

FELSEFE DÜNYASI

2010/2 Sayı: 52 YILDA İKİ KEZ YAYIMLANIR ISSN 1301-0875

Sahibi

Türk Felsefe Derneği Adına
Başkan Prof. Dr. Necati ÖNER

Sorumlu Yazı İşleri Müdürü

Prof. Dr. Ahmet İNAM

Yazı Kurulu

Prof. Dr. Necati ÖNER
Prof. Dr. Ahmet İNAM
Prof. Dr. Murtaza KORLAELÇİ
Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Gazi TOPDEMİR
Prof. Dr. İsmail KÖZ
Doç. Dr. Erdal CENGİZ
Yard. Doç. Dr. Fulya BAYRAKTAR

Felsefe Dünyası Hakemli Bir Dergidir.

Felsefe Dünyası 2004 yılından itibaren PHILOSOPHER'S
INDEX ve TUBİTAK/ulakbim tarafından dizinlenmektedir.

Yazışma ADRESİ

P.K. 21 Yenişehir/Ankara
Tel & Fax: 0 312 231 54 40

Fiyatı: 20 TL (KDV Dahil)

Banka Hesap No: Vakıf Bank Kızılay şubesi: 00158007288336451

Dizgi ve Baskı

Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı
Yayın Matbaacılık ve Ticaret İşletmesi
Alınteri Bulvarı 1256 Sokak No: 11 YeniMahalle/ANKARA
Tel: 0 312 354 91 31 (Pbx) Fax: 0 312 354 91 32

DIMENSIONS OF THE CONCEPT OF TOLERATION IN JOHN RAWLS'S *POLITICAL LIBERALISM**

Devrim KABASAKAL*

Introduction

Although toleration is a central theme that informs the whole project of Rawls's political liberalism, it is surprisingly difficult to find a systematic analysis of the concept and its role in the political philosophy of Rawls.¹ This paper aims to examine the dimensions of the concept of toleration in Rawls's text *Political Liberalism*, published in 1993. By focusing on what I call the characteristics of and reasons for toleration, I intend to lay out in which way one might think of a robust theory of toleration in Rawls's political theory.

In the first chapter, I will focus on the significance of toleration within the project of political liberalism. In this manner, I will examine the role that toleration has concerning the project of Rawls in his text *Political Liberalism*. Second chapter will be devoted to analyze the conceptual characteristics of toleration in the theory of Rawls. Specifically, I aim to draw the structural boundaries of the concept of toleration. And in the third chapter, I will analyze what kind of reason Rawls provides in favor of toleration.

I. The Centrality of Toleration in *Political Liberalism*

First of all, it is significant to understand the centrality of toleration in *Political Liberalism*. It might be said that toleration is the subject of *Political Liberalism* as an important component of the project of establishing the fundamentals of 'justice as fairness' as a political conception. The fundamental question that is addressed in *Political Liberalism* is: "How is it possible for there to exist over time a just and stable society of free and equal citizens, who remain profoundly divided by reasonable religious, philosophical and moral

** I would like to thank to Prof. Peter Jones in Newcastle University for his comments and suggestions regarding an earlier draft of this paper.

* PhD, Center for Ethics and Global Politics, Luiss University of Rome Italy

¹ Of course there is a lot that has been written on Rawls's political theory all over the world from different angles. My point is that the available literature concerning toleration focuses on certain aspects of Rawls's conception of toleration but yet does not consider toleration on its own as a theory that inspires the whole project of political liberalism.

doctrines?"² In the background of the question, Rawls takes the diversity among reasonable comprehensive doctrines in a constitutional democratic regime as a starting point and so toleration comes as an answer which is also conceived as a foundational conception for political justice. We might say, according to Rawls, given the fact that democratic societies are divided by various reasonable religious, moral and philosophical comprehensive doctrines which have opposing and irreconcilable views; one has to start from toleration and its possible role in imagining a well-ordered stable democratic society. The fact of pluralism and diversity makes it central and significant for Rawls to consider toleration at the center of establishing the fundamentals of a political conception of justice.

For Rawls, the whole attempt to formulate a political conception of justice is applying the principle of toleration to philosophy itself. Thus he says: "The aim of justice as fairness then, is practical: it presents itself as a conception of justice that may be shared by citizens as a basis of a reasoned, informed and willing political agreement. It expresses their shared and public political reason. But to attain such a shared reason the conception of justice should be, as far as possible, independent of the opposing and conflicting philosophical and religious doctrines that citizens affirm. In formulating such a conception, political liberalism applies the principle of toleration to philosophy itself."³ Thus, for Rawls, political liberalism by affirming a political conception of justice is at the same time affirming toleration because the political conception of justice does not refer to any comprehensive doctrine but the shared public reason of citizens in a democratic society. We might infer that toleration in this manner means not imposing the values of any comprehensive doctrine on citizens as the source of the legitimacy for the conception of justice since the legitimacy comes from their shared agreement which is the reflection and practice of public reason. Rawls puts this in a clear way when he mentions the liberal principle of legitimacy: "our exercise of political power is fully proper only when it is exercised in accordance with a constitution the essentials of which all citizens as free and equal may reasonably be expected to endorse in the light of principles and ideals acceptable to their common human reason."⁴ Thus political liberalism, by being independent from reasonable comprehensive doctrines and by acknowledging the liberal principle of legitimacy, is applying the principle of toleration to philosophy.

