These rights have been clearly established in the declaration of human right which was approved in General Assembly of United Nations as an international treaty on December 10, 1984 in Paris. The content of this declaration has determined civil, cultural, economical, political, and social fundamental rights which all human beings must have them (Schapiro, 2012). Each of the main factors of liberal humanism has indictors which were illustrated in Figure 1.

In the following, it will be discussed Motahari's critique of liberal humanism as one of the contemporary Islamic philosophers, in addition to describing factors of liberal humanism.

Freedom

The most important aspect of liberalism is freedom. In liberalism, freedom is not an instrument in achieving higher political goals, but it is, in fact, the highest political aim (Arblaster, 2006). Freedom is considered as superior value and it is the essence of life, the most important desired goal of human, and the most precious value in the most philosophical works. In the argument "freedom from what?" which is the most central principle of liberalists, most importantly, freedom means release from government control, force, restrictions, and interventions. In the argument "freedom for whom?", freedom is for individuals which is the principle concern of liberalists. The purpose of individual freedom is usually personal freedom (Arblaster,2012). Hobbes presents such a definition of freedom which includes non-human creatures because he considers human in the whole order of nature along with other creatures. Therefore, he emphasizes that external barriers in the way of human freedom is man's self-made. Isaiah Berlin believed that the degree that a person or others do not interfere in each others' actions. In this concept, political freedom is the only area where a person could act on without others' obstructions. The degree of each person's freedom depends on others' interference and something missing here (Arblaster, 2006).

Even Liberal economic policies aim to construct an economy that people perform their transactions liberally with freedom to develop their talents. From the Bourgeois liberals' point of view, the ranking and social welfare is related to the natural inequality of humans. They believe that the government's intervention in the economy is harmful. Some of the most famous experts in this field are David Ricardo (1772-1823) and Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1832) [Shapiro, 2012; Fam, 2004].

Motahari, in the manner of Islamic philosophers and theologians, knows the world as a God creature. In this regard, he knows human freedom as God's will and he believes that divine destiny governs the entire world and man is free, authorized, responsible, and his fate sovereign to be doomed to destiny (Motahari, 2014A). Motahari believes that the base of human freedom is human wisdom and his nature talent to interact, but this freedom is in continuity with God's will. There is a strong and deep relationship between wisdom and freedom, and human to be free is the best claim for this radically base because God has created man authorized through "indeed, we have guided him to the path, he is either grateful or ungrateful" and this freedom has no meaning without having wisdom. There is no difference between freedom and lack of freedom for unwise man. According to Motahari's point of view, man is free because he has wisdom and will unlike animals who do not have this. So he believes that liberal thought has reduced human dignity with too much emphasis on human material. After focusing on human with two dimensions, Motahari presents a definition of freedom which emphasizes two dimensions. "Freedom means that there is no obstacle; free men are people who preclude obstacles. Freedom is likely internal, on one hand, and it is likely external, on the other hand. Thus, it gets spiritual dimension, on one hand, and social dimension, on the other hand. Social dimension means that human must be free from the rest of society and others do not prevent him to grow and develop" (Motahari, 2014, C pp, 15-17).

Who believes that prophets focus on this level of freedom. One of the purposes of the prophets was generally and certainly to provide social freedom and to fight with social servitudes and slaveries (Motahari, 2014, B).

Despite this level of freedom which both liberalism and religion followers are jointly in support of, there is another level of freedom called "spiritual freedom" that was only sought by divine prophets. They have addressed human to be released from slavery and captivity of ignorance and evil and to care for heavenly values and ethics. Elsewhere, Motahari speaks about three kinds of freedom: human freedom from nature captivity, human release from his own sovereignty, and human release from other people sovereignty. Third dimension of freedom is social freedom, but second dimension is spiritual freedom. According to his point of view, ultimate and perfect freedom is only achievable through obeying the laws of Islam. Since, spiritual freedom has more importance; social freedom could be set as a tool of spiritual freedom. Otherwise, it will be rejected where social freedom becomes the tool of immoral greed. "Freedom is instrumental perfection, not targeted perfection. Human goal is not to be free but human must be free to reach his own perfections" (Motahari, 2014, A, pp, 83-86). Therefore, there are two major problems on considering liberal freedom: 1- it only considers social freedom and 2- it negates any attempt to make freedom the tools for

evolution as a positive freedom. As a result, liberalism totally sets spiritual freedom aside and it sets the target human life to be separated from religious essentials.

