

Presentation by Javad Hieran-Nia of the Mehr New Agency

World Philosophy Day, November 2017

Joint venture between St. Olaf college, MNA on World Philosophy Day

St. Olaf College in US celebrated World Philosophy Day with 3,000 students who expressed a desire for friendship between the Iranian and American people independent of the policies of US government.

At St. Olaf College with 3,000 students and 200 faculties, there was a celebration of Philosophy Day in which a recorded message from Javad Heiran-Nia (Head of international desk of Mehr News Agency) and Mohammad Ghaderi (chief editor of Tehran Times newspaper) was broadcast continuously in Buntrock Commons at the center of the college on the prospects of peace in the Persian Gulf.

Following is the full text of Mr.Heirannia lecture:

“I congratulate the World Philosophy Day to all lovers of philosophy. First of all, please let me welcome all professors and students here, especially the present professors and students of St. Olaf College in this seminar.

I am Javad Heiran Nia, the Phd. Student in International relations and the editor of International desk of Mehr News Agency, expert of Tehran Times newspaper and visiting research fellow at the Institute for Middle East Strategic Studies. I’m talking to you from Iran, the land of peace and philosophy.

I would like to discuss the issue of peace, the issue that is rare in our today’s world.

The question is that will philosophy result in the establishment of peace in human community? Has any kind of philosophic logic been resulted in peace?

Giving answer to both questions is considerable from two points of view: Theoretical view and use of that theory in practical aspect. For example, why Marxism that is based on principle of equation resulted in the establishment of USSR in practice? Should we search for problem through its theoretical principles or say that the interpretation of these principles had been wrong?

Of course, inversion of theory in practice had not been discussed in philosophical views of Aristotle and Plato. For instance, when we talk about the concept of Philosopher- King in Plato's philosophy, the king and thinker are the same in theory and practice. It means, there is no difference between king and thinker in Plato's view. Aristotle also has justified this matter and there is no difference between theory and practice for him, because theory was the same as practice in Aristotle's beliefs.

Some theories of International Relations has assumed peace and cooperation as the behavioral base for relations between states while some others, like Realism, emphasize on war and struggle.

Realism emphasizes on the principles of power centrism, national interests, state centrism, cooperation, survival and anarchy in the international order. According to the realism, peace is a rare element in international relations.

On the contrary, Liberals believe in cooperation between the states by trade and international law. Then, peace is not defined as a rare affair in liberal views and the base of international order is based on peace, not war.

So, the approaches to international peace are different from each other in various schools and there are some specific reasons for this matter.

We have faced to another phenomenon in our today's world that has challenged the international peace. Yes, that is terrorism. This is necessary to pay attention to this fact that not only there is no difference between the messages of ISIS and president of a state who wants to begin nuclear war but also massacre resulting of nuclear attack is more brutal and dangerous than ISIS.

Ideology is one of the main reasons behind terrorism that acts to create identity based on same and other while the other is excommunicated and could be physically eliminated. Man acts to eliminate those who don't think like him and this is the policy that is followed by extremist groups, means deleting others.

According to this approach, those who don't think like me are categorized as others. In fact, the concept of "other" here, will be created when the identity of a person is threatened from out and that is why he seeks to hurt others.

But what philosophy recommends us regarding this issue? Philosophy teaches us dialogue and critical thinking.

Critical methodology of philosophy that is based on dialogue will be reliever. In fact, a philosophical school has to pay attention to dialogue and authenticity of reasoning. If the power of reasoning is discussed, we could have an equal dialogue. This is what the history of philosophy teaches us. Philosophy is the product of man and it is not dedicated to a specific geography.

Philosophical research began by Aristotle and Plato traditionally. But it has to be attended that philosophical researches existed before Plato and

Aristotle. In fact, we had witnessed the existence of some philosophers in Iran.

We could achieve the thoughts of Greek philosophers like Plato and Aristotle by studying views of Islamic thinkers. We learned how Islamic thinkers could join the issues of their time to thoughts of Greek philosophers for response.

In fact, transfer of the Greek classic philosophy to the Western modern world by translation movement in the Muslims world is high considerable.

Transfer of philosophical texts of ancient Greece by the movement of translation was effective on the modern thought of West, while it was affected by interpretation of the Islamic philosophers from Greek philosophy. Because significant parts of these texts were destroyed or lost after fall of Western Roman Empire.

The effects of Islamic philosophy on Western philosophy in medieval era had been impressive. Beginning of philosophical tradition related studies of Al – Kindi in 9th century was greatly considerable that its continuation is visible in Ibn Rushd's studies of 12th century. We also witnessed the foster of Islamic Philosophy in Ibn Sina's studies that had been so effective on Islamic philosophical tradition.

Islamic philosophers have delivered an interpretation of existence and of course they have considered the ancient Greek philosophical texts in their studies and had written their interpretation on them.

Then, we are witnessed for dialogue between the philosophy of ancient Greece and its effects on Islamic philosophy in one hand, and effects of Islamic philosophy on medieval philosophy and its transfer to renaissance era. This is a philosophic dialogue. This is the type of

reasoning that is significant for philosopher and not the geography of thought.

This dialogue could be resulted in creation of peace among communities. A strategist talk about the negative one in best condition while philosophy emphasizes on the concept of positive peace and this is the main difference between philosopher and strategist. The positive peace emphasizes on the roots of terror and violence while it seeks to eliminate the creative structures of violence such as poverty, illiteracy, health and etc.

The philosophic dialogue conducts us to peace and this is the duty of philosophers and philosophy lovers to try for consolidation of positive peace.

As a journalist, I'm proud to declare that we are ready for having this dialogue with philosophers in Mehr News Agency and Tehran Times Newspaper while we invite them to discuss their views in our media. We had the same dialogue during last years with well-known world philosophers in our media and would like to continue this process.

Hereby, I thank St. Olaf College of US for preparing possibility for having this dialogue and especially thanks to Sir. Charles Taliaferro as a philosopher in its real and right concept.”