

POPPER'S MORAL INDIVIDUALISM AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR REASONABLE DIALOGUE: FOCUS ON HACOHEN'S AND O'HEAR'S INQUIRY OF POPPER'S ETHICS

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Abstract

It is said that the social conflicts and disputes can be resolved by dialogue between opposing groups. Karl popper argues that if social conflicts are resolved with the authoritarian attitude that our arguments are conclusive then this attitude imposes its opinion and hence it cannot provide the ground for reasonable dialogue. Karl Popper rejects authoritarian attitude on the basis of his critique of absolute knowledge. He believes in fallibility of knowledge. He thinks that if disagreements are resolved with an attitude that our arguments are rational but are not conclusive then this attitude is ready to be convinced by other. Hence it can provide the ground for reasonable dialogue. Popper is of the view that an attitude is moral as it believes in equality of men. Hacoheh and O'Hear critically examine Popper's fallibilism. They identify a problem that fallibilism ultimately leads Popper to anti-foundationalism which makes ethics purely individualistic. In this paper I focus on this problem and workout how Popper's moral individualism is inadequate for possibility of reasonable dialogue.

Keywords: reasonable dialogue, authoritarian attitude, absolute knowledge, fallibilism, moral individualism, anti-foundationalism

Introduction

Karl Popper (1963) is one of the most renowned social thinkers of 20th century. He has been an ardent opponent of traditional social philosophy. He argues that traditional social and political thought presume absolute knowledge which is not rationally justifiable. A traditional social thinker believes that the historical and cultural analysis of a society can lead us to absolute moral and rational standards. On the basis of the problem of epistemology Popper rejects this approach. He believes that knowledge is fallible and critical thinking is the only way to offer a better proposal. Popper trusts in individual reason and rejects authority of absolute standards.

Popper contends that the belief in absolute knowledge promotes authoritarian attitude. It imposes its opinion as a consequence of which reasonable dialogue between opposing groups is not possible. He believes that fallibility of knowledge helps in promoting reasonable dialogue. If we believe that our opinions are fallible then we are ready to be convinced by others. In this way reasonable dialogue is not possible. For Popper such an attitude is also moral because it believes in equality of men and on peaceful settlement of social conflicts.

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Hacoheh (2000) and O'Hear (1980) critically examine Popper's fallibilism. They argue that fallibilism ultimately leads Popper to anti-foundationalism that makes ethics purely individualistic. Hacoheh argues that Popper's moral individualism cannot provide the rational ground for reasonable dialogue as it does not provide the rational ground for the consensus over basic goals and values. O'Hear argues that rational consensus requires a moral code that is rooted in non-provisional idea of truth. But fallibilism provide provision idea of truth. It makes reasonable dialogue problematic. (O'Hear, 1980, p.206)

Hacoheh's and O'Hear's reservations seem to be reasonable. In this paper I focus on their arguments. In order to evaluate Hacoheh's and O'Hear's arguments I have divided this paper into two sections. In the first section I discuss the moral roots of Popper's conception of 'reasonable dialogue'. Here, I analyze how Popper's method promotes 'moral individualism'. In the second section I work out the implications of Popper's ethics for reasonable dialogue. I explore how Popper's anti-foundationalism is problematic. Here I focus on the problem of moral foundation of consensus.

The Moral Foundation of Popper's Idea of 'Reasonable Dialogue'

It is said that the conflicts and disagreements regarding social issues can only be resolved by an absolute or certain knowledge of social structure. Philosophers have been in search of those absolute laws of human and social natures by virtue of which social conflicts can be resolved permanently. Karl Popper critically examines the possibility of absolute laws. He is of the view that there is no rational ground to justify the perfect or absolute laws of human and social natures. The problem of immediate experience and the unjustifiability of induction leads Popper to hold that the certain knowledge is impossible.

Popper argues that all human knowledge is fallible; therefore, a search for objective truth is essentially an attempt to eliminate falsehood. Due to our nature, we cannot be completely certain that we have not made a mistake. He says that "to err is human". According to Popper, our search for truth is a constant struggle against error. Through critical testing we can identify our mistakes and come up with better proposals. Our search for better solutions is an ongoing process. Popper uses the concept of 'verisimilitude' (approximation of truth) in explaining this. Through critical approach we reach better solutions or move closer to the truth. Critical examination helps us in identifying the false content in a theory. And if we select a theory with relatively lesser false content then we can say that this theory is a better approximation of the truth. Thus it is responsible for the growth of knowledge. In other words, for Popper, criticism is the essence of rationality. It helps us in learning from our mistakes by means of intersubjective criticism (Popper, 1986, p.258).