As Motahari's point of view shows, freedom has a religious essential and it is considerable under God's will, not natural situation of human. Also, freedom is a tool for human evolution and it could not be precedence over everything. Meanwhile, freedom is not only summarized in social freedom but it has more important aspects such as spiritual freedom. Freedom is being released from others' sovereignty and his own ego sovereignty through this interpretation.

Figure 2 expresses types of freedom from Motahari's point of view:

The sovereignty of the individual to the community (individualism)

An individual is the first and the last concern of liberalism; the first, because an individual's rights are based on the natural state, a state which he has no other options but to change nature into his own accord; the last, because individuals are production unit (Garandu,2004). In liberalism, individuals are regarded without concerning their race, group, society, religion, and the party they have joined. He is regarded as a person in the possession of natural rights. In fact, it can be stated that the goal of liberal system is to maintain individual and help him to achieve happiness. Individualism is a main core of liberalism and its purpose is a single person. This term emphasizes the integrity of every human being and distinction of one person from another one, not on their similarities (Berlin, 1969).

Being within present time is of liberal individualism tools. Liberalism negates to rely on past and traditions and it considers the future as a nowhere. Thus, it considers the refusal of some advantages existed in providing welfare, happiness, and wellbeing of future generations. Isaiah Berlin quotes from Bentham: "the only real interest is individual interest… Can one understand the existence of so unreasonable humans who prefer missing people to living human being? (Berlin, 1969). Bhikhu Parekh believes that future is hypothetical and unavailable and it is morally of importance to the extent which is related to the future of present generation, not numerous generations and yet unborn. So, triple aspects are decreased only to present time. It is considered only present or future claims of alive generation (Parekh, 1972).

Liberal humanism theory is often referred to Locke and his morality and some relate this theory to Habez. Various theories have been suggested regarding individualism that has been generally categorized in eight groups (Tuhidfam, 2004):

Natural or innate individualism theory: In this theory, individualism is a manner or behavior that treats person
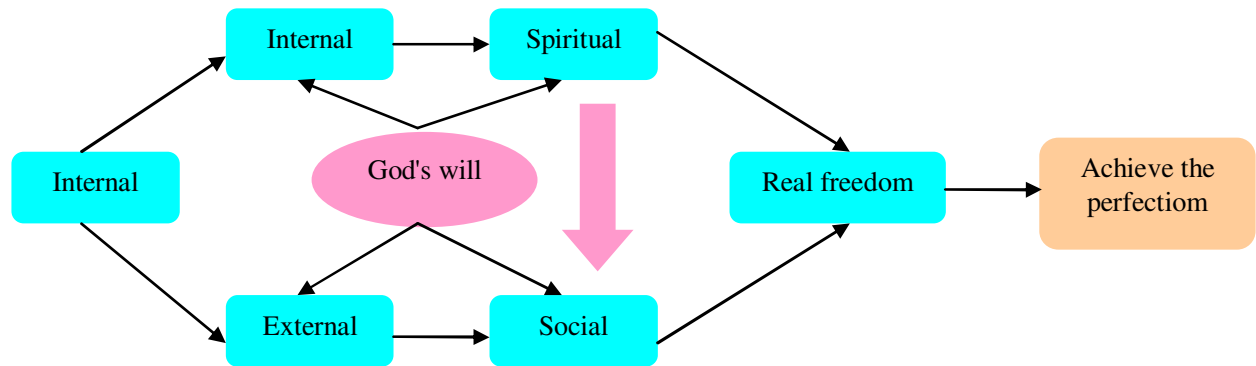
Figure 2. Types of freedom from Motahari's point of view.

as a human whom rights and needs have had preference over every community such as family, company, civil society, or government in moral- political decisions. Just "individuals" are entitled to have natural rights and rights related to group that in fact, is a set of various individuals. Theories of natural right, natural law, and human rights are arisen from this theory.

