

**ISTANBUL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY ★ GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**RETHINKING CONFLICTUAL DESTRUCTIVITY: A NORMATIVE
INQUIRY ON THE IMPACT OF POLITICAL CONFLICT ON POLITICAL
BELIEF SYSTEM**

M. A. THESIS

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Department of Political Studies

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İSTANBUL TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ ★ SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

**ÇATIŞSAL YIKICILIĞI YENİDEN DÜŞÜNMEK: SİYASAL ÇATIŞMANIN
SİYASAL İNANÇ SİSTEMİNE ETKİSİNE DAİR NORMATİF BİR
İNCELEME**

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MAYIS 2015

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Date of Submission: 4 May 2015
Date of Defense: 28 May 2015

Anneme ve babama,

FOREWORD

I want to extend my gratitude to my dear advisor Prof. Dr. Gürcan KOÇAN, who has always looked for ways to support me both academically and personally, for his valuable guidance, criticism and suggestions throughout my research.

I would like to express my special thanks to Assoc. Prof. Barry STOCKER who has supported my ideas with his unique insight and filled me with self-esteem to keep going, as well as Assoc. Prof. Markus DRESSLER, Hatice CANER DRESSLER and their beautiful son, Can Kolya DRESSLER and Ayça ZORLUOĞLU who offered me the warmth of a family during my stay in Germany when I was writing this thesis.

I would like to thank my Hüsniye, mother to my heart and soul; my Muzaffer, father to my intellect; my Hamdiye, friend and grandmother to my joy and light-heartedness; my Ebru, aunt to my feelings; my Ceyda, sister to my life, and my lovely brothers for supporting me to become this me in any possible way.

I am especially indebted to Barış AKHANLI who has witnessed on a daily basis the trouble of creation that I have gone through from thousands of miles away; Özer Barış TUNÇEL who constantly uplifted my mood, cheered me up with his sense of humor and offered his continued support; and, last of all, the anonymous night watchman at Max Planck Institute who made me feel safe at the library during my tedious studies until latest of nights.

March 2015, Berlin

Zeynep Nur AYANOĞLU

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RETHINKING CONFLICTUAL DESTRUCTIVITY: A NORMATIVE INQUIRY ON THE IMPACT OF POLITICAL CONFLICT ON POLITICAL BELIEF SYSTEM

SUMMARY

This thesis aims to search for a ground on which political belief feeds upon political conflict. The argument of the thesis is that political conflict is a positive asset that contributes to the construction of the individual's political belief system contrary to the traditional conception of conflict as a phenomenon that should be done away with. The necessary conditions that constitute political belief display a direct affinity to political conflict, which is established upon a particular approach to social relations as composed of the integrative and disintegrative continuum of conflict and change. The main purpose is not to deny the fact that political conflict has great potential to escalate into war and bring forth misery, violence and destruction as history has taught us, but rather it is to attract attention to that the specific depiction of political conflict introduced hereby cannot be overlooked with regards to its inevitability in and contribution to social relations.

In order to accomplish my goal, I have dwelled upon Rudolph J. Rummel's *Conflict Helix* where conflict is explained in terms of perception which is the continual balancing of outward directed and inward bearing vectors of power, manifested as perpetual conflict. Rummel's conception of conflict is a normative one that saves the world against following an inevitable course with predetermined trajectory. In contradiction, I have shown how Thomas Hobbes's political philosophy favors social and political order against the danger of conflict in *Leviathan*. I have related the necessary conditions that constitute the formation of the political belief system to political conflict. This indicates that the role of political conflict is vital and central in the formation process of the conditions required for the existence of a person's political belief system.

ÇATIŞMAL YIKICILIĞI YENİDEN DÜŞÜNMEK: SİYASAL ÇATIŞMANIN SİYASAL İNANÇ SİSTEMİNE ETKİSİNE DAİR NORMATİF BİR İNCELEME

ÖZET

Bu çalışma siyasal çatışmadan beslenen siyasal inancın kurulu olduğu bir düzlem bulmayı amaçlar. Tezin savı, çatışmayı ortadan kaldırılması gereken bir olgu olarak değerlendiren geleneksel kavramsallaştırmanın aksine, siyasal çatışmanın bireyin siyasal inanç sistemini kurmasına katkıda bulunan olumlu bir değer olduğu düşüncesidir. Siyasal inancı teşkil eden gerekli koşullar siyasal çatışmayla doğrudan yakınlık sergiler. Bu çalışmada tasvir edilen siyasal çatışma anlayışı, insan yaşamının yapıcı ve yıkıcı çatışma ve değişim sürekliliğinden meydana geldiği yaklaşımı üzerine kuruludur. Bu çalışmanın amacı siyasal çatışmanın savaşa dönüşme potansiyelini ve beraberinde getirdiği acıları, şiddeti ve yıkımı yadsımak değil, sunulan siyasal çatışma tasvirinin insan yaşamındaki kaçınılmazlığına ve insan yaşamına katkısına dikkat çekmektir.

Bu amacı gerçekleştirmek adına Rudolph J. Rummel'in çatışmayı, dışarı dönük ve içeri yönelik güç vektörlerinin sürekli dengelenmesi anlamını taşıyan algı kavramı bakımından açıkladığı *Conflict Helix* eseri üzerinde durdum. Rummel'in çatışma kavramı dünyayı önceden belirlenmiş bir eksenle kaçınılmaz bir seyir izlemekten kurtaran normatif bir kavramsallaştırmadır. Buna karşın, Thomas Hobbes'un siyaset felsefesinin *Leviathan*'da çatışma tehlikesine karşı sosyal ve siyasal düzeni destekleyişine işaret ettim. Siyasal inancı teşkil eden gerekli koşulları siyasal çatışma ile ilişkilendirdim. Bu, kişinin siyasal inanç sisteminin varlığı için gerekli koşulların oluşma sürecinde siyasal çatışmanın hayati ve merkezi bir rol oynadığına işaret etmektedir.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Research Question and the Purpose of the Thesis

This thesis is grounded on my personal understanding that the acceptance of the presence of conflict at every aspect of social relations both contextually (depending on the setting and persons involved) and structurally (depending on the invisible social structures) would alleviate the tension and panic that accompanies the experience of it. Seeing social relations as composed of conflict opens up a perspective that tells us it is the most natural phenomenon in life that actually gains social relations momentum and liveliness. Accordingly, by contributing to the connection of the idea of “political conflict as an asset” with the notion of the political and power, the ever-presence of conflict is shown to be working in contribution to our personal political belief systems.

The definition of “political” or “politics” as power is the broadest one among the four definitions: (1) politics as the art of government, (2) politics as public affairs, (3) politics as compromise and consensus, (4) politics as power and the distribution of resources. This view espouses that politics is at work in all social activities and at every corner of human existence. Therefore, politics takes place at every level of social interaction in all human groups, institutions and societies (Leftwich, 2004). In the broadest sense, politics is concerned with the production, distribution, and the use of resources in the course of social existence. From this point of view, politics is about diversity and conflict over who gets what, when and how (Lasswell, 1936), since human needs and desires are infinite whereas the resources available to satisfy them are limited. Ergo, politics can be seen as a struggle over resources, and power can be seen as the means of such struggle. However, this conception of politics as power does not solely stand for the aims sought in this project. It is in the first sense that political is conflictual; not regarding the conflict about the redistribution of the wealth, but regarding conflictual dimension of everyday social interaction. Every aspect and level of human existence is interwoven with conflict since power relations exist everywhere and among everyone. Political is a realm where humans encounter

fellow humans as well as animals, environment and the universe as a whole. Philosophizing about conflict in social relations, therefore, requires establishing an extensive approach to the scope of political. Accordingly, the connection between conflict, power and political forms the backbone of the argument of this thesis. The following question as “How does political conflict affect personal political beliefs?” is answered as “Political conflict helps the person to examine her political beliefs”. This stands out as the positive outcome of political conflict that humans encounter at every aspect of their life. The understanding that is set out to be established in this work is about taking the existence and presence of conflict as an asset that already has big contributions to social relations.

The phenomenon of political conflict constitutes the totality of social relations with regards to its necessary connection to power and political. Political conflict is about power; power is political and political is conflictual. This triangular relation contributes to social relations in a unique way in the sense that self-consciousness in social relations is accomplished through the encounter with the self and the other, which is basically a conflictual situation. By displaying such triangular relation between the concepts, the positive effect or contribution of political conflict to social relations is indicated. From this point of view, embracing the political conflict in one’s life becomes a crucial input to her self-realization and transcendence. The dialogic relation of the person with herself and her significant others is realized through the consciousness that is brought to her by understanding the big role political conflict plays in her life. In this sense, the nature of social relations as consisting of power relations and conflict makes every context and setting outstandingly political. Such central positioning of “political” in social relations, or recognizing the evergreen political aspect of social relations, determines the approach to political conflict as a necessary element of self-consciousness. The categorical distinction between violent conflict that conflict based on dialogue has been made. This distinction indicates that properties of peaceful political conflict are different from, although sometimes common with, violent conflict that escalates readily into war. However, what needs to be underscored is that political conflict which is based on dialogue does not, within the aims of this project, signify a situation where an ultimate deliberation or agreement is envisaged. Having made the distinction between violent conflict and peaceful conflict, this is yet another

distinction to be made between an understanding that proposes to terminate political conflict ultimately within the field of deliberative political life. The aim of politics is not seen to diminish or to prevent the growth of political conflict. This thesis does not attribute any commission to the field of politics in terms of the status of political conflict. Instead, it contributes to the understanding that political conflict can be beneficial. This thesis draws on the existing literature to explore how political conflict can be beneficial in terms of its effect on political belief systems.

The view that is defended herein is ineradicably evaluative and essentially contested as the concept of power, the concept of conflict and the concept of political are not settled in the social sciences, either in political science or in sociology (Parsons, 1957, p. 139). Accordingly, this work is a quest for exploring how these essentially contested terms can be defined in relation to each other.

1.2. The Methodology

This thesis aims to indicate the positive contribution of political conflict in social relations with regards to its effect on the person's political belief system, as has been mentioned above. The relation between the concept of political conflict and political belief systems is examined to understand in what way political conflict benefits the examination of political belief systems. In order to do that, two different conceptions of political conflict are focused on so that the effect of political conflict on political beliefs can be put into the framework of the more extensive understanding of political conflict. Therefore, the methodology which is used in this thesis is dialectical. By comparing two contrasted philosophical stances, I establish a discourse in order to make my point guided by reasoned arguments. However, this work is not a mere comparison and contrast between two standard points of view, but a display of how political conflict and political belief can be related.

The conceptual analysis of political conflict is done by introducing two competing conceptions of conflict, the tradition of contractualism as represented by Thomas Hobbes and ever-presence of conflict as defended by Rudolph Joseph Rummel. For this goal, I analyze Hobbes's account of conflict in the state of nature and his embarking to cease conflict and to bring order by the social contract. Hobbes's

depiction of the state of nature in his *Leviathan* (1998) is analyzed critically from the perspective of properties of political conflict that are retained from the analysis of conflict as a general term. In opposition to his account, the account of R.J. Rummel's *The Conflict Helix*, volume two of the five-volume work *Understanding Conflict and War*, which is an ambitious theoretical approach to international and domestic conflict, is given to disclose the centrality and ever-presence of political conflict in social relations. The complete work provides substantial theoretical and epistemological foundation for the democratic peace proposition, which has attracted much attention especially in the late 1990s. With Rummel's account of political conflict, the necessity of political conflict as a central element that composes social relations is to be shown. The formation of self-consciousness as feeding upon political conflict is mentioned. In addition, the characteristics of political belief are evaluated within the light of political conflict. The relation between political conflict and political belief systems is accounted for based on the conception of political conflict that is existent at every aspect of social relations.

The methodology adopted in this work is not historical analysis, but structural analysis. Thus, the methodology cannot be said to be limited to a certain era of human kind. The main literature is based on Rudolph Rummel, Thomas Hobbes, Carl Schmitt, Jürgen Habermas, Michel Foucault, Friedrich Nietzsche and Chantal Mouffe. Foucault and Nietzsche are brought in as a criticism against the formative power that is attributed to agency within the framework of this thesis. Rummel's conceptualization of conflict is used to describe the integration-disintegration continuum of conflict and change in social relations, which tells us that conflict is insurmountable. Hobbes's contractualism is argued against due to its quest for eliminating conflict through the establishment of the sovereign power. Schmitt's political distinction of friend and enemy is used to explain the dimension of antagonism inherent in political relations. Mouffe's description of the political is used as a path that leads to her agonistic pluralism through conflict as opposed to Habermas's model of deliberative democracy based on agreement. The questions raised in this work connect largely with other interesting questions on the issues such as political violence and the foreseeing of the elimination of conflict thanks to the establishment of communism that have deep roots in the Marxist tradition. Nevertheless, Marxist literature and the problem of political violence and the

elimination of conflict have been excluded from this work. For, this work exclusively dwells upon the relation between political conflict and political belief systems, leaving class conflict out. In addition, the necessary relation established in this work between the political and power predisposes that conflict can never be eliminated from the face of earth whichever rule dominates it, since human relations are inherently political (about power), and thus, conflictual.

Although an extensive supportive literature has been made use of such as the works of Bakhtin, Mill, Honneth, and Hegel through the conceptual analyses of political conflict and political belief, the rationale behind the choosing of specific literature is limited to the concepts that have been linked to the necessary conditions discovered as a result of the two conceptual analyses. Therefore, this is an eclectic work in terms of the literature that has been benefited from. However, the structure of the work is analytically synthesizer, thus, the use of different approaches of thinkers and philosophers is only meant to be working together to achieve the synthesis that is arrived at the end. The synthesis is regarding the connection between the two conceptual analyses on political conflict and political belief and the necessary relation between the two.

1.3. The Framework for Distillation and Chapter Outlines

The never-ending conversation about political conflict indicates that political conflict, as well as “political” and “conflict” alone, is a loaded term that many philosophers and thinkers have set out to conceptualize for ages. It is an ambitious project to strictly define the scope of political concept with regards to the contexts and structures in which it occurs. It is also striking that the ambiguity that political conflict has in terms of how it is understood, analyzed and experienced makes it even more difficult to define. Moreover, the discussion of political conflict involves several controversies, one of which is, for example, the difficulty regarding its relation to violent conflict and war. Another example would be that political conflict is seen about the distribution and redistribution of limited resources and wealth within the society. On the other hand, there are thinkers who make a direct connection between political conflict and power, seeing social relations as a struggle for power that essentially leads to conflict (Weber, 1976, p. 389). The second chapter

deals with the questioning of the destructivity of conflict. Destructivity of political conflict can be positive or negative regardless of the type of political conflict, be it violent or non-violent, depending on the orientation of conflict. Conflict can be understood as a means to achieve a specific end where the destructivity needs to be understood as necessary and useful. In this regard, there is a need to analyze the destruction accompanied by conflict in several contexts. In the second chapter, the relation between dialectic and conflict is examined with regards to how dialogue can be destructive and conflictual. Information about the world can be obtained through the operative principle of conflict. The destructive nature of conflict and its usefulness reveals a need for the conceptual analysis of conflict. Therefore, the third chapter starts with the broader definition of conflict for the aim of displaying its necessary connection to the concept of power. Power is defined for Weber as the chance to realize one's will against the resistance of others. Hence, his vision of politics as endless conflict is in direct opposition to any dreams of perpetual peace or social contract theory as Thomas Hobbes maintains. Conflict, for Hobbes, is an intolerable state that constitutes the pre-political condition of state of nature in which every man is against every man. In such a condition human beings live in "continual fear and danger of violent death" (Hobbes, 1998, p. 78). For another thinker, Rummel, conflict is a balancing of vectors of powers and vectors of capabilities to produce effects. It is a clash of powers (Rummel, 1976). He, like Weber, explains conflict in terms of power relations and power struggle between different vectors. Therefore the framework of conflict is shown to be about power and to be political inherently: without power relations conflict cannot exist. However, a definition of conflict as an umbrella term that explains a variety of processes and phenomena is provided, which is highlighted in the third chapter. Accordingly, the characteristics of a type of conflict determine the cluster that it belongs to. From here, the distinction between violent conflict and peaceful conflict is made. It has been noted in the third chapter that terms such as rivalry, opposition, antagonism, tensions, etc. are included within the confines of the concept of conflict as a general term. Among these terms, political conflict in a structure of relations of power is categorized under the sociological conceptualization of conflict that denotes the clash between power holders in the struggle to become manifest. Rummel explains that the concept of conflict is multidimensional that envelops a family of forms. For him, reality is constituted by multiform and interwoven potentialities, dispositions and powers.

Thus, political conflict is a perpetual process that cannot be settled or “balanced”. Rummel points out at three levels of conflict as potentiality, dispositions and manifestations. The position espoused by Rummel takes up the notion of conflict as a potentiality that exists in every aspect of social life. Parallel to the understanding that power relations are necessarily existent in every interpersonal relation, Rummel’s position suggests that every social setting is a conflict-space in which opposing dispositions are present, thus the relation between power and conflict is established. Upon this relation causes of conflict are recounted in terms of a power-related and context-dependent categorization. A single cause for political conflict cannot be found which underlies every instance since conflict is context-specific, multi-causal and multi-dimensional. Even a society which is hypothetically dominated by a single supreme purpose cannot agree on subordinate ends (Berlin, 1962, p. 151). As a matter of fact, there has hardly ever been a society dominated by a single purpose with every member of it. Three general categories of factors that lead to the escalation of conflict are mentioned: (a) political and institutional factors, (b) socioeconomic factors, (c) resource and environmental factors. Since political conflict is about power, the context within which power relations occur determines the cause of conflict, which indicates that there is an umbrella category that brings together context-dependent conflicts. This category is composed of infinitely diverse contexts that can be broadly clustered into the realms of politics, economy, science, religion, academic, environment, class, gender, race, nation, sect, etc. The context predisposes the classification of conflict as to the causes. Every context, while belonging to a larger category with regards to its common properties, has its own implications and connotations in terms of power and conflict. Invisible structures that shape social relations are active determinants of such context-dependent conflicts. In the third section, types of conflict are put forward based on a subject-dependent categorization. The clusters that the agents who come into conflict with each other belong to constitute this second categorization. Accordingly, conflict can be classified into four categories: (a) Interpersonal conflict, (b) Intrapersonal conflict, (c) Intragroup conflict, and (d) Intergroup conflict. Such types of conflict are explained in terms of their take on power. Political conflict can be interpersonal, intrapersonal, intragroup and intergroup depending on the groups or clusters to which agents that go into power struggle and conflict with one another belong. The fourth chapter dwells upon the problem of political conflict and establishes the relation

between power, conflict and political with the help of Chantal Mouffe's definition: "By "the political" I refer to the dimension of antagonism that is inherent in all human society, antagonism that can take many different forms and can emerge in diverse social relations" (Mouffe, 1999, p. 754). Indicating that there is an ongoing debate as to the distinction between the political and the social, herein it is argued that if political is about power, the notion of political cannot be separated from that of social contrary to what Etzioni defends (2003, pp. 90-92). Connecting the notion of political with social relations, it is argued that as social forms unite, they also break apart. As systems get integrated, they also disintegrate. As power of a group escalates, it also dissolves. In this regard, conflict is always part of the integration-disintegration continuum. Constant construction and destruction in political space is inherent in the structure of politics and this amounts to the integrative aspect of political conflict. In addition, Carl Schmitt's definition of political and his political distinction of friend and enemy are explained. In the light of the conceptualization that Schmitt offers to us regarding the political and the friend-enemy distinction, Chantal Mouffe is, once again, visited. Agonistic pluralism, as advocated by Mouffe, stands out as an alternative model to deliberative democracy. These two models handle the concept of conflict in diametrically opposite manners. The former category of agonistic pluralism defines the "political" and politics in connection to conflict, whereas proponents of the latter have traditionally argued that politics is not the source of conflict, but the solution to it. As long as political exists, communicative conflict, which is in no way violent, should exist as well for agonistic pluralists. The second category, on the other hand, is based on deliberation and consensus, aiming at minimizing conflict. Having explained the difference, Thomas Hobbes's take on conflict is focused on. In the third section of the fourth chapter, the connection between political conflict and clash of beliefs is made. Expression of incompatibility of beliefs indicates that there is a positional difference between beliefs as content thought and concept. This requires the existence of the following elements: actors, interaction and item. These elements are explained in the last section. The fifth chapter starts with a quest to position the concept of political belief within the larger category of belief and believing. Accordingly, a traditional distinction between knowledge and belief is recounted. The fallibility of political belief is established as opposed to the term of knowledge. Second, political beliefs are understood to lead to actions together with emotions and passions. Beliefs,

emotions and passions feed each other so as to shape a person's perceived reality. Thus, there is a clear link between political belief and action; the two cannot be separated from each other. The third characteristics of political belief is that it is a type of belief with a self-conscious dimension of discourse that is shaped upon active reflection which is fallible and which has a great potential to lead to action. The fourth characteristics of political belief is that the form of association that constitutes political belief is a conscious one sought after in the pursuit of truth. The pursuit of truth marks the distinction between what Mill calls "the belief of the wise which is regulated by evidence" as opposed to "the belief of fools which is mechanically produced by any accidental association" (2002, p. 407). In the second section of the fifth chapter political belief is taken up as source of political conflict development. Distinction between open and closed belief systems is made and it is noted that confrontation between closed minds as a cognitive state inevitably leads to conflict. Belief systems are decomposed into four belief elements as fixed, inelastic, firm and flexible. The type of belief element determines the rigidity of the political conflict between political belief systems. There arise four primary sources of conflict on which political beliefs develop conflictual relations to each other: i. Preparedness to act; ii. Claiming authoritativeness; iii. Expansionism; iv. Tendency to be violated. All in all, political belief has been originally defined as a type of belief with a self-conscious dimension of discourse that is shaped upon active reflection which is fallible and which has a great potential to lead to action, which finishes the fifth chapter.

In the sixth chapter, three functions of political conflict are introduced in terms of the parties that go into conflict with each other: (a) political conflict between two closed belief systems that results in oppression; (b) political conflict between two open belief systems that results in a synthetical new belief system, or an amalgamation; (c) political conflict between a belief system and skepticism that results in liberation, or the discovery of "truth". In the second section of the sixth chapter, functions of political conflict are examined within the light of characteristics of belief systems that are recounted in the fifth chapter. Four basic characteristics as to which belief systems vary are (i) accessibility either to argumentative demonstration or to factual evidence; (ii) centrality of the belief-elements; (iii) level of abstraction; and (iv) comprehensiveness (Sartori, 1969, p. 410). In the third section, political conflict is

handled as rhetoric of control. This is a criticism of against the positive aspect of political conflict that has been espoused in this work, starting with a distinction between knowledge and political belief. Foucault and Nietzsche challenges the traditional distinction that is made between the two terms, indicating that knowledge is acquired within discourse. The truth is determined within the framework of discourses, thus making the category of knowledge devoid of its higher status as a separate realm from political belief. Foucault includes conflict within the territory of knowledge, shaping, creating and recreating it. Thus, the status of knowledge which is very elevated in the Western philosophy is attacked by peeling off knowledge of the normativity attributed to it. Similarly, Nietzsche says that knowledge has no rapport with the world to be known; there can be no relation of natural continuity between knowledge and the objects of knowledge. Only a relation of violence, domination, power, force and a relation of violation are left for the limits of knowledge. Under the circumstances where truth-telling is not possible, we cannot talk about the condition of self-consciousness that is necessary for the existence of political belief. This understanding undermines the conceptualization of political conflict proposed in this thesis. In the fourth section of the fourth chapter, how political belief feeds upon political conflict is explained with an explanation of the formation of self-consciousness. The recognition of different, and sometimes mutually exclusive, political belief systems promotes differentiation. Formation of individual's political belief systems as to who she is and how she understands life is based on the confrontation which results from conflictual relations with the other. Based on the definition of political belief introduced in the fifth chapter as a type of belief with a self-conscious dimension of discourse that is shaped upon active reflection which is fallible and which has a great potential to leading to action, five elements stand out with regards to the relation between the notion of political belief and political conflict: self-conscious, discursive, active reflection, fallible and potential to lead to action. Lastly, the necessary relation between political conflict and the five elements that are used in the definition of political belief is established. Therefore, the necessity and centrality of political conflict as part of the formation and examination of political belief systems are accounted for. Foucauldian and Nietzschean conceptions of power could also be accounted for in terms of the formation of political belief systems as an alternative approach to social relations; however, it stays outside of the scope of this project. All in all, in this work, I argue

that it is not possible to eliminate political conflict and even if it were possible, it is not desirable.

