

A Comparative Study of the Sphere of Political Action in Ayatollah Khamenei's Theory of Religious Democracy and Habermas's Deliberative Democracy¹

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Research Article



Abstract

The growing importance of paying attention to people and the inefficiency of liberal democracy led theorists to critique this political paradigm and offer alternative paradigms. One of the most important models presented in the Western world is Habermas's deliberative democracy, and in the Islamic world, Ayatollah Khamenei's religious democracy. Both models are based on the critique of liberal democracy and the emphasis on the position of the people in the political system and the reconstruction of various arenas of political action. This study tries to answer the following question using the documentary method: "What is the sphere of political action in Ayatollah Khamenei's theory of religious democracy and Habermas's deliberative democracy?" The findings of the research

1. This article is derived from the proposal of the theory of political progress in the constitution and the thought of the leaders of the Islamic revolution, emphasizing the view of Ayatollah Khamenei, number 99028318 of the Researcher Support Fund.
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indicate that both theories, while criticizing liberal democracy and considering the instrumentalization of the role of the people according to their different semantic systems, have revived various areas of political action in the spheres of establishment, participation and supervision.

Keywords

Ayatollah Khamenei, Habermas, Political Action, Religious Democracy, Deliberative Democracy.

Introduction

With an increase in social and political revolutions, Islamic awakening, reviving cultural identities, changing the development paradigm from economic to social issues based on socio-cultural contexts, expanding mass media, increasing people's sensitivity to political and social issues and the inefficiency of political systems in expanding people's political action in the political arena, the crisis of rationality, legitimacy and motivation and the dominance of instrumental rationality and limiting the field of communicative action (Moeini Alamdari, 1380 SH, p. 13) and inattention to spirituality and religion have led to inefficiency of liberal democracy. In answering the inefficiencies of liberal democracy, the Western and Islamic theorists sought to draw alternative models of the political system. Among the most important models in the Islamic world and the Western world are religious democracy and deliberative democracy. While criticizing the instrumental role of the people in liberal democracy, these two theories try to create new arenas for political action according to different semantic systems.

Habermas laid the foundations of the theory of deliberative democracy by basing the concept of human rights on liberal democracy and the concept of public sovereignty on republicanism (Finilition, 1395 SH, p. 154). He believes that because the capacity for national unity and homogeneity of civic unity is reduced (Habermas, 1989, p. 121), the conditions for dialogue in society should be based on interpersonal communication, communication between people and explaining the mental experiences of individuals and empathy (Bashirieh, 1387 SH, p. 226) in the context of the public sphere without threat (Harsij, 1389 SH, p. 108) to achieve the development of the field of political action.

While criticizing the instrumentalization of the role of the people in liberal democracy, Habermas has redefined the fields of political action and considered the goal of political action to be the achievement of freedom and equality (Bashirieh, 1387 SH, p. 227). Relying

on the rationality of dialogue, political and social equality and public interests, he has explained the relationship between freedom and equality in society (Mirahmadi, 1387 SH, p. 284).

He believes that in the public sphere as one of the important areas of political action, the situation should be administered without exercising power and freely (Samiei Esfahani, 1393 SH, p. 451) so that in the public sphere, human beings achieve equality and conditions of complete political action through dialogue, understanding, language and intellectual communication (Pedram, 1388 SH, p. 19).

Habermas has attributed the quality of people's political action to how public opinion and will are formed in the public sphere. Civil society, as one of the influential areas of political action, must maintain its principle of autonomy and coherence in the face of systemic power. What hinders the development of the field of people's political action in society is the existence of government's interference, party policies and manipulation of the mass media (Bayani et al., 1394 SH, p. 208). He believes that by relying on social movements as the main actors in the political arena, it is possible to develop political action (Habermas, 1996, p. 442).

Prior to its introduction into the Islamic world, religious democracy was introduced as Theodemocracy, a term coined by Joseph Smith, in the Christian world to establish a link between theology and democratic government. For Smith, this meant a regime in which God and the people exercise power on the basis of righteousness. This term was proposed by some Muslim thinkers, including Abul-Ali Maududi, one of the thinkers of India and Pakistan, before it became popular in post-revolutionary Iran (Moballegghi, 1393 SH, p. 43).