Metaphysical individualism theory: This theory considers a high degree of perfection and self-reliance for human. Thus, separation and self-reliance account on the basic quality of human metaphysics. Accordingly, this theory considers metaphysical situation which a person is independent on community or any social relations. So, it considers all social events in regard to human being.

Methodological individualism theory: According to this type of individualism, one should prevent to mention social entities or organizations as far as possible and in contrast, should pay attention to individual interactions while he studies society and social realities. Therefore, it is emphasizing more on individual, individual rights and freedom; communities and various groups such as group or family who consider unrealistic things.

Atomism individualism theory: In this theory, individualism is to diminish the importance of whole community-disagreement with group gentility- that it can be nothing but its aggregated components. Thus, the society cannot have its own set of common interest separated from individual interests or claim the rights against individual. Mil believes that large cultural developments were the product of human genius; it is the product of determined minority view and social space which provides the opportunity of diversity and proliferation (Arblaster, 2006).

Humanism individualism theory: In a world view liberalism is essentially humanism and individualism, so it has finally mundane nature. Human in the centre of worldview is the product of modern humanism of sixteenth century.

As Christianity scheme for creatures, human had also special position because Christ had came to rescue human. Nevertheless, prominent thinkers of renaissance era had drawn an image of human implicit challenge with this theology view. This theory considers potential abilities and successes of humans as the main basis or position of values.

Holism individualism theory: Totally, the purpose of holism is that human rights and duties have general and global aspects and its origins from the special condition of human being that is beyond time and location. People must learn to forget their local and insignificant dependencies, such as their look to problems which must be neutral as a legislator view. As holism individualism doctrine, it can mention international socialism, human rights, and Kant's moral laws.

Rational individualism theory: Liberalism establishes that individual is necessarily rational. So, if individual is the main origin of values, rationality of individual will be a necessarily base. Because, it is so difficult that irrational person, who cannot be more than an animal, has high value. The assumption of rationality justifies democracy, freedom, justice, equality, and even public participation in formation of government.

Moral individualism theory: Liberal individualism is both existentialism and ethics. This concept considers a person more real and prior to human society, institutes, and its structures. Individual has already existed before society in terms of time. Existential individualism creates necessary philosophical foundation for moral and political individualism. Accordingly, a person is protected and respected human and he must fully protect the respect of human life. Obligation limits and moral rights in liberalism are individual own conscience commanding to the extent which have no anti-social consequences. An individual should choose his own values and follow his moral values (Figure 3).
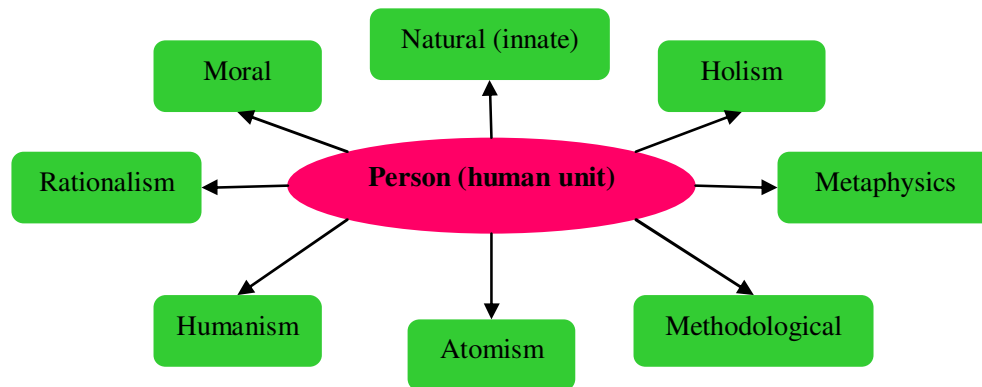
Figure 3. Types of individualism in liberalism.