According to him, absolute knowledge is merely a claim of subjective state of mind that imposes its opinion. It encourages the authoritarian attitude towards knowledge as a consequence of which, reasonable dialogue between opposing groups is not be possible. The authoritarian attitude towards knowledge discourages individual criticism and attempts a reform of the whole of society by controlling individuals through use of power. It does not leave any room for dialogue and consensus.

Popper emphasizes on a method that does not involve the consequence mentioned above. The main theme of his method is that all knowledge is conjectural and fallible. He elaborates that individuals have aims, hopes and expectations based on which they criticize and propose theories for the solution of problems they face in society. This method trusts in human reason and rejects the authority of the absolute laws. Popper is of the view that this methodology is free from an authoritarian attitude towards knowledge. It encourages the attitude that our point of view about a dispute is correct according to our analysis of problem; but it is not conclusive. There can be a more reasonable way to deal with the problem. Consequently it promotes the attitude towards being convinced by others that ultimately helps in promoting reasonable dialogue and consensus (Popper, 1963, pp.355-7). As this attitude is always ready to be convinced by the other and does not hope to impose opinion by use of power or to crush the opponent, it makes reasonable dialogue between opposing groups possible. According to Popper the attitude towards being convinced by others is rational because it accepts fallibility of human knowledge. Moreover, such an attitude is also moral because it believes in equality of men and on peaceful settlement of social conflicts. That is why Popper claims that his method has a moral effect or ethical reasoning.

Popper's Moral Individualism: Hacoheh's Analysis of Popper's Conception of Ethics

One knows that Popper prioritizes individual criticism in his method; likewise he also prioritizes individual criticism in his conception of ethics. Hacoheh, who is one of the most renowned critics of Popper, better explains Popper's conception of ethics. He points out that it is a modification of Kantian Ethics. Like Kant, Popper believes that morality is a matter of our responsibility to take appropriate moral decision. But he does not believe in absolute judgment of moral good. Popper argues that morality should not be derived from human nature. He presumes that human nature seeks self-interest. Therefore if morality is derived from human nature, then it would become self-interest. Moreover, morality should not be derived from existing social laws or norms because blind acceptance of existing laws encourages the belief that "might is right" (Hacoheh, 2000, p.511).

According to Popper, morality is not determined by absolute standard or moral ideals. Instead, he argues that as there is no rational ground to accept an absolute moral standard, therefore we are solely responsible for our choice of moral decision. Reason demands that one should analyze the consequences of all alternative choices. In short, Popper believes that we should have a critical attitude in morality just like the attitude we have in science. In this regard, science and ethics have the same method, according to Popper. But there is also a fundamental difference between ethics and science that Popper explains (Popper, 1966, p.233). In science, our decisions depend upon the result of our experiments, while in ethics we are solely responsible for our moral decisions.

In the same context, Hacoheh mentions that although Popper encourages scientific attitude towards ethics, he rules out the possibility of scientifically derived moral judgment because it will shift personal responsibility to some other grounds or authorities. Popper maintains that without personal responsibility of moral decisions, there will be no ethics. According to Hacoheh, here Popper radicalizes Kant's defense of

autonomy of human reason. In doing so, Popper declines the Kantian idea of pure motive and "moral good" because it presumes the authority declaring something to be good (Hacoheh, 2000, pp.511-12). Popper also rejects the trend of deriving ethical judgment from historicism because historicism presumes certain end or inevitable future which is not justifiable. Hacoheh explicates Popper's position:

Moral decision could not be derived from knowledge of future. Even if people could know what history's judgment would be, they would still have to decide whether to abide by it; history's judgment was notoriously wrong. Values or standards could never be deduced from facts, and moral norms could no more be derived from history than from nature. Moral decisions dependent, to be sure, on background and context, but they were not determined by it. People growing up in similar circumstances made different decisions. Learned from mistakes, and changed their view (Hacoheh, 2000, p.512).

What Hacoheh infers from the analysis of Popper's ethics is that Popper's entire attempt is to save individual autonomy in the sphere of morality. In other words, Popper's criticism of 'moral good' or moral standard is for the sake of his idea of 'moral individualism'. Popper's anti-foundationalism makes ethics purely individualistic.