Ayatollah Khamenei considers the origin of the political system in Islam to be God and based on the thought, belief, emotion of equality of people and officials, and religious democracy based on free elections of the people in electing rulers, and policy-making according

to Islamic principles based on the Book and traditions (Khamenei, 1379/01/06 SH, p. 5), people's political determination based on the rules of Sharia (Khamenei, 3/9/1395 SH, p. 6), and taken from the text of religion ("those who conduct their affairs with consultation among themselves" (Shura, 38) and "And if they would deceive thee, then lo! Allah is Sufficient for thee". He it is who supported thee with His help and with the believers (Anfal, 62). Ayatollah Khamenei considered the concept of consultation to include a wide range of people's participation in various political and social fields. And the main basis is spirituality (Khamenei, 14/03/1383 SH, p. 8). This kind of spirituality is the essence and principled (Khamenei, 24/11/1382 SH, p. 9). Religious democracy can lead to the material and spiritual development of human societies (Khamenei, 27/03/1383 SH, p. 8), and be a model for other nations in the Islamic world (Khamenei, 26/10/1396 SH B, p. 6).

Emphasis on independence, freedom in various dimensions, non-permeability, and justice are elements of religious democracy (Khamenei, 1/4/1383 SH, p. 9). Religious democracy is Ayatollah Khamenei's practical interpretation of the position of the people's political action in politics and society. This research tries to answer the following question: "What is the field of political action in the theory of religious democracy of Ayatollah Khamenei and deliberative democracy of Habermas by using documentary method?"

The findings of the research indicate that both theories, while criticizing liberal democracy and paying attention to the instrumentalization of people's role according to the different meaning systems they have, have revived various fields of political action in the institutional, participatory and supervisory fields.

Conceptual framework

Unlike quantitative studies, which are based on a theoretical framework for assessing the theory, the qualitative studies use conceptual

framework. The conceptual framework includes the collection of interrelated concepts that focus on the major concepts under study, linking them together in the form of a consistent and interrelated semantic system.

The two theories of 'religious democracy' and 'deliberative democracy' are among critics of liberal democracy and believe in the instrumentalization of the human role in the political process, believing that in democracy and democratic systems, people must be the basis of government formation, and their political action in the field of political system should be emphasized.

The sphere of establishment of political action is synonymous with the sphere of legitimacy of the government with a common sphere. Political action in the establishing arena reflects the people's role in the political system.

Another area of people's action in the sphere of politics is the sphere of participation. The sphere of participation reflects the people's position in the sphere of governance, and states that with people's consent and agreement in establishing a government, the political action does not come to an end. Rather, in addition to actively participating in elections at regular intervals, people must be always active in the process of politics and governance, and the political system must benefit from the people's views and votes at all times.

One of the most important criticisms of liberal democracy is that people are guided in politics by those with wealth, power, and the media. Due to the control of the people, the supervisory role of the people in the political sphere is reduced.

In the theory of deliberative democracy and religious democracy, in addition to the establishing and participatory roles of the people in the political sphere, the people have a supervisory role. People, as the founders of the political system must have active supervision over the

performance of the government and be able to give comments in case they see any deficiency. The philosophy of political supervision is to prevent rebellion, because if there is no supervision, tyranny, oppression and injustice will arise. (Javan Arasteh, 1384 SH, p. 162).

People's supervisory political action deals with investigating and evaluating, and monitoring the government's performance and its conformation to the laws to prevent it from deviation in execution. In other words, monitoring means ensuring compliance of actions with goals (Aghabakhshi and Afshari Rad, 1375 SH, p. 361). In fact, monitoring is a way to take care of the effectiveness of planned and organized activities (Rezaian, 1380 SH, p. 558).

The semantic system of deliberative democracy and its effect on political action

The semantic system of Habermas's deliberative democracy is in the intellectual tradition of liberalism, and is based on the division of the world into three worlds. First: the external world of affairs and objects; second: the inner world of opinions, thoughts and emotions; and third: the normative world of values and norms that are determined in an intersubjective way. These credit claims are divided into four types: a) comprehensibility, b) truth, c) being real or truthful, and d) correctness or appropriateness (Nozari, 1383 SH, p. 51). Habermas believes generating knowledge arises through man's attempt to "capture existence and reproduce his own kind of existence. In his view, the general conditions for the construction and growth of knowledge are the very historical and tangible conditions in which the evolution and growth of mankind has taken place (Abazari, 1387 SH, p. 27)

The position of people in Habermas's thought is derived from his views on anthropology. Habermas considers man to be essentially a linguistic being (Habermas, 1994, p. 15), and has built the deliberative

democracy on the basis of theoretical "reconstructions" of human capacity (Outhwaite, 1994, p. 58). Habermas has critiqued capitalism by relying on German philosophical anthropology and teaching its concepts (Pusey, 1393 SH, p. 53). He even goes a step further and explains human development not in terms of function but in terms of communicative action (Holub, 1375 SH, p. 145).