2. INVESTIGATION OF CONFLICT AND DIALECTICS

Real peace is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of justice.

John Lynch

This chapter starts with the examination of destructivity of conflict. In the second section the conflictual nature of dialogue as destructive, thus productive, is set forth with the philosophical implications of conflict as a never-ending process.

2.1. Conflict as Destruction?: An Examination of Destructivity

The significance of conflict depends on people's relationship to the issues that have specific contexts. Therefore the properties that accompany conflict can only be understood within the framework of the contexts in which they occur. The role of conflict resolvers in addressing major conflicts tends to be localized, peripheral, advisory, short term and narrow due to the inaccurate understanding regarding the manifestation of conflict in different contexts. Although the role that conflict resolvers play in major conflicts has been "helpful, sometimes healing, and frequently appreciated", the profundity of impact remains doubtful because of the need for a better critical perspective on conflict (Mayer, 2004, p. 16). Conflict resolvers generally approach the parties of conflict with a feeling that if they bring disputing parties together in a safe atmosphere using a thoughtful process, they will be able to communicate their concerns by listening to each other, identifying alternatives, and making wise decisions. This service, these skills, and this vision have been offered since the field of conflict resolution emerged during 1970s. The values and rhetoric of empowerment, self-determination, participatory democracy, and non-violence have accompanied the service of conflict resolution since then. This is the product of the normative stance regarding the position of conflict that is supposed to be cultivated and nurtured in the society. This normative stance should

be interrogated both for itself and for its implications as to the model of deliberative democracy and democratic values in order to display its impossible effort to eliminate conflict. In this regard, there is a need to think over what destructive and constructive means and what the relation between the two is by examining dialectic and dialogue.

2.2. Dialectic and Conflict: How Dialogue is Conflictual

Dialectic is a notion that refers to antithetical, oppositional, and contradictory movements or features (Limnatis, 2010, p. 1). The existence of oppositions and contradictions in the world is an evident fact. Since Hegel's re-establishment of dialectic as a central theme in the modern philosophy, this discipline has been regarded in various different ways by various schools of thought. The Marxists have viewed this discipline as part of the causal pattern of historical development, whereas Karl Popper and his school as a way of systematizing the testing process for scientific theories (Rescher, 1977, p. xi). The founder of dialectics is Plato and Aristotle is the father of the enterprise (Aristotle, 2005). However, it was Hegel's and his school's ideas that established the role of dialectic in the authentication of claims to knowledge. The philosophical take on dialectic regarding disputation, debate and conflict seems promising to handle. Apart from epistemological benefits drawn from this philosophy, the ontological dialectical model exposes processes at work in a setting of socially conditioned interactions. The dialectics of conflict and controversy provides a useful antidote to the cognitive egocentrism motivated by the Cartesian animus, insisting on the building up of knowledge as a communal enterprise subject to communal standards. John Stuart Mill, supporting the importance of dialectic and open discussion as an instrumentality in the pursuit of truth, holds dialectic to be a perennial necessity of the rational enterprise. In this regard, conflict resulting from the instance of dialectical process as formal disputation is vital for the personal pursuit of truth.

If we were never to act on our opinions, because the opinions may be wrong, we should leave all our interests uncared for, and all our duties unperformed. ... It is the duty of governments, and of individuals, to form the truest opinions they can; to form them carefully, and never

impose them upon others unless they are quite sure of being right (Mill, 1956, p. 23).

What Mill calls “acting on our opinions” is termed for the purposes of this work as acting on our political belief systems which are governed by our everyday judgments and motivations. The formation of truest opinions Mill talks about is only possible through dialectic. A formal disputation involves three parties: two disputing adversaries, namely the proponent and her opponent (or opposing respondent), and the determiner presiding as referee and judge over the conduct of the dispute. This exposes the rather stylized routine of the formal disputation with rules and regulations that constitute dialectic. The dialectical fabric of a disputation is composed of formal moves and counter-moves from which the rigidity of the logical structure of the debating can be observed. Outside the programmed minuet of well-determined steps is social relations shaped by intrinsically non-terminating processes. The indeterministic nature of social relations determines the need for dialectic based on conflict. The pivotal facet of the determination of a formal disputation depends on the plausibility of the theses to which the proponent is driven by her opponent. This is the synthesis reached out after the clash of two different positions, thesis and antithesis. The ground rules for rational controversy and the conditions for making out a conclusive case dictated by the conceptual scheme that is at issue does not hold in social relations where individuals have no formal opponent and no formal determiner presiding as referee and judge over the conduct of the dispute. However, claims to knowledge in social relations are crucially predicated upon a “right to be sure” (Ayer, 1956, p. 35). The right to be sure should be based on the destruction brought about by dialectic, that is by argumentative conflict, abiding by some rules if not as strict as those required in formal disputation. Otherwise the ground of truth is lost. The mastery of rules that constitute the dialectic in daily life is a crucial part of discovering the world and forming self-consciousness that come along with language-learning and discovering the way in which things work in the world. The task of rational inquiry is “to provide information about the world” (Rescher, 1977, p. 110). Information about the world can be obtained through the operative principle of conflict. A systematic abstention from cognitive involvement in conflict affords avoiding to encounter conflict at too steep a price, for it costs to a person low level of self-consciousness. As a cognitive enterprise, conflict as experienced in dialectics is destructive to the proponent’s mind in the sense that the

proponent faces a challenge to her argument. Her argument need not be in the form of a well structured argument in the technical sense, but rather it counts as the articulation of her proposition or statement specifying her beliefs or opinions. Since dialectic teaches how to reason about oppositions and contradictions, it sets out to destroy any unsubstantial belief by subjecting them to the operation of reason.

With respect to dialectic, the idea of irreconcilable conflict or opposition prevails. The intersubjective spirit of Hegel presents an account of a universal human consciousness that is dialectically grasped (Limnatis, 2010, p. 181). Since this account is dialectical, the “intersubjective” must be broken down into its constituents as individual consciousnesses that stand opposed to one another in a conflictual relationship. Thus, consciousness is grasped as Life for Hegel which is “the splitting up of itself into shapes and at the same time the dissolution of these existent differences” (Hegel, 1977, p. 108) and “Life points to something other than itself, viz. to consciousness, for which Life exists as this unity, or as genus” (ibid, p. 109). The struggle for recognition follows necessarily as a consequence of the intersubjectivity. Self-consciousness becomes reason as a universal category. Hegel included “from the start, not only a field of moral tensions but also the social medium by which they are settled through conflict” (ibid, p. 183). This understanding destroys the external object as the self-sufficient source of truth and reason is pronounced as “the certainty of consciousness that it is all reality” repeated by Hegel on every page in an entire chapter (ibid, pp. 178-185). Hegel’s spirit is born out of reason with its full-blown intersubjective dimension that is based on conflict (Limnatis, 2010, p. 182). Thus it can be concluded that the formation of reason, whether it is transformed into spirit or not as in Hegel’s philosophy, requires the involvement of conflict.

Argumentation or disputation is not only the expression of an individual assessment, but rather a contribution to a communicative process between individuals that enables the exchange of ideas, opinions and beliefs. In this context, conflict occurs destructively. In order to achieve the conduction of the communication process destruction is needed. The ways in which the parties involved react to each other’s standpoints, be it genuine or assumed, doubt, criticism, objections and argumentation are considered as vital parts of a process of conflict. The exchange might result in destruction in the positive sense in that it can help eliminate unwarranted or

fallacious beliefs. According to Hegel's dialectic all phenomena of reality, such as nature, social life, and history, are internally conflicted and bear their own negation, eventually changing into their opposite (Nikulin, 2010, p. 63). In this regard conflict is destructive with positive connotations that constitute the formation of self-consciousness through encounter with the other. However, attending conflict is vital because dialogue itself only represents each individual in her uniqueness and individuality, thus being an accidental, ever partial, and incomplete and unsystematic for philosophizing. The utter arbitrariness of the unfolding of the dialogue does not count a development for Hegel, because this would presuppose an inner purpose. Indeterminacy of a conversation's conclusion, if there is a conclusion at all, makes the dialogue accidental rather than necessary. Therefore attending conflict deliberately contributes vitally to the necessity of argumentation.

Dmitri Nikulin sorts out four components that turn conversation into dialogue regarding this problem: personal other, voice, unfinalizability, and allosensus (Nikulin, 2010, pp. 74-79). The first component is personal other which enables the occurrence of conversation with reference to the other person who is real. Dialogue presupposes an other who cannot be reduced to either to the other person or to the other in the world, but it is the *personal other* to oneself. In this sense dialogue always involves an expression of one's personal other in which the discussion of a topic happens with the other and for the other person. The personal other is present and involved in dialogue together with the personal others of every individual taking part in the dialogue. When an individual talks to others, she expresses her personal other and tries to understand it for herself together with the others. Thereby the conflict that becomes manifest through dialogue becomes a quest for forming self-consciousness. The second component is voice that represents a minimum of corporeality by the presence of every individual in a dialogical communication. A voice resonates with another voice allowing a person to converse properly by inviting one into conversation. Thus the voice is for the other and with the other. Since each voice is unique it distinguishes a person from the other expressing a person in her distinctness at the same time joining her with other voices in dialogical conversation. The third component is unfinalizability. Even if the personal other accounts for each person's existence in dialogue, no one ultimately coincides with herself ever. Rather, each person's voice is new to herself every time she speaks and

is therefore other to herself. This makes dialogue and the process of self-consciousness unfinalizable. Dialogue, in this sense, becomes an exchange in which the participants can converse with each other without exhausting their relations to each other and to themselves. This distinguishes dialogue from a mere exchange of information. The last component is *allosensus* that implies disagreement with the other and the constant questioning of every claim made. This comes from the inability of ultimately and definitely expressing oneself in a dialogical conversation.

This notion of dialogue is against the understanding of communication defended by Jürgen Habermas who conceptualizes conversation in terms of a final agreement between the speakers. The communicative practice of everyday life includes normative validity claims that play an action-coordinating function where the problems to be resolved in moral argumentation require a cooperative effort. The process of moral argumentation brings together participants through a communicative action in a reflexive attitude with the aim of restoring a consensus that has been disrupted. Thanks to moral argumentation conflicts of action are settled by consensual means. The disruption of a normative consensus results in conflicts in the domain of norm-guided interactions. Such repairing of a disrupted consensus means either restoring intersubjective recognition of a validity claim after it has become controversial or assuring intersubjective recognition for a new validity claim that substitutes the old one. Agreement of the second kind expresses the existence of a common will. If moral argumentation is to produce such agreement, though, the individual's reflection on whether she can assent to a norm is not enough. Nor is it enough that she reflects in this way and then register her vote. Habermas sees it obligatory that a real process of argumentation in which the individuals concerned cooperate exists. Namely, only an intersubjective process of reaching understanding can produce a full-fledged agreement which is truly reflexive in nature and only it can give the participants the knowledge of being collectively convinced of something (Habermas, 1990, pp. 66-67). For him, the principle of discourse ethics makes reference to a procedure regarding the discursive redemption of normative claims to validity. Discourse ethics can properly be characterized as formal to that extent, since it provides no substantive guidelines, but instead merely a procedure of practical discourse. Practical discourse does not generate justified norms; it generates a procedure for testing the validity of norms that are proposed and hypothetically

considered for adoption. Thus, practical discourses depend on content which is brought to them from outside. Habermas sees it utterly pointless to engage in a practical discourse “without a horizon provided by the lifeworld of a specific social group and without real conflicts in a concrete situation in which the actors consider it incumbent upon them to reach a consensual means of regulating some controversial social matter” (ibid, p. 103). The concrete point of departure of a disturbed normative agreement is the focal point of practical discourses. The topics to be discussed are determined by such antecedent disruptions. Therefore practical discourse is dependent upon the contingent content that is fed into it from outside through conflict. In discourse this content gets subjected to a process in which particular values are discarded for they are not susceptible to consensus. Social interactions vary in terms of how cooperative and stable, or, conversely, how conflictual and unstable they are. What makes social order possible has a counterpart in action theory: What makes at least two participants in interaction coordinate their plans in such a way that “alter is in a position to link his actions to ego’s without a conflict arising, or at least without the risk that the interaction will be broken off?” (ibid, p. 133). Habermas speaks of communicative action when actors are prepared to harmonize their plans of action through internal means, committing themselves to pursuing their goals only on the condition of an agreement. The consensus model that Habermas suggests ignores the insurmountable conflict of personal exchange, including political interaction (Arendt, 1961, p. 241). Diametrically contrary to the consensus model an agonistic conflict as a war that disrupts as possibility of expression and communication comes about. However the conflict within dialogue is more than dissensus in the sense that it expresses the inclusion of the other, thus “allos”. Unlike both consensus and dissensus, allosensus signifies a productive process in which the difference of and from the other is recognized through a dialogical and unfinalizable unwrapping. Hence dialogue does not manifest itself only as a linguistic phenomenon that involves the particular uses of language. In the context of allosensus the destructive nature of conflict occurs in terms of the unfinalizable unwrapping of each other during conflict by both creating and destroying one’s own voice at the same time. On the other hand, submitting oneself to a “smoothly running and established course of common and agreed upon action” is a doubtful political enterprise; but rather it is an exercise of the common will (Nikulin, 2010, pp. 80-81). There cannot be common will in conflict, or in dialectic.

The dialogue is not guided and not directed by an extra personal purpose, principle or agent, thus it inevitably results in allosensus which is a kind of conflict that allows for, as well as requires, further discussion. The never ending nature of conflict and of dialectic is inherent in the medium of language that creates allosensus, since the life of dialogue is constituted by disagreement whereas consensus means the death of dialogue, thus also the end of being on the condition that to be is to be in conflict. In this sense conflict means the personal freedom to be, because authenticity can only be achieved through conflict. Nikulin explains the relation between dialogue, thus conflict, and freedom as follows:

Being the locus *of* freedom, dialogue is also the locus *for* freedom.

Dialogue has a great liberating potential, which was already known in ancient Greek tragedy and is explicitly mentioned in Euripides. Even though it ultimately does not produce any goods, artifacts, or conclusions, dialogue is a—perhaps *the*—therapy against the misrecognition of one person by another—that is, against the misidentification of a person as having a solely social or other type of role (Nikulin, 2010, p. 82).

Thus, the existence of conflict in dialogue can also be related to the notion of freedom. Regardless of its ultimate productivity, conflict works as a liberating phenomenon in terms of constituting a process where a person meets with her voice and others' voice. Dialogue, in this regard, differs from monologue radically. As Bakhtin puts it, the monological world is the world in which people have nothing more to say (Bakhtin, 1996, pp. 325, 350, 367). Only dialogue allows a person to utter her unique individuality; therefore, the destructive encounter in dialogue as opposed to monologue is favored.

The objective of dialectic is to attain systematic knowledge; discursive reasoning is used to arrive at it (Nikulin, 2010, p. 86). The quest for attaining knowledge requires a formal methodological trajectory that should be followed strictly in order to accomplish this objective. On the other hand dialogue does not chase up systematic knowledge; it is a form of communication that is valued for its enabling of exposing a person's uniqueness and recognizability. Thus, dialogue is both personal and interpersonal whereas dialectic is impersonal and belongs to everyone since the argument can be anyone's argument so long as the intellectual trajectory of reasoning

is well followed. Accordingly, the conflict that is observed in dialectic is a formal conflict that occurs when two different positions encounter with each other within the rules and limits of reasoning. However, the conflict that is observed in dialogue necessitates no skills of argumentation in order to decide where to go at each step; it is rather a spontaneous and immediate act of speaking in which conflict occurs through expression. The result of reasoning in dialectic should indicate a universal abstract truth which is frameworked formally, whereas the result of expression in dialogue exposes an unending process of becoming. In this regard, the context of conflict in social relations is the context of dialogue rather than dialectic. Dialogue requires conversational skills in order to speak to the other and to express her personal other as well as to listen to the other. However, unlike dialectic, it does not produce remarkable proofs and refutations; it does not produce anything by itself. Nikulin defends that dialogue is about communication and expression, not about production (ibid, p. 90). It can be inferred from his argument that the conflict observed in dialogue is communicative and expressive, but not productive. In order for it to become productive, it should comply to a set of formal rules as dialectic does. Since dialogue is renewable unpredictably at any given moment, any conclusion to be achieved during the course of dialogue is an accidental conclusion that does not occur as part of a well established formal logic. In this sense, dialogue cannot be productive. This conclusion drawn from the unpredictability and non-formal nature of dialogue is argued against in this thesis in the following chapters, although encounter with other political belief systems is experienced through dialogue which stands for the dialogical political conflict having the characteristics of both unpredictability and non-formality. The productive nature of political conflict realized through dialogue is pointed out at in this work, contrary to the position adopted by Nikulin within his framework of dialogue versus dialectic. His understanding of dialectic might also be controversial (see Adorno, 1973; Deleuze, 2006). The unsystematic nature of dialogue and dialogical communication does make the conclusion of the dialogue unsecured. In this regard, dialogue does not offer the conclusive standpoint or perspective that dialectic offers. However, this does not prevent the conflict in dialogue from being productive just because of the unpredictability and unsecuredness of reaching at a conclusion. The juxtaposition of dialogue with dialectic in terms of productivity does not hold in this work. Instead, it

is argued that the process of the occurrence of conflict itself in dialogue exposes productivity.

The productivity of dialogue comes from the high value it contributes to the formation of individuality. John Stuart Mill expresses two extreme cases in terms of conduct of life, one of which is people's doing absolutely nothing but copying one another, thus not putting into their mode of life and into the conduct of their concerns. This would suspend forming one's own judgment or her own individual character. The second extreme is the case where the individual pretends that people ought to live as if nothing had been known in the world before they came to it and as if experience had as yet done nothing toward showing that one mode of existence, or of conduct, is preferable to another (Mill, 1956, pp. 42-43). Thus, avoiding the two extremes, there is a middle way in life that helps form individuality: People should be taught and trained in youth to benefit by the ascertained results of human experience. On the other hand, the privilege and proper condition of a human being that is arrived at the maturity of his faculties requires using and interpreting experience in her own way. She then finds out what part of recorded experience is properly applicable to her circumstances and character. Mill explains in the following passage in what way a person might need to form her own understanding of life:

The traditions and customs of other people are, to a certain extent, evidence of what their experience has taught them —presumptive evidence, and as such, have a claim to his deference: but, in the first place, their experience may be too narrow, or they may have not interpreted it rightly. Secondly, their interpretation of experience may be correct, but unsuitable to him. Customs are made for customary circumstances and customary characters; and his customary circumstances and character may be uncustomary. Thirdly, though the customs be both good as customs and suitable to him, yet to conform to custom merely as custom does not educate or develop in him any of the qualities which are the distinctive endowment of a human being. (Mill, 1956, p. 43).

Dialogue is productive and the destruction brought about by dialogue is required in the sense that Mill explains. Destroying part of what is learned is necessary in the course of forming one's own political belief system that constitute her individuality.

From this point of view destruction in dialogue is beneficial. In addition, destruction in dialogue is productive of a person's unique political belief system and authenticity. Why is this destruction needed? It is needed because she who lets the world choose her plan of life for her is only in need of one faculty which is the "ape-like faculty of imitation" (ibid, p. 43). Otherwise, she uses observation to see, reasoning and judgment to foresee, activity to gather materials for decision, discrimination to decide, and firmness and self-control to hold her deliberate decision when she has decided. All these faculties other than the ape-like faculty of imitation that Mill refers to require the destructive nature of conflict which is manifest in dialogue. In this regard destruction discloses itself as a useful and valuable means for a person's becoming as opposed to her being. In order to build, there is a need to destroy. What is destroyed and how it is destroyed determine the methodology of destroying of which an intelligent following of custom together with an intelligent deviation from custom form the basis. Therefore a person's becoming in and out of the customs of the society that she lives in is realized through the methodology of destruction.

The society is threatened by the deficiency of personal impulses and preferences. Everyone lives "under the eye of a hostile and dreaded censorship" regarding not only what concerns others but in what concerns only themselves. The individual does not ask herself what she prefers or what would suit her character and disposition. She asks herself what is suitable to her position and what is usually done by persons of her station and circumstances. It is not that she chooses what is customary in preference to what suits her own inclination, but rather it does not occur to her to have any inclination except for what is customary. "Thus the mind itself is bowed to the yoke: even in what people do for pleasure, conformity is the first thing thought of" (ibid, p. 45). Therefore no real conversation or communication is held among people who are willing to submit themselves to the customary way of living. Even the exercise of choice, Mill explains, is only carried out among things that are commonly done. "Until by dint of not following their own nature they have no nature to follow: their human capacities are withered and starved; they become incapable of any strong wishes or native pleasures, and are generally without either opinions or feelings of home growth, or properly their own" (ibid, p. 46).

The destructive nature of conflict and how it can be useful has been established in this chapter. In the following chapter a close look at the concept of conflict analytically is offered where the connection of conflict with power is developed.

3. DEFINITIONS, CAUSES, AND TYPES OF CONFLICT

Conflict is the beginning of consciousness.

Mary Esther Harding

This chapter starts with the conceptual analysis of the term “conflict” and examines the phenomenon of political conflict as a category that constitutes social relations as a whole. In the second section causes of conflict are introduced in terms of the concept of power that is inherent in conflictual relations. The third section examines types of conflict from a subject-dependent clustering method as different from the context-dependent and power-related classification introduced in the earlier section. Types of conflict are given in terms of which cluster the subjects that go into conflict belong to. The fourth section connects the necessary relation between power and conflict, which is established in the first and the second sections, with the concept of “political”. How does conflict become political, or is conflict inherently political with regards to power relations by which it operates? The positioning of “political” in social relations and the necessary relation between the concepts of power, conflict and political are argued herein. The next chapter connects the totality of ideas introduced in this chapter to the clash of belief, which exposes the requirement of the examination of the category of political belief introduced in the fourth chapter.

3.1. What is Conflict?: A Conceptual Analysis

Conflict is a highly contested term over which there is no agreed definition. Weber sees conflict directly related to power, which may be valued for its own sake, rather than as a tool that helps with only economical enrichment (Weber, 1976, p. 389). Power is defined for him as the chance to realize one’s will against the resistance of others. Social relations consist of struggle for power, which essentially leads to conflict. Class and status group conflicts are one dimension of the general distribution of power. Thus, he does not limit the scope of power struggles into the

realm of economics. Although influenced by Nietzsche regarding understanding the social relations as struggle for power, Weber mostly dwells upon class conflict as the explanation of political developments and struggles over land (Allen, 2004, p. 118). Yet, the inescapability of politics as conflict (*Kampf*) remains a constant theme in all his work; thus, although he is mostly interested in the quality of human being in any given economic and social order in general, he understands the social relations as composed of power and conflict. Weber's vision of politics as endless conflict is in direct opposition to any dreams of perpetual peace or social contract theory as Thomas Hobbes maintains. Conflict, for Hobbes, is an intolerable state that constitutes the pre-political condition in which every man is against every man. In such a condition human beings live in "continual fear and danger of violent death" (Hobbes, 1998, p. 78). He, therefore, hopes to demonstrate the necessity of a political society governed by an undivided and absolute sovereign. A sovereign with absolute power is the best security against a reversal to the state of nature. Whatever evils unlimited power might bring are necessary risk because the evils arising from the lack of power are greater. Hobbes demonstrates that conflict in the state of nature is inevitable and summarizes his explanation of conflict in the state of nature as follows: "So that in the nature of man, we find three principal causes of quarrel. First, competition; secondly, diffidence; thirdly, glory. The first maketh men invade for gain; the second for safety; and the third for reputation" (Hobbes, 1998, p.77). Lastly, for Rudolph Joseph Rummel, conflict is a balancing of vectors of powers and vectors of capabilities to produce effects. It is a clash of powers (Rummel, 1976). He, like Weber, explains conflict in terms of power relations and power struggle between different vectors. In the light of these conceptions of conflict put forward by the three thinkers, it is apparent that in order to understand the concept of conflict, the concept of power needs to be grasped. Therefore conflict is inherent in social relations that is interwoven with power relations. Without will to power conflict cannot exist. Conflict is about power.