The problem that Hacoheh identifies here is that if neither nature nor history provides moral standard, then individual decisions would become subjective and relative. That would not be acceptable for rationalists like Popper. That is why in order to avoid this problem and to make ethics methodologically sound, Popper makes a case for the justification of Kant's categorical imperative. Hacoheh mentions that Popper finds 'categorical imperative' or universal moral rule in the community of reason (Hacoheh, 2000, p.513). It is consistent with Popper's approach towards epistemology. Just as he emphasizes upon intersubjective criticism in his method, in a similar fashion he emphasizes upon intersubjective criticism in ethics. Popper thinks that intersubjective criticism or criterion of rationality provides the basis for equality and impartial truth. All individuals have the right to criticize one's judgment and to change it. For him all standards or values are subject to criticism; values are reasonable beliefs. No belief would be reasonable unless it passes through criticism. In this way, Hacoheh mentions, only communicable and criticizable positions will be ethical in Popperian concept of ethics (Hacoheh, 2000, p.513). It makes ethics a system of values that emerges as a result of public criticism.

Hacoheh notes that for Popper, public character is important in science, politics and ethics. It sets objectivity in science and in ethics. The argumentative nature of intersubjective criticism makes public debate directional and oriented towards the non-relative truth. Popper does not regard science and ethics as processes in the mind or consciousness of an individual (a subjective process). Instead they are results of cooperation among many individuals. It has openness and thus provides a model for 'open society' that guarantees human freedom. Popper links humanitarianism with this freedom of public character (Hacoheh, 2000, p.514).

Hacohen highlights that since Popper has reservations against class or cultural analysis based on sociological factors, therefore he forecloses any arbitration between logical and sociological factors in establishing scientific consensus. He has only the criterion of public criticism as the standard for reaching consensus (Hacohen, 2000, p.515). The problem that is pointed out by Hacohen, is that the concept of 'public criticism' requires more to become a plausible idea. The question, as to how the public or intersubjective criticism really work, is also important to probe. It is also important to be acquainted with the conditions under which public debates take place.

The Implications of Popper's Ethics for Reasonable dialogue

Popper has been of the view that a rational public debate would only be possible if persons having difference of opinion would share the same purpose (Popper, 1999, p.37). Obviously, our having the same purpose will be linked with our sharing of definite goals or values. It means that our sharing of the same goals or values is a precondition for dialogue. Thus Hacohen argues, how consensus over basic goals or values emerges, also becomes an important question (Hacohen, 2000, p.515). Hacohen rightly points out that Popper never answers this question. We have seen that Popper does not believe in absolute moral judgments and his method remains ineffective in giving rational justification for values or goals, therefore he has been unsuccessful in explaining how consensus over values or goals is possible. According to Hacohen, Popper's indifference to this question is not justifiable. Popper himself recognizes that if scientists fail to agree on a test statement; testing would become problematic; hence consensus over a matter would not be possible. Here we may say that, in the absence of agreement over shared goals or values, political discourse will face the same difficulty. This makes his idea of 'rational public debate' narrow and problematic. It makes his position regarding actualizing moral value of peaceful settlement of conflicts problematic.

Popper's Anti-Foundationalism and its Implications

Here it would be better to focus on the issue that Popper's moral individualism leads him to anti-foundationalism. We have seen that Popper does not believe in secure foundation of knowledge. Moreover, anti-foundationalism leads Popper to the rejection of 'sociology of science' (or 'sociology of knowledge'). There has been a trend in sociology that social and historical conditions determine our knowledge. According to this trend the social and historical factors construct foundation of knowledge. Knowledge is justified through them. Without 'sociology of science' we cannot explain the foundation of decision making in science, politics and morality. We can notice that Popper faces the same difficulty in this regard. He has no criterion for explaining the foundation of decision making in scientific knowledge and thus he has been unsuccessful in explaining the growth of knowledge in a broader sense.

In the same context, Hacohen mentions that thinkers like Kuhn and Feyerabend have been of the view that social and psychological factors are the basis for decision making among individuals involved in science. They think that the process of rationality is actually a communal assent process (Hacohen, 2000, p.530). In this process the social factors play their role. Kuhn, in his *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* has a position,

that the activity of scientific knowledge can only be understood within a paradigm that consists of general theoretical assumptions, techniques and metaphysical principles. These principles are considered legitimate and are used to solve problems within paradigms. A paradigm is some sort of a sociological whole. In this way different paradigms are 'incommensurable'. The failure of one paradigm leads to the acceptance of the other paradigm. But, due to the 'incommensurability between paradigms', this acceptance is not a transformation based on rational debate; it is like a religious conversion. Thus with reference to Kuhn, Hacoheh mentions that the foundation of decision making for the individual and growth of knowledge cannot be explained without an appeal to history, sociology and psychology (Hacoheh, 2000, p.532).