² John Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, Columbia University Press, 2005, 4

³ Ibid, 9-10

⁴ Ibid, 137

By being political, a political conception of justice is also freestanding. This means "it offers no specific metaphysical or epistemological doctrine beyond what is implied by the political conception itself."⁵ This point of being freestanding might be considered in relation to toleration as well because if political liberalism would affirm some metaphysical or epistemological assumptions, then it would be an imposition of a certain world-view which is partially or fully comprehensive on the other comprehensive doctrines that are part of the democratic society. For instance, imagine that political conception of justice is based on an assumption that human beings are morally autonomous which is in the center of the liberal doctrine of Kant and Mill. This would mean that the conception of justice is affirming a liberal comprehensive doctrine and that would mean imposing this liberal assumption on the comprehensive doctrines who do not share this view of autonomy. Thus, one might say that both by being independent (as mentioned in the previous paragraph) and freestanding regarding reasonable comprehensive doctrines, political conception of justice considers the significance of toleration.

II. Characteristics of Toleration in *Political Liberalism*

Above, we aimed to demonstrate how toleration is a central idea in *Political Liberalism* and how it is connected to the idea of a political conception of justice. Now it is intended to look more into what we call the dimensions of toleration to the extent that one might draw out of *Political Liberalism*. Here, I will refer to two dimensions of toleration: characteristics (conditions of possibility) of and reasons for toleration. By conditions, I mean the conceptual dimensions that make the concept possible. As for reasons for toleration, I refer to the justification of toleration for answering why we should tolerate.

Agents and Objects of Toleration

The first characteristic as for the conditions of possibility of toleration is the objects and subjects of toleration. Put it in another way, one has to talk about the 'tolerator' and the 'tolerated' to be able to refer to toleration. In this manner, concerning *Political Liberalism*, firstly, one might cite citizens of a constitutional democratic society as agents of toleration. In a well ordered democratic society, citizens are regarded as free and equal persons. "The basic idea is that in virtue of their two moral powers (capacity for a sense of justice and for a conception of good) and the powers of reason (of judgment, thought, and inference connected with these powers), persons are free. Their having

⁵ Ibid,10

these powers to the requisite minimum degree to be fully cooperating members of society makes persons equal.”⁶ Thus, persons as free and equal agents engage in relations of toleration to each other in acting through these two moral powers and powers of reason in public forum.

Reasonable comprehensive doctrines as constituting belief sets, values, attitudes and the sources of action, come to the scene as objects of toleration. It is significant to understand what Rawls means by a reasonable comprehensive doctrine. Here I will refer to ‘reasonable’ with respect to the character of comprehensive doctrines. I will focus on reasonableness as an attitude of persons in the following parts of the paper, when talking about the limits of and reasons for toleration. It is not to say that Rawls has two conceptions of reasonable; certainly reasonable comprehensive doctrines are viewed as doctrines that are held by reasonable persons as we will observe later and in this sense there is one common definition. First we will focus on what he means by ‘comprehensive’. In explaining the distinction between a political conception of justice and other moral conceptions, Rawls mentions scope in terms of generality and comprehensiveness. In this sense, he continues:

“A moral conception is general if it applies to a wide range of subjects, and in the limit to all subjects universally. It is comprehensive when it includes conceptions of what is of value in human life, and ideals of personal character, as well as the ideals of friendship and of familial and associational relationships, and much else that is to inform our conduct, in the limit to inform our life as a whole. A conception is fully comprehensive if it covers all recognized values and virtues within one rather precisely articulated system; whereas a conception is only partially comprehensive when it comprises a number of, but by no means all, nonpolitical values and virtues and is rather loosely articulated. Many religious and philosophical doctrines aspire to be both general and comprehensive.”⁷

Concerning the nature of comprehensive doctrines, as Rawls himself puts it very clearly, we might talk about a diversity cross cut by opposing and irreconcilable world-views that are informing the life style and value set of citizens under constitutional modern democracy.