Motahari' point of view concerning the relation between individual and society has multiple aspects:

1. Based on Quran verses, he believes in individual gentility as in society gentility when both do not negate each other. Motahari suggested his theory using Quran verses. He emphasizes on the role of Quran in making social arguments between Muslims (Motahari, 2012). Abdu r-Rahman Ibn Khaldun Tunisi is the first social thinker who found the personality and the reality of the society according to Quran views. On one hand, Quran (Al-Isra: 4-8) talks about tradition sovereignty and unchangeable and general laws governing society (Motahari, 2014, A). On the other hand, Islamic education has been established according toe44 governing social determinism over human. Otherwise, the responsibility of enjoining good and forbidding wrong, Jihad, and so on will essentially have no meaning (Motahari, 2008).

2. In addition to accepting the real identity of the society and the argument over "philosophical gentility", he believes in "value (legal) gentility" and "epistemology gentility". Thus, he believes that the society has its own existence and life that is different from the existence of one by one individual of the society and it has gentility, existentially (Motahari, 2013).

3. He believes in logic relation between these three gentilities. He knows epistemology gentility and value gentility based on existential gentility. Because, the society has a special nature, it has its own specific laws and tradition, thereby, its own independent science. He believes that if we do not believe in gentility for society existence, talking about society rights will be extravagant. Then, he expresses the distinction between mixture and composite and notes that human relationship with the society is closer to the relationship between components of the composite than the relationship of the mixture; he presents evidences of the society impact on creating moods and beliefs. Motahari believes that the whole of community is really one unit and it has spirit and life. In

this regard, Moatahri represents Allameh Tabatabai's view about society character by inference to verses 34 of Al-A'raf; he mentions the role sins of some community members playing in misfortunes to be generalized and expansion of it to all community members. Then, mentioning the verse "The Prophet is closer to the faithful than they are themselves" (Al-Ahzab: 6), He argues that Islam entitles society; because it considers gentility for the society; and because it considers life for the society. In fact, the community has a unity and it is not absolutely authenticity. The society to be entitled is required to accept a goal for it. The fact that, we entitle future generation and children is based on accepting the creation. Otherwise, if we believe in fortuity, we will not know to speak about the society to be entitled. Then, Motahari criticizes also the hypothetic of community gentility. He believes "the fact that, it is said that there is community, not individual; it is the ridiculed one and irrelevant" (Motahari, 2012, pp, 220-230).

4. Regarding the primacy of society, he does not negate individual responsibility while accepting extraordinarily influence of society on individual, trying human collective destiny. He confirms motion against society and this means that he prefers psychology to sociology. Motahari believes that individualism or collectivism theories developed in Western are a kind of extravagance which has resulted in economic alignment in this regard. In fact, individualism is a reaction to extravagantly collectivism (Motahari, 2008).

5. He states that individual psychology is precedence on its sociology, in some cases, as in Islamic point of view. But in reference to his speeches, it is clarified that the purpose is not the precedence of individual over society such it is expressed "individual gentility" view against "collective gentility" view. Because, he always empha-sizes on society combination formed of individual to be true. In his opinion, individual independence is preserved to a certain degree and individual can change his society or he can move against river flow of the society while
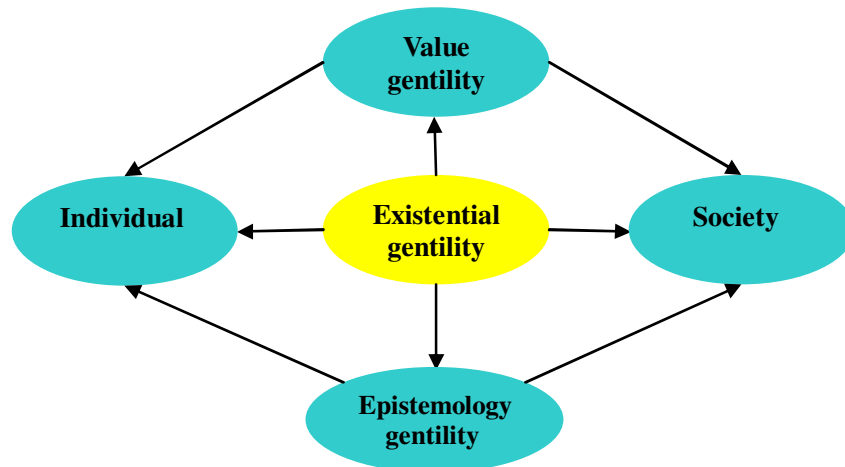
Figure 4. Individual and society gentility.

society is a fact and a combination. He can change history route. This means that human has freedom and authority. Here, the main masterpiece of Motahari is to totalize these two cases and this is under protection of accepting temperament for human. Therefore, the precedence of psychology is to accept innate and natural talent inside human which preserves a possibility of his independent character against society (Dezhkam, 2005).