Hacoheh points out that due to his reservations against 'sociology of science', Popper dismisses Kuhn's incommensurability of paradigms. He thinks that while communication between different systems of ideologies is difficult, comparison between them (between different paradigms) is possible. He provides many examples of paradigmatic shifts in physics and mathematics that result from critical debates among conflicting paradigms and which can be understood rationally and without 'sociology of knowledge'. On the same pattern, Popper believes that when different cultures confront each other, they produce critical dialogue that can lead us to consensus.

Hacoheh regards Popper's response as inadequate and limited. He argues that the scientific and critical debate situation and consensus through criticism is only possible if we understand the obstacle in its way. This understanding is only possible if we know the broader social-historical context along with the intellectual context. By the knowledge of such broader social-historical context we can produce conditions for critical debates. Hacoheh's argument is convincing because the problem of 'incommensurability between paradigms' can only be responded if we search a broader social-historical context. True exchange of arguments between two paradigms can only be possible if there is some shared ground. What Hacoheh wants to say is that dialogue and consensus is a social problem that cannot be understood without social-historical analysis of man. Popper does not offer any debate about the social-historical context of man. That is why he does not give a comprehensive account for the possibility of dialogue and consensus (Hacoheh, 2000, p. 532).

What follows from the foregoing discussion is that the question regarding possibility of critical dialogue is important from the rational point of view. This is not properly answered in the Popperian concept of rationality. He links the possibility of critical dialogue with 'culture interaction'. He thinks that the 'culture clash' produces critical dialogue. He writes that;

I believe that ontological relativity, though an obstacle to easy communication, can prove of immense value in all the more important cases of culture clash if it can be overcome not by sudden leap into the dark, but sufficiently slowly. For it means that the pattern in the clash may liberate themselves from prejudices of which they unconscious—from taking theories unconsciously for granted, theories which, for example, may be embedded in the logical structure of their language.

Such a liberation may be the result of criticism awakened by culture clash (qtd. in, Noturro, 1996, p.51).

Popper argues that because of relativity of values and language the conflict between two cultures is obvious. But in the long run it produces critical attitude and provides the ground for learning from each other through critical dialogue. It makes possible to develop consensus between different cultures and brings them close to form a universal community. Hacoheh mentions that Popper's optimism that the clash of cultures produces critical dialogue and advances 'cosmopolitanism' is problematic. Popper underestimates the factors behind cross-cultures without which dialogue and consensus may not be possible. For instance, Hacoheh mentions that cultural clash under conditions of unequal power does not always create dialogue but often breeds oppression; and it does not advance 'cosmopolitanism' (Hacoheh, 2000, p.541). Popper himself was aware of this problem. Hacoheh quotes from Popper that

Cultural clash may lose some of its great value if one of the clashing cultures regards itself as universally superior, and even more so if it is so regarded by the other: this may destroy the great value of cultural clash, [the development of] a critical attitude... . (Hacoheh, 2000, p.542)

What Popper wants to say here is that the critical attitude, which is basically an attitude of self-criticism; cannot be developed by cultural clash if one regards that his culture is superior or, in other words, if one does not accept the equality of men. Obviously, this is a moral position. But the problem is that how such a moral position that one is not superior to another, can be achieved or promoted. Hacoheh points out that Popper himself is not free from superior attitude against closed communities and non-western cultures (Hacoheh, 2000, p.542).¹ Hacoheh elaborates that we can see that socially disadvantaged groups or politically inferior groups do not have a fair chance of being heard. Interest groups manipulate and circumvent channels in the name of dialogue. Such kind of dialogue and consensus are ostensible. True and genuine dialogue necessitates the neutralization of power. That will be the 'ideal speech situation.' Hacoheh points out that even Popper once says that a fair socioeconomic structure and public control of corporations are preconditions to affect democratic dialogues (Hacoheh, 2000, p.543). What follows from this analysis is that Popper's idea of consensus between conflicting issues through dialogue can only be realized if the 'ideal speech situation' can be produced through social reforms. It can be said here that for the 'ideal speech situation' we must investigate the social and cultural factors that are not properly focused by Popper. Hacoheh rightly points out that Popper does not investigate the social and cultural conditions promoting critical exchange. Without an understanding of these conditions, his moral end will not be realizable.