As mentioned, Rawls specifically talks about reasonable comprehensive doctrines in terms of the character of pluralism in democratic societies. That is why we need to understand the meaning of reasonable with respect to comprehensive doctrines. As he puts it, first, we have to assume that reasonable

⁶ Ibid, 19

⁷ Ibid, 13

comprehensive doctrines are the comprehensive doctrines that are affirmed by reasonable persons.⁸ Concerning the features of reasonable comprehensive doctrines, he says they have three main features. One is that a reasonable doctrine is an exercise of theoretical reason in the sense that “it covers the moral, religious and philosophical aspects of human life in a more or less consistent and coherent manner”.⁹

Secondly, “in singling out which values to count as especially significant and how to balance them when they conflict, a reasonable comprehensive doctrine is an exercise of practical reason”.¹⁰ And third, although stable over time, it tends to evolve slowly in time in the light of what it sees as sufficient and good reasons. Here Rawls puts it that his definition of ‘reasonable comprehensive doctrine’ is ‘deliberately loose’¹¹. As Samuel Freeman, rightly mentions many philosophers would call unreasonable what Rawls calls reasonable: “For example most philosophers would content that most any religious doctrine is unreasonable in so far as it believes in miracles, an after life, spiritual beings and so on”.¹² However for Freeman, the loose and flexible character of the definition is in line with Rawls’s limited purpose: He needs to avoid controversial epistemological claims in order to achieve agreement on the political principles of justice among reasonable comprehensive doctrines. We might relate what Samuel Freeman suggested here to Rawls’s empirical observation about the characteristic of pluralism in democratic societies. As mentioned before, since democratic societies are divided by reasonable religious, moral and philosophical comprehensive doctrines, one should begin with acknowledging this diversity in working out the possibility of stability in democratic societies. In this way, as mentioned before, reasonable comprehensive doctrines constitute the objects as far as toleration is concerned in *Political Liberalism*.

Diversity Coupled with Disapproval/Dislike

One of the conditions of possibility of toleration is circumstances of diversity coupled with disapproval or dislike. Thus, it is not sheer diversity or a circumstance in which everyone is approving about each other’s differences. It is diversity with specific qualification. In this way, as we examined *Political*

⁸ Ibid, 59

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Samuel Freeman, *Rawls*, London, New York: Routledge, 2007, reprinted 2008, 351

Liberalism, we could obviously talk about the existence of this condition. As we have addressed before, indeed the very starting point of Rawls in this text is the fact that modern democratic societies are divided by various comprehensive doctrines. In this sense, pluralism is a fact. Here Rawls mentions reasonable pluralism as a condition of diversity mostly in the text. Nevertheless he is also addressing the fact that there could also be unreasonable comprehensive doctrines as they always might occur but it seems like what is characteristic of constitutional modern democracies is the fact that they contain a pluralism which is reasonable because in a sense Rawls considers the fact of reasonable pluralism as something that modern democracy achieved as the history evolved.

There is a significant remark that Catriona McKinnon makes regarding the character of the pluralism that Rawls endorses. For her, Rawls conceives of the ideal character of pluralism as non-hostile due to the requirement of public reason in the form of engagement on the part of citizens separated by differences.¹³ She says, hostility involves a rejection of another person and citizens who are hostile towards each other cannot engage in public reason. Thus, she means that the expectation from reasonable citizens such as willingness to understand and interpret each others differences in their political discourse is at the roots of a Rawlsian political justification and these specific attitudes that citizens are expected to adopt are underlying the non-hostile character of pluralism in Rawls' theory. In the following parts of the paper, we will examine this relation between the expectations from citizens and toleration better as we carry on analyzing *Political Liberalism* in Rawls's theory. Here one might interpret this non-hostile character of pluralism in Rawls's theory not as a dimension that is removing the basis for disapproval or dislike. Quite the contrary: since we have the diversity, it is likely that people would disapprove of each other's values, attitudes etc even though they are reasonable. We will observe that better when we talk about 'burdens of judgment' which marks that

¹³ McKinnon, "Toleration and the Character of Pluralism", *The Culture of Toleration in Diverse Societies- Reasonable Tolerance*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2003, 64. In the article, she claims that the character of the pluralism that is affirmed in a theory has a bearing on political justification. Basically she makes a contrast between the character of pluralism in Rawls's theory (constructivist political justification) and that of Joseph Raz (perfectionist political justification). She argues that contrary to Rawlsian account of pluralism, Raz's account is hostile and competitive in character in which citizens are viewed as adopting natural unwillingness to engagement and interpretation. This competitive character makes it necessary to appeal for perfectionist values in political justification because there are limits to the legitimate expectations from citizens. (64-65)

disagreement is possible between reasonable people in the following parts of the chapter.