Individualism is precedence to society in the liberalism point of view and individuality will be known as the main base of liberalism doctrine. While individualism and socialism are considered as two sides of one coin in Motahri's thought (Figure 4).

RATIONALITY

In liberalism, human is inherently wise person. Rationalists approach science due to its being an illuminator and they consider wisdom as their usher and leader (Schapiro, 2012). In Lock's Natural State, humans are not living in mutual hostility but it is established peace and wisdom. As his thought, humans were not living in the state of permanent war or continual fear, in natural state.

In his opinion, if people live in a situation corresponds to wisdom without common superior who has the right to arbitrate them, it will be certainly natural state. Natural state is under rule of natural law and no human orders other. In other words, natural state has natural law that governs it and it is binding for everyone. Wisdom is the same natural law and it teaches all people who conduct an opinion from it that all people are equal and independent; nobody should hurt or harm other's life, health, freedom, or property (Guteg, 2005).In this enlightenment era liberalism emphasizes on the power of human´s rationality to dissolve the problems, innovate

solutions and improve life and society. The reasoning power provides a powerful tool for human to reconstruct the traditional system .They also believe that the scientific approach may be applied for the most of social, political, economic and educative issues. The superstition and ignorance residues distort the human ´s rationality. Human ´s rationality is released by removing the research barriers [Mill, 1949].

Motahari believes that rationality has much value. In support of rationality, Islamic scholars have a disagreement with Western liberal thinkers. Disagreement appears where rationality will be defined against religion. As Moatahari's point of view is concerned, a problem of confronting wisdom and religion is not a problem which has link with pure nature (identity of wisdom, and reality) fact of religion. Manifestations and expressions of human wisdom in its essence have no conflict or contrast with religion or religiosity. Being inspired with Quran verses, narratives, and Nahj Al-Balagha, Motahari believes that prophets came to utilize and release wisdoms and intellects. All prophets were common in awakening human intellect and removing the chains which fetter wisdom and intellect. As humankind has achieved today, even intellectual and scientific achievements are indebted to the emergence of prophets in history of human life (Motahari, 2008).

According to Motahari's point of view, although church had had the thousand years support of political and cultural sovereignty in renaissance era (medieval), and it had controlled over all material and spiritual abilities of Europe it could not present a systematic, humanistic, and rationality culture or thought from its accepted religion. It could not embed systematic and evolved knowledge into the mind and heart of people. In fact, inadequate and self-made trainings of church were the most factor for religion aversion and irreligious ones. Because scholars and thinkers immediately found religion that ritual owners,

Liberalism   **Motahari**
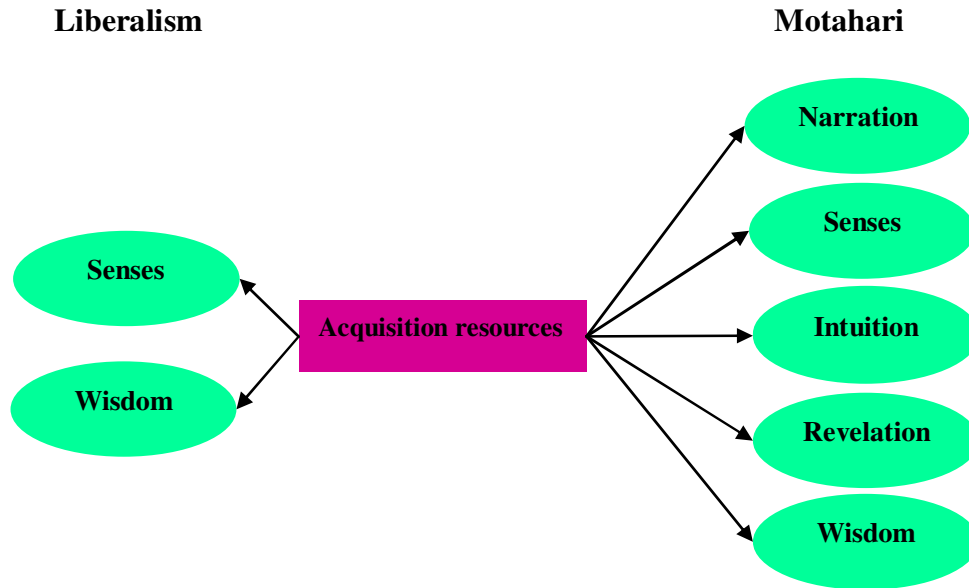
Figure 5. Acquisition resources of knowledge in Motahari's and Liberalism point of view.