Habermas establishes a direct link between human liberation and all forms of science; He believes that the "unfinished project of modernity" implies the expansion and domination of a kind of instrumental rationality that has dominated all human relations. Socially, the development of instrumental reason and technocratic attitude pose the risk that most scientific issues, especially those that are related to political and cultural ethics, are defined and evaluated as technical issues, and as a result, they are resolved by experts and scientists outside the scope of democratic decision-making (Habermas, 1373 SH, p. 1).

The core of the social content of contemporary natural sciences is what Habermas calls "purposeful rational action" (Nozari, 1383 SH, p. 52). Habermas's role in the evolution of modern sociology is to rely on the role of man and to develop critical theory. He inherited the Frankfurt intellectual tradition, criticized positivism and emphasized bourgeois ideology (Nozari, 1383 SH, p. 52).

He believes that the development of instrumental rationality has led to the incomplete project of modernity, which dominates all human relations. Socially, the expansion of instrumental reason and the technocratic attitude has the risk that most scientific issues are those that are political and cultural ethics, they are defined and evaluated like technical issues and "as a result, they are resolved by experts and scientists outside the scope of democratic decision-making" (Habermas, 1994, p. 19).

Habermas likens the human evolutionary process to learning processes and explains the evolution of the individual and society using the personal growth models of Jean Piaget and Kohlberg, and discusses the transition from "traditional" to "modern" societies. He emphasizes the Max Weber's theory of instrumental or purposeful rationality; and by reconstructing this rationality, he practically expands his theory of evolution. Thus, Habermas's anthropology is a discussion about evolutionary theory, systems theory, historical materialism, rationalization, individual psychology, lifeworld, and other elements (Bayani et al., 1394 SH, p. 192).

The theory of deliberative democracy respects individuals' autonomy and independence but puts them in a situation that provides them with the ground for achieving mutual understanding and the formation of the rationality of dialogue (Mirahmadi, 1387 SH, p. 261). The theory of deliberative democracy, on the one hand, accepts the idea of human self-governing independence and, on the other hand, by placing it in the process of consultation, emphasizes the need for the basis of dialogue intellect.

Priorities formed through public consultation are not influenced by external conditions, but are the result of the power of reasoning exercised through public debate (Cohen, 1373 SH, p. 227).

Habermas considers the intellect of dialogue to be the result of the communicative action of speakers and listeners. Participants in the consultation process commit themselves to listening to the claims and arguments of other participants and, as a result, a kind of communication action is formed between them (Leit, 1373 SH, p. 192).

By using these mechanisms, this system provides more legitimate and more reliable forms of political authority based on inclusive and unrestricted dialogue, political judgments, and more informed and active political decisions than citizenship (Smith, 1383 SH, p. 61).

The semantic system of religious democracy and its effect on political action

The semantic system of religious democracy is derived from a religious approach to the foundations of ontology, epistemology and anthropology. Religious democracy believes in the monopoly of the divine law and God's sovereignty.

God's power and sovereignty and the right of custody and rule must be respected (Khamenei, 20/04/1369 SH). Religious democracy as a reading of political guardianship during the Occultation Period believed *Wilayah* (meaning 'authority' and 'guardianship') returns to divine attributes and actions (Javadi Amoli, 1378 SH, p. 143). Political authority is a state of the states of imamate and is mixed with faith, and no belief in it is considered as denial of some part of religion and a defect in faith (Subhani, 1373 SH, p. 543). Divine *Wilayah* is the source of the legitimacy of religious democracy. (Khamenei, 20/04/1369A SH)

Islam is both a social and individual religion and has considered all aspects of human life. The immortality and comprehensiveness of Islam is the basis of the necessity of forming a religious democracy (Khamenei, 14/3/1385B SH). Religious democracy believes that God is aware of all matters of life and worldly and otherworldly happiness. God has revealed the Sharia to humanity to be in charge of the administration of society (Khamenei, 26/2/1389 SH). Religious democracy in Islam is spiritual and esoteric (Khamenei, 4/11/1378 SH). It must be the manifestation of power, justice, mercy, divine wisdom, religion and piety (Khamenei, 14/03/1384 SH).

Religious democracy is based on the belief that no sovereignty over human beings is approved, unless God affirms the person's justice and piety and the people want him (Khamenei, 20/4/1369B SH).