Power as a Condition of Toleration

The characteristic of power is one of the conditions of possibility of toleration as well. In order for me to be in a relation of toleration, I should have the power to act on my objection. Thus, toleration needs the agent to be in a position to be able to interfere with the situation that is the object of disapproval or dislike. Here, we can make a distinction between tolerant conduct and attitude. To be able to talk about a tolerant attitude, it is enough to say that the tolerant agent, regardless of having the actual power to act, would not act on her objection even if she had the power not to do so. In line with this, we could say that in the democratic society of Rawls, citizens would exhibit both tolerant conduct and tolerant disposition. They would refrain from using political power either to promote their own conception of good or to impede others' pursuit of their conceptions of good. They would do this as a matter of justice. In this manner, what Rawls calls 'burdens of judgment' also demonstrates that reasonable persons could disagree and in these situations they certainly tolerate each other even though they have the power not to do so. I will get into what "burdens of judgment" refer to and its place in the toleration argument in *Political Liberalism* in the following parts of the paper.

Scope, Limits and Demands of Toleration

We could analyze scope, limits and demands of toleration concerning the conditions of possibility. By referring to the scope, we mean the sources of disapproval or dislike. The scope refers if the sources of disapproval are moral or not. We might claim that there might be diverse sources such as aesthetic and mere dislike as well as moral. Here, concerning *Political Liberalism*, one might claim the same since we have religious, philosophical and moral reasonable comprehensive doctrines; it seems very likely to have disapproval or dislike that would fall under the category of nonmoral as well as moral. Citizens might find certain values and practices of other citizens which are informed by their particular comprehensive doctrine as morally wrong as well as aesthetically ugly or they just might not like for many different reasons. Here we need to recall the meaning of 'comprehensive' in Rawls. We had seen that comprehensive doctrines could cover a broad range of aspects such as values, traditions, beliefs which could be connected to a religion, philosophical or moral doctrine. Therefore, the range of differences that might cause disapproval is broad as well. Due to this nature of diversity, one might claim that we could have different sources of disapproval or dislike such as religious, aesthetic, cultural as well as moral.

As for the limits of toleration, I will refer to substantive limits regarding what we should tolerate and what we should not. In this sense, in *Political liberalism*, reasonableness, which is central to the idea of toleration in Rawls's theory, seems to be significant in the sense of drawing the limits of what is tolerable and what is not in the public forum. In addition to this aspect, reasonableness also gives reasons for toleration in the theory of Rawls but I will take up this issue later. First let's see what Rawls mean by reasonableness: "Persons are reasonable in one basic aspect when, among equals say, they are ready to propose principles and standards as fair terms of cooperation and to abide by them willingly, given the assurance others likewise do so. Those norms they view as reasonable for everyone to accept and therefore as justifiable to them; and they are ready to discuss the fair terms that others propose."¹⁴ Thus, reasonableness refer to a particular public disposition which is based on an other- regarding principle of proposing principles that others would accept and being ready to abide by the principles that other people would propose in the same manner.

Here it is also significant to note that reasonable is distinct from rational. Rawls says justice as fairness "does not try to derive the reasonable from the rational. ...Rather within the idea of fair cooperation, the reasonable and the rational are complementary ideas. Each is an element in this fundamental idea and each connects with its distinctive moral power, respectively with the capacity for a sense of justice and capacity for a conception of the good."¹⁵ Thus citizens as persons in a well-ordered democratic society behave as reasonable when they appeal to their moral capacity of having a sense of justice.

How is reasonable significant in determining the limits of toleration? Here Rawls seems to propose that comprehensive doctrines who gain the status of reasonable in public realm are tolerated because by being reasonable, they already demonstrate that they move within the boundaries of the appropriate principles of justice. Citizens practice toleration when they engage in proposing principles as fair terms of cooperation given that others would do the same. We might say even if they do disapprove of certain aspect of a particular reasonable comprehensive doctrine, they do tolerate these aspects due to the fact that this comprehensive doctrine is reasonable as well. In this sense, citizens know that disagreement or disapproval should not lead them to act intolerantly. In this manner, reasonableness comes to the scene as a substantive limit to the toleration that citizens practice in Rawls's theory.

¹⁴ Rawls, 2005, 49

¹⁵ Ibid, 52

What about the unreasonable comprehensive doctrines? Here Rawls says: "There is not one account of toleration for reasonable doctrines and another for unreasonable ones. Both cases are settled by the appropriate political principles of justice and the conduct these principles permit. Unreasonable doctrines are a threat to democratic institutions since it is impossible for them to abide by a constitutional regime except as a *modus vivendi*. Their existence sets a limit to the aim of fully realizing reasonable democratic society with its ideal of public reason and the idea of legitimate law."¹⁶ Here by not complying with the appropriate set of principles for a constitutional democracy, unreasonable doctrines already exclude themselves from the reciprocal toleration of democratic citizenship. Even if they could benefit from the outcomes of a *modus vivendi*, they would not be willing to participate as a member of a stability that is the outcome of an overlapping consensus. And this will make them not tolerated in the long run in a well-ordered democratic society.