A definition of conflict which would serve as an umbrella for a variety of processes and phenomena can be found; however this broad definition might carry, or might be understood as carrying, more kinship between different types of conflict than actually exists (Glass, 1966, p. 152). On the other hand, a narrow conception of conflict might also be as controversial because of the existence of many dimensions

that correspond to different sets of properties. The characteristics of a type of conflict can be defined by the relative importance of the following variables: (a) regulated vs. unregulated, (b) indirect (parallel striving) vs. direct (mutual interference), (c) unconscious vs. conscious, (d) impersonal vs. personal, (e) continuous vs. intermittent, (f) communication absent vs. communication present, (g) high communication vs. low communication, (h) peaceful vs. violent, (i) large admixture of cooperation vs. relatively pure antagonism, (k) third party controls goal vs. opponent controls goal, (l) based on scarcity vs. based on incompatibility, inconsistency, etc., (m) economic goals vs. noneconomic goals, (n) non-disruptive vs. disruptive (Fink, 1968, p. 454). As long as the conceptual boundaries between conflict and other terms such as rivalry, opposition, antagonism, tensions, etc. shift, it would become more difficult to create a set of properties that strictly define conflict. Thus the problems a general theory of conflict has been argued to have are also present in terms of a specific theory of conflict. In addition, piling up different properties to define different types of conflict might become too random, many possible narrow definitions may occur as a result. Disadvantages of both general and narrow conceptions of conflict may lead to the suggestion that the term “conflict” should be dropped altogether. Having no “clear-cut referent, being emotion-fraught, value-laden, fuzzy, and equivocal”, the term itself confuses analysis, rather than to facilitate creative thinking and research (Bernard, 1957b, p. 111). This approach may stand out to be feasible when other concepts such as competition, rivalry, opposition, or struggle can substitute “conflict” in certain contexts. However the trend towards omitting the concept of “conflict” does not help to the ideal extent, since other terms also are in need of sharper definition. Replacing “social conflict” with “social opposition”, “social strife” or “social antagonisms” does not help describing and classifying phenomena within the domain of the theory. Ambiguity of all other synonyms that can be offered instead of conflict fails the attempt to bring conceptual clarification, because the problem “lies in the definitional system itself” rather than in the term “conflict”. Thus, Fink offers a broad definition for the term including antagonism as a common element in all conflicts: “any social situation or process in which two or more social entities are linked by at least one form of antagonistic interaction” (Fink, 1968, p. 455). By this definition Fink makes distinction between different kinds of psychological antagonisms such as incompatible goals, mutually exclusive interests, emotional hostility, factual or value dissensus, traditional

enmities, etc. and different kinds of antagonistic interaction ranging from the most direct, violent, and unregulated struggle to the most subtle, indirect, and highly regulated forms of mutual interference. Every instance of conflict has its own set of properties out of the two categories set forward by Fink. Along with this disjunctive definition, developing a systematic classification of the phenomena of conflicts is strongly needed.

By conflict, it has been referred to the range of ways in which members of a particular political group constitute or stylize political differences in a structure of relations of power, including antagonism, competitions, debates, disputes, wars, etc. Since the range of ways has been variously conceived, methodological approaches to different conceptions of conflict have also been various. The nature of the problems studied as well as the data gathered has been influenced by varying theories of conflict. Therefore we should familiarize with three categorizations of several conceptualizations piled up by Jessie Bernard (1957a, pp. 35-44) and discuss under which category our conception of political conflict belongs.

1. Social-psychological conceptualization of conflict
2. Sociological conceptualization of conflict
3. Semanticist conceptualization of conflict

The social-psychological conceptualization of conflict is the most thoroughly used in the research in terms of individual mechanisms. In this category, conflict stands out as essentially non-rational in nature. Although there are both “personality-centered” model and “society-centered” model (Rommetveit, 1951, pp. 12-18), the approach has been through the individual. The conflict is understood to be coming from the individual, her attitudes, opinions, and behavior patterns. Statistical, clinical, or experimental methods are applied, or projective techniques and depth analysis of individual cases are exploited. Problems such as prejudice, hatred, hostility, stereotypes, scapegoating, aggression, fighting, quarreling, and violence are dealt with. Joseph Breuer’s and Sigmund Freud’s co-work of “Anna O.” is generally considered as the first example of “tension theory” which is the theoretical orientation of the social-psychological conceptualization where a repressed memory or an unresolved emotional conflict is considered the basic core of neurotic behavior.

However, the concept of tension since then has been broadened to include resentments and frustrations that grow within the individual to the point of explosion in overt aggression as a means of reducing the tension. These tensions are no longer conceived as resulting from inherited or instinctive mechanisms, but from the conditions of modern life in industrialized societies. As for the practical application, some change in human attitudes or motivation is suggested varying from educational programs to propaganda. Violence or interpersonal aggression is seen as functioning on the level of individual's psychological economy. The researcher of the conflict prescribes to promote mental health and believes that proper methods can minimize this type of conflict leading to harmonious human relations.

The second conceptualization of conflict is the sociological one, which is in terms of the relationship between or among systems. Historical or anthropological data, informants, statistical analysis, content analysis of documents, and mathematical deduction methods are used as part of this approach. As opposed to social-psychological conceptualization, conflict is not necessarily viewed as non-rational; contrary to it, it is seen as sometimes very rational. Schism, secession, civil war, sect formation, splinter parties, resistance movements, revolutions, reform movements as well as imperialism, conquest, subjugation, colonialism, growth of political, economic, and social integrations are dealt with. Incompatible or mutually exclusive goals or aims or values of human beings result in conflict (Bernard, 1949). Out of two exclusive goals, both may be necessary, but mostly one is selected at the expense of the other. This is obviously a sacrifice. The cost of one group's, or one system's, winning its values is another's losing them. Desiring to maintain an exclusive group identity and at the same time expecting no discriminatory behavior toward itself on the basis of precisely the exclusive identity sought is shown to be hopelessly contradictory (Lundberg, 1952, p. 34). Thus, minority groups do not suffer from prejudice as much as they suffer from mutually exclusive values espoused by human groups. Practical applications of research on this approach are mostly in terms of strategic action such as seeking coalitions or alliances, conciliation or aggression, legislation or education. Violence can also be adopted as a strategy for dealing with conflict. Some groups may advocate violence as a deliberate policy, but it is not in any sense synonymous with conflict. Hatred and hostility also do not necessarily go together with conflict. Conflict may arise among those who love one another, just as

subjective hatred and hostility can exist where there is no conflict. Thus establishing a necessary relation between these feelings and emotions and conflict is faulty according to the sociological conception of conflict. On the other hand, social-psychological conception, as has been shown, studies inner mechanisms of conflict and relates hatred and hostility to conflict in the personal sense. However, whether understanding the foundations of hostility in an individual may or may not facilitate getting closer to understanding group antagonisms is yet to be discovered (Klineberg, 1950, p. 208). Personal violence and aggression as non-rational, even irrational, are theorized within social-psychological conceptualization, whereas violence and aggression constitute a broader problem when dealing with groups or systems that are in conflict.

The third, and the last, type of conceptualization of conflict is the semanticist conceptualization. Defenders of this conceptualization argue that in the real world mutually incompatible values and goals do not exist. They hold that conflict in the social-psychological sense does exist, but only due to verbal or conceptual misunderstanding and nothing more. This means that if we could eliminate misunderstandings on the level of language and communication, this adequate interaction would never lead to conflict, or at least would dramatically be minimized. The basic philosophy behind this conceptualization is that there is ultimate harmony in the universe and quarrelling or fighting or wars take place as a result of subjective error. However, the assumption that social problems were verbal rather than objectively real just as philosophical problems are has come across as a big argument to make. Attributing to the case of mutually incompatible values only verbal existence is reductionism. To argue against the reductionism of the semanticist conception of conflict, we can apply to the cost theory of conflict introduced within the framework of sociologically conceived conflict (Type II). Some kind of cost is inherent in the nature of conflict. For instance, equality of opportunity for all comes in the cost of some people losing special privilege. Verbal refinement cannot solve the “problem” that arises out of the cost theory, because the problem is not a problem of semantics. Besides, and equally importantly, the cost theory does not pass judgment in terms of incompatible values; conflict might occur between two good things as well as between two bad things (Bernard, 1949, Chapter V, *American Community Behavior*). Thus, mutually incompatible values do exist in the real life

contrary to semanticist position. Clarification of argument shall not help in any case, because:

...there do exist values which are incompatible, mutually exclusive in the sense that they cannot both prevail at the same time in any given system. Several kinds of strategy are possible for groups with such differing and incompatible values: (a) one group may withdraw from the system or be ejected from it; (b) one group may impose its system on the other; (c) an equilibrium may be established in which concessions are made, the more 'expendible' values of one group being exchanged for the more "expendible" values of the other; (d) values may be modified so that coalescence is possible; or (e) the groups may assimilate to one another, or one may absorb the other (Bernard, 1957a, p. 42).

Out of the three conceptualizations of conflict that have been introduced, political conflict that is the subject-matter of this thesis falls under the sociological conceptualization of conflict. Conflict comes across as a philosophical category that denotes the clash between power holders in the struggle to become manifest. In addition, as a distinct category of social behavior, different parties try to attain something that they cannot have at the same time. Thus, conflict can be thought of as a continuous process or as a potentiality that never ceases to exist. I will now take up Rudolph Joseph Rummel's *The Conflict Helix*, volume two of the five-volume work *Understanding Conflict and War*, which is an ambitious theoretical approach to international and domestic conflict. The complete work provides substantial theoretical and epistemological foundation for the democratic peace proposition, which has attracted much attention especially in the late 1990s. The second volume by Rummel engages in human interaction and he differentiates between types of power. He identifies the differences between bargaining power, coercive power and authoritative power. National societies change dramatically according to the type of power most prevalently seen in relationships within those societies. Bargaining power, as the name suggests, is the basis for exchange in societies; authoritative power is largely seen in closed, aristocratic, or traditional societies; and coercive power predominates in totalitarian political systems (Ray, 1998, p. 125).

Rummel understands that the concept of conflict is multidimensional, enveloping a family of forms. Analytical purposes and the practical problem determine which form to be chosen. Understanding conflict as a social phenomenon requires considering it as a general category. From the general conception, Rummel works towards comprehending social conflict and its empirical manifestations. He explains that reality consists of multiform and interwoven potentialities, dispositions, and powers. One aspect's becoming manifest in life depends on the "dialectical confrontation between this reality and our perspective, which is a power, an outward directed vector. What we perceive is the result of the *conflict* between this vector and reality's inward bearing vector of power". We perceive conflict, but then what is conflict? Rummel defines the concept of conflict as such:

Conflict is a balancing of vectors of powers, of capabilities to produce effects. It is a clash of powers. But note. Conflict is not a balance, an equilibrium, of powers. It is not a stable resultant. Conflict is the pushing and pulling, the giving and taking, the process of finding the balance between powers. (Rummel, 1976).

Rummel understands that conflict is a perpetual process in social life that cannot be settled or "balanced" as he terms. Power and conflict are interwoven, which leads to the dialectical conception of conflict. The fundamental correlation between power and conflict makes it existent everywhere in which power struggles may occur. Therefore conflict has a great potentiality to manifest itself as a form of clash of power. If we desire to eliminate conflict from the face of earth and establish ultimate harmony and universal cooperation, our desire may become true only when the world is frozen with all relationships fixed in their patterns, all in balance. In a world where conflict is eradicated, a better tomorrow cannot be hoped for. What is left is only an inevitable course with predetermined trajectory.

Rummel points out at three levels that conflict embodies: potentiality, dispositions, and manifestations. Potentiality is explained as the space of possibilities. Conflict as potentiality is the space of possible conflicts, i.e. the realm of potential opposing vectors of power. He gives the example of the space of our interests as a space of potential conflicts. Any writing is a space of potential conflict between the power of the words that are used and the meaning a reader might project onto them. The two-

dimensional space of a landscape painting is also a potential conflict between the vectors of action in the painting and the viewer's perspective. Rummel calls spaces within which conflict can occur, "conflict-spaces". In conflict-spaces no ongoing conflict is required, because the space refers to the potentiality of conflict which is always existent. In conclusion, our reality is a conflict-space as a technical term. Our reality inherently consists of conflict as a space, because even our perception dictates a power struggle between inward directed vectors and our active reaching out to sense to comprehend reality. Then, Rummel asks the question whether all spaces of potentials are conflict-spaces and answers positively. Since all potentials may be opposed, they have the possibility of conflict in their space inherently.

The second level of reality Rummel accounts for is the level of dispositions and powers. Among potentialities, some are transformed into tendencies towards being manifest and specific. At this level, he discriminates between two facets of conflict: "conflict-structure" of the opposing dispositions within the conflict-space and the "conflict-situation" that consists of opposing powers and indeterminate balancing. Reality, according to Rummel, is a multi-dimensional space of potentialities and opposing dispositions. He gives the example of oxygen and hydrogen as two dispositions that carry the tendency to form a dynamic balance called water. Water can become steam or ice which are the opposing dispositions of it. However, these dispositions to become steam or ice exist with little strength towards conflict in water. The structure of conflict is not altered by boiling or freezing the water, although water has a manifested disposition to become steam or ice. Therefore, the structure only refers to the existence of dispositions that have a tendency to conflict. Likewise in social life, regardless of the strength of their opposing dispositions, slaves and masters, proletariat and bourgeoisie, and peasant and landowner constitute structures of conflict. When the opposing tendencies are activated a conflict-structure comes into play. To take up the example of water again, if water is contained in a long pipe with one end heated and the other packed in ice, the opposing dispositions are activated. The opposing dispositions in water have gained power towards manifesting themselves. Similarly in social life, classical Greece legitimized a system in which slaves and masters shared a normative system, which is a structure of conflict, although there is no manifestation of conflict. Nevertheless, with the popularization of values such as equality and freedom for all people, dispositions of

conflict have become manifested and turned into actual opposing powers, thus leading to a conflict-situation.

The final level of reality is the level of manifestations according to Rummel. When the opposition of powers gets specific, conflict becomes manifest, thus, conflict behavior becomes manifest. Following the water example, simultaneous heating and freezing from the two ends, which is the situation of conflict, manifests a rapid circulation of water. The circulation, in turn, reflects the balancing of powers within the water. The struggle of opposite tendencies in water becomes manifest. The metaphor applied to social life again, the organization of an escape route among slaves manifests the conflict-situation. The level of manifestation has three facets. First, the opposing powers create a conflict-situation attempting to produce effects. Second, opposing powers turn into a process of balancing. Finally, the actual balancing becomes true. The final stage of manifestation, the balance of powers, is the momentary equilibrium established between the opposing powers. It is not a conflict anymore, but a system of manifest effects.

The position espoused by Rummel takes up the notion of conflict as a potentiality that exists in every aspect of social life. Parallel to the understanding that power relations are necessarily existent in every interpersonal relation, Rummel's position suggests that every social setting is a conflict-space in which opposing dispositions are present. The terminology that he coins for explaining his theory of social conflict is a helpful one in terms of getting acquainted with the different phases of conflict. Conceptualizing conflict as a multidimensional, dialectical confrontation between reality and our perception is an enhancing vision as opposed to limiting the notion to a set of situations such as disputes, animosity, wars, etc. In *Conflict Helix*, which is comprised of nine parts and thirty five chapters, Rummel discusses in length social behavior and interaction, the sociocultural space and its components, the field of social forces and the essence of social power and types of power as well as arguing for and explaining many other relevant concepts. Most significantly, Rummel establishes a direct relation between power and conflict, which is the basis of the political conflict as far as the aims of this thesis are concerned. Thus, his approach stands out as an important contribution to the explanation of how conflict composes opposing dispositions. Potentiality and manifestations of conflict as respectively the first and the third phases of the process of any conflict observed in life display the

dialectical characteristics of the concept. However, the balance of power as achieved after a conflict is totally settled equals to the situation in which potentiality of conflict still exists. Although Rummel might have theoretically needed to coin a term to describe this conflict-situation, I think that the phase of the balance of power hinders the understanding of conflict as a circular process, or as a “helix” as he refers to. Revisiting the three categories of conceptualization of conflict introduced and discussed above, the strength of Rummel’s conceptualization is apparent in his efforts to bring together both the social-psychological explanations and sociological explanations within the framework of his philosophical discussion of the definition and extent of the term. Within the confines of this work, I have only discussed his sociological narration because this narration introduces great deal of relevant terms; however, the content of his social-psychological chapters is also worth dwelling upon as part of another project.

Having examined a strong philosophical approach to the “problem” of conflict by R.J.Rummel, the relation between power and conflict is well established. This relation displays the extent to which the conflict-space reaches. Another approach to the concept of political conflict that I would like to investigate belongs to Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes’s conception of “state of nature” is an account that he provides as a justification for forming a state. Niccolo Machiavelli’s political writings paved the way for an understanding that frames social life as fundamentally a condition of struggle for self-preservation. Individual subjects and political communities, Machiavelli understands, oppose each other in a constant competition over interests. Hobbes, on the other hand, writes in a similar fashion and bases his contractualist justification of the sovereignty of the state on this competition (Honneth, 1996, p. 7). The essential relation between the concepts of conflict and power leads to the examination of the scope and the content of power. Foucault sees power as dispersed and pervasive, stating that power is everywhere and comes from everywhere; therefore, in this sense, power is neither an agency nor a structure (Foucault, 1991, pp. 39-63). Instead, it is a “meta-power” or “regime of truth” that pervades society and which is in constant flux and negotiation. The omnipresence of power makes conflict omnipresent, as well. Foucault offers abandoning a whole tradition that allows us to imagine that knowledge exists only where the power relations are suspended (Foucault, 1991, p. 27). Therefore, contexts in which knowledge is

produced are contexts of power and conflict, not necessarily in a destructive way, but also in a constructive manner. The next section dwells upon such contexts that generate the environment in which conflict can occur.

3.2. Causes of Conflict: A Power-Related and Context-Dependent Categorization

We cannot refer to a single cause for political conflict since conflict is context-specific, multi-causal and multi-dimensional. Isaiah Berlin suggests that even in a society that is dominated by a single supreme purpose, deductive reasoning from accepted premises cannot help automatically answer questions of what is to be done when subordinate ends come into conflict (Berlin, 1962, p. 151). However, there has hardly ever been a society in the world dominated by a single purpose. Conflict is a fundamental element in every society, although confronted in differing amounts. The following factors may constitute a cause, dynamic or impact of conflict in combination with one another:

- (a) *Political and institutional factors:* weak state institutions, elite power struggles and political exclusion, breakdown in social contract and corruption, identity politics
- (b) *Socioeconomic factors:* inequality, exclusion and marginalization, absence or weakening of social cohesion, poverty
- (c) *Resource and environmental factors:* greed, scarcity of national resources often due to population growth leading to environmental insecurity, unjust resource exploitation

One of the political and institutional factors that lead to conflict is weak state institutions. State weakness may create conditions for violent conflict. When political institutions are unable to govern different group interests in a peaceful way, to provide some level of guarantee for group protection, to accommodate increasing demands for political participation, societies can crack. There is a U-shaped relationship between the maturity of democracy and likelihood of violent conflict. Mature democracies can manage tensions in a peaceful manner through democratic

inclusion whereas autocracies fail to do so by repressing violence and managing conflict through force. States that are in political transition are the most vulnerable among all. Uncertainty and collective fears of the future may result in the taking conflict to an armed level by marginalized groups and nationalist, ethnic or populist ideologies¹. Elite power struggles and political exclusion is another political and institutional factor that leads to conflict. This has resulted in the promotion of ideologies of “us versus them” with a strong tendency to exclude and marginalize other groups. When access to state structures and resources is dominated by a leader, group or political party, other groups are excluded from their share of power and resources. This may be encouraging for excluded groups of people to mobilize and protest and engage in violent rebellion. Contrarily, inclusive elites who address social fragmentation and integrate a broad coalition of key elites are capable of reducing the chances of violent rebellion against the government². Breakdown in social contract and corruption is another political and institutional factor that leads to conflict. As a framework of rules, a social contract governs state-society relations, distribution of resources, rights and responsibilities in an organized society. How the public revenue is spent matters much. When social welfare is sustained through the expenditure from the public revenue, conflict is less likely to occur when compared to the expenditure on fractional purposes and corruption. Corruption leads to the collapse of public trust in government, blocks domestic and foreign investment, heightens inequalities in wealth and increases socioeconomic grievances. If and when the ruling party resorts to violence to prolong its rule, this can provoke violent rebellions as well³. Identity politics is the latest political and institutional factor that leads to conflict. As opposed to the primordialist argument which defends that ethnic, religious or cultural differences inevitably result in conflict, instrumentalist theorists argue that identity is constructed and exploited as a means of mobilization into violence. Neither the “ancient hatreds” argument of primordialists nor the arguments of instrumentalists who build only upon constructionism are espoused in this work. When mobilized, religion, ethnicity and culture provide a system of beliefs and practices that encourage in-group persons to take collective action on

¹ See Mansfield, E.D. and Snyder, J. (2007) for further reading on the relationship between safety and democratization.

² See Lindemann, S., (2008) for further reading on the ability of post-colonial states in Sub-Saharan Africa to maintain political stability and their ability of the ruling political parties to overcome the historical legacy of social fragmentation.

³ See Murshed, S.M. and Tadjoeeddin, M.A., (2009) for further reading on two recent explanations for the onset of internal conflict: greed and grievance. The authors argue that for the outbreak of violent conflict, institutional breakdown or the failure of the social contract are required.

behalf of their group since their perception of others is altered by the mobilization. When excluded and discriminated, prominence of group identity becomes a conclusive factor as to whether they can be mobilized to exerting violence. Weak cohesion within a religious or ethnic group significantly reduces the probability to get organized and mobilized violently. Not all forms of identity politics foster violence; also, identity politics can be used by both dominant groups and minority groups or marginalized groups. Identity politics may lead to inequalities in terms of the distribution of wealth and services, whereas it can also establish a basis for inclusion and empowerment⁴.

As for the socioeconomic factors that lead to conflict, inequality, exclusion and marginalization are prominent causes. When inequalities align with cultural, ethnic or religious identities, violence is more likely to occur. Especially when multidimensional inequalities are observed together such as exclusion from political, economic, social, security, justice and cultural realms, they interact and compound one another. A group's feelings of alienation from the general society can increase because of actual or perceived exclusion that result in a strong sense of collective injustice. This, in turn, may result in animosity and antagonism. Such oppositions and tensions have the potentiality to foster mobilization and to fuel violent conflict. On the other hand, the privileged segment of the society can resort to violence with the fear of losing power and the accompanying benefits. When a protest breaks out, the responses that a government makes determine the future of the protest in terms of turning violent or staying peaceful. Harsh state reaction to non-violent protests often marks the end of peaceful protests turning them into violent. Instead, exclusion and inequality should be addressed by the government, which might be connected to the breakdown of the social contract, introduced under political and institutional factors⁵. Poverty and conflict is another socioeconomic factor that needs to be examined. There is a clear link between poverty and conflict. Disproportionately, conflicts that take place in poor countries outnumber. Although the link is clear, the direction of causality has been debated. Poverty in itself is rarely a direct cause of conflict. Conflict causes severe poverty as in Angola, Congo and Sierra Leone, but does

⁴ See Luckham, R., Moncrieffe, J. and Harris, C., (2006) for further reading on the linkages between identity politics, exclusion, inequality and political violence.

⁵ See Brinkman, H.J., Attree, L., and Hezir, S., (2013) for further reading on the impact of inequalities on the likelihood of violent conflict.

poverty cause conflict? There seems to be consensus in that poverty does not lead to armed conflict on a large scale, but “impoverishment and growing inequality within society do lead to social and political unrest” (Ardenne, 2004, p. 4). Poverty may contribute to the occurrence of conflict, or sustain it after it occurs through its association with perceived injustices and forms of exclusion between groups⁶.