Centrality of monotheism in religious democracy leads to social construction, individual construction, endless hope, tireless passion

and effort, invulnerability to fear and greed, breadth of vision and point of view, and correct and definite orientation (Khamenei, 26/2/1389B SH).

The principle of monotheism guarantees the man's freedom; Everyone who believes in the oneness of God and accepts monotheism must set man free: "Certainly, We raised an apostle in every nation [to preach:] 'Worship Allah, and shun fake deities (Nahl, 36). Avoid those who are evil, and want to capture and enslave man. Islamic freedom is based on monotheism, the monotheistic spirit is based on the denial of worship of anything other than God, obedience to divine commands, and acceptance of the system based on divine thought (Khamenei, 26/2/1389B).

According to Ayatollah Khamenei, human beings have the following characteristics: Man is respected in himself (Khamenei, 19/10/136 SH), Man is revered by God (Khamenei, 11/6/1362 SH), Man is not self-founded, He needs the guidance and revelation of the prophets (Khamenei, 11/6/1362 SH), Human perfection is created by divine morality (Khamenei, 13/11/1370 SH), Faith in God gives man strength (Khamenei, 19/9/1375 SH); Man needs divine education, cultivation and training (Khamenei, 27/7/1363 SH). Human nature made a covenant of worship with God on the first day (Khamenei, 8/12/1378 SH). The divine tradition in the universe is for man to achieve happiness (Khamenei, 12/9/1361 SH). Human perfection is in achieving both material and spiritual dimensions (Khamenei, 23/4/1369 SH). Islam has been designed according to all human needs (Khamenei, 29/1/1370 SH).

Ayatollah Khamenei accepts the valuable achievements of the Shiite scholars from the period of Occultation to the contemporary era as the basic foundations of the development of thought, the lasting legacy of political knowledge and the strength of the historical prestige of his theory and links it to the field of thought and society. Religious beliefs play an essential role in the emergence of political consciousness in the epistemological system. This awareness means

direct mental access to the basis of socio-political behavior and action (Berger and Lukman, 1387 SH, p. 200).

The theory of religious democracy is explicable on the basis of the holy sharia, which is the basis for legitimizing the political system based on the religious values accepted by society (Namdar, 1376 SH, p. 215), and on the basis of reason, which is the acceptability and efficiency of the political system. This basis is used to determine human destiny and happiness; therefore, the right and degree of human intervention to ensure prosperity based on rational judgment must find a suitable place in the military and political structure so that the government finds a stronger efficiency and social acceptance (Namdar, 1376 SH, pp. 215-216).

The theory of religious democracy is derived from *ijtihad* (i.e. "legal reasoning") in religious sources. *Ijtihad* thinking is based on time and place condition. Issues with rules in the past may, apparently, find a new decree in the relations governing politics, society and the economy of a regime. (Imam Khomeini, 1378 SH, vol. 21, p. 98). Ayatollah Khamenei's theoretical and practical efforts in the political sphere are focused on contemporary religious democracy. This, epistemologically, indicates a kind of epistemic self-centrism (Zagzebski, 1391 SH), because it is based on a kind of belief in jurisprudential epistemology and emphasis on Islamic traditions. In other words, this idea comes from a kind of "epistemological community" (Zagzebski, 1391 SH, p. 164) which is based on narrative and religious sciences in Islam. In this context, following the sources of knowledge acquisition and their truthfulness is important for socio-political forces.

Political action in the sphere of establishment (legitimacy) of the political system in deliberative democracy

The political establishment of regimes is basically caused by the

existence of common ideas and values between the government and the people. Therefore, what causes the survival, permanence and establishment of political regimes is a mental common aspect between rulers and people; the basis of the strength of the regime is within the content of the minds of the people (Bashiriyeh, 1385 SH, p. 116). The existence of common beliefs and values between politicians and the people strengthens the foundations of legitimacy (Zibakalam, 1380 SH, p. 87).

The existence of the state is not for the protection of equal individual rights; rather, its existential nature is for the preservation of the process involved in the formation of will and belief wherein free and equal citizens come to understand which goals and norms are in the best interest of all. (Habermas, 1996, p. 7).

Habermas believes in two types of goal-oriented action and value-oriented action that overlap with Weber's concepts of instrumental rationality and value rationality (Pedram, 1388 SH, p. 125).