As for the demands of toleration, the debate is about what could be the appropriate limits of action that could be taken for tolerating: whether toleration means leaving alone and refraining from persecuting or it could require more than that (assisting, aiding and fostering etc). I think one has strong reasons to believe that Rawls's understanding of toleration goes beyond refraining from persecuting or leaving alone. In this way, the requirements set by public reason and reasonableness provides toleration to maintain dimensions that are related to the ideal of democratic citizenship. Rawls expresses this very explicitly when referring to the ideal of public reason and its limits:

"I stress the limits of public reason are not, clearly the limits of law or statute but the limits we honor when we honor an ideal: the ideal of democratic citizens trying to conduct their political affairs in terms supported by public values that we might reasonably expect others to endorse. The ideal also

¹⁶ Rawls, 2005, 489 Regarding this point, as Samuel Freeman puts it, some critics think that Rawls is being unfair towards unreasonable doctrines by not trying to accommodate them. Freeman replies: "But unreasonable persons, by definition, either do not want to cooperate with others on terms they can reasonably accept or they refuse to accept the inevitability of pluralism in a democratic society. As a result, they are either intolerant of other persons (i.e. racists) or doctrines (e.g. religious fundamentalists), or they do not accept the role of society to meet the basic needs of all citizens (e.g. libertarians). Hence any accommodation reached with unreasonable persons or unreasonable doctrines will be unacceptable to reasonable citizens, and results in an injustice to them (e.g. respectively to the despised racial groups, religious non-fundamentalists, and nonbelievers, and the less advantaged whose rights and interests have been compromised.) Any overlapping consensus with unreasonable persons or doctrines is itself unreasonable." (Freeman, 2007, 371)

expresses a willingness to listen to what others have to say and being ready to accept reasonable accommodations or alterations in one's own view. Public reason further asks of us that the balance of those values we hold to be reasonable in a particular case is a balance we sincerely think can be seen to be reasonable by others. Or failing this, we think the balance can be seen as at least not unreasonable in this sense: that those who oppose it can nevertheless understand how reasonable persons can affirm it. This preserves the ties of civic friendship and is consistent with the duty of civility.”¹⁷

Here one might say that demands of toleration and the ideal of citizenship are connected to each other: Demands of toleration go further enough to cover civic duty and friendship in a democratic constitutional society. In this sense, demands could be seen as part of the requirements of public reason and acting reasonable as citizens who share the same institutional framework.

III. Reasons for Toleration in *Political Liberalism*

Above, we tried to analyze the characteristics of the concept of toleration in *Political Liberalism* with reference to conditions of possibility. Now, it is the aim to focus on what we call the reasons for toleration with reference to *Political Liberalism*. Here it is claimed that Rawls subscribes to moral principled reasons as justification for toleration. With this in mind, below, Rawls's concept of toleration in *Political Liberalism* will be examined with respect to reasons for toleration.

It might be claimed that Rawls subscribes to the idea of 'respect for persons' as a principled moral justification to toleration. Before concentrating on Rawls's understanding of 'respect for persons' and how it fits in the argument for toleration, we will focus on what is meant by 'respect for persons' in general and what the idea of personhood implies in *Political Liberalism* to the extent that it is related to the analysis of toleration. Personhood is usually associated with being recognized as a human being that is capable to reflect, judge and choose for herself. As Peter Jones mentions, here it is not the merit of the choice which is respected, but it is the status of the person that is making the choice.¹⁸ The idea has Kantian roots in the sense of treating human beings as ends in themselves and it is shared among philosophers who have deontological theories.¹⁹ For instance, Charles Larmore connects the idea of person to the idea of

¹⁷ Rawls, 2005, 253

¹⁸ Jones, "International Toleration and the 'War on Terror'", in *Globalizations*, 6, No.1.,12

¹⁹ Regarding Rawls, we need two qualifications here: First, we do not mean to say Rawlsian idea of 'respect for persons' is Kantian. Rawls says Political Liberalism is not a comprehensive doctrine, so claiming that his idea is Kantian would be misinterpreting his notion of

democratic legitimacy in a way echoing Kant with regard to 'respect for persons':

"...an essential feature of persons is that they are beings capable of thinking and acting on the basis of reasons. If we try to bring about conformity to a rule of conduct solely by the threat of force, we will be treating persons merely as means, as objects of coercion, and not also as ends, engaging directly their distinctive capacity as persons.... Thus, to respect others as persons in their own right when coercion is at stake is to require that political principles be as justifiable to them as they presumably are to us."²⁰

Also, in contemporary literature on toleration, it has become common to refer to 'respects for persons' as a reason for toleration.²¹