The last group of factors that constitutes a cause, dynamic or impact of conflict is resource and environmental factors. Greed and opportunity in war is one of the causes mentioned under this cluster. Whatever the beliefs, ideologies and grievances are involved within an armed conflict, it is for sure that they must be funded, which often comes from illicit sources and activities. State weakness and lack of accountability might be reinforced during conflicts by illicit trade in commodities. Some conflicts are mainly economically rooted, whereas others start due to political and social motives but go on due to economic motivations, that is, due to greed. This creates disincentives for peace⁷. Resource exploitation is yet another cause of conflict. All phases of conflict cycle involve control and exploitation of natural resources which contributes to the outbreak of conflict through inequitable resource and wealth sharing; the perpetuation of conflict, through the exploitation of “high-value” resources to finance armed forces; and the undermining of conflict resolution and peace agreements by parties that could lose access to resource revenues. When resource exploitation gets connected to social or political exclusion, extractable resources have the most chance to cause conflict⁸. Environmental insecurity and resource scarcity is the last cause of conflict under this heading. Environmental scarcities contribute to violent conflict in the developing world (Homer-Dixon, 1994). Environmental change and resource degradation together with population pressure and the unequal distribution of resources such as land and water lead to environmental scarcities. However, environmental factors are very rarely the mere cause of conflict; they combine with other factors to deteriorate instability and violence. For instance, state may be weakened due to environmental pressures when it falls short of providing food security for its citizens. Likewise, socially,

⁶ See Goodhand, J., (2001) for further reading on the nature of the link between conflict and poverty.

⁷ See Berdal M. and Keen D., (1997) for further reading on conflicts and peace efforts in several African, Asian and Central American countries, revealing the crucial role played by economics.

⁸ See Aspinall, E., (2007) for further reading on when and under what circumstances natural resource extraction gives rise to violent conflict.

economically or politically marginalized groups can be more prone to create violent conflict when they are disadvantaged in resource allocation. In terms of environmental change, the effect of climate change is not yet certain, but it is likely to have an impact on the risk of conflict⁹.

As has been emphasized, conflict is about power. Accordingly, causes of conflict are power-related. The context within which power relations occur determines the cause of conflict, which indicates that there is a large category of context-dependent conflicts. This category is composed of infinitely diverse contexts that can be broadly clustered into the realms of politics, economy, science, religion, academic, environment, class, gender, race, nation, sect, etc. The context predisposes the classification of conflict as to the causes. Every context, while belonging to a larger category with regards to its common properties, has its own implications and connotations in terms of power and conflict. Invisible structures that shape social relations are active determinants of such context-dependent conflicts. Thus, the context is mostly constituted by the invisible structures of the society that humans are born into such as the political structure, the economic structure, the scientific structure, the social structure, the religious structure, etc.

The classification as to the causes of conflict has been made broadly by separating the fields of the political, social and economic, although it has also been noted that they do not occur in isolation from one another, and they generally exist together feeding upon the other causes of conflict. Locating political conflict as a separate type of conflict that exists on its own, isolated from the social, the economic, etc. seems inefficient for the purposes of this project. At some point, it is important to be able to differentiate between causes and types of conflict, and after having done so; it should be asserted that every type of conflict has its own political aspect, bigger or smaller. So, if political conflict occurs on an integration-disintegration continuum in social relations, it is impossible to totally separate it from other types of conflict. This idea is discussed elaborately in the following chapter. The broad definition of "political" introduced under the section "4.1. The Problem of "Political" Conflict: Power, Conflict and the Political" determines the framework of political conflict as an encompassing field of conflict.

⁹ See Smith, D. and Vivenkananda, J., (2009) for the effect of climate change on violent conflict.

3.3. Types of Conflict: A Subject-Dependent Categorization

In addition to the invisible structure-based categorization of context-dependent causes of conflict that are clustered into the realms of politics, economy, science, religion, etc., another categorization of subject-dependent types of conflict comes to the front. The clusters that the agents who come into conflict with each other belong to constitute this second categorization. Accordingly, conflict can be classified into four categories: (a) Interpersonal conflict, (b) Intrapersonal conflict, (c) Intragroup conflict, and (d) Intergroup conflict. Interpersonal conflict refers to a conflict between two individuals. Typically, people's differences in terms of behavior, opinion, belief, etc. lead to interpersonal conflict. Diverse variety of personalities often results in incompatible choices and opinions in social relations. It is natural that we find ourselves in conflict with other persons in social situations which can help personal growth or development. Interpersonal conflict is often non-destructive and stays at the level of disagreement or antagonism. Intrapersonal conflict occurs within an individual as opposed to interpersonal conflict. Thus, it involves one's psychological standing to her own in terms of her thoughts, values, principles and emotions. Intrapersonal conflict is, as other types of conflict, an inevitable force that determines and shapes the flow of social relations. It comes in different scales from the simpler ones such as making a daily decision to major ones that can affect one's life. Inability to decipher one's inner struggles may lead to restlessness and uneasiness, and even depression. Moreover, intrapersonal conflict is as inevitable as other types of conflicts as part of the formation of person's self-consciousness. Intragroup conflict happens among individuals within a group. Incompatibilities and misunderstandings cause intragroup conflict with one's peers. Different personalities of group members may lead to tension; that is, it arises from interpersonal disagreements or antagonisms. The objectives of a group might sometimes be dependent on the conflict that it experiences, since the conflict may help group members to come up with better decisions. Intergroup conflict occurs due to incompatibilities among different groups within an organization. This organization can be a community, a society, or a nation. Rivalry in resources or the boundaries set by a group to others which establishes their own identity as a "team", or a group can cause intergroup conflict. Conflict can also occur between an individual and a group.

Under the category of intergroup conflict, there are cultural, social, political, religious, scientific, environmental, ethnic, economic, judicial, ethical types of conflict regarding the distribution of goods and services, roles, justice, generation, class, sex, gender, human rights, values, rules, etc. There is a wide range of conflict areas and topics which can happen on the global or the local level. Types of conflict that result from hegemonic relations between parties tend to produce more antagonism, whereas conflicts that occur as a natural consequence of manifestations of difference and opposition can be beneficial, which shall be defended in the sixth chapter of this project. Political conflict that we examine can be categorized under each of the four categories. Political conflict can be interpersonal, intrapersonal, intragroup and intergroup depending on the groups or clusters to which agents that go into power struggle and conflict with one another belong.

4. POLITICAL CONFLICT UNDER EXAMINATION

All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility.

John Stuart Mill

4.1. The Problem of “Political” Conflict: Power, Conflict and the Political

Both conflict and “political” are the result of power practices. The domain of politics would not exist in human affairs if there were complete agreement with regards to what is at stake. Politics and diversity of opinion necessarily exist together. Political history, however, has taught us that diversity of opinion readily escalates into conflict. Political life, therefore, has traditionally been regarded as a field of evergreen conflict. Likewise, without any form of social order, no political life at all would be possible. Containing diversity of opinion and order under a roof is the art of politics. How about conflict and order existing together? Does conflict eliminate the possibility of order fully? To what extent does politics as a system of power struggle allow the coexistence of conflict and mutual recognition? These questions are under focus in this chapter.

Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics explains that a modern mainstream view of politics is that politics applies only to beings that can communicate symbolically, thus excluding any other species than humans, and that can “make statements, invoke principles, argue, and disagree; politics occurs where people disagree about the distribution of goods, benefits, or statuses and have at least some procedures for the resolution of such disagreements” (2009, p. 418). There has not yet been offered an all-satisfactory definition for the term “politics”, thus “political”. Coming across as an essentially contested concept, politics has been described as centrally concerned;

(1) with civil government, the state, and public affairs,

(2) with human conflict and its resolution, or

(3)with the sources and exercise of power.

The second concern of politics, which is human conflict and its resolution, constitutes the whole of political space as a perpetual effort. The extent to which the domain of politics reaches is very controversial; whereas some limit it to state and government, others may go so far as saying “personal is political”. I would like to base the understanding of the “political” within the aims of this project on Mouffe’s account as expressed in the following paragraph:

By “the political” I refer to the dimension of antagonism that is inherent in all human society, antagonism that can take many different forms and can emerge in diverse social relations. “Politics,” on the other hand, refers to the ensemble of practices, discourses and institutions that seek to establish a certain order and to organize human coexistence in conditions that are always potentially conflictual because they are affected by the dimension of “the political” (Mouffe, 1999, p. 754).

It should be noted that there is no widely agreed-upon definition of “political”, although the definition is to include “power” as central. One definition holds that “political” is about the processes that bridge power differences with society with those within the state (from society to the state) and from the state to society. The results of elections are an example to the former and presidential speeches and legislation to the latter. The political realm is argued to include intrastate –but not intra-societal, processes concerning application, reallocation, and legitimation of power. As to Aristotle’s advancement of the thesis that “man is, by nature, a *political* animal”, the interpretation tended to fold social into the political. However, a wide consensus within the field tells us that it means people are *social* in nature: they cooperate and have shared meanings and purposes (Etzioni, 2003, p. 89). According to this approach, there is a common tendency to confound state and society by folding social processes and actions and institutions into the “political”. The distinction is exemplified by pointing out at the difference between being a citizen of the state with legal obligations and legal rights versus being a member of society holding a social status that defines one’s membership in one or more communities or associations including moral responsibilities towards other members of one’s community. Citizenship versus membership distinction becomes more significant

regarding the distinction between functions of the state and functions of the society. Etzioni defends that the more the state takes over functions once discharged by communities, voluntary associations, and families, the weaker the society will be. Similarly, the more the state presents opportunities for social actors to initiate and sustain their own action, the more viable the society will become. Social conservatives favor the idea that the state should promote citizenship as well as the good person. Religious social conservatives rely on the state to foster “virtuous” behavior as they consider. There is a contention between good-citizen issues and good-person issues. At this point, Etzioni believes the problem stems from the failure to separate the notion of political from that of social. Every political deliberation, decision or action, for Etzioni, contains a moral (normative) dimension, which is exactly one of the main reasons why a line should be drawn between the social and the political (2003, pp. 90-92). When Etzioni thinks of the folding of political and social, he actually tries to determine the boundaries of the field of politics; i.e. he tries to convince the audience that authorities who hold political power should keep away from bringing life to their intentions of regulating the social life or the social relations. Social relations is unique and should be left to the flow of the social solely without any intervention by the political rulers. However, acknowledging the political within the social means, for me, and for Mouffe as indicated above, acknowledging all-enhancing power relations which are present everywhere regardless of one’s acceptance or denial. To the contrary, ignoring the political (read as “power-related”) aspect of social relations, be it interpersonal, intragroup or intergroup, shall only minimize our understanding of the deeper patterns built upon power relations.

Ranging from the strictest definition of “political” to the grandest, it is a common fact that human conflict is part of it. Conflict as a form of social interaction is, Albion W. Small once called, an “ongoing social process” (Bernard, 1957a, p. 44). As social forms unite, they also break apart. As systems get integrated, they also disintegrate. As power of a group escalates, it also dissolves. In this regard, conflict is always part of the integration-disintegration continuum. Constant construction and destruction in political space is inherent in the structure of politics. The integrative aspect of social processes tends to be emphasized by conservatives, since order

seems significant to them rather than conflict and change (Nisbet, 1952). However, political conflict is also present in the integrative aspect of the social life.

Carl Schmitt defends that a definition of “political” can only be obtained by discovering the specifically political categories as opposed to the final distinctions between good and evil in morality, beautiful and ugly in aesthetics and profitable and unprofitable in economics. He makes a similar political distinction to which political actions and motives can be reduced: friend and enemy (Schmitt, 1927, p. 26). This distinction cannot be traced to the distinctions in morality, aesthetics or economics; it denotes the utmost degree of intensity of a union or separation, an association or dissociation. In explanation, the political enemy does not have to be morally evil or aesthetically ugly, nor does she need to appear as an economic competitor. However, she is the other and the stranger; she is existentially something different and alien, therefore conflicts with her are possible. For Schmitt, only the actual participants of the conflict at stake can correctly recognize, understand and judge the concrete situation and settle the case. So, each participant judges on her behalf whether the adversary intends to negate her opponent’s way of life and must be repulsed or fought against so as to protect and preserve her own form of existence. The enemy can fail victim to emotional treatment as being evil and ugly, since the political distinction of friend and enemy draws upon other distinctions for support. However, this leaves intact the autonomy of such distinctions. Conversely, the morally evil, aesthetically ugly or economically unprofitable need not be the enemy just as the morally good, aesthetically beautiful and economically profitable need not make a friend in the political sense of the term. Thereby, Schmitt makes a great contribution to the political thinking by introducing the friend-enemy antithesis which stands independently of other antitheses. But when does an enemy become an enemy? An enemy exists only when a collectivity of fighting people confronts a similar collectivity as itself, thus the enemy is merely a public enemy.

The enemy concept is related to the ever-present possibility of combat. However, military details and the development of weapon technology must be put aside from the term. War breaks out between organized political entities and civil war within an organized unit. Weapons essentially work as a means to physically kill human beings, which should be eradicated from the content of combat in the political sense that we are dealing with here. The terms enemy and combat, for Schmitt, are to be

understood in their original existential sense in that the entire life of a human being is a struggle and every human being is symbolically a combatant. Having established this, the friend, enemy and combat concepts are not followed by war or physical killing of human beings. Thus the content of the term “political” emerges once again *vis-à-vis* this clarification. The political does not signify devastating war and military action; nor is every nation faced uninterruptedly with the friend-enemy alternative against every other nation. The definition of the political does not favor war or militarism, imperialism or pacifism (Schmitt, 1927, p. 33). The energy of the political can be derived from the religious, economic, moral human endeavors. The energy comes from the intensity of an association or dissociation of human beings whose motives can be religious, national, ethnic, cultural, economic, etc. Association or dissociation of human beings signifies the integration-disintegration continuum of conflict. The political entity is based on the real existence of an enemy and therefore coexistence with another political entity becomes obligatory. The political entity cannot be universal and cannot embrace all of humanity and the entire world. Had different states, religions, classes and human groupings unified to make conflict among them impossible and inconceivable, then the friend enemy distinction would cease. The remnant of this new formation would be culture, civilization, economics, morality, law, art, entertainment, etc. but not political (Schmitt, 1927, p. 53). Thus, the political distinction of friend-enemy is the beginning and end of the political life. Thinking of political as a determining factor of social relations results in taking the concept of conflict to the center of political debates. Two different schools that centralize the problem of conflict in the “political”, come to the front. In the light of the conceptualization that Schmitt offers to us regarding the political and the friend-enemy distinction, Chantal Mouffe should, once again, be visited. Agonistic pluralism, as advocated by Mouffe, stands out as an alternative model to deliberative democracy. These two models handle the concept of conflict in diametrically opposite manners. The former category of agonistic pluralism defines “political” and politics in connection to conflict, whereas proponents of the latter have traditionally argued that politics is not the source of conflict, but the solution to it. As long as political exists, communicative conflict, which is in no way violent, should exist, as well for agonistic pluralists. The second category, on the other hand, is based on deliberation and consensus, aiming at minimizing conflict. Democratic institutions in the deliberative model are based on the assumption that their decisions represent an

objective and impartial standpoint that is to the interest of everyone equally. As long as the decisions of democratic institutions are based on appropriate public processes of deliberation, everyone's interests stay under protection. The fundamental idea behind this model is regarding the consequences of the norms and institutional arrangements: if the consequences are agreed upon by all who are affected by them according to the process of deliberation. Public discussion process can be successful to the ideal extent when it realizes the conditions of ideal discourse: the more equal, impartial and open the process is, the more likely truly generalizable interests will be accepted by all persons who are relevantly affected. Practices of rational public debates such as existential issues that concern good life rather than questions of justice or conflicts among interest groups about distributive problems are left outside. However, Habermas asserts that "this differentiation within the field of issues that require political decisions negates neither the prime importance of moral considerations nor the practicability of rational debate as the very form of political communication" (Habermas, 1991, p. 448). This clearly shows that Habermas believes political questions can be decided rationally and the exchange of arguments and counter-arguments is the most suitable procedure for establishing the rational formation of the will from which general interest will emerge. He trusts the process of rational opinion and will formation in his model of deliberative democracy, leaving conflictual relations outside of the scope.

Apart from the deliberative model of Habermas, social contract theory belongs to the second school of political thought. The view that persons' moral and political obligations depend on a contract or agreement among the people to form the society in which they live is called social contract theory, which is a traditional old school theory. While explaining to Crito why he must remain in prison and accept the death penalty, Socrates uses a very similar argument to social contractionism¹⁰. However, as a well-established theory, it dates back to Thomas Hobbes's political philosophy in the 17th century. After Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau have stood out as the best known proponents of social contract theory.

Hobbes's main concern is on social and political order. How can human beings live together avoiding the "danger" of conflict? His answer is that we should obey a

¹⁰ <http://www.iep.utm.edu/soc-cont/>

sovereign in order to escape the “state of nature”. We should analyze Hobbes’s philosophy to see how he approaches to the concept of conflict. Human action consists of specific desires and appetites that arise in the human body and experienced as discomforts or pains to be overcome. Every human being is motivated to act to relieve her discomfort, to preserve and promote her well-being (*Leviathan* I, Chapter 6). This natural inclination determines everything a human being does because she wants to relieve the physical pressures impinging upon her body. Thus, human volition is the determination of the will by the strongest desire. However, this strict determination of the will over the human being does not make her a slave, so to say; she is free so long as her activities are not under the constraint of anybody else (*Leviathan* II, Chapter 21). The human nature which is our animal nature, according to Hobbes, produces the state of war because it allows everyone to live independently of everyone else. This means everyone shall act only in her self-interest regardless of other people around. Hobbes starts Chapter 13 of Part I of *Leviathan* by acknowledging that human beings are equal by nature in terms of the faculties of the body and the mind. In cases where someone is manifestly stronger in body, or quicker in mind, the difference is still not so considerable. The strength of the body is not so important since even the weakest can kill the strongest either secretly or by coming together with others. As to the faculties of the mind, human beings are not born with them; they invest their time and energy to acquire these faculties. This equality gives rise to diffidence, which Hobbes accounts for in the following paragraph:

From the equality of ability, ariseth equality of hope in the attaining of our ends. And therefore if any two men desire the same thing, which nevertheless they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies; and in the way to their end, which is principally their own conservation, and sometimes their delectation only, endeavor to destroy, or subdue one another (Hobbes, 1839, p. 111).

To analyze Hobbes’s account of conflict in this paragraph according to Bernard’s second category of sociological conceptualization of conflict, it is correct to acknowledge that Hobbes brings forward a cost theory of conflict. When two men desire the same thing and they cannot both have it, only one of the two can have it at the cost of the other person’s losing. The cost of having the thing for one party

means to lose the chance of having the same thing for the other party. Cost is inherent in the nature of conflict for Hobbes. However, Hobbes takes the cost theory of conflict to the extreme and argues that it makes the two parties an enemy to each other. The animosity results in one party's destroying or subduing the other. From hence an invader, Hobbes continues to narrate, who has no fear, tries to dispossess and deprive the person from the fruit of her labor as well as from her life, or liberty. Consequently the invader shall also be in the similar danger of another invader. This is the process that leads to war. "From this diffidence of one another, there is no way for any man to secure himself, so reasonable, as anticipation; that is, by force, or wiles, to master the persons of all men he can, so long, till he see no other power great enough to endanger him" Hobbes writes (1839, p. 111). Again, this brings no pleasure, but only grief to the human being.

Hobbes recounts three principal causes of "quarrel"¹¹: competition, diffidence and glory. The first one makes the person invade for gain; the second one for safety and the third one for reputation. When competing with each other, humans use violence to make themselves masters of other people's wives, children and cattle. Diffidence, the second principal cause of quarrel, results from one's effort to defend her belongings and persons (wives, children and cattle). Lastly, glory is a cause of quarrel based on signs of undervalue such as a smile, a different opinion either directly in their persons, or by reflection in their kindred, friends, nation, profession, or name. Hereby it is understood that as long as no common power is established to keep all human beings in awe, they are in a condition of war which is of every man against every other. The nature of war does not necessarily consist of actual fighting, but the known disposition to it equals to war. Human beings cannot be accused of non-trusting their fellow subjects, fellow citizens, their children and servants when they act to preserve their belongings. The desires and other passions are not sins in themselves. Following those desires and passions is also not wrong, for Hobbes, until people know that there is a law that forbids them. Until laws are made they cannot know and laws cannot be made until human beings have agreed upon who is going to be the person to make them. Hobbes mentions that there may be objections that there was never such a condition of war and replies that he believes it was never generally

¹¹ Hobbes does not use the term "conflict" specifically; he refers to the unrest as "quarrel".

the case over all the world, but there was still (at his time) many places, for instance, in America where the “savage people” have no government at all and live in the brutish manner. If there were no common power to fear, it may be perceived what manner of life people would lead. The same people who live peacefully under a government would degenerate into a civil war. Hobbes describes life in the state of nature as such:

There is no place for industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving, and removing, such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short (1839, p. 113).

This “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” life of human beings in the state of nature is the inevitable condition of conflict in which people are locked. Everyone in this conflict seeks superiority in resources and reputation whereas no one can actually attain it. However, if people learn that they can hold equal standing with others before the law, the landscape will look very different. Pettit evaluates Hobbes’s main work *Leviathan* and finds out that the invention-of-language theme gives originality and unity to this work. The invention of language transformed human beings distinctively from other animals, which gave people three positive capacities: ratiocination, personation, and incorporation. However, it also had a dark side of warping their appetites, focusing their attention both on the future and the present and on their standing relative to others besides their private welfare. The wake of language left people in a situation where inescapable competition prevails. Building upon their positive capacities people can incorporate under a sovereign ascribing it absolute authority (Pettit, 2008, p. 4). Also, regarding agreement about who is going to be the person to make the law, people should resolve the problem of “interpersonal indexicality” by deciding upon an arbitrator they all defer to. This arbitrator decides on the content and implications of words like good or bad. Choosing an arbitrator might resolve the problem only partly, though, since people are not just split contingently as to what they call good or bad. The influence of

speech and reason has brought along an expansion of their desires which creates necessary or inevitable conflict (Pettit, 2008, p. 96).

Hobbes's state of nature equals to warfare in which there is ultimate conflict among human beings. Security for everyone can only be achieved through the establishment of a common authority that everybody recognizes as absolute. To put an end to the war of all against all, a kind of contract which establishes political institutions as a covenant should be adopted. Honneth claims that struggle for self-preservation is central point of reference of Hobbes's theoretical analysis. Thus, for Hobbes, the ultimate purpose of political practice is to bring halt to the ever-threatening conflict, according to Honneth (1996, p. 7). At this point, we can say that considering the establishment of a contract only as a means of self-preservation in relation to the violence and fear of humans without laws and institutions would not be very accurate. The idea behind the contract was also to allow commerce, culture, law courts, and all the benefits of social peace (Hobbes, 1839, p. 113). Hobbes's descriptive and normative assumptions yield a state of nature which is fraught with divisive struggle. Competition for resources invites serious conflict in his theory, be it violent or not. Conflict is further fueled by disagreement in religious matters, in moral judgments, and over matters such as what goods one actually needs, and what respect one properly merits. The state of nature that Hobbes imagines is one in which every person is free to decide for herself what she needs, what she's owed, what's respectful, right, prudent, pious, and also free to decide all of these questions for everyone else as well, and to act on her judgments enforcing her views where she can. In this situation the state of nature becomes a state of war, and even worse, a war of all against all for Hobbes. The level of freedom that Hobbes anticipates for the state of nature is not limited to bodily attacks by persons to other persons; it is freedom to possessing competing judgments for oneself and others. In this regard, establishment of the absolute sovereign power to prevent the ills of the state of nature is an aim towards banning the personal entitlement to conflict and judgment that this project finds necessary for the establishment of political belief system.