Performing a communicative action and reaching an agreement based on this content leads to the reproduction of the lifeworld through the strengthening of culture, the integration of society and the formation of personality (Ritzer, 1390 SH, p. 608),

The political system based on deliberative democracy has separated the political sphere from the social sphere and believes that satisfaction is the basis of the legitimacy of the political system. In this theory; the state is established on the basis of citizens' satisfaction; so, deliberative democracy falls under the theories of satisfaction. Satisfaction is the basis of government legitimacy in the theory of deliberative conversational democracy. Deliberative democracy emphasizes the concept of people's agreement to establish a political system (Mirahmadi, 1387 SH, p. 200). The quality of democracy depends on how public opinion and will are formed in the public sphere of civil society (Habermas, 1996, p. 78). Thus, Habermas sees in civil society the

social basis for the formation of the "public sphere of autonomy" that is able, because of its cohesive power, to resist the power of the system (economy and politics) and survive.

Deliberative democracy is a combination of communicative rationality and dialogue ethics. Law and legislation are based on popular legitimacy and the satisfaction of the majority, and no law should be imposed on citizens by force, unless it is accepted by all. The function of law in the implementation of moral norms must be valid, which has already been achieved during the dialogue with understanding and agreement of the participants, resulting in norms of public practice, confirmation, consent and legitimacy (Manouchehri, 1392 SH, p. 18).

Political action in the sphere of people's participation in deliberative democracy

In Deliberative Democracy Theory, Habermas emphasizes people's participation in civil society, the public sphere, and the lifeworld. Civil society is another sphere of people's political participation. Civil society is a developed sphere of individual independence as opposed to the state (Habermas, 1987, p. 12). Civil society has voluntary associations and organizations, which make possible the unrestricted dissemination of information and ideas in the sphere of the lifeworld. (Kiwisto, 1385 SH, p. 111). In civil society, members of the political community participate in discourse and they reach an understanding, and both sides reach a mutual victory and express their views on public and private issues (Philancion, 1395 SH, p. 153). It provides a platform for people to talk about solutions to problems. The task of civil society is to facilitate public participation in politics through participation in public dialogue.

The public sphere is a trans-empirical and trans-place, wherein the act of understanding takes place (Tohid-fam and Hosseinian Amiri, 1388 SH, p. 20). In fact, the public sphere is defined by the communication structure of

the social space, and this social space itself is created in communication action (Habermas, 1996, p. 360). Communication action is a type of interaction through speech and a way of recreating society (Tohid-fam and Hosseinian Amiri, 1388 SH, p. 24), a dialogue in which private individuals gather to form the public sphere (Habermas, 1996, p. 265). The public sphere is centered on rational and critical discourse and is the result of a clear separation of the private sphere and public power (Holub, 1375 SH, p. 29). And it is a manifestation of active and democratic participation of citizens (Mirahmadi, 1387 SH, p. 2). Habermas refers to various types of public spheres, including the political public sphere, the economic public sphere, the social public sphere, and the literary or cultural public sphere (Nozari, 1383 SH, p. 467). In the public sphere, all participants in a debate should have an equal chance in order to be able to use discourse acts in a way that first opens the door to discussion and then exchanges speeches, opposing speeches, questions and answers (Habermas, 1994, p. 43).

In the public sphere, the relationship must be based on internal power, not on external domination leading to active and democratic participation. Legitimate decisions and institutions, as decisions and institutions agreed upon by the participants in the democratic process, should emphasize free and equal collective participation (Mirahmadi, 1387 SH, pp. 192-225)

Emphasizing the doctrine of public sphere, Habermas considers dialogue reason as one of the theoretical foundations of dialogue democracy (Mirahmadi, 1387 SH, p. 227). The public sphere does not devote itself to this or that view. As soon as it focuses on politically related issues, specialized work leaves this issue to the political system. On the contrary, the public sphere shows itself with a communication structure based on the third aspect of understanding behavior; (It) is built neither on the functions nor on the content of everyday

communication, but on the social space created in communicative behavior (Habermas, 1994, p. 436).

Habermas expands the sphere of political participation of the people and depicts the category of the lifeworld. The lifeworld provides the conditions for actors as members of a socio-cultural lifeworld wherein they can reach an agreement on intra-world issues (Habermas, 1384 SH, p. 540). In it, they can understand issues within the world (Habermas, 1384 SH, p. 515). The lifeworld refers to a network of intuitive, familiar, transparent and calculable presuppositions (Nozari, 1383 SH, p. 387). The lifeworld is the place of communication and micro-interaction of actors and consists of culture, society and personality (Ritzer, 1390 SH, p. 608). The lifeworld is a transcendental base where the speaker and the listener intersect (Habermas, 1384 SH, p. 515).