As far as *Political Liberalism* is concerned, Rawls says that he refers to a political conception of person. In this sense, persons are regarded as free and equal. He says, "The basic idea is that in virtue of their two moral powers (a capacity for a sense of justice and for a conception of the good) and the powers of reason (of judgment, thought, and inference connected with these powers), persons are free. Their having these powers to the requisite minimum degree to be fully cooperating members of society makes persons equal."²² We might say that this idea of person is political in two aspects: First, viewing persons in this way is considered as one of the political values of a democratic political culture. Citizens are free and equal is already a political value that we find in a constitutional democratic society. Secondly, the idea of person is connected to the idea of social cooperation. Citizens as persons are members of society as a fair system of cooperation in which they appeal to the political principles of justice as well as following their conceptions of good. "For purposes of social cooperation as members of a democratic society the ideal conception of free and equal moral persons captures (Rawls conjectures) how we think of ourselves and one another in our capacity as democratic citizens."²³ In our capacity as

personhood. Concerning this matter, he also mentions that his theory of personhood is not metaphysical but it is political. (see Lecture 1, Part 5 "The Political Conception of the Person" in *Political Liberalism*) And, one other qualification: the idea of 'respect for persons' is likely to be associated with autonomy in relation to Kant. However, Rawls clearly mentions that he does not refer to autonomy as a moral ideal like in Kant and Mill but he talks about artificial and political autonomy (see Lecture 2, Parts 5 and 6 in *Political Liberalism*)

²⁰ Charles Larmore, *The Autonomy of Morality*, Cambridge University Press, 2008, 148-149

²¹ One might mention Catriona MacKinnon, Rainer Forst, Peter Jones and Susan Mendus as political theorists who subscribe to 'respect for persons' as a normative reason for toleration.

²² Rawls, 2005, 18-19

²³ Freeman, 2007, 335

citizens, we view ourselves as well as each other as free and equal and respect this status both in our own capacity and in the capacity of other fellow citizens. Thus, we might say that Rawlsian personhood is also about the status of persons and respect owed to this status as part of the justification of toleration. Below, we will focus on how 'respect for persons' constitutes a justification for toleration in *Political Liberalism*.

To begin with, it might be argued that the idea of 'respect for persons' as a reason for toleration is embedded in the idea of 'reasonableness' together with the idea of 'burdens of judgment' in Rawls's understanding of toleration. Indeed 'burdens of judgment' as Rawls says constitutes the second aspect of the reasonable: "The first basic aspect of the reasonable is the willingness to propose fair terms of cooperation and to abide by them provided others do. The second basic aspect is the willingness to recognize the burdens of judgment and to accept their consequences for the use of public reason concerning the legitimate exercise of political power in a constitutional regime."²⁴ Here, both concerning the first and second aspect of the reasonable, toleration comes as a response to difference and disagreement, and it is related to our judgment and comprehension of others' status as persons.

As for the first aspect of the reasonable, citizens know the fact that they have different viewpoints and values does not necessarily mean that others' values are unreasonable. This is a comprehension which allows citizens to see other fellows as respectable and on equal footing in the use of public reason for the exercise of shared political power. In this sense, seeing the other as free and equal persons (just like us) who are willing to propose reasonable arguments constitute a principled moral ground by providing reasons for our toleration. And in addition to this, citizens by seeing other comprehensive doctrines as reasonable would find it unreasonable to use political power to impose their own comprehensive doctrine on others.²⁵

In relation to the idea of 'reasonableness', 'burdens of judgment' constitute a significant ground for toleration. By 'burdens of judgment', Rawls says he means the causes and sources of disagreement between reasonable persons.²⁶ In this manner, he lists six possible sources of disagreement from a to f:

"a. The evidence- empirical and scientific- bearing on the case is conflicting and complex, and thus hard to assess and evaluate.

²⁴ Rawls, 2005, 54

²⁵ Ibid, 60

²⁶ Ibid, 55

b. Even where we agree fully about the kinds of considerations that are relevant, we may disagree about their weight, and so arrive at different judgments.

c. To some extent all our concepts, and not only moral and political concepts, are vague and subject to hard cases; and this indeterminacy means that we must rely on judgment and interpretation (and on judgments about interpretations) within some range (not sharply specifiable) where reasonable persons may differ.

d. To some extent (how great we cannot tell) the way we assess evidence and weigh moral and political values is shaped by our total experience, our whole course of life up to now; and our total experiences must always differ. Thus, in a modern society with its numerous offices and positions, its various divisions of labor, its many social groups and their ethnic variety, citizens' total experiences are disparate enough for their judgments to diverge, at least to some degree, on many if not most cases of any significant complexity.

e. Often there are different kinds of normative considerations of different force on both sides of an issue and it is difficult to make an overall assessment.

f. Finally, as we note in referring to Berlin's view (V: 6.2), any system of social institutions is limited in the values it can admit so that some selection must be made from the full range of moral and political values that might be realized. This is because any system of institutions has, as it were, a limited social space. In being forced to select among cherished values, or when we hold to several and must restrict each in view of the requirements of the others, we face great difficulties in setting priorities and making adjustments. Many hard decisions may seem to have no clear answer."²⁷

In recognizing the burdens of judgment, citizens would grant that disagreement is possible even among reasonable persons and comprehensive doctrines. Disagreement does not mean that other comprehensive doctrines are unreasonable. That is why they would consider using state power or make an alliance with some citizens to impose their own view on others as unreasonable since disagreement does not give them any grounds for oppression or imposition of their own comprehensive doctrines over others. Moreover, they would consider imposition of their own conception of good by using political power as unjust. In this sense, political toleration is a requirement of justice as well.