¹ Hacoheh is right. We can notice that Popper declares 'western culture' superior. He asserts that 'western society' has specific beliefs that make it the best society. In his lecture "What Does the West Believe in?" Popper regards the belief in 'open society' as the superior to all beliefs. One can infer that Popper himself has attitude of superiority. [See, Popper, Karl (1996)]

With reference to Carl Schmitt, Hacoheh raises another problem regarding the feasibility of critical dialogue. He points out that comprehensive considerations over a conflicting issue are not possible because of partial knowledge. So we need an authority, for instance a political state; that has to decide. But due to conflicting social demands, the state remains unable to negotiate them effectively. Thus the state has to block the process of dialogue (Hacoheh, 2000, p.544). This makes debate unfeasible. Consequently, the liberty of debate will not be feasible at all unless we have a shared social demand.

We have seen that Popper has been of the view that in order to make reasonable debate possible we should trust on reasonable attitude; the attitude of readiness to listen to critical arguments or the attitude of readiness to recognize others as equal. But it will only be possible if we believe in intersubjective criticism, or in other words, if we live in an 'open society'. In fact, Hacoheh mentions, we live in a society with communities that do not accept intersubjective criticism because of their divergent claims or proposals. In order to reconcile their claims or proposals, we require negotiation and for negotiation we require debate. But Popper does not suggest how we may proceed in a situation that does not admit intersubjective criticism. Hacoheh contends that Popper does not provide guidelines for evaluating divergent political claims or proposals. Popper does not point out guidelines for the best argument regarding compromises. In Hacoheh's own words, "if critical dialogue is to remain politically vital, not merely a regulative ideal for utopian cosmopolitan age, Popperians need to develop guidelines for political evaluation" (Hacoheh, 2000, p.546).

The insight of Hacoheh is that Popper's method is merely a regulative idea for political direction. It does not give guidelines for the evaluation of real politics of diversity in a society. Popper expects too much from his method of criticism. Popper's optimism towards 'moral individualism' inclines him to consider criticism as a moral standard which, we have seen, does not seem to be successful in acquiring a moral end. But if we replace criticism as the moral standard with any value, then we will still require a reason for arguing 'universal emotive' and thus we will again have to engage in a debate for resolving conflicts between reasons. Here Hacoheh infers that we again revert to the position from where we began. The summary of Hacoheh's analysis is that Popper's method misses the point and the point is that it lacks guidelines for the best argument and for the 'ideal speech situation'. Here we can say that without such guidelines, Popper's method and its compatibility with moral values will not be convincing.

The Problem of the 'Moral Foundation' of Consensus: O'Hear's Inquiry of Popper's Fallibilism

The guidelines for the best argument and for the ideal speech situation must require a moral code that is rooted in the infallible idea of truth or justice. Popper's over emphasis on fallibility of knowledge leads him to believe that 'fallibilism' is a moral code. O'Hear focuses this issue (Catton, 2004, p.189). He critically examines the presumption that merely 'fallibilism' can hold a society together. He argues that the moral code, that we are fallible in our views, cannot lead us to any consensus or general agreement. There should be positive basis for us to be able to judge whether our beliefs are better than others. If torture and abortion are wrong, they should be wrong for all. There

should not be any question of personal standing regarding moral value. O'Hear states that Popper's principle "I may be wrong and you may be right" reflects moral uncertainty. It makes a proper aim of life problematic (Catton, 2004, pp.192-4). It ultimately leads us to the idea that consensus about goals or aims have no rational or moral basis. Consequently, O'Hear argues; it blocks the possibility of rational argument.

O'Hear asserts that Popper insists on negative utilitarianism because he himself thinks that his 'open society' has no basis of consensus about goals and aims of life. In order to make consensus regarding policies of human welfare possible, he emphasizes upon the prevention of most urgent or manifest ill. But O'Hear argues that this is too dubious. His argument is that, without a general conception of a good life, it would be hardly possible to reach consensus about what is manifest ill (Catton, 2004, p.194). What O'Hear wants to say here is that theoretically it will not be possible to define 'most urgent evil' without a general conception of good. Therefore consensus regarding policies in an 'open society' (the society having no positive basis of general good), will no more be rational (or moral also), but pragmatic. Such agreement would have nothing to do with the matter of truth but would only be for the sake of specific aims of running society.