The lifeworld has provided its members with a common capital of cultural knowledge, patterns of socialization, and values and norms for communicative action, and is reproduced in the same way (Tohid-fam and Hosseinian Amiri, 1388 SH, p. 90).

The lifeworld is a kind of internal view and the world of the system is an external view (Ritzer, 2012, p. 607). Communication actors always move inside the horizon of their lifeworld and cannot be outside it (Habermas, 1384 SH, p. 515).

Actors have the ability to achieve understanding in criticizable litigations (Habermas, 1384 SH, p. 79). Internalization of the lifeworld provides the possibility of interpreting meanings in a valid way and teaching adaptation to social norms and reflection with others while preserving mutual identity (Pusey, 1393 SH, p. 144). Interactive abilities and lifestyles are measured by the responsibility of individuals. Disruption of the socialization process leads to anti-socialization and alienation (Habermas, 1384 SH, p. 531).

The rationalization of the lifeworld leads to a critical evaluation of

the dogmatic elements of traditional culture and the possibility of rational understanding (Tohid-fam and Hosseinian Amiri, 1388 SH, p. 90). The tradition of culture must provide formal concepts for the objective, social, and mental worlds, and the possibility of a rethinking relationship with them. It must move away from dogmatism and provides the possibility of questioning the interpretations accumulated in the tradition and reviewing them (Habermas, 1384 SH, p. 102).

Political action in the supervisory sphere in deliberative democracy

Habermas considers the characteristic of liberal capitalism index to be the depoliticization of class relations, which leads to a small group control over the government (Nozari, 1383 SH, p. 52). Habermas expands the public sphere as opposed to foreign-dominated institutions or those that have internal power relations, emphasizes democratic oversight and even considers the level of development of the public sphere to be subject to a confrontation between the government and the press and media (Holub, 1375 SH, p. 26). When citizens consult and explore each other on issues of public interest benefits in a free and unfettered manner - that is, by guaranteeing freedom of communities and association, freedom of expression and publication of their thoughts - they are acting as a public body. The term 'public opinion' refers to the mission of criticism and supervision that citizen's act informally against the government (Nozari, 1383 SH, p. 466).

Political action in the sphere of establishment (legitimacy) of religious democracy

Legitimate government is based on people's will; no authority, no possession, no exercise of power without reliance on God or without His permission and authority is legitimate, and God has given the right

of sovereignty over human beings to the prophets and innocent Imams (Mousavi, 1391 SH, p. 196). Religious democracy is based on the freedom and equality of all human beings and the emphasis on lack of personal guardianship over another person. In the jurisprudential literature, the imposition of an act or its omission is a requirement of the acts of guardianship and is one of the examples of oppression and transgression, and it is rationally ugly and forbidden by Sharia. In other words, *Wilayah* is an originated domination preceded by the absence and appropriateness of special rules whose absence is the principle (Al-Bahr Al-Uloum, 1401 AH 214). The political system is not allowed to take over public, private and individuals' affairs (Khamenei, 1370 SH).

Although democracy has a religious basis, only persons with certain characteristics are allowed to exercise guardianship in society, and this requires the impermissibility of the others' influence in the sphere of public affairs; and their private and personal affairs are outside the control of the authority (Khamenei, 1400 SH).

But in this kind of government, people are the principle and in all matters of life, they have the right to vote and the right to plan and decide (Khamenei, 29/11/1396B SH). Religious democracy means the authority of the country in ruling, choice, will in all areas of the country are in people's hands (Khamenei, 14/3/1396C SH). Religious democracy means the rule of the people over the people based on religion (Khamenei, 29/3/1395B SH). In religious democracy, people must be the basis of the political system, and the acceptability of the political system depends on people's acceptance. According to religious democracy, the people's vote is based on human dignity, and no guardianship or sovereignty over human beings is accepted except by God (Khamenei, 26/9/1382B SH). Ayatollah Khamenei's view of the man leads to the view that there is a simultaneity of people's free choice

and divine criteria in legitimacy of religious government in religious democracy. Ayatollah Khamenei believes that without people's will, the Islamic system will not be established (Khamenei, 14/3/1378); however, it should be noted that the basis of the legitimacy of the government, in addition to the people's opinion, is the existence of justice and piety. Legitimacy in the theory of religious democracy is based on the divine rule of the prophets and Infallible Imams, lack of force, and people's will and desire (Mohajernia, 1394 SH, p. 322). One of the points in religious democracy is attention to the efficiency of government, because inefficiency destroys legitimacy and material desirability (Ismaili, 1398 SH, p. 103).