clergies, and church administrators were made and addressed, incompatible with wisdom and science, they immediately pushed human-made/human-addressed religion and religiosity to the field; and faced them with wisdom and intellect. It was common that metamorphosed and bared religion would succumb against strong and fresh wisdom and intellect.

Therefore, the conflict between wisdom and religion has roots in Western and Christianity history rather than being public problem and it could not consider it as general. Motahari has stated in his various works how religious principles of Islam are related to wisdom and he often has remembered existed differences with written thought in distorted religions. For example, he has encountered the interpretation of Christianity form the story of Adam and Eve, where picking the fruits of knowledge led to expulsion from paradise, with the interpretation of Islam where God is Himself the teacher of human (according to Quran verses ". Then He gave Adam knowledge of the nature and reality of all things and everything" (Al-Baqara, verses 31)). And he has emphasized on rational aspects of Islamic narrative against distorted narrative of Christianity (Motahari, 2014, B) (Figure 5).

Conclusion

Today, liberalism is a dominant ideology of the West. Liberalism in contemporary concept is an outlook style to life, social world, and set of assumptions about it, where human being is being absorbed gradually. Liberalism reconstructs itself synchronizing time and social circumstances. It influences the different components of communities. Liberalism doctrine has various philosophical, ethic, economics, and human principles . In this research survey humanism principles were considered .Three factors- individualism, freedom, and rationality- are to express focusing on human and individualism in this doctrine. It can be pointed to factors such as freedom, individualism, rationalism, progress and promotion, justice, equality, human rights, etc. In this study, individualism, freedom, and rationality have been criticized according to conceptual relation. Since, dominant social philosophy of Iran is religious and Islamic and it is in contrast with liberalism in expressing human values; therefore, it seems that this contrast has roots in a type of outlook where these two doctrines belong to human. After studying and analyzing each factor of individual liberalism, it results that freedom factors expressing equality, secularism, tolerance and forbearance, as well as privacy and public policy, and rationality are explaining civilization or legalism, justice, scientism, or progress and promotion which are required for individual and social life and individual and collective rationalism. On the other hand, what makes the main core of humanistic liberalism acceptable is to emphasize on individual and the nature and civil rights of him that these two individual rights also related to three main factors of rationality, individualism, and freedom. As one of Islamic thinkers, Motahari has criticized these factors. As far as Motaharis' point of view is concerned, freedom has a religion base and it is considerable under divine will, not natural human situation. As his point of view, emphasis on individualism along with society gentility is not negating each other and it seems that there is an agreement in support of rationality factor. However as Motahari's point of view (as opposed to liberalism view),

wisdom is not the only resource of achieving knowledge, but there are other resources such as revelation, intuition, narration, and sense as the resources of achieving knowledge in Islam. He knows the contrast between wisdom and religion as a result of western condition and distorted Christianity. It can be concluded that Motahari's theories are most relying on Quran, Islamic traditions and narratives; and his outlook to human and nature is religious and spiritual that is different from liberalist outlook which is based on nature and "mundane". Thus, in addition, to consider the global and idealism concepts, the liberalism school emphasizes the key elements contributing to the improvement of living such as rationalism, freedom of human, ownership and economy , tendency to progress based on rationality as well as civil and individual rights. It is concluded that despite some differences in general, it is possible to reach an agreement between both schools of Islam and Liberalism in applying Humanism components to improve human life using the modification format of various social systems.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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