O'Hear points out another implication of Popper's conception of reason (uncertain reason). He contends that it encourages an instrumental approach towards society and institutions (Catton, 2004, p.195). Popper's emphasis upon uncertainty encourages the approach to critically evaluate institutions in order to monitor how they are solving problems and then a continuous willingness to change them on the basis of usefulness. O'Hear keeps a critical eye on such limited conception of social institutions. He argues that not all institutions exist to solve problems. Such an approach undermines the role of human institutions. He says,

An institution like a church or an ancient university or the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra or even my son's rugby club does not exist to 'solve problems'. They may, once they exist, have plenty of problems to solve, such as keeping in existence or dealing with their staff or members, but it misunderstands their nature to think of them principally in terms of problem solving. In so far as they exist for anything at all, they exist to embody and pass on a certain form of life. They are the vessels through which particular traditions are transmitted and developed. They exist because the people who belong to them and support them find that they and the activities they promote are worthwhile in themselves (Catton, 2004, p.196).

O'Hear is basically interested in collective effects of social institutions. He argues that 'moral individualism' undermines collective values of institution. For him, a social institution comprises of collectivity whose aims are in themselves rather than means for empty terms like problem solving. They have their own spirit and they should not merely be treated as instruments. He argues that Popper's demand for permanently critical evaluation of institutions cannot focus on the spirit of institutions but focus on what they do for apparent interest. In this way, this method can destroy the most valuable things about institutions (Catton, 2004, p.197). For instance, he presents an

example that in Britain in the 1980s many institutions had declined due to permanent critical evaluation of them.

O'Hear moves a step further in his criticism of Popper's idea of uncertainty and permanently critical evaluation of institution. He argues that the Kantian conception of the purely rational and autonomous man, which has an influence on Popper; is merely fiction. Man is not a purely rational agent isolated from tradition. Man should be seen in connection to his community. With reference to Popper's "*Towards Rational Theory of Tradition*", O'Hear emphasizes that Popper himself was also aware of this fact and he accepted the bonds of shared sentiments, share traditions and shared values in one's existence in community (Catton, 2004, p.198). O'Hear insists that these shared bounds constitute form of life that is uncritical and certain for human discourse and provides criterion for 'non-provisional truth'. Following Burke, O'Hear argues that there is latent wisdom in communal bonds. Our first reaction should not be critical towards such wisdom; instead we should be inclined towards exploring it (Catton, 2004, p.198). Without this wisdom we cannot hold a society together and thus cannot argue well about morality.

What reflects from O'Hear analysis is that morality requires certain foundations or 'non-provisional truth'. Certainty regarding morality can only be possible if we see society with respect to collective values. Similarly consensus can only be non-instrumental if we perceive society in the realm of collective values. Thus, if Popper hopes that a society consisting of individuals with different cultural or communal backgrounds and with distinct sets of values may be bound together by merely the 'reasonable dialogue', then this would be impossible. This is so because this idea is originated from 'provisional truth' having no shared basis. A society can only be bound together by a shared basis associated with non-provisional truth. Without it we will not be able to argue for morality. Popper's credo that "I am fallible so I may be wrong and you may be right, by a mutual effort (by learning our mistakes) we may get near to the truth"; cannot provide substantial grounds for dialogue and consensus.

Conclusion

What follows from Hacoheh and O'Hear's inquiry of Popper' is that Popper's moral individualism is plagued by the following problems.

Popper asserts that his method promotes critical dialogue as the standard for reaching consensus. He thinks that his method has moral effects. But Hacoheh rightly indicates that true dialogue can only be possible if we provide conditions under which it takes place. It can only be possible if we have positive basis of some shared moral ground. Popper's anti-foundationalism does not leave any room for such moral ground. Since Popper does not believe in 'sociology of knowledge, therefore he dismisses the possibility of knowledge of a broader social-historical context of man. Due to this he has no justified ground for conflict solving.

Popper hopes that a society consisting of individuals with different cultural or communal backgrounds and with distinct sets of values may be bound together by merely the 'attitude of reasonableness'. But O'Hear rightly shows that this is impossible.

This is so because the idea of ‘attitude of reasonableness’ is originated from ‘provisional truth’ having no shared basis. A society can only be bound together by a shared basis associated with ‘non-provisional truth’. Without it we will not be able to argue for morality.

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