Besides the in-depth introduction of Rummel's and Hobbes's accounts of conflict, I would like to mention several other approaches to the concept in order to spot the general tendency among philosophers and theoreticians who handle the concept. Social conflict is attributed to the power struggle of social entities to maintain

autonomy. Toynbee attributes “cardinal sin”, a term he coined, to self-centeredness which seeks to distort the world for individual or group interests, identifying their purposes with the will of God (Toynbee, 1956). Following Toynbee’s concept, it can be deduced that the causes that lead to social conflict are sinful and that conflict should be avoided once and for all. Another specific type of conflict, international conflict, often results in war and is “(1) the most dangerous to mankind; (2) the most typical of social conflicts; (3) the most comprehensive of all other forms of conflict; and (4) the most thoroughly examined in the literature dealing with conflict” (Wright, 1957, p. 3). In the age of nuclear fission and fusion international conflict poses a danger to overall human happiness. Once international conflict generates war, it is very easy to spread and become absolute. Thus maintaining peaceful coexistence of different people with conflicting economic, political, social, and ideological backgrounds, Wright understands, is difficult. Karl Deutsch interprets social conflict as sourcing from an imbalance between autonomy and external communications. Autonomy equals to preferring self-reference symbols to information from another world (Deutsch, 1954). To be autonomous means establishing a set of inner rules in the first place and then sticking to these rules whenever possible. On the other hand, communication with the external world is most of the time required to moderate self-interest. External world may have a lot to offer to us, but if this goes too far, autonomy might be lost. Therefore, the antinomy between autonomy and external communications is the signifier of a strong conflict.

To be able to conceptualize the type of political conflict which is studied in this thesis, several types of political conflict have been introduced so far. Conflict has been used synonymously as struggle, antagonism, tension, opposition, contradiction, rivalry, and struggle for existence within the context of social Darwinism. The profundity of alternatives is indicative of the quest for a substantial definition that clarifies the boundaries of the term. However, one conclusive definition should not be sought after for the term of “conflict” in the realm of political philosophy, since the conversation around the term differs highly with regards to its perception, analysis, and even experience. Accordingly, rather than presenting a general theory of conflict as has been defended by Fink, we can distinguish between types of conflict that occur on different levels. Seeking a general theory shall mean to put much effort on an almost impossible project of bringing together countless

implications under one roof. Therefore, the conflict which is the focus of this thesis is specific: It occurs on the political level and is conscious, continuous, communication-present, violence-free, peaceful, based on incompatibility and inconsistency rather than scarcity, disoriented with economic goals, and lastly, both disruptive and non-disruptive, as long as the categories offered by Fink are concerned (Fink, 1968, p. 454). Any type of conflict that occurs outside of the confines of a dialogical political life, such as armed conflict, is irrelevant to the aims of this project.

Having already classified types of conflict under two broad categories (type of conflicts that involves armed clashes and/or has life-threatening destructive results and type of conflicts that occur on the level of disagreement of opinion, thought, or orientation), the features of the political conflict enable it to exist as an evergreen field. Thanks to the constructive and integrative nature of political conflict, which has been shown to be neglected to a great extent, we can analyze the political life as displaying the features of a conflict-ridden developmental process. The dimension of power and antagonism cannot, and need not, be eradicated from political life. Conflict between interest groups about distributive problems is one concrete aspect of the problem, whereas the general perspective towards the issue of conflict should be broader than only including distributive problems as the cost theory of conflict suggests which we have already discussed. The central role that conflict plays in politics with regards to the formation of collective identities cannot be denied (Mouffe, 1999, p. 752). Failing to understand the integration-disintegration continuum that is at work all the time in all aspects of social relations, thus in the political space as well, conservative thinking lags behind on the progressive dynamics of the political space. Bernard explains in the following passage why conservatives do not enjoy the idea of conflict:

To them [*conservatives*] the given social structure or integration with all the non-rational props it rests on is a thing to be preserved. The schismatic, the evolutionary, the agitator, the protester will therefore be condemned. Conflict will be viewed as bad because by challenging current values it destroys the social fabric (1957a, p. 45).

Conflict might intuitively be seen as bad. However, in-depth thinking on the concept reveals that the social fabric itself that conservatives are so willing to preserve is an integration-disintegration continuum that feeds on conflict perpetually.

4.2. Political Conflict and Clash of Interests

Political conflict can result both from clash of interests and clash of beliefs. Clash of interests occurs when two or more parties have conflicting agenda as to their targets. When interests clash as to the actions of such parties, political conflict results. Clash of interests has nothing to do with the belief elements of a person's political belief system or her world view. It also does not operate on a level that tells a person or a group right from wrong. Thus, no moral rules are supposed to be involved in this kind of political conflict. Rather, clash of interests is about the concern of different parties for getting what they want. Having made a distinction on conflict over scarce resources and conflict over belief systems that constitute personal world views, clash of interests can be grouped into the conflict over scarce resources and distribution or redistribution of wealth. In this regard power is seen as relative to several separate issues and bound to the local context of its exercise. Researching on conflict of interests requires asking the question of how much power the relevant actors have with respect to selected issues in a given time and place in cases such as urban renewal, school desegregation and party nominations. Power is conceived as intentional and active as such. The "measuring" of power is done by the study of its exercise (Dahl, 1961). The frequency of who wins and who loses in respect of given issues is taken to be indicative of the extent of power. This points out at decision-making situations where some power groups prevail over others in terms of clash of interests. Interests are conceived as overt preferences that are revealed in the political arena by political actors or lobbying groups who take political stands. The exercise of power consists in defeating the contrary preferences obstructing the way to the political group's interests (Lukes, 2005, pp. 2-5). When key political decisions are based on the preferences of a ruling elite that run counter to those of any other likely group, the exercise of power displays clash of interests. The specificity of power as domination within the wider conceptual field of power stands out in this relation of domination. However, power is a dispositional concept that identifies an ability or

capacity which may or may not be exercised. The focus on the exercise of power of some A over some B equates the concept with domination, thereby “neglecting what we have seen to be manifold ways in which power over others can be productive, transformative, authoritative and compatible with dignity” (Lukes, 2005, p. 109). Moreover, an actor’s interests are treated as unitary, thus failing to consider differences, interactions and conflicts among her interests. Finally, a reductive and simplistic picture of binary power relations is displayed according to the approach that handles clash of interests as the exercise of power over someone or some party. The concept of power based on clash of interests, although the notion is essentially contested, leaves us with an incomplete explanation of the dimension of power that constitutes the social relations in terms of the integration-disintegration continuum of conflict. To understand the triangular relation between political, conflict and power, the category of clash of beliefs needs to be examined. This is not, in any way, to deny the immediacy of clash of interests that has been used as a fundamental explanatory concept for understanding political relations in the political arena by many thinkers such as C. Wright Mills (Mills, 1956) and Floyd Hunter (Hunter, 1956; 1959). On the other hand, approaching political conflict from a broader perspective so as to include a larger conception of power with regards to clash of beliefs is the focal point of this work.

4.3. Political Conflict and Clash of Beliefs

The concept of power lacks an objectively determinable answer; accordingly it is essentially contested. In this work, the relation between political conflict and clash of beliefs is examined with regards to its effect on a person’s political belief system that guides her through her life. The lack of an objectively determinable answer does not disable the examination of power in several contexts, though, one of which is clash of beliefs. Political conflict results, ostensibly, when people’s beliefs clash. However, this approach that political conflict results *when something happens* misses the point that social relations is composed of a network of political conflicts. The main definition that has been used for conflict, Rummel’s definition, handles the notion of conflict as a basic foundation of social relations. Likewise, the main definition that is made for “political” explains that the dimension of *antagonism* is

present and inherent in all human society which can take many forms and emerge in diverse social relations. Accordingly, putting “political” in front of “conflict” can even be argued to be tautological. Political is about antagonism. Conflict exists in every aspect of social relations. Ergo, every (inter)action is basically political and conflictual. This makes the point that political conflict can exist as interpersonal, intrapersonal, intragroup and intergroup depending on the framework and context of the conflict at stake. However, to examine the relationship between political conflict and political belief, we should understand the category of belief and necessary conditions for political belief first and foremost, which is under scrutiny in the next chapter. Approaching the problem of political conflict and clash of beliefs as the title of this section suggests requires asking: beliefs about what? The answer to be given to this question determines the scope of the political conflict: beliefs that make up the world view of a person; beliefs that tell her right from wrong motivating her actions and her life choices. In this case, every belief element matters, because belief elements are all connected to each other; they come together to form a belief system, as pointed out in the fifth chapter.

If a belief system is composed of belief elements that are all connected to each other, seemingly coherent belief elements between two different belief systems do not assure peace or harmony within the person, between persons, within a group or between groups. The conscious or unconscious connection that holds belief elements together within a belief system causes the clash of beliefs. Political conflict is most articulate when the clash of beliefs is expressed out loud. However, political conflict does not necessarily manifest itself through expression since it is a dispositional concept that exists inherently in social relations. When compared to the clash of interests, clash of beliefs that lead to political conflict is less negotiable since it is the world views of individuals that are at stake. It might be possible to negotiate and find a compromise between two different interest groups that do not have ultimately conflicting aims, whereas the rigidity of belief systems is more difficult to break through negotiation or by time. Expression of incompatibility of beliefs indicates that there is a positional difference between beliefs as content thought and concept. This requires the existence of the following elements: actors, interaction and item. First, there have to be at least two subjects who are capable of intellectual and imaginative power and of communicating it. These subjects are called actors. Out loud expression

requires two actors and categorized under the interpersonal conflict. These actors may represent a group or themselves in terms of their belief systems. Second, there has to be reciprocal and correlated action and communication between these actors, in order to be aware of the incompatibility of belief. Such incompatibility rises to the surface through language and communication. Third, communication has always reference to a certain belief and action to a certain object. This content of a measure is called item. If and when the item which is referred to through communication by both actors is the same item, the communication is likely to be successful. However, the item of belief, i.e. the belief element, which is at stake, does not solely determine the failure or success of the interaction. The connection between belief elements within a belief system, that is the web of beliefs, constitutes the “item”, to be more specific. Referring to a single statement (or “proposition” technically) as a basis for successful communication is not enough, because propositions do not exist in vacuum. They are all connected in a belief system. This final thought completes the definitional aims of this chapter. Accordingly, in the following chapter, I will give an account as to the relation between the “political conflict” explained in this chapter and belief systems that present a source of conflict in diverse social relations. The next chapter discusses the content and scope of the notion of belief and examines political belief as source of conflict development.

5. THE RELATION BETWEEN POLITICAL CONFLICTS AND POLITICAL BELIEF SYSTEMS

*...beliefs are like the fabled statues of Daedalus,
which can walk away if they are not fastened to their place.*

A.E.Taylor

This chapter starts with a quest to understand the position of the concept of political belief within the larger category of belief and believing. What are the properties of political belief and what does the term “political” add to the category of belief? These questions are dwelled upon with an aim to discover what political belief is. Accordingly, five necessary conditions are proposed for the concept of political belief based on the readings of the larger category of belief and believing. In the second section, political belief is examined as source of conflict development. Political belief systems are shown to consist of belief elements that display several properties. These properties are explained in terms of their potential to leading to political conflict.

5.1. The Nature of Political Belief

The encompassing field of political conflict as discussed comprehensively in the former chapter is the dimension of antagonism that emerges in diverse social relations. Hereunder social relations are derived from individual agency and are the basis of the social structure. We are confronted by a pluralism of conflicting ultimate values in the social structure and this makes it impossible to reach an “objective ranking of ultimate values or moral principles” as Weber explains (Geuss and Skinner, 1994, p. xxiii). Thus the integration-disintegration continuum of political conflict observed in the social structure is an inevitable, and even desirable, aspect of

the social relations. If political conflict dominates every aspect of social relations as explained, what is the relation between the domination of political conflict and political belief systems?

Merriam-Webster Dictionary gives three definitions for belief: (1) a state or habit of mind in which trust or confidence is placed in some person or thing; (2) something believed; especially: a tenet or body of tenets held by a group; (3) conviction of the truth of some statement or the reality of some being or phenomenon especially when based on examination of evidence¹². Simply put, a belief is an assumed truth, and every proposition that a person utters is a belief in this regard. Beliefs are divided into three categories as descriptive/existential beliefs, prescriptive/exhortatory beliefs and evaluative beliefs (Rokeach, 1969). The first category of descriptive/existential beliefs is verifiable statements about people, objects and situations. In principle these statements are objective and can be shown to be true or false, valid or invalid such as I believe Mars is a planet. The second category of prescriptive/exhortatory beliefs denotes the appropriateness of a position or an activity in a given situation, advocated as desirable or undesirable such as I believe it is desirable for children to obey their parents. The last category of evaluative beliefs is regarding statements that reflect a general assessment or judgment of an attitude object. Evaluative beliefs can be stated as good or bad such as I believe Starbucks coffee does not taste good. Political belief system is a system of beliefs that includes all three categories of belief. However, the most conflictual field regarding political belief system is the context of evaluative objects where people talk about in terms of their rival views of “ought to”s.

Normative notions of belief; rational, warranted, justified belief, belief when the only desire is to attain truth, are guided by reason and constitute the proper philosophical issue as opposed to the study that falls within the realm of psychology on actual belief held by actual people. The question of what one ought to believe has been a major philosophical concern from the ancient times till today. The tradition of European philosophy, as Alfred North Whitehead reminds us in his *Process and Reality*, "consists of a series of footnotes to Plato" (1979, p. 39). Thus it would be best to first look at what potentialities Plato presents us with. Hoitenga, following the

¹² <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/belief>, accessed on February 3, 2015.

trace of faith and reason from Plato to Plantinga, dwells upon two main theories of knowledge and belief that can be seen in Plato's two different works, *Republic* and *Meno* (1991). The former puts forward that knowledge and belief are two different and opposite states of mind; they are similar in some formal respects, but knowledge is never definable in terms of belief. In *Meno*, on the other hand, Plato explains that the difference between knowledge and belief is not so absolute; that knowledge is actually a form of belief; therefore knowledge must be defined in terms of belief. The second theory is widely adopted by contemporary philosophers, Hoitenga says, conceptualizing knowledge as justified true belief. These two theories are incompatible with each other. The former theory supports that knowledge is undefinable in terms of belief as much as it is not definable at all in terms of anything. Knowledge, in this view, is an ultimate notion such as being, space, and time; or an elemental sensation that is primitive and ultimate therefore not definable in terms of anything else such as the sense of pain, the taste of salt, and the sight of colors. This view which holds knowledge to be *sui generis* is the *indefinabilist* view of knowledge. On the other hand, the latter view is a *definabilist* view. The definabilist view defends that knowledge can be defined and must be defined in order that its nature can be understood. It must be defined in terms of truth, belief, and the ability to give an account (Hoitenga, 1991, pp. 1-3).

What is the difference between knowledge and belief? For instance, people used to believe that the earth is flat, which we now know to be a false belief. What they had was a belief about the shape of the earth, it was not knowledge. In view of this, Plato was the first philosopher to distinguish between knowledge and belief in terms of fallibility. Knowledge is infallible, which means it is incapable of being mistaken. However, belief can be mistaken. If knowledge cannot err, whereas belief can err, can we claim that knowledge is a form of belief, or can knowledge be defined in terms of belief? On the other hand, it would be absurd not to believe something that we know. No one can know what she does not believe; this leads us to a necessary relation between the two terms. Defining them as two different states of mind, at this point, is not possible because knowledge appears to be definable as a form of belief: a true belief. The recent discussion of knowledge and belief suggests that,

...belief need not be mistaken, and so when it is not, there is nothing to prevent it from being at least a component of knowledge, which cannot

be mistaken. When a true belief is also justified, the combination may produce the knowledge that cannot be mistaken (Hoitenga, 1991, p. 6).

In this combination, although belief is not enough on its own to constitute knowledge, other properties such as truth and justification can create what belief solely cannot. Infallibility is produced when these three terms meet: Knowledge is justified true belief, according to the contemporary idea proposed by Plantinga. The intellectual position of belief as a category cannot be easily pointed out. As has been shown, it shares some aspects with knowledge, also some aspects with opinion, although the contemporary tendency is to categorize knowledge as a form of belief which is justified. Justification adds the value of truth to a belief turning it into knowledge. As a matter of fact, the methodology of justification of belief is also another big issue to be discussed, which stays outside the scope of this project.

For the purposes of this project, the difference between knowledge and belief is especially important in terms of fallibility. Believing something is not necessarily to know it. Political belief, in this regard, can be mistaken since it is a form of belief. This is where the relation between belief and action comes to the fore. Even if what one believes might not actually be true, holding the belief must have some implications for her regardless of the categorical relation between knowledge and belief. Does one act upon her beliefs? Since belief can err, acting upon belief can lead us to wrong actions consequently. In terms of political belief to be defined hereafter, how action and belief correlate plays a significant role in terms of fallibility.

To explain the relation between belief and action, William Clifford makes an analogy between a ship-owner and a believer. In an essay titled “The Ethics of Belief”, Clifford recounts the story of a ship-owner who was about to send to sea an emigrant ship that was old and not over-well built, had seen many seas and climes, needed repairs often. The ship-owner has his worries that the ship might not be seaworthy; however, he overcomes the negative feelings somehow and sends the ship to the sea, reassuring himself that the ship had gone safely through so many voyages and weathered so many storms so far that it was idle to suppose she would not come home safely from this trip also. Dismissing all ungenerous suspicion from his mind, he acquires a sincere and comfortable conviction that the ship would be safe in open

seas. But the ship sinks in mid-ocean at the end of the story. Clifford charges the man of the death of those in the ship. For Clifford, the man has no right to believe the ship would be fine when he has the evidence before him. Insufficient evidence as to his belief makes the man “completely unjustified” to hold the belief. Even if the ship can get through the voyage safely, the ship-owner would still be unjustified to hold the belief since;

The question of right or wrong has to do with the origin of his belief, not the matter of it; not that it was, but how he got it; not whether it turned out to be true or false, but whether he had a right to believe on such evidence as was before him (1879, p. 178).

Clifford can be argued against in that he confuses between *belief* and *action* in the example of the ship-owner. Believing that his ship is sound is one thing, while sending it to sea without proper inspection is another. Taking up the belief is not as harmful or wrong as acting upon the belief. Nevertheless, Clifford insists that beliefs can also be subject to condemnation since they naturally lead to actions. In this line of argumentation, beliefs held with insufficient evidence harm people since they form the basis upon which actions come about. Clifford's argument that belief leads to action can be reinforced with some other comments on the affinity between belief and action. Charles Sanders Peirce, for example, in his famous article “The Fixation of Belief”, makes a distinction between the sensation of doubting and that of believing. Peirce supports that our beliefs guide our desires and shape our actions, by giving the examples of the Assassins, or followers of the Old Man of the Mountain (Rashid ad-Din Sinan) who would not have acted as they did, had they possessed doubt. “The feeling of believing is a more or less sure indication of there being established in our nature some habit which will determine our action”, Peirce explains (1877, p. 7). Alexander Bain supports this position when he characterizes belief with preparedness to act. He makes a lengthy discussion of belief at the end of Chapter XI of James Mill's *Analysis* where Mill presents a simplistic account of belief as “inseparable association” (after Mandt, 1984, p. 81). The willingness to act constitutes the difference between believing two facts to be conjoined and only thinking of them together. David Malet Armstrong, on the other hand, explains that although belief may guide our actions, they are incapable of initiating action on their own. For Armstrong, emotions are the prime candidates for turning a thinking being

into an actor (Armstrong, 1973). Rokeach defines belief as “any simple proposition, conscious or unconscious, inferred from what a person says or does” (Rokeach, 1969, p. 113). He suggests that all beliefs are predisposition to action. Since we explain people's behavior in terms of their beliefs, it should be assumed that beliefs can lead to action. Within the confines of this project beliefs are understood to lead to actions together with emotions and passions. Beliefs, emotions and passions feed each other so as to shape a person's perceived reality. In addition, Clifford's position is espoused that defends there is a clear link between belief and action; the two cannot be separated from each other.

Taylor gives an account of “right belief” and weighs it in terms of the results it produces or actions it leads to, contrary to Clifford. Taylor argues that a right belief directs practice as satisfactorily as genuine knowledge. He gives the example of a guide who has a right belief about the road to somewhere and can take you there as successfully as one who knew the way. This is the practical function of a right belief, for Taylor, and it is deemed as good as knowledge apart from one difficulty only. Including the epigraph used in the beginning of this chapter, Taylor says that;

There would be no practical difference, if you could make sure that a man will always retain his right belief. But beliefs are like the fabled statues of Daedalus, which can walk away if they are not fastened to their place. The statues are fine pieces of work, but their price is naturally low if they are loose. So a correct belief is a fine thing, if it will only stay with you, but it will not stay long unless you fasten it down by thinking out the reason of it... (1926, p. 143).

This position defended by Taylor is one Clifford argues harshly against. Taylor's words indicate that there is nothing wrong holding a belief *before* we have conclusive evidence on it. Reasoning and finding evidence shall only reinforce the foundations of the belief that we hold. Clifford makes his way to the conclusion that independently of any result whether good or bad, a belief held on insufficient evidential grounds is completely unjustified. For example, the belief that human beings are nice and generous in nature may lead to one's being nice and generous to others; but so long as this belief is held without adequate evidence, Clifford denies its justifiability. In his article “The Will to Believe”, William James quotes from

Clifford the following ethical law on belief: “It is wrong always, everywhere, and for everyone, to believe anything upon insufficient evidence” (1948, p. 93). This law brings forth an obligation to suspend judgment so long as we don't have conclusive evidence. When applied to religious belief, Clifford's law makes it a *duty* to be agnostic. At this point it needs to be stated that someone suspending judgment does not have the truth and does not have an error at the same time. To have the truth or error, one *must* believe. James's argument in “Will to Believe” was written as an attack to Clifford's belief ethics; however, James and Clifford agree that evidence against a hypothesis makes belief on it unjustified. What James attacks is the conclusion that Clifford draws about the case in which there is no evidence for or against a belief. Suspension of belief as a duty in this case is not to be a law for James.

According to James, reason and passions are the two determinants of belief. Reason judges a belief in terms of the evidence for or against it, whereas the passions are all the factors but intellectual that leads us to accept or reject a hypothesis. Passions were rejected by Aristotle as a source of belief and reason has been regarded as the rightful judgmental tool for assessing evidence to hold a particular belief. Aristotle writes in *Rhetorica*, a treatise on the art of persuasion, for example, “the orator persuades by means of his hearers, when they are aroused to emotion by his speech, for the judgments we deliver are not the same when we are influenced by joy or sorrow, love or hate” (Book I, Chapter II, p. 5). As shown in the passage, being persuaded on an issue is not taken as a proper way of believing, since emotions and passions intrude. Clifford clearly stands in the tradition of this kind. James, however, defends that when reason is neutral, we may allow our passions to direct our belief. In this case reason is sacrificed to the passions which Clifford disapproves profoundly.

But when does James think it is acceptable to allow our passions to direct our belief? Rowe formulates James's basic point as follows: “When and only when a hypothesis is (i) *intellectually undecidable* and (ii) such that it presents us with a *genuine option*, it is not wrong to believe as we wish concerning the hypothesis, to let our passionate nature to decide” (Rowe, 2006, p. 98). Intellectual undecidability refers to the case in which reason is neutral concerning a hypothesis. James makes it clear that we are not free to believe anything as we wish as long as the reason is neutral; quite differently,

in addition to the neutrality of reason, he necessitates there to be a genuine option.

A genuine option for James is a decision between two hypotheses that is *living*, *momentous*, and *forced*. What does it mean for an option to be living? An option is living when both hypotheses appeal to us as real possibilities. James explains it in the following paragraph:

If I say to you: 'Be a theosophist or be a Mohammedan,' it is probably a dead option, because for you neither hypothesis is likely to be alive. But if I say: 'Be an agnostic or be a Christian,' it is otherwise: trained as you are, each hypothesis makes some appeal, however small, to your belief" (James, 1948, p. 89).

Likewise, an option between two hypotheses may be momentous or trivial. It is a momentous option when the choice made cannot be easily reversed and something important hangs on making the right choice, such as attending to a battle for one's country. Lastly, an option may be forced or avoidable. It is a forced option when refusing to decide means deciding for a certain one of the hypotheses. Rowe gives the example of being offered a job and being given a deadline for accepting or rejecting it. Decision can be made to call by the deadline and accept the offer or reject it. This is a forced decision because not calling equals to rejecting the job. The two different acts of not calling and rejecting lead to the same result. Refusing to decide practically is the same as making up one's mind to reject the job. An option is avoidable when there is some real difference between different acts of refusing to decide and deciding for either of the two hypotheses. Rowe explains further a case in which the option is not forced but avoidable:

If you are taking a true-false examination in which you receive five points for a correct answer, lose five points for a wrong answer, and neither gain nor lose points for no answer at all, then your decision between answering "true" and answering "false" is avoidable, not forced. For the consequences of not answering at all are different from the consequences of each of the two ways of answering (Rowe, 2006, p. 99).