Since disagreement does not mean other comprehensive doctrines are unreasonable, persons who are holders of these doctrines could not be viewed as

²⁷ Ibid, 56-57

unreasonable either. In this way, 'respect for persons' seems to follow as a necessity of recognizing the burdens of judgment. We have to respect and grant equal status to others as persons in sharing the corporate political power of society even though we end up in disagreement. Moreover, If I am equal in status with all other reasonable persons with different reasonable comprehensive views, then I cannot justify using power to impose my own view to others. In case if I do this, I would be in a position of not granting respect to other citizens who are also free and equal and this would definitely mean that I would be unreasonable to demonstrate intolerance.

We have pointed out that the idea of 'reasonableness' is connected to the idea of 'respect for persons' as a ground for toleration in Rawls' theory as far as justification is concerned. Furthermore, we could point out the idea of 'overlapping consensus' and 'moral psychology of persons' as two significant conceptions which are supportive of the idea of 'respect for persons' and 'reasonableness'. First let's concentrate on 'moral psychology of persons'. For Rawls, persons as citizens of a well-ordered democratic society act out of a certain philosophical disposition which we might call a certain moral psychology. This is related to the moral motivation of persons in the sense that they have a reasonable disposition. Thus Rawls says, "Citizens have a reasonable moral psychology. The features we have attributed to citizens- their readiness to propose and to abide by fair terms of cooperation, their recognizing burdens of judgment and affirming only reasonable comprehensive doctrines and their wanting to be full citizens- provide a basis for ascribing them a reasonable moral psychology, several aspects of which are consequences of these features."²⁸ In this manner, one might claim that persons as citizens acting out of a particular disposition might be considered as ascribing to a tolerant attitude towards their fellow citizens. Thus, the principle of toleration itself could be seen as embedded in the ideal of democratic citizenship which requires a reasonable moral psychology.

As for the idea of 'overlapping consensus' as supportive of 'respect for persons', we might claim that the principle of toleration which is grounded by 'respect for persons' and 'reasonableness' could be under full guarantee only with the stability which is the outcome of an overlapping consensus. In other words, stability achieved by the assent of reasonable comprehensive doctrines with respect to the appropriate principles of justice could support the principle of toleration and its conduct to the admirable extent. As Rawls himself puts it, "the kind of stability required of justice as fairness is based, then, on its being a

²⁸ Rawls, 2005,86

liberal political view, one that aims at being acceptable to citizens as reasonable and rational, as well as free and equal, and so addressed to their public reason.”²⁹ In this sense, overlapping consensus as the basis of stability is different from *modus vivendi* which is no more than a contingent balance of forces in the society. Moreover, a constitutional consensus is also far from guaranteeing the principles of toleration to the full extent because it covers basic rights to political participation but does not address questions of distribution of goods. However, with the overlapping consensus, the principles of a fully developed conception of justice are agreed on. It is only with overlapping consensus, we arrive at a stability in which citizens do not consider to change the stability by using political power to impose their own comprehensive doctrine on the others. Thus, the principle of toleration is secured. As McKinnon puts it, the agreement through an overlapping consensus demands deeper answers concerning the questions of justice from citizens who adopt different reasonable comprehensive doctrines because the level of opposition is deeper at that level due to the wide range of principles that are addressed by the appropriate conception of justice.³⁰ In this situation, citizens find a way to accommodate their different views in order to accept the same conception of justice and this is possible with the reasonable attitudes of the citizens who participate in overlapping consensus. Citizens see themselves and others as reasonable in affirming the same conception of justice regardless of their differences. They also grant the respect to the others who are as reasonable like them and do not consider changing the stability by using political power.

IV. Conclusion

In this paper, I examined the dimensions of toleration in the political theory of Rawls with specific reference to his *Political Liberalism*. I made a conceptual analysis on the basis of the conceptual map that I had drawn regarding characteristics of and reasons for toleration. It was demonstrated that in Rawls's theory, toleration comes to the fore as a requirement of justice and also the idea of political liberalism. In this sense, it is central and significant to Rawls's whole political philosophy. In addition to this, by laying out the dimensions of the concept of toleration in *Political Liberalism*, it was demonstrated that one might think of a robust theory of toleration in Rawls's political philosophy.