Political action in the sphere of participation in religious democracy

Ayatollah Khamenei believes that political participation is a voluntary activity with divine goals and motives through which the citizens of a society participate in their socio-political affairs on the basis of duty with empathy and support. They directly or indirectly (Khamenei, 20/11/1368 SH), supportively (Khamenei, 23/4/1368B SH) or competitively (Khamenei, 26/6/1368) contribute to shaping their political and social life. In fact, political participation means a sense of belonging to society (Khamenei, 18/10/1368B SH), involvement, participation and cooperation in political processes which leads to choosing the type of government, structures and political leaders. It determines public policy or affects it, in a way that it has an effective presence in the process of governing the society, including planning, organizing, coordinating and supervising in order to achieve the goals of that society. From this perspective, participation is an organized process in which citizens engage in voluntary activities (Khamenei, 13/12/1381 SH).

People's political participation has dignity and value (Khamenei,

14/3/1383C SH). Religious democracy does not only mean political and administrative participation in the governance process. Rather, people's participation has a greater meaning. People's participation must cover the entire political, social and cultural spheres of society (Khamenei, 29/11/1396B SH). Religious democracy relies on elections and the active presence of the political people in politics (Khamenei, 1/1/1396E SH). People's vote is part of religion and Sharia. (Khamenei, 14/3/1393B SH).

Political action in Supervisory sphere in religious democracy

One of the elements of political progress is supervisory, and there is a direct connection between supervisory and reform, dynamism and efficiency of each regime. In today's complex world, no political system can be indifferent to supervisory, but the level of supervisory varies from political system to political system. More and better supervision leads to more reformation and elimination of fouls, and the political system becomes more powerful, efficient and accountable. The principle of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil is the most important religious support in Islam for exercising supervision (Jafarian, 1380 SH, pp. 70-168);

Governors are accountable to God and the people, and the continuation of their power depends on legal activity and observance of the Sharia and the interests of the *ummah* (i.e. nation); Rather, it has established the strongest and the most equitable social connection between the *ummah* and the ruler, which is based on the protection and observance of public interests. This principle makes the *ummah* follow the divine policy. People's control over the governors is one of their rights because God has commanded it (Mosulli, 1394 SH, p. 118). Meritocracy and supervising the subordinates' function and non-stop effort in this way is among the features of an efficient government

(Khamenei, 6/6/1385C SH). The stability of the organization, the scheduling and implementation of developed plans, the cultivation of efficient and faithful elements, the entrustment of the basic disciplines to qualified and skilled people, and the efforts to fight corruption must be considered (Khamenei, 22/5/1383E SH).

Conclusion

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the overcoming of liberal democracy as the supreme model, this model received a lot of attention. But soon, the world underwent other changes such as social and political revolutions, Islamic awakening, revival of cultural identities, change of development paradigm from economic to social issues based on socio-cultural contexts, expansion of mass media, and increasing people's sensitivity to political and social issues. The model of liberal democracy could not respond to so many changes in human society, and many critics in the Islamic world and the Western world began to criticize that model. They believed that liberal democracy was in a crisis of legitimacy and by overcoming instrumental rationality and limiting the field of people's political action and not paying attention to the spirituality of human societies, it has afflicted losses on human societies. Amid this crisis, new theorists began to draw new patterns of the political system. One of the most important models in the Islamic world is religious democracy and in the Western world, it is deliberative democracy. These ideas were critical of liberal democracy and the instrumentalization of people's political action, and created new spheres for political action.

This article tries to compare the sphere of people's political action in the two theories of Habermas's deliberative democracy and Ayatollah Khamenei's theory of religious democracy. Each of these theories is a

serious critic of liberal democracy and the instrumentalization of political action in politics.

Although Habermas's theory of deliberative democracy and religious democracy are serious critics of liberal democracy and believe in people's active action in politics, they have different semantic systems and philosophical foundations that cause content differences in the sphere of political action.

Habermas's philosophical system is based on the intellectual tradition of liberalism. It is the epistemological system based on comprehensibility, truthfulness, verity and appropriateness. Habermas has placed the production of knowledge in the light of the man's attempt to produce existence and to reproduce his own typical existence.

In his view, the general conditions for the construction and growth of knowledge are the same as the historical and objective conditions that human evolution and growth has occurred in its text. Relying on man and developing critical theory. Habermas tries to redefine man as a linguistic, comprehensible and rational being. Habermas's definition of man is the basis of deliberative democracy. He believes that human beings should have a purposeful and rational active presence in the political and social spheres.