The discussion around the ethics of belief and the distinction between knowledge and belief make great sense in terms of the nature of belief. As an assumed truth, belief forms a genuine category of its own. James's argument that reason and passions are

two determinants of belief constitutes the foundation of political belief, as well. However, there are other approaches to the category of belief such as the one held by contemporary analytic philosophers of mind who mostly use the term “belief” to refer to the attitude that we have whenever we regard something to be true. In this sense, believing something does not require *active reflection* on it. Many objects of belief are quite everyday issues: I believe you are reading these lines now; I believe I have two hands with ten fingers in total; I believe we are in the 21st century, etc. Accordingly, forming beliefs is one of the most basic and important part of our daily life which our mind accomplishes. The concept of belief has an important place in the philosophy of mind and epistemology. James’s two conditions for the acceptability to allow our passions to direct our beliefs (intellectual indecidability and presentation of a genuine option) lose their significance as long as belief does not require active reflection. For, we cannot know if an object of belief is intellectually undecidable or not if we do not spend time thinking about it. Likewise, whether an object of belief is *living*, *momentous*, and *forced*, i.e. whether it presents a genuine option, can be discovered only when active effort of thinking is made. Therefore, political belief is a type of belief with a self-conscious dimension of discourse that is shaped upon active reflection which is fallible and which has a great potential to lead to action.

There are three ways of conceiving of beliefs: (a) Beliefs as Conscious Occurrences; (b) Beliefs as Dispositions, and (b) Beliefs as States. The first type of belief conception shall be under focus because political belief is understood by the author of this thesis to belong to a type of belief as conscious occurrence. Accordingly, Hume’s account of belief falls under the category of beliefs as conscious occurrences (*Treatise*, Book I, Part III, Section VII). He understands that belief is a vivid or lively idea associated with a present impression. Hume starts from the assumption that we conceive many things, which we do not believe. Thus in order to discover the nature of belief, we should weigh a couple of questions (2010, pp. 156-164). There is a great difference, for Hume, between the simple conception of the existence of an object and the belief of it. The difference does not lie in the parts or the composition of the idea, but it lies in the manner that we conceive of it. For instance, a person presents some propositions which I don’t believe such as, to use Hume’s original examples, Caesar died in his bed, silver is more fusible than lead, or mercury is

heavier than gold. It is evident that I clearly understand what these propositions mean; my imagination is endowed with the same powers as hers, thus understand the meaning behind the propositions and form all the same ideas in my mind. Therefore the question arises as to wherein consist the difference between believing and disbelieving any proposition? In this case, the person who utters these propositions not only conceives the ideas according to the proposition, but is necessarily determined to conceive them in that particular manner either immediately or by the interposition of other ideas. Therefore, “All the perceptions of the mind are of two kinds, viz. impressions and ideas, which differ from each other only in their different degrees of force and vivacity” Hume proposes (2010, p. 159). This means that holding a belief only varies the manner of the possessor in which she conceives any object. So far the distinction of vivacity that Hume makes is agreeable to me. However, Hume continues to comment that belief consists not in the nature and order of our ideas, but only in the manner of their conception, and in their feeling to the mind. The vivacity of belief gives it more force and influence; makes it appear of greater importance; infixes it in the mind and renders it the governing principle of all our actions. Hence Hume’s view of belief in general is that someone’s believing that *p* is equivalent to her having present to consciousness a vivid or lively idea of *p*. There are two problems I observe about Hume’s account of belief, although his categorization of belief as a conscious occurrence fits to this project’s purposes. First, although I agree that belief does not solely consist in the nature or the order of our ideas, there is a special connection between our ideas when they form a belief system which is more than the simple combination of individual beliefs. Second, even the strongest vivacity of a belief cannot act on its own as a governing principle of all our actions. This is a reductionist approach to the relation between belief and action.

The second type of belief conception is belief as disposition. Philosophers espousing this approach compare the attribution of beliefs with the attribution of dispositions to objects. There is a connection between a thing’s disposition and the manifestation of that disposition such as the brittleness of a piece of glass and its actually breaking. On the other hand, having the disposition does not necessarily entail manifestation: a piece of glass may be brittle without ever breaking. Similarly, a belief and its manifestation, or its expression, should be distinguished. Having the belief does not

entail manifestation or expression of the belief. According to this view, unconsciousness during sleep, for instance, does not prevent the individual from holding the belief. Beliefs do not have to manifest or express themselves in actions (Ryle, 1949), which signifies a behaviorist-oriented theory of mind. There is nothing in the mere dispositional view of belief that entails manifestations or expressions of a person's belief, if they occur at all. Accordingly, unspoken thoughts, mental images or inward motions of assent are possible expressions of someone's belief that p. The third type of belief conception is belief as state. According to this, someone's believing that p is a matter of her being in a certain continuing state which endures for the whole time that she holds the belief. Her belief that p is thought of as a matter of her mind being imprinted or stamped in a certain way of which she might even not be aware (Armstrong, 1973, pp. 10-11). Having explored the category of belief in general, some of the properties of political belief have been understood. This leads us to exploring how political ideologism and political belief systems differ in terms of consisting of a set of ideas in order to better understand further properties of political belief.

Discussions about ideology are carried out in two broad domains: ideology in knowledge and ideology in politics. In the first area the question is whether man's knowledge is ideologically conditioned or distorted, as Marx and Mannheim most outstandingly argue. Ideology is contrasted with truth, science and valid knowledge in general in this case. Hereby, more specifically "ideological doctrine" is meant by the term ideology. The second domain enquires whether ideology is an essential feature of politics. The functional value of ideology comes to the fore in the second domain where an ideological mentality, or "ideologism", is ultimately under focus (Sartori, 1969, pp. 398-399). The notion of "system" as in belief systems brings forward the state of *boundedness*. When one thing is believed, anything that contradicts the primary belief is generally *disbelieved*. This results in having a belief system which is composed of interconnected ideas hanging together. There have been logical or rational attributes to belief systems such as coherence or consistency, however single belief elements within a belief system can be logically contradictory, whereas beliefs in general within a system are necessarily "bound together by some form of constraint or functional interdependence" (Converse, 1964, p. 207). Therefore, beliefs cluster and establish belief systems, but not in a rationally

organized form in the strict sense. To have a belief means that an impression or an idea calls for another impression or an idea that is bound to it, which James Mill describes as an “inseparable association” (after Mandt, 1984, p. 81). According to this approach, association is a necessary condition and identifying mark of belief. Also, John Stuart Mill writes in *A System of Logic* that belief results from association. He explains that belief is formed through feelings, unaccountable and irresistible, that pass into equivalent judgments. However, this does not mean that every association produces belief, on the contrary, for Mill, belief proper “is an operation of the understanding in the pursuit of truth” (2002, VII, p. 9). Accordingly, an association without such objective is not considered a case of belief for Mill. This is where another important property of political belief comes to the front. The form of association that constitutes political belief is a conscious one sought after in the pursuit of truth. The pursuit of truth marks the distinction between what Mill calls “the belief of the wise which is regulated by evidence” as opposed to “the belief of fools which is mechanically produced by any accidental association” (2002, p. 407). He is committed to the view that belief is intrinsically connected to truth; therefore, delusions are not counted as beliefs at all. I also do not consider delusions as part of political belief since they are not consciously formed and espoused.

In addition, the primary difference between ideological doctrines and ideologism is in terms of “authority beliefs” concerning cognitive authority. The beliefs that inform us on what is true and what is false about what is going on in the world are the authority beliefs (Rokeach, 1960, p. 44). The notion of authority beliefs plays role with regards to authoritativeness in order to point out at the solidity of the authority that establishes the truth or falsity of the belief in consideration. Political belief is formed, understood and represented through dialogue with other actors that one confronts in her daily life. The confrontation which shapes the person constantly leads to self-consciousness of one’s political beliefs. The more one’s political beliefs are based on solid authority beliefs, the less she becomes willing to change them. This is when her belief system leads to political conflicts upon confronting conflicting belief systems. Besides the criterion of authoritativeness, difference between two beliefs is measured by the “energy of pursuit inspired by it” for Mill, which refers to the connection between dispositions to act and belief. A disposition to act accompanies all belief, which signifies the difference between belief and

merely having something in mind. Several different approaches to the relation between belief and action have been mentioned, which shall be one of the important aspects when examining political belief as source of conflict development in the next section of this chapter.

5.2. Political Belief as Source of Political Conflict Development

Political belief is not political ideology. It is a set of associated propositions upon which the possessor of the belief *might be* ready to act. The association between the propositions that constitute political belief is a conscious one, thus making it “political” in the pursuit of truth. Political belief is not knowledge; nevertheless it is formed when seeking for knowledge. Political belief consists of authority beliefs which inform the possessor of belief on what is going on and enable making meaning of the constant confrontation.

Rokeach makes a distinction between open and closed belief systems. Basically “a person’s [belief] system is open or closed... [to] the extent to which the person can receive, evaluate and act on relevant information...on its own intrinsic merits” (1960, p. 57). The closed mind stands for a cognitive state in which a person does not discriminate substantive information from information about the source. One’s belief system may be closed to the extent that she becomes completely unable to evaluate relevant information on its own intrinsic merits. The closed mind relies on, and yields to, absolute authority. It also hardly selects and checks its authorities. The closed mind of the possessor of a belief system may be just as dogmatic as the common opinion about ideological mentality being dogmatic, namely rigid and impermeable. Consequently, confrontation between closed minds as a cognitive state inevitably leads to conflict. The conflict resulting from such confrontation represents the ideological conflict as elaborated below.

Belief and belief systems vary according to an emotive dimension besides the cognitive dimension. Along the emotive dimension, beliefs can be intense or feeble, passionately or weakly felt. All the same, the emotive dimension and the cognitive dimension do not operate totally independently from each other, because abrupt transitions cannot be expected between individual cognition and affect; they are

interlinked. As a reference to the argument regarding the relation between belief and action, the introduction of the emotive dimension of the belief system along with the cognitive dimension falls into place very well. Preparedness to act on a belief depends on the vivacity of the emotive dimension of a belief system. When Armstrong, as introduced above, argues that beliefs are incapable of initiating action on their own and introduces emotions to the stage as the prime candidates for turning a thinking being into an actor, it can be interpreted that he points out at the emotive dimension of a belief system. Passions have traditionally been rejected as a source of belief and reason has been regarded as the rightful judgmental tool for assessing evidences to hold a particular belief. However, a belief system is composed of, as James argues, both rational and passionate beliefs. James's justification of holding religious belief when it presents a genuine option becomes relevant and meaningful within the context of political belief systems to the extent that political belief systems can be religious-like or cult-like in the sense of rigidity, which shall be further discussed in this section. The distinction between political ideology and political belief system, which has been pointed out, is an important one in terms of the emotive dimension. Whenever politics is depicted as a matter of faith, as a religion or even as a mystique; a particular intensity of feeling and of emotional involvement are referred to and therefore we should speak of passion (Sartori, 1969, p. 403). Thus, passion is the commonality of religious belief, ideology and political belief at the emotive dimension.

Sartori introduces in his article, "Politics, Ideology and Belief Systems", a scheme that decomposes belief systems into belief elements (1969, p. 404). In the scheme there are four belief elements as in the following:

- (I) Closed and strongly felt: fixed elements
- (II) Closed but weakly held: inelastic elements
- (III) Open but strongly felt: firm elements
- (IV) Open and weakly felt: flexible elements

First type of belief element, which is closed and strongly felt, is rigid, dogmatic, and impermeable to argument and evidence. This is the level of a belief system where political conflict along with any other type of conflict happens in the most

destructive way. Emotive participation in fixed beliefs triggers, most of the time, dynamic and activist potential of the possessor. The second type of belief element within a belief system, which is closed but weakly held, is still impermeable, but displays a low dynamic potential, since they are not passionately felt. As opposed to the first belief element which is subject to traumatic change only under conditions of great stress, inelastic belief elements are persistent over time, but still can fade away without traumatic consequences. The third belief element, which is open but strongly felt, is open to evidence and to argument. They tend to be persistent, but they are not impermeable and are, therefore, changeable at least in principle. They have a stronger dynamic potential than inelastic elements. The fourth belief element which is open and weakly felt is flexible, feebly held, open to argument and to evidence and, furthermore, to convenience. They are changeable by definition; however, their dynamic potential is very low. On the other hand, the centrality of the idea elements should also be taken into consideration: "The idea-elements within a belief system vary in a property we shall call centrality" (Converse, 1964, p. 208).

The persons who are imbued with an *adamant* belief system are impenetrable when confronted with external influence and are strongly motivated toward outward expansion, either in the form of proselytism or of overt aggression. The persons who are imbued with a *resilient* belief system resist change and support the internal status quo, but they lack dynamism and outward orientation. The persons who share a *firm* belief system are both open to change and motivated toward outward expansion. Finally, the persons sharing *flexible* belief system easily accept changes but lack outward dynamism.

To make an analogy, any belief is "a map of neighboring space by which we steer" (Ramsey, 1931, p. 238). Two important concepts strike one's eyes in this analogy: thinking of belief as a *map* and that belief *steers* us. The belief map, so to say, includes a map of the believer's own mind and also a map of the believer's belief-map, which refers to her beliefs that she holds certain beliefs. The sub-belief-map that she has in mind regarding her beliefs marks her awareness of her belief system. In other words, whether she has an open or a closed mind with regards to her belief system depends on her ability to "map out" her sub-belief-map in relation to other belief systems. As has been explained, the closed mind stands for a cognitive state in which a person does not discriminate substantive information from information about

the source. Checking of information about the source makes her compare the substantive information at hand to other information that people hold and turns her into a conscious being regarding her belief system. To turn back to Converse's warning that centrality should also be considered in terms of the belief element within a belief system, the metaphor of map and steering is also subject to the locality of the belief within the person's world of interconnected belief systems.

With regard to the problem of political belief as source of conflict development, we should ask how two or more belief systems relate to one another, having explained what type of belief elements may exist within belief systems in terms of open and closed cognitive dimension. There may be common and distinctive elements between belief systems. The "central" belief elements are those that are of prime importance. Based on the earlier distinction between fixed, firm and flexible belief elements, three typical patterns of interrelation between different belief systems stand out. The first typical pattern is between two belief systems whose distinctive elements are fixed, that is, closed and strongly held. This interrelation indicates that the two belief systems are incompatible and mutually exclusive; thus the relations between relevant belief groups shall be *conflictual* and conciliation is impossible. If the central distinctive elements are more numerous, the hostility between the two belief groups shall be greater and vice versa. The second typical pattern is between two belief systems whose distinctive elements are flexible, that is, open and weakly held. This interrelation indicates that the two belief systems are coalescent or fusible; thus the relations between the two belief groups shall be consensual and cooperation is likely. The amalgamation and the convergence are higher when central distinctive belief elements turn out to be fewer. The third, and the last, typical pattern is between two belief systems whose distinctive elements are firm, that is, open but strongly held. This interrelation indicates that the two belief systems are compatible and capable of peaceful coexistence; thus the relations between the two belief groups shall be of the bargaining type and mutual adjustment is possible. Coexistence is easier when central distinctive elements are fewer. "In essence, political conflict (in its autonomy vis-a-vis economic conflict, or conflicts of interest) largely depends on which distinctive elements are distributed how within a national community or across nations". The distinction between political ideology and political belief makes sense with regard to the closed cognitive dimension of a belief system. Sartori explains that

if the central distinctive elements are “closed”, the conflict occurring at that level is properly called ideological (1969, p. 409). If the central distinctive elements are “open”, the conflict is pragmatic, which I shall define as political conflict as opposed to ideological conflict. Ideological warfare results if the distinctive elements are not only closed, but also passionately held; as a result, the relation between the two belief systems is incompatibility and the arising conflict leads to destructive conflict rather than operating on the daily integration-disintegration continuum as we have described in the earlier chapter. On the other hand, when the distinctive elements are open and feebly felt, pragmatic transactions and relations of mutual adjustment shall overweigh. However, only relations between homogeneous belief systems have been argued about so far. We also observe in the society relations between closed and open belief systems, i.e. closed ideological groups and open belief groups, which constitute an unbalanced and incompatible type of power relation, thus a different type of conflict than the political conflict that I would like to discuss here. That is why it is important to emphasize once again that the distinction between political ideology and political belief system also makes the distinction between types of conflict that we observe.

There are four basic characteristics as to which belief systems vary: (i) accessibility either to argumentative demonstration or to factual evidence; (ii) centrality of the belief-elements; (iii) level of abstraction; and (iv) comprehensiveness. To explain these characteristics respectively, accessibility refers to the extent to which ideological mentality receives external communications. If it is receptive to external communications, it is receptive to rational demonstration, as well. In ideological belief systems, the “ends” are attached centrality, whereas in pragmatic belief systems the “means” tend to constitute centrality. In terms of abstraction, ideological belief systems operate on a far more remote and high-flown level of discourse than pragmatic belief systems. Finally, and correlatively, in terms of comprehensiveness, the coverage of ideological belief systems is far more universal and totalistic than the coverage of the pragmatic belief systems.

Keeping these basic characteristics in mind as potential sources of conflict development with regard to political belief systems, it should be noted that approach to interpersonal conflict as resulting from competition for a scarce commodity is an outdated mode of analysis (Summers, 1968, p. 215). As a result of the competition

for a scarce commodity approach, experimental game paradigm has been resorted to. However, the non-competitive nature of interpersonal conflict has been increasingly indicated in the literature starting from the 1960s (Hammond, 1965; Rappoport, 1965; Todd, Hammond, and Wilkins, 1966). Replacing the competition oriented approach, an understanding that conflict between persons can result from cognitive differences was espoused. Opposed and contradictory beliefs in a particular domain constitute a significant portion of interpersonal conflict. This important novel approach to the problem of interpersonal conflict is relevant in terms of the relation between political belief and political conflict. Political conflict is a characteristic of politics and is part of the dynamic of political existence specifically driving people into the new possibilities of development. Political belief systems are zones of interpersonal conflict occurrence where political existence is at stake in terms of cognitive differences as explained. Political conflict is the expression of disagreement over something important to both (or all) sides of a dispute. Since it is entirely dependent on the people involved, it is interpersonal and operates on the cognitive level of dispute and disagreement. It depends on their having a particular set of beliefs, which may or may not have independent facts and evidence to support it, and on how they behave when they encounter an opposing point of view or beliefs. When independent facts and evidence is lacked within a belief system, it is a closed system at the cognitive dimension. Such conflicts have the greatest potential to turn into destructive conflicts such as an armed conflict when fighting for a scarce commodity or when fighting for power. However, since we take interpersonal conflict as the type of conflict which is observed on the cognitive level, i.e. expression of contradictory beliefs, however much the belief systems that confront each other leading to interpersonal conflict is closed cognitively; they are still beneficial in terms of opening up a zone of discussion for other open-minded people. Several combinations of political belief systems within political conflict shall be introduced and discussed in length in the following chapter.

Political conflict is a natural aspect of social relations. Thus it is impossible to list and categorize every moment of political conflict which is experienced in everyday life between political belief systems. On the integration-disintegration continuum of political conflict and change, the flow of social relations is under constant construction, deconstruction and reconstruction. However, in light of the issues so far

introduced in this chapter, there arise four primary sources of political conflict on which political beliefs develop conflictual relations to each other:

- i. Preparedness to act
- ii. Claiming authoritativeness
- iii. Expansionism
- iv. Tendency to be violated

Preparedness to act on a specific political belief system makes the content of the belief open to dispute. If there is a strong direct correlation between action and belief, what the individual believes becomes a matter of concern for other individuals and for the society as a whole. It has been argued that our actions are partly, if not totally, guided by our beliefs. Beliefs, emotions and passions feed each other so as to shape a person's perceived reality. Thus, the individual's social behavior is partly built upon her complex belief system, one of which is her political belief system, i.e. how she relates to the daily issues around her and how she positions herself in the middle of the integration-disintegration continuum of everyday conflict. "Dangerous" beliefs might not constitute a real danger to the individual and to the society; however, given the fact that actions are based on beliefs to an extent, we come to care about the beliefs of others since we are affected by the results that belief generates. When, for instance, a fundamentalist holds a radical understanding of religion and forms a political belief system accordingly in her mind, we assume that she is prepared to act based on her beliefs, although the radicalism in terms of belief cannot be argued to always produce radical behavior. Interpersonal conflict arises from the opposed belief systems of different persons based on the perception that belief and action go together. When persons with two closed political belief systems encounter, they find no common action basis to operate and to understand each other. They cannot act, because they suppose they have literally nothing in common at all. Action requires a ground on which several minimum belief units are based. Such as when you walk in the street, you act on the primitive belief that nobody will come and punch you, even though that is not an active cognitive belief which appears in the consciousness; rather, you take it for granted. Having categorized political belief as a conscious occurrence, the conflict that arises between

two mutually exclusive political belief systems based on the source of conflict of preparedness to act should be conscious, as well. However, the closed nature of a belief system does not allow for a conscious conflict between belief systems. That is why we have made the distinction between political ideologies and political belief systems. The plentifulness of the central distinctive elements among belief systems make them counter-active. Thus, closed political belief systems stand out as eternal competitors that want to dominate the social life.

Claiming authoritativeness is the second source of conflict among different political belief systems. While some political belief systems are flexible and feeble, other political beliefs tend to claim authoritativeness, which makes coexistence more difficult. The distinction that we have made in this chapter between knowledge and belief is very important at this point to analyze the authoritativeness of a political belief system. When we define the nature of knowledge as infallible and nature of belief as fallible, we, consequently, attach fallibility to the elements of any belief system, be it political, religious, etc. This assumption that belief is fallible might be rejected by some political believers who claim that their political belief system is based on knowledge. Such a discourse underestimates the value and content of any other political belief system as an alternative and equally respectable perspective on world and social relations. According to my definition of political conflict, every aspect of social relations is established on an integration-disintegration continuum of change and conflict, as has been explained in the former chapter; thus, claiming hegemonic authoritativeness on an issue concerning social relations means, contrarily, to ignore the nature of social relations and it is counter-productive to the aims of a political belief system, which are to be elaborated after the examination on the four sources of conflict on which political beliefs develop conflictual relations. Political belief systems are ways of making meaning of and interpreting social relations. In this regard, the multiplicity of meanings and interpretations give birth to an authority problem within the society. Some persons would like to make other people accept that the authoritative way to understand social relations is their interpretation. Outsiders hold several other belief systems which are labeled as corrupt or wrong. Authoritative understanding of a political belief system makes little or no distinction between knowledge and belief, or claims that their belief system is based on knowledge elements rather than belief elements. However, there

is a third position in the case of religious belief, for example, in terms of the authoritativeness of belief elements. Religious belief systems are based on exclusive authoritativeness which takes its source from faith, rather than knowledge in the direct sense. Religious believers claim that their faith is one and only correct way of making meaning of social relations in the universe. When the political belief system is based on faith the source of which denies any interrogation and doubt, it becomes very similar to the dogmatic religious belief system.

Expansionism is the third reason of conflict among different political belief systems and connected to the second reason of conflict, claiming authoritativeness, very closely. Expansionism occurs when a belief system would like to enhance its area of power. Political belief systems that claim authoritativeness are more likely to be in favor of expansionism. This expansionism is towards other belief systems' area of power, thus leads to political conflict. In this sense, the enhancement of a particular political belief system equals to the shrinking of another political belief system. In other words, it is the conquest of an area of power which was formerly under the sphere of influence of another political belief system. When central distinctive elements are in plentitude between two political belief systems, the conquest of one another is more difficult. Likewise, when two political belief systems display many common or connected belief elements, it is easier to come and go between one of these. To make use of Ramsey's map analogy (any belief is "a map of neighboring space by which we steer"), we can say that the geographical distance that marks two places that are located far-away from each other in the map are two political belief systems whose central distinctive belief elements are plentiful. Similarly, two close places in a map of belief share more common belief elements. Accordingly, expansionism into similar political belief systems might not make as strong an irritation as they would make for two distinct political belief systems. An authoritative political belief system, however, wishes to be absolute and tends to be totalitarian, thus it carries parallelism to religious faith. As religion wants to spread its authoritative world view and practices over a larger human population, a political belief with such cult-like or religious-like structure of system becomes more expansionist in turn. Expansionist ambitions of a political belief system lead to conflict among political belief systems. Hegemonic or totalitarian attitudes espoused by these systems leave almost no space for free speech and critical thinking, or even

the existence of alternative political belief systems is taken as a threat to their own existence.