²⁹ Ibid, 143

³⁰ McKinnon, *Toleration- A Critical Introduction*, London, New York: Routledge, 2006, 70

JOHN RAWLS'UN SİYASAL LIBERALİZM'İNDE HOŞGÖRÜ KAVRAMININ BOYUTLARI

ÖZET

Bu Makale, 1993'te yayınlanan *Siyasal Liberalizm* eserine özel olarak atıfta bulunarak, John Rawls'un siyaset felsefesinde hoşgörünün boyutlarını incelemektedir. Rawls'un siyasal liberalizm projesi açısından hoşgörünün, siyasal adaletin bir gerekliliği olarak merkezi bir yer teşkil ettiği iddia edilmektedir. Bununla birlikte, hoşgörünün özellikleri ve hoşgörü için sebepler üzerine vurgu yapılarak, Rawls'un siyasal liberalizm projesinin kalbinde yer alan iddiali bir hoşgörü teorisinin olduğu ispatlanmaktadır. Diğer bir deyişle, hoşgörüye ve hoşgörünün Rawls'un siyaset felsefesindeki yerine ilişkin kavramsal bir harita çizmek amaçlanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: John Rawls, Hoşgörü, Siyasal Liberalizm, Çoğulculuk, Çeşitlilik, Siyasal Adalet

DİMENSİONS OF THE CONCEPT OF TOLERATION IN JOHN RAWLS'S POLITICAL LIBERALISM

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to examine the dimensions of toleration in the political philosophy of John Rawls with specific reference to his *Political Liberalism* published in 1993. It is claimed that toleration constitutes a central place as a requirement of political justice as far as his project of political liberalism is concerned. In line with this, by concentrating on what is called the characteristics of and reasons for toleration, it is intended to demonstrate that Rawls has a robust theory of toleration which is at the heart of his project of political liberalism. In a sense, it is the goal to draw a conceptual map with respect to toleration and its place in the political philosophy of Rawls.

Keywords: John Rawls, Toleration, Tolerance, Political liberalism, Pluralism, Diversity, Political justice

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Freeman, Samuel. *Rawls*. London, New York: Routledge, 2007, reprinted 2008

Jones, Peter. "International Toleration and the „War on Terror“", *Globalizations*, Vol.6, No.1, March 2009

Larmore, Charles. *The Autonomy of Morality*. Cambridge University Press, 2008

McKinnon, Catriona. *Toleration: A Critical Introduction*. London, New York: Routledge, 2006

McKinnon, Catriona. "Toleration and the Character of Pluralism", *The Culture of Toleration in Diverse Societies- Reasonable Tolerance*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2003

Rawls, John, *Political Liberalism*. Columbia University Press. 2005

BİLİNÇ FELSEFESİ PARADİGMASI OLARAK İLETİŞİMSEL RASYONELLİK VE BİREYSELLİK

Seyit COŞKUN*

Giriş

Aklın, soyut özdeş belirlenim ve kendini korumaya bağlı bir öznel-araçsal akıl ve bireysellik olarak biçimlenmesi ve bu biçimlenmeden kaynaklı ortaya çıkan olumsuzlamalar, gelinen noktada farklı bir bakış açısını ve belirlemiyi gerekli kılmaktadır. Bu çerçevede, *Eleştirel Okul* içerisinde yer alan Habermas, günümüz çoğulcu yaşamı açısından modern öznel-araçsal rasyonellik ve bireyselliğe bağlı olarak ortaya çıkan sorunların ancak iletişimsel eylem temelinde biçimlenen bir rasyonellik ve bireysellik temelinde çözülebileceğini iddia eder.

Soyut Özdeş Ben Olarak Öznel Akıl ve Bireysellik Eleştirisi

Modernleşme sürecinin temelinde yer alan aklın, kendini kendinde bilen özdeş Ben olarak biçimlenmesi, Descartes'ın "ego cogito"sundan başlayıp, Kant'ın öz-bilincin tamalgısında en yüksek doruğuna ulaşmış ve özne-nesne ayrımı çerçevesinde özerk biçimde eyleyen dünya kurucu öznellik ya da bireysellik olarak kavranmıştı. Dolayısıyla Habermas'a göre, özne merkezli bir akıl eleştirisi, bir modernlik ve rasyonalite ilişkisini anlamayı gerektirmektedir. Dolayısıyla bu durumda, modernliği ve özne merkezli aklı anlamak istiyorsak Hegel'e kadar geri gitmeliyiz. Çünkü öncelikle aydınlanmanın özne merkezli aklının bu soyut belirlenimi ve kavrayışı, aklı tarihsel gelişim süreci içinde kendini diyalektik olarak açımlayan ve gerçekleştiren somut nesnellik olarak gören Hegel'in, Kant felsefesi eleştirisiyle olumsuzlanmıştı. Ama bu Hegelci nesnel-idealist olumsuzlama, özne merkezli aklın dönüşümünü sağlamak yerine, öz-

* Dr. Seyit Coşkun 1