Ayatollah Khamenei's theory of religious democracy is based on the monotheistic semantic system and the neo-Sadraist philosophical system. Ayatollah Khamenei believes that sovereignty belongs to God and no human being has the right to sovereignty over another human being. Sovereignty without God's permission is oppression and causes tyranny. The epistemological system of Ayatollah Khamenei's theory of religious democracy is taken from transmission (the Quran Sunnah), and *ijtihad* reasoning based on time and place conditions. Ayatollah Khamenei believes that human being is a free, aware, and authoritative

being and should be active in the political and social spheres.

To compare the sphere of people's political action in the theory of religious democracy and deliberative democracy, the political sphere is divided into three spheres of establishment, participation and supervision of political action. In establishing sphere of people's political action or the relationship of the people with the legitimacy of the ruling political system, Habermas believes in the satisfaction of the citizens. Satisfaction is the basis of the legitimacy of the political system; therefore, all laws are under the principle of public legitimacy and the satisfaction of the majority, and no law should be imposed on citizens, unless it is accepted by all and the function of law in enforcing moral norms is valid. But in the theory of religious democracy, the ruling and approval of the law without God's permission is wrong.

It can be said that Habermas considers the sphere of people's political action in the sphere of establishment only on the basis of citizens' satisfaction and natural right; However, Ayatollah Khamenei has considered the sphere of people's political action in the sphere of establishment as a divine right and based on the holy Sharia.

One of the most important and influential spheres of political action in the two theories of religious democracy and deliberative democracy is the sphere of "participation". In the theory of religious democracy, Ayatollah Khamenei has defined political participation as voluntary activity with divine goals and motives through which the citizens of a society participate in shaping their political and social life in their socio-political affairs on the basis of duty with empathy and direct or indirect, supportive or competitive life. In fact, political participation means a sense of belonging to society, involvement, and participation in political processes that lead to the choice of the type of government, structures and political leaders, and determines or affects public policy

in a way that it has an effective presence in the process of governing the society, including planning, organizing, coordinating and supervising in order to achieve the goals of that society.

In the sphere of political action in the theory of deliberative democracy, Habermas believes in the participation of the people in civil society, the public sphere and the lifeworld. In civil society, members of the political community participate in the political sphere and reach an agreement and offer their views in public and private issues. Habermas believes that civil society should facilitate popular participation in politics through participation in public dialogue. Ayatollah Khamenei believes that the sphere of participation is more comprehensive and in line with the self-construction of society and has a religious content.

Supervision is another sphere of political action, and there is a direct link between supervision and reform, dynamism and efficiency of each system. In the sphere of political supervision, Habermas emphasizes democratic supervision by expanding the public sphere. He believes that when citizens freely consult about the public interests, it becomes a public body. He defines public opinion as a critic and observer in the public sphere, which is the key to the dynamism of a political society. The more freedom the government gives to public opinion as an observer, the more power it will have to deal with political anomalies.

Ayatollah Khamenei has a religious view of supervision in the theory of religious democracy. "Enjoining the good" and "forbidding the evil" are considered as the basis of people's supervision over the political system. Accordingly, the political system is accountable to God and the people, and its continuation is subject to legal activity in compliance with the Sharia limits and people's interests. People's supervision over governors is a divine and social right.

**Table: Comparison of Ayatollah Khamenei's Religious Democracy
and Habermas Deliberative Democracy**

Row	Subject	Ayatollah Khamenei's religious democracy	Habermas's Deliberative Democracy	
1	Political and social conditions	Critic of liberal democracy and the instrumentalization of the human role in politics and society	Critic of liberal democracy and the instrumentalization of the human role in politics and society	
2	Semantic system	Ontology	God's Governance	Objective – mental
		Epistemology	Quotation (the Book and Tradition) – Wisdom	Man's attempt to take over existence and reproduce his own typical existence
		Anthropology	Free- Aware - Owner of authority	Free-Communicative- Rational
		Teleology	Achieving a new Islamic civilization - God's vicegerent on the earth	Resolve communication distortions and achieve liberation
3	People's political action in the establishment sphere	Establishment of a political system on the rule of God, and people's satisfaction and will	Establishment of a political system based on the consent, agreement and the people's will	
4	People's political action in the participatory sphere	freely- consciously- Religious Duty - Rational	Freely - voluntarily - rationally	
5	People's political action in the sphere of supervision	Religious and Rational duty	Free-critical - public opinion	

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