Tendency to be violated is the fourth, and the last, reason of conflict among different political belief systems. It can be argued that the content of some political belief systems is based on wrong information, or misinformation, which makes the totality of the political belief system open to violation. Every belief system is a package of interconnected beliefs and ideas. Belief systems are “diffused in ‘packages’ which consumers come to see as ‘natural’ wholes”, thus believing one element in a political belief system is followed by believing another element and still another element and so on (Converse, 1964, p. 216). However, following the chain of argumentation or the linkage between vast belief elements becomes very difficult for an ordinary believer. The organization of belief elements can only be followed and grasped by an attentive, articulate person. Sartori explains that “The inarticulate public not only lacks, without guidance, the grasp of *what goes with what* in the deductive chain of a high-flown, abstract argument; it equally and especially lacks the information and the inductive capability of deciding on his own how a *specific* event relates to a general principle, and specifically to *which* principle” (Sartori, 1969, p. 407). Therefore, a poorly articulated political belief system becomes subjected to linkage-guidance. This requirement makes the mass public belonging to a political belief system open to the manipulation of the elites who can interpret the connection between particular belief elements displaying the relevance and significance of a specific “reading” of events in the way that the system indicates. However, the “elites” of a political belief system need not be elite in the first sense. They are the rhetorical leaders of interpretation who dispense meaning-making tools that the mass public uses. When and if these leaders exploit the power that they have in terms of directing and guiding the mass public according to their interests, conflict between different political belief systems occur. Even though the political belief system that we handle in this project is a conscious one held individually, the communitarian aspects of it cannot be ignored. Therefore, leadership and openness of individuals are significant aspects of the problem. However, the controversial debate around these issues is not within the scope of this project.

In conclusion, political belief is a determinative field of conflict. Whereas, for instance, an LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, and intersex) individual

interprets the world in her own political way, a religious person might have a totally different political belief system and orientation. This is very natural and about the primitive identities of persons. Natural in the sense that political belief is about personal identifications and personal intuitions. Primitive, in the sense that it is not transcendent. However, political belief is transcendent of the first impressions and intuitions that we have as a person. Then, how is it primitive at first look? Beliefs are formed in the immediate surroundings of a person: in the family, in the social circle, in the school, etc. When beliefs are first formed, they are at a primitive stage, i.e. the connection or linkage that is supposed to exist among the belief elements within a belief system is lacking. Therefore it is difficult to talk about belief as a conscious occurrence yet. For the consciousness to come into play and transform the nature of the beliefs that already exist, we need encounter with dissimilar ideas, opinions, and beliefs eventually. To further the example of an LGBTI individual, she shares the political beliefs of her immediate surroundings until she discovers who she is and her political belief system gets activated. Similarly, when a religious person starts to check her primitive political beliefs, she becomes transcendent and forms a conscious political belief system, even though this does not mean that every linkage between belief elements in her political belief system is consciously held. Political belief is formed through what sounds to a person the most agreeable and becomes conscious in the process of making meaning of what is going on around her in confrontation with dissimilar world views, that is, political belief systems. Political belief has been defined as a type of belief with a self-conscious dimension of discourse that is shaped upon active reflection which is fallible and which has a great potential to lead to action. Accordingly, political belief must be transcendent as required by its self-conscious dimension. In the following chapter, the functions of political conflict are examined based on the characteristics of the political belief system established in this chapter.

6. EFFECTS OF POLITICAL CONFLICT WITH REGARDS TO BELIEF SYSTEMS

*What is a rebel? A man who says no, but whose refusal
does not imply a renunciation.
He is also a man who says yes, from the moment
he makes his first gesture of rebellion.
A slave who has taken orders all his life suddenly decides
that he cannot obey some new command.
Albert Camus, *The Rebel**

Description of political conflict has been made partly based on redistributive claims that seek a more just distribution of resources and wealth in the second chapter. Egalitarian redistributive claims have constituted the paradigm case regarding social justice theories for the past 150 years (Honneth, 1994). However, a second type of social justice claim lies in the politics of recognition today. The goal of this politics is achieving a difference-friendly world “where assimilation to majority or dominant culture is no longer the price of equal respect” (Fraser, 2003, p. 7). Claims for the recognition of the distinctive perspectives of ethnic, “racial”, and sexual minorities and gender difference are at the center for the struggle for recognition. Admitting the necessity of pluralism and recognition of pluralism, what is at stake is power and antagonism, thus conflict, and its ineradicable character. Mouffe argues that this can only be grasped from a perspective that interrogates the objectivism and essentialism that is dominantly observed in democratic theory (ed. Benhabib, 1996, p. 247). Accordingly, the position of and approach to the concept of political conflict within the political life marks the split between liberal democracy and agonistic pluralism. This chapter, first of all, introduces the relationship between political conflict and four characteristics of belief systems, introduced in the third chapter. Two different functions of political conflict are introduced, afterwards, resulting from

incompatibility among belief elements in political belief systems rather than from redistribution of goods and services.

The excitability, the cost on the surface and the divisiveness of conflict are so great that it has been difficult for political theoreticians to frame the concept to expose its socially useful functions. The destruction caused by armed conflict has been the main connotation of the concept which ignores the beneficial dimensions to it. However, in this thesis, a novel approach to the term has been put forward and a framework of social relations in terms of an integration-disintegration continuum of conflict and change has been offered. In the light of this approach, this chapter starts with the examination of three functions of political conflict in terms of the parties that conflict with each other in the first section. The second section explores the outcomes that political conflict produces with regards to four basic characteristics as to which belief systems vary that are introduced and dwelled upon in the third chapter. Political conflict is examined as rhetoric of control under the third section. And, under the last section entitled “Political Belief as both Nurturing and Nurtured by Political Conflict”, the necessary relation between the existence of political conflict and political belief system is established and defended as well as pointing out at the affirmative dimension of political conflict.

6.1. Three Functions of Political Conflict: Parties of Political Conflict

Socratic dialogue is a method that suggests that true knowledge can only be gained in a reciprocal conversation where the teacher, together with his interlocutors, examines their beliefs and judgments which are based on personal experience. This inquiry requires a room for doubt and ignorance besides being an ongoing dialectic that is never fully accomplished. Digging for true knowledge which Socrates was after, he invented a method which is constructive and results with *aporia* (impasse). The *aporia* is liberatory in terms of abandoning previously held unwarranted beliefs which were not based on active reflection. The oldest philosophical method as to the gaining of true knowledge, accordingly, starts challenging and ends with renouncing the current beliefs and judgments through Socratic dialogue. In addition to showing the interlocutors what questions matter to them, Socrates aimed to engage them in a

method by which a true answer can be sought. Mere opinions or popular thoughts had no validity as part of this method.

Before examining functions of political conflict within the context of characteristics of belief systems in the second section of this chapter, functions of political conflict shall be introduced in terms of the beliefs that go into conflict with each other. Three correlations are dwelled upon: (a) political conflict between two closed belief systems that results in oppression; (b) political conflict between two open belief systems that results in a synthetical new belief system, or an amalgamation; (c) political conflict between a belief system and scepticism that results in liberation, or the discovery of “truth”.

Political conflict between two closed belief systems, namely, the antagonism between rival belief systems, is not productive in itself. It is a power clash between two asymmetrically powerful belief systems in which the more powerful one wins the battle against the other. The end result of such political conflict is nothing more than subjugation and oppression of the less powerful belief system. It is not productive in itself because the belief elements of the two fighting belief systems are not in communication to each other, examining possibilities of renewal, discovery and expansion. Rather, the belief systems try to conquer, beat or eliminate the other belief system, seeing it as the polar opposite to be done away with. This happens when the political conflict is regarding not the means but the aims. When the political conflict is about the end to be achieved, parties that espouse antagonistic belief systems go into conflict with each other to accomplish their own agenda. At the end of the political conflict, one of them prevails and has the privilege to have the end operate as to its own belief system. There is victory and there is defeat; however, there is no gain in itself as a result. No victory or defeat can be absolute; in this sense, there is room for productivity, however, not in terms of the interaction between belief elements of the two “enemy” belief systems, as Schmitt calls. Productivity, in this case, can occur not from the perspective of synthesis, but due to the debate that is provided throughout the battle.

The second correlation is political conflict between two open or semi-open belief systems that results in a synthetical new belief system, or an amalgamation. In this case, as opposed to the first one, political conflict is beneficial, leading to something

novel. Belief elements of the belief systems that go into conflict with each other are in communication and interaction. The connection between some of the belief elements are broken and new connections are established between new belief elements that interact. The establishment of new connections and linkages are the productive result of political conflict in this case. There is no hegemonic relationship between the two belief systems and the result is not oppression, but amalgamation. The synthesis helps the parties that espouse different, and sometimes rival, belief systems expand their horizon and gain out of the political conflict a new perspective over issues. The rivalry between the open or semi-open belief systems does not prevent them from merging some of their belief elements. Likewise, the openness or semi-openness of belief systems does not prevent them from having competitive relations. Since, as explained in the second chapter, political conflict occurs both regarding the ends and the means, and since facilities that parties can have are limited, open belief systems can also form conflictual relations with other open belief systems with regards to attaining a privilege. At the end of the political conflict, a new scenery with the formation of new linkages among belief elements is observed.

The third correlation is political conflict between a belief system and scepticism that results in liberation, or the discovery of “truth”. This type of correlation ends up with the defeat of the belief system. When it genuinely meets with scepticism and understands that the firmness of the connectivity between its belief elements is based on false representation or an inaccurate account, political conflict has the effect of liberation. It liberates thanks to scepticism that displays that the belief system fails to explain and to represent accurately what it aims to do so. This is Socrates’s “elenchus” method, which translates as refutation, shame or embarrassment but can also simply mean education. Elenchus is composed of making explicit what the partner in dialogue thinks she knows, showing different positions to her as clearly and completely as possible, relating these with one another and bringing inconsistencies to light herein. This experience is not only negative or destructive. Contrarily, the destruction of the claim of knowledge over mere belief constitutes the motivation for further research to understand the phenomena. This also shows that accepting certain propositions that justify certain judgments and actions is different from knowing for oneself the truth of the statements. As a result, *aporia* occurs; that is, a situation in which the former believer now says: “I don’t know” (Van Rossem,

2015). Thus the connection between the believer and the belief is destroyed and the person, by meeting with scepticism, discovers the faultiness of holding unexamined beliefs.

6.2. Functions of Political Conflict According to the Characteristics of Political Belief Systems

Four basic characteristics as to which belief systems vary are (i) accessibility either to argumentative demonstration or to factual evidence; (ii) centrality of the belief elements; (iii) level of abstraction; and (iv) comprehensiveness. Accessibility refers to the extent to which ideological mentality receives external communications. If it is receptive to external communications, it is receptive to rational demonstration, as well (Sartori, 1969, p. 410). The magnitude of political conflict changes according to the accessibility of the belief systems that interact conflictually. A belief system may be very accessible in that believers of it may be very open to argumentative demonstration, in which case political conflict with another belief system shall be welcome. The connection between belief elements within a belief system shall be affected by the conflict that it is exposed to. The difference between the two belief systems shall be manifested in terms of both content of the belief system and the strength of it. When the belief system is receptive of factual evidence, the believers of it shall not be fiercely bothered to get under the influence of conflict. For, the introduction of political conflict brings interrogation to the content and to the strength of the belief system. Accessibility does not always guarantee the welcoming of political conflict by the believers, though. As has been explained in the former chapter, there are several different clusters of believers of a political belief system. Ordinary believers of a political belief system are different from elites of a political belief system in terms of receptivity to argumentative demonstration or to factual evidence. Each and every believer of a political belief system cannot be handled as if they were a homogeneous group within themselves; they are not. It is important to note this fact here; however, it is utterly possible to differentiate between belief systems with regards to belief elements and regardless of the heterogeneous outlook of its believers. Therefore, a political belief system can be more open, less open or closed to conflictual interaction with another political belief system. Political belief systems that do not favor interrogation are dogmatic and the linkage among their

belief elements is strict, therefore difficult to soften or break. Political conflict functions to “close the ranks” in such a belief system, which displays commonalities with political ideology in terms of strictness.

Centrality of belief elements is the second characteristic that determines the function of political conflict. If the belief elements that go in conflict with each other between two different belief systems are central and definitive of the political belief system, then the intensity of conflict that is to occur is greater. The intensity of political conflict diminishes as the centrality of belief elements is degraded. Political conflict between two peripheral belief elements is less a conflict than otherwise. In ideological belief systems, the “ends” are attached centrality, whereas in pragmatic belief systems the “means” tend to constitute centrality. In this regard, firmer political belief systems tend to produce conflictual relations with other political belief systems in terms of the end that they try to achieve. On the other hand, pragmatic belief systems are more open to negotiate about the means with which the end shall be achieved. Thus, the result of political conflict between two central belief elements can create, again, an atmosphere of closing the ranks against the perceived “other”. In terms of the level of abstraction, ideological belief systems operate on a far more remote and high-flown level of discourse than pragmatic belief systems. Strict political belief systems, therefore, consist of a more remote level of discourse which requires a great deal of interpretation for the common people who adopt the relevant political belief system. Abstraction makes it more difficult for common people to get to the essence of the belief system; they are left in need of explanation as to the content of the conflict. Thus, when conflictual relations arise between the proponents of two political belief systems, the cognitive capacity of the relevant people in conflict comes to the front as a determining factor of the function of the conflict. Proponents of a political belief system who can understand the abstraction and discourse of it are better able to sort out the linkage between belief elements, which leads to a more fruitful discussion of political conflict. The discussion is the production of the confrontation between the political belief systems. Finally, in terms of comprehensiveness, the coverage of ideological belief systems is far more universal and totalistic than the coverage of the pragmatic belief systems. When a political belief system claims authority over an extensive area of social relations, it does so at the cost of over-generalizing by covering too many of meaning-making

processes. The explanatory power of political belief systems increases as the focal point of it is smaller. Accordingly, the function, or the outcome, of political conflict depends on the nature of political belief systems that conflict with each other. The destruction attributed to political conflict itself is actually a destruction caused by the fixity of belief elements of political belief systems as well as accessibility either to argumentative demonstration or to factual evidence, centrality of the belief elements, level of abstraction and comprehensiveness. Political conflict itself has no destructive outcome that accompanies or follows the occurrence of it automatically. Thus destruction is not inherent in political conflict. On the contrary, embracing an improved political belief system requires the destruction of belief elements that are either simply wrong or have less explanatory power as to the turn of events. In this regard, political conflict is positively destructive against dogmatic opinions, beliefs and ideas, which is discussed in the last section of this chapter.

6.3. Political Conflict as Rhetoric of Control: A Critical Point of View Against Agency

The necessary conditions that establish political conflict, as explained in the fourth chapter, are actors, interaction and item, which bring about the structure of the social and cultural matrix within which power activities are played out. Power is the key term, as the exercise of power shapes the structure of social relationships. Baumgartner et al. refer to the exercise of such meta-power as “relational control” that particular groups use “to promote, ensure, or stabilize their advantages or dominance over others or the effective functioning of a social system” (Baumgartner et al., 1975, p. 418). When one power group structures the relationship between other groups to foster conflict of interest, social disorganization, and distrust, its control activities constitute a control strategy. This is a strategy built for exploiting political conflict as rhetoric of control. The ideological or cultural barriers that exist between groups within a society are used by rulers to inhibit association and organization of subordinate groups and to hamper processes that would surpass existing divisions. Namely, exploitation of racial, ethnic, or ideological cleavages is common among rulers who intend to constrain the organization or political cooperation of subordinate groups. This results in the exploitation of political conflict that always

exists among various power groups within the society. In the second chapter the contract tradition is introduced that offers framework as to how to establish rules and institutions which have consent and prevent conflict. Michel Foucault criticizes the contract theory regarding it as a cover for power. Likewise, the framework of political conflict and the relation between political belief and political conflict essentially exclude the contract theory that sets forth to minimize, and ideally, eliminate conflict. In this regard, this project might have a common point with Foucault's work, although his conceptualization of truth and truth-telling do not conceptually match to the ideal of this work as explained at the end of this section after Foucault's perspective is introduced.

Political conflict, as well as any type of conflict such as gender conflict, religious conflict, economic conflict, academic conflict, etc., serves as rhetoric of control and change for framing and structuring the life of the political community. The distinction between knowledge and belief has been examined in the third chapter and political belief has been defined as fallible, as opposed to that knowledge cannot be mistaken. This clear distinction between the two concepts is challenged by Nietzsche and Foucault. For Foucault, conflict, combat, the outcome of the combat, and, consequently, risk and chance give rise to knowledge. It is not instinctive but counter-instinctive; it is not natural, but counter-natural (Foucault, 1996, p. 8). He includes conflict within the territory of knowledge, shaping, creating and recreating it. Thus, the status of knowledge which is very elevated in the Western philosophy is attacked by peeling off knowledge of the normativity attributed to it. Nietzsche, similarly, says that knowledge has no rapport with the world to be known. The character of the world for Nietzsche is "chaos for all eternity –in the sense not of a lack of necessity but of a lack of order, arrangement, form, beauty, wisdom" (Nietzsche, 2001, p. 109). Thus, the distinction between knowledge and belief seems to be lost when Foucauldian and Nietzschean take on knowledge are considered. There can be no relation of natural continuity between knowledge and the objects of knowledge (things to be known). Only a relation of violence, domination, power, force and a relation of violation are left out for the limits of knowledge. Knowledge, therefore, violates its objects rather than perceiving, recognizing, identifying of or with those objects. Foucault concludes that if there are discontinuity, relations of domination, power relations and servitude between knowledge and its objects, the

subject in its unity and sovereignty disappears as a result (Foucault, 1996, p. 10). The philosophical tradition that starts with Descartes proposes the unity of subject ensured by the continuity running from desire to knowledge, from the instincts to knowledge and from the body to truth. Thus, the subject's existence was ensured. Nevertheless, as a result of the discontinuity between knowledge and its objects, unity and sovereignty of the subject is eradicated for Foucault. However, the concept of political belief that has been under scrutiny in this work has been constructed on the distinction between belief and knowledge, attributing fallibility to political belief in contrast to the truth and unmistakability of knowledge. The connection between the category of political belief and that of political conflict is based on one necessary condition of political belief as fallible, which is investigated on the fourth section of this chapter.

As opposed to the traditional characterization of knowledge as logocentrism, resemblance, congruence, bliss and unity, Nietzsche places at the center of knowledge hatred, struggle and power relations. He asserts that thinking the nature of knowledge in the form of congruence, love, unity and pacification is the wrong of the philosopher. True knowledge of knowledge comes from understanding what the relations of struggle and power are. The manner in which humans fight one another, try to dominate one another and exercise power relations over one another is the clue to knowledge. This is exactly the opposite picture of knowledge drawn in this project. Instead, discovery of the Nietzschean conception of knowledge is possible through the understanding of the conception of political conflict which I have argued to exist in every aspect of social relations with regards to an integration-disintegration continuum except for the elevated status of knowledge. Implications of such conception regarding knowledge leads to the evaluation of social life as made up of antagonistic discourses. Subjects of knowledge, hence truth relations, are formed by means of the political and economic conditions of existence. The subject, the domains of knowledge, and the relations with truth are formed on the basis of political conditions (Foucault, 1996, p. 15). Thus, there is no knowledge ingrained in the world, but there are only subjects of knowledge who *invent* knowledge. According to this approach, political conflict that we have defined as constituting the totality of social relations is only a discourse of knowledge which was invented. There are innumerable discourses of political conflict among political communities

within a society. These discourses shape the political life, creating subjectivities that are willing to espouse the ready-made discourses of political conflict, rather than as a result of active involvement such as the one proposed in this project.

Foucault, in *The Courage of the Truth*, offers four principles that have been a permanent challenge for political thought in the Western world. The first principle is the principle of opposition which is founded on a quantitative differentiation. Individuals in a city either fall into the group of the masses, or the group of the few. The city, for Foucault, is organized with regards to the quantitative division between the masses and the few, out of which opposition in the city is born and within which conflicts develop. This division between the majority and the minority, again, raises the issue of who should govern. Thus, the quantitative division of the city's unity is one principle. Second, the opposition based on the division between the many and the others coincides with the distinction between the best and the worst. This is an ethical division between the good and the bad which is called ethico-quantitative isomorphism. The third principle is that the ethical distinction between the good and the bad corresponds to a political distinction. The city's good depends on the good of the good people and the will of the good people who seek the good is useful to the city, whereas the good of the bad people is bad for the city. This is called the principle of political transitivity. As a consequence of this, the truth in the realm of political discourse, namely the discourse of what is good, useful, and healthy for the city, cannot be told in the form of democracy that is understood as the right for everyone to speak. The truth can be told only when an essential quantitative division between the good and bad is marked, maintained and institutionalized. To the extent that such essential division between who is good and who is bad actually takes shape, finds its place and achieves definite manifestation within the political field can the telling of the truth be possible at all (Foucault, 2011, pp. 43-45). For the city to exist and be saved there has to be truth, which cannot be told in a political arena that is defined by an absence of differentiation between the subjects speaking. For Foucault, the truth can be told only when the quantitative division between the mass and the few as well as the ethical division between the good and the bad are made. That is why, he explains, truth-telling cannot have any place in the democratic political field, since democracy does not recognize and make room for the ethical division only on the basis of which truth-telling is possible.

Under the circumstances where truth-telling is not possible, we cannot talk about the condition of self-consciousness that is necessary for the existence of political belief. In a world where encounter with the other is only based on false knowledge, or face value, self-consciousness can only stem from illusion. This is against the nature of self-consciousness which should be authentic and genuine, rather than based on illusion. Similarly, political belief based on a self-conscious discourse cannot be possible when discourse is, for Foucault, a means of rhetoric of control. He writes that "...the production of discourse is controlled, selected, organized and redistributed according to a number of procedures" (Foucault, 1971, p. 8) and identifies a number of procedures of exclusion in discourse, the most obvious of which is prohibition. We are not free to say anything and we cannot speak of anything when and where we like. "Just anyone, in short, cannot speak of just anything" he writes (ibid, p. 8). There are three types of prohibition he recounts: covering objects, ritual with its surrounding circumstances, and the privileged or exclusive right to speak of a particular subject. These three prohibitions interrelate, reinforce and complement each other and form a complex web. He mentions politics and sexuality as the most tightly woven webs shaped by prohibition. Prohibitions surrounding politics and sexuality have links with desire and power, which makes the two fields most vulnerable to control. Thus, political conflict that occurs on the dimension of self-conscious discourse composing political belief is actually a field of prohibition, prohibited discourse. For Foucault, self-consciousness cannot form itself in the way that this project understands that it does, since discursive interaction between individuals cannot exist truthfully according to his interpretation. Thus, the conflict coming from the discursive nature of interaction which feeds political belief is seen as a conflict that prevents truthfulness and truth-telling. Although truth is not a necessary condition for forming political belief, when politics is regarded as the field of discursive prohibition, the political conflict is only a conflict between or among prohibited discourses, rather than offering a solid foundation for presenting and representing one's political belief system.

A common object of constitutive instinctual energies that enter into the reproduction of society is discourse for Foucault. Society can be interpreted, for him, as a social system that is nourished through the dispositions of power and desire, in which discourse is an object of strategic conflict. Accordingly, the institutional organization

of society is explained as a social constellation of strategies and techniques that power groups embody conflicting dispositions of power and desire in the medium of discourse. Power is not a fixable property which is an enduring characteristic of an individual within a social group, but rather it is the fragile and open-ended product of strategic conflicts between subjects. Thus, the acquisition and maintenance of social power is not in the form of a one-sided appropriation, but rather it takes place in the shape of a continuous struggle of social actors among themselves, which Foucault calls the “diversity of power relations”, borrowing the term from Nietzsche. It seems to me that power must be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization; as the process which through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses them; as the support which the force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from one another (Foucault, 1980, p. 92).

Foucault interprets the strategic action among social actors as the ongoing process in which the formation and exercise of social power is embedded. Since power is rooted in a perpetual battle, every unilateral achievement of strategic objectives is linked to situations of confrontation between subjects. He traces the genesis of social power to the inconspicuous conflicts of everyday social life (Honneth, 1993, p. 155). Thus, perpetual conflict that exists in every aspect of social relations constitutes the power relations of the social world of human beings. Discourse forms the media of social integration as culturally valid knowledge systems. Political conflict is taken as a form of rhetoric of control as a discourse that determines the totality of power relations. Social life is constituted by conflict, which, in turn, constitutes power; thus, picturing social relations as taking place in conflict is the same conception attributed to political conflict within the confines of this thesis. However, bringing forth discourse as a dimension of power struggle among power groups within a society is the point where Foucault understands conflict as rhetoric of control.

6.4. Political Belief as both Nurturing and Nurtured by Political Conflict

Political belief, as has been indicated, causes the development of political conflict via the confrontation of belief elements of different political belief systems. It has also been noted that the outcome of political conflict depends on the fixity of belief elements that constitute the political belief systems conflicting with each other as well as accessibility either to argumentative demonstration or to factual evidence, centrality of the belief elements, level of abstraction and comprehensiveness. In this regard, political conflict results from the nature of political belief. In addition to such instance where political belief nurtures political conflict, political belief is also nurtured by political conflict, which means that political conflict helps form an individual's political belief system. This section finalizes the thesis by showing how political belief system of an individual feeds upon and gets nurtured by political conflict.

As opposed to Cartesian dualistic philosophy of consciousness where knowledge of the self is achieved via introspection, the ego can only understand itself by positing itself as an individual who is summoned by another individual. Dialogue is ousted in modern philosophy "by the advent of the Cartesian, self-centered, autonomous, and universal subject, who develops its dialectic of philosophical analysis as *the* method of correct reasoning" (Nikulin, 2010, p. xii). The all-permeating subjectivity of the author attempts to suspend itself and thereby protecting itself from itself and from its own intrusion into things, it fails most of the time. Cartesian self-isolating autonomous subject gets rid of dialogue and claims to espouse the method of correct reasoning, thus excluding other consciousnesses. In other words, the individual's understanding herself as a being capable of action and possessing freedom is enabled by her acknowledgement of the claims of other free individuals (Fichte, 1976, p. 7). Similarly, the other's comprehension of her also depends on being recognized as such. Therefore, mutual recognition is necessary for human beings who are capable of "I-hood". Hegel, influenced by Fichte, also developed the idea of self-consciousness with relation to the other as part of an intersubjective relationship and the idea of intersubjective recognition. "Self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself, in that, and by the fact that it exists for another self-consciousness; that is to say, it is only by being acknowledged or 'recognized'" (Hegel, 1807, p. 229). The encounter between two self-consciousnesses that seek to affirm the certainty of being

for them is, Hegel calls, the struggle for recognition (ibid, p. 232). This conflict makes up the totality of social relations, which operates on an integration-disintegration continuum of conflict, in which each consciousness seeks to confirm its self-existence and independence through confrontation with the other.

The emphasis on political conflict as being peaceful and non-violent based on dialogue and confrontation needs to be discussed within the context of Hegel's philosophy and political violence. In politics, violence has been seen as a powerful component of history, like force is an integral part of physical phenomena (Ruggiero, 2006, p. 175). The analysis of social change has long incorporated the notion of violence as an instrument to be utilized for the acceleration of historical processes. Even war may stimulate such an acceleration by contributing to the breach of the status quo and to the enhancement of revolutionary processes. However, this view falls short of considering that "war has now been subsumed in the economic process" and contemporary wars strengthen the economic domination while they also bring devastation (Revelli, 2004, p. 58). Violence as an instrument to put an end to violence exercised against them is a violence that becomes too similar to that they criticized, which has led activists to question the logic that inspires violent means of action (Morucci, 2004; Guagliardo, 2002; Dellwo *et al.*, 1998). Both war and terrorism mobilize values, strengthening bonds and generating absolute situations. Such intense emotional experiences bring collective feelings together, shaping identities as opposed to the identity attributed to the enemy. In this regard, "the experience of violence is the 'perverted twin' of the experience of value commitment" (Joas, 2003, p. 19). Therefore, war is argued to possess an "educational element" and to tear down barriers to learning. Groups and nations learn, thanks to war, to adhere to new values and achieve stability through them even against their will by changing them profoundly (Hondrich, 1992). The essential difference between peaceful political conflict and political violence which is the main distinction made in this thesis shall be pointed out.

The distinction between violent conflict and non-violent political conflict marks the difference between the descriptive and normative fields of thinking in the sense that the former is avoidable while having produced, at the same time, results that have triggered the development of social relations whereas the latter, non-violent political conflict, is a necessary condition for the formation of person's political belief system.

The opinion hereby defended is the normative non-desirability of violence that should be avoided whenever possible, whereas political conflict based on dialogic destruction is a necessary condition a person should be attending to establish her self-consciousness and authenticity. The individuality implies negation, but not violence or war in the severest case within the framework of this thesis. On the contrary, Hegel writes that “The relation of two self-consciousnesses is their struggle for proving themselves and each other through a life-and-death struggle” (1977, p. 130). The two selves become embroiled in a “life and death struggle” to prove their existence and freedom to one another. Thus, each also, coincidentally, allows the other an opportunity to show that she is free, too. Against the interpretation of thinkers who understand that Hegel finds violence and war desirable (Inwood, 1992), some other interpreters note that the life and death struggle is not meant to be a struggle to stay alive. Rather, it is a struggle by two selves to show how little life matters to them, which results from the utterly abstract and indeed primitive notion of selfhood and freedom that is entertained by each self. Each self seeks to confirm its existence or “being-for-self” by trying to kill the other with no care for its own life. “Hegel’s analysis thus shows how a primitive, abstract and self-absorbed conception of identity leads to the inflicting of the most severe violence on others” (Houlgate, 2013, p. 94). Therefore, the logical lesson to be learned from the life and death struggle is that “life is as essential to it as pure self-consciousness” (Hegel, 1977, p. 132). For, only when both parties remain alive can one recognize the other as a pure self (Houlgate, 2013, pp. 94-96). Furthermore, although the destruction brought about by political violence can well be shown to be contributory to the political belief system of an individual in terms of making antagonisms visible and concrete and thus creating a ground for expression, the main difference, I would argue, between the contribution of violent and non-violent political conflict is that whereas peaceful political conflict is required normatively for the individual’s authenticity and unique voice, political violence is not required at all. As a matter of fact, Hegel’s take on political violence do not, in every interpretation, resonate as normative, but only descriptive:

It is obvious that, for there to be recognition, the master, who makes me exist simply by looking at me, must not be killed! Human consciousness is not acquired through reason, but through desire.

Adversaries thus enter into conflict in order to gain recognition. The desire for recognition prevents them from killing each other. How would they be able to recognize each other if one of them died or they were both killed? (Girard, 2009, pp. 31-32).

Therefore, Girard argues, Hegel does not arrive at a sufficiently radical conception of violence. In the case of war, for instance, people are left in misery whose primary needs are not catered for, thus self-determination becomes a luxury. It is true that political violence does not equal to war, though. Thus in less severe cases than war in which armed parties clash each other, political violence might be beneficial with regards to self-determination. However, the self-determination process does not apply to the person who loses her life within the course of life and death struggle, or if we are to make it more concrete, during war. It is only the survivors who can benefit from the opportunities that are facilitated in the aftermath of war. However, the framework that justifies the positive contribution of political violence does not hold in the framework of this thesis. All in all, peaceful political conflict is a necessary condition that should be attended for the formation of political belief system; nevertheless, political violence should be avoided normatively speaking, although it might have some positive input to the formation of political belief system as well in the last analysis, which would be a work of another project.

The recognition of different, and sometimes mutually exclusive, political belief systems promotes differentiation. Formation of individual's political belief system as to who she is and how she understands life is based on the confrontation which results from conflictual relations with the other. This "other" need not be the significant other, but just anyone else than the person herself with whom she forms intersubjective relations. Thus, whereas intrapersonal conflict has been introduced in the second chapter as an umbrella category of political conflict, it only happens after interpersonal struggle for recognition. The fight, the conflict expose conflictual relations one holds within her political belief system. Only after coming to the realization of the faultiness of belief elements or of the linkage between belief elements within her political belief system can she dig into her political understanding of herself, or her "political map", thus experiencing an intrapersonal type of conflict.

Political belief has been defined as a type of belief with a self-conscious dimension of discourse that is shaped upon active reflection which is fallible and which has a great potential to lead to action. Every phrase of this definition indicates a relation to political conflict: self-conscious, discursive, involving active reflection, fallible and having great potential to lead to action. How does self-consciousness of political belief relate to political conflict? Self-consciousness of one's political belief system points out at her ability to sort out her stance in her environment and in the world more broadly. Self-consciousness is formed through knowing itself in relation to the knowing of another. It is "the reflection out of the being of the world of sense and perception, and is essentially the return from *otherness*" (Hegel, 1979, p. 105). Encounter with the other brings self-consciousness into being; thus the other is a necessary condition for forming self-consciousness. The other brings a standpoint according to which the self can understand and assess its being in the world. This is the process of political conflict that the self goes through first. Self-consciousness is movement towards the other. The motionless tautology of "I am I" is immediately superseded by the movement towards the other. Consciousness is the first movement of the self towards the object of perception in the world. Self-consciousness follows consciousness as the second movement that becomes unified with the first one. Self-consciousness which characterizes its object as a negative element to its existence learns through experience that the object is independent. Life is as essential to self-consciousness as pure self-consciousness is. The immediate self-consciousness learns "I" as absolute mediation and has lasting independence as its essential moment. The first experience dissolves that simple unity. It means that there is a pure self-consciousness, which is formed immediately after confrontation and which is independent, and there is a consciousness which is not purely for itself but for another in the form of *thinghood* (Hegel, 1979, p. 115). The relation of two self-consciousnesses is their struggle for proving themselves and each other through a life-and-death struggle. They engage in this struggle since they must raise their certainty of being for themselves. Only through staking one's life that freedom is won. Only thus is the essential being of self-consciousness not just being and just the immediate form in which it appears, but rather that it is pure being-for-itself. The individual may be recognized as a person if she has not risked her life, but she has not attained to the truth of this recognition as an independent self-consciousness. Similarly, everyone should seek the other's death just as she stakes her own life,

because she values the other no more than herself. Her essential being is present to her in the form of another self-consciousness which is outside of her and must get rid of her self-externality. The other is an immediate consciousness that is entangled in a variety of relationships for her and she must regard her otherness as a pure being-for-self or as an absolute negation. Since life is the natural setting of consciousness and independence without absolute negativity, death is the natural negation of consciousness, negation without independence (Hegel, 1979, pp. 104-123). Hegel bases his conception of self-consciousness on negation and the stage of self-consciousness, i.e. life, on its opposition with death. Thus, self-consciousness, since it takes stage and becomes meaningful in life, transforms into an issue of the contention between life and death, both for the person's self-consciousness and for other self-consciousnesses.

After the establishment of self-consciousness comes the dimension of discourse. Discourse is a term that designates every symbolic order of intentional processes of communication and understanding, thus referring to the context of an "interpretive community" as the frame of its existence (Fish, 1998, p. 419). Discourse changes in time together with the interpretive community; therefore it is dependent on the temporary belief elements and belief systems of people. The concept of symbolic order invokes discursive rules, representing a deeper structure of linkage or profundity when compared to plain speech. Discourse, with its deeper connotations, manifests the meaningful connection among belief elements with its symbolic power. The connection or linkage among belief elements becomes articulable thanks to the symbolic expression presented by discourse. On one hand, discourses display recurrent patterns of rules, allocations, and arrangements, which make them meaningful in terms of representing the content of political belief systems. On the other hand, contingencies, shifts, and displacements intervene in the ordered recurrence. Thus there is tensional relationship within the confines of discourses between recurrence and contingency. At the end of the second chapter, I put forward the necessary elements for the expression of incompatibility of beliefs in terms of positional difference: actors, interaction and item. Actors coincide with persons who have formed self-consciousness through confrontation with the other. Interaction, on the other hand, realizes itself on the dimension of discourse that has been used for the definition of political belief. The dimension of discourse is constituted by language

and interaction. Without language, belief cannot be formed, just as without the other self-consciousness cannot exist. Therefore, language that creates discourse is one of the necessary conditions for the formation of political belief. When self-consciousness is established and the self realizes itself through confrontation with the other, language comprises the tool for exchange. The cognitive authority regarding the beliefs that inform us on what is true and what is false, or what is moral or immoral is based on the exchange on the level of discourse. Authority beliefs in a political belief system that establish the truth or falsity of a belief element or a proposition represent political conflict with other authority beliefs in various different political belief systems. The conflict comes about on the dimension of discourse and the relevant battle is fought on the dimension of discourse again. This is a constant battle that makes up the integration-disintegration continuum of conflict that dominates every aspect of social relations. Therefore, discourse is not merely a language game that occurs outside of practices, routines and institutions. On the contrary, discourse implies contexts of relationships clearly. Habermas offers an idealization of the practice of modern democracy in terms of communicative reason that combines rationalism and universalism (Habermas, 1987, Chapter XI). Constitutional democracy marks a certain level of the development of reason and understanding to be reconstructed critically. This is a progressivist theory indicating that democracy is dependent on the essentials of reason. Chantal Mouffe criticizes this for it implies “presenting the institutions of liberal Western societies as offering the rational solution to the problem of human coexistence; as the solution that other people will necessarily adopt when they cease being irrational” (Mouffe, 1996, p. 4). A democratic politics cannot be established upon comprehensive consensus. On every level of social relations conflict, clash of interests and social contradictions exist. “...the specificity of liberal democracy as a new political form of society consists in the *legitimation of conflict* and the refusal to eliminate it through the imposition of an authoritarian order” (ibid, p. 8, italics added). Dynamism between consent and dissent needs to be allowed by political institutions for the extended existence of liberal democracy. Thus, the centrality of political conflict within discourse as a necessary condition for the formation of political belief is significant for the sake of liberal democracy.

Active reflection is about the energy and labor that are put into the process of searching the “truth”. The truth hereunder is not Truth (with a capital initial), but rather it is the person’s set of belief elements forming her political belief system that fits best to her self-consciousness. The search for her own truth based on her own judgment is shaped through confrontation and she becomes conscious of her political stance only compared to other stances. The journey of seeking truth and meaning is a necessary condition for the definition of political belief and this feeds again on political conflict. Everybody has her own specific set of authority truths that relate conflictually to her environment and to her world. Active reflection on the authority beliefs and the connection between the belief elements presents a person as a political animal. The confrontation need not be multiple; that is, she can establish her political belief system vis-à-vis a specific political belief system that she assesses as her enemy as Schmitt explains (Schmitt, 1927, p. 26). Active reflection is an extension of the process of the formation of self-consciousness. However, this does not mean that her political belief system takes its source only from a definite set of rules within one framework, because rules are shared among political belief systems that are in constant interaction with each other both conflictually and harmonically in terms of their political belief elements. This exactly points out at the integration-disintegration continuum of conflict that constitutes social relations.

Fallibility is another necessary condition for political belief that feeds upon political conflict in essence. Fallibility of a political belief signifies its position in search of truth. Conclusive evidence on a matter that settles an issue takes the issue at hand out of the domain of the political. It now becomes knowledge, which is again open to political usage, since not everybody can get convinced by the conclusive evidence even when they are presented with one; nevertheless the introduction of conclusive evidence on a matter need not turn the matter into common sensical knowledge to be regarded as so. This marks the significance of the distinction that I have made in the third chapter as to knowledge versus belief. Fallibility of political belief makes it open both to manipulation and to conflict. Manipulation also creates conflict by itself. Thus, political belief with its property of fallibility feeds upon political conflict, as well.

Last of all, political belief has been defined with a great potential to leading to action, the roots of which feed upon political conflict. Political belief orients person’s

actions towards what she believes to be right or wrong. The decisions of her daily life are based on her political belief system out of which she cares for herself all the time. When an action is taken, she activates cognitively the relevant belief elements within her belief system and here conflict unfolds. She needs to evaluate her decisions in the light of the political belief system that she has established through confrontation. As has been explained, she might experience intrapersonal conflict as a result of the accumulative conflict at this stage. Political beliefs have a great potential to lead to action because the belief system that one has consists also of authority beliefs that shape her morality. Moral decisions based on one's political belief system feed on conflict as there is always an antagonism between right and wrong. In conclusion, the five necessary conditions (self-conscious, discourse, active reflection, fallible and potential to lead to action) that make up political belief feed upon and stem from political conflict.

The indication that there is a necessary relation between the formation of one's own political belief system and political conflict forms the backbone of this project. Considering that the five necessary conditions that generate political belief system are necessarily linked to political conflict, we can infer that the existence of political conflict is a positive asset. First, we approve the existence of political conflict with regards to the formation of political belief system, and afterwards we affirm the *necessity* of it. The struggle for recognition is built upon the person's self-consciousness that is, in turn, built upon confrontation with another. Recognition of a person or a group by other persons or groups requires a level of self-consciousness that is able to present and represent itself. Therefore, not only self-consciousness but also struggle for recognition feeds upon political conflict inherently.

Embracing the idea that political conflict is essentially a valuable asset for human flourishing may lead to the ideal society where the adherents of conflicting norms contest over the direction their society should take. Social pluralism, as opposed to totalitarianism, thrives when politically active and influential groups within the society hold conflicting ethical and political values and principles. The normative conflict that is born out of pluralism gives rise to systematic reflection and criticism. Berlin answers the Kantian question "In what kind of world is political philosophy – the kind of discussion and argument in which it consists – in principle is possible?" as "Only in a world where ends collide" (Berlin, 1962, p. 149). A society that is

dominated by a single goal can only discuss about the best means to attain this end. Berlin makes a connection between the existence of pluralism and conflict in order that political philosophy can perk up. For serious questions about political ends or values to be asked, we need a society where there is no total acceptance of any single end or value, where people disagree about the purpose of social relations. To the extent that there is room for dialogue based on conflict about the values that can and should guide a society's collective future, the society is pluralist. For the society to be pluralist, individuals should be open to conflict and understand that their political belief systems feed upon political conflict, as well as their experience of social relations does.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the conceptual analysis of political conflict within the field of conflict in general, Rummel's account of conflict has been cited. Rummel's position suggests that every social setting is a conflict-space in which opposing dispositions are present and in rivalry, thus there is a necessary relation between power and conflict. Upon this relation causes of conflict are recounted in terms of a power-related and context-dependent categorization. It has been noted that a single cause for political conflict cannot be found which underlies every instance since conflict is context-specific, multi-causal and multi-dimensional. Rummel's account of political conflict is given to disclose the centrality and ever-presence of political conflict in social relations. This understanding is contradicted with the tradition of contract theory which is outstandingly represented by Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*. Hobbes takes up conflict as violent and destructive, observed in the state of nature. He conceptualizes the political institutionalization based on the social contract that prescribes the giving up of the freedom in the state of nature where every human being is a threat to every other human being in exchange for the elimination of conflict and threat. By connecting the idea of "political conflict as an asset" with the notion of political and power, the ever-presence of conflict is shown to be working in contribution to our personal political belief system. Thus the benefit taken from the experience of political conflict saves the person from being reduced to anonymity and preserves her unique being and authenticity.

In the section "2.1. Conflict as Destruction?: An Examination of Destructivity" the destructive occurrence of conflict is examined in terms of dialectic and dialogue. Accordingly, it is indicated that destructivity that is brought along by conflict is a positive asset that contributes to the personal political belief system. The need to think over what destructive and constructive means and what the relation between the two is by examining dialectic and dialogue are pointed out. In the section "2.2. Dialectic and Conflict: How Dialogue is Conflictual" the destructive nature of

dialectic is mentioned with regard to its conflictual implications. The benefits of the conflict exposed during dialectic and dialogue are mentioned with references to Hegel's philosophy. Also, the notion of dialogue as conflictual is contrasted to Habermas's conceptualization of conversation in terms of a final agreement between the speakers since the consensus model that he suggests ignores the insurmountable conflict of personal exchange as Arendt points out (1961, p. 241). The productivity of dialogue thanks to its destructivity and its relation to the building of self-consciousness are mentioned with an emphasis on John Stuart Mill's thoughts in *On Liberty*.

In the section "3.1. What is Conflict?: A Conceptual Analysis" the contested nature of conflict has been highlighted, as well as its connection to the concept of power mentioned. Political conflict's position within the category of conflict is pointed out by making a distinction between violent and peaceful conflict. Conflict comes across as a philosophical category that denotes the clash between power holders in the struggle to become manifest. In addition, as a distinct category of social behavior, different parties try to attain something that they cannot have at the same time. Thus, conflict can be thought of as a continuous process or as a potentiality that never ceases to exist. Rummel's account of political conflict is that he understands that the concept of conflict is multidimensional, enveloping a family of forms, which forms the basic perspective of this work in terms of the definition of political conflict. In the section "3.2. Causes of Conflict: A Power-Related and Context-Dependent Categorization" it has been explained that there is no single cause for political conflict since it is context-specific, multi-causal and multi-dimensional. Political and institutional factors, socioeconomic factors and resource and environmental factors are sorted that may constitute a cause, dynamic or impact of conflict in combination with one another. In addition, it has been mentioned that the context within which power relations occur determines the cause of conflict, which indicates that there is a large category of context-dependent conflicts. This category is composed of infinitely diverse contexts that can be clustered into the realms of politics, economy, science, religion, academic, environment, class, gender, race, nation, sect, etc. In the section "3.3. Types of Conflict: A Subject-Dependent Categorization" subject-dependent types of conflict have been listed and explained, which are interpersonal, intrapersonal, intragroup and intergroup conflict. Political conflict can be

interpersonal, intrapersonal, intragroup and intergroup depending on the agents who are involved in. In the fourth chapter entitled “Political Conflict Under Examination”, the section “4.1. The Problem of “Political” Conflict: Power, Conflict and the Political” establishes the triangular necessary relation between power, conflict and the political. Chantal Mouffe’s account of the “political” has been given that understands that the political is the dimension of antagonism that exists inherently in all human society (Mouffe, 1999, p. 754). To support the antagonism that is inherent at the level of political, Carl Schmitt’s political distinction of friend and enemy to which political actions and motives can be reduced has been explained. Also, the positional difference between Chantal Mouffe’s agonistic pluralism and Jürgen Habermas’s deliberative democracy has been examined in terms of the existence of political conflict in social relations. The dimension of power and antagonism cannot, and need not, be eradicated from political life. The section “4.2. Political Conflict and Clash of Interests” displays the relation between political conflict and clash of interests as opposed to the political conflict that occurs out of clash of beliefs. Clash of interests is about the concern of different parties for getting what they want. Having made a distinction on conflict over scarce resources and conflict over belief systems that constitute personal world views, clash of interests can be grouped into the conflict over scarce resources and distribution or redistribution of wealth. Having clarified that what is at stake in this thesis is regarding the political conflict resulting from clash of beliefs, in the section “4.3. Political Conflict and Clash of Beliefs” the relation between political conflict and clash of beliefs has been established in the sense that one of the major determinants of political belief is the clash of beliefs, which is dwelled upon in the third chapter. The first section of the fifth chapter “5.1. The Nature of Political Belief” examines the properties and characteristics of political belief and in the second section “5.2. Political Belief as Source of Political Conflict Development”, distinction between open and closed belief systems is made and it is noted that confrontation between closed minds as a cognitive state inevitably leads to conflict. Preparedness to act, claiming authoritativeness, expansionism and tendency to be violated have arisen as four primary sources of political conflict on which political beliefs develop conflictual relations to each other. The fifth chapter connects the notion of political conflict with political belief in this regard. The sixth chapter starts with the section “6.1. Three Functions of Political Conflict: Parties of Conflict” which has examined

three outcomes of political conflict based on the parties that go into conflictual relations with each other. The second section “6.2. Functions of Political Conflict According to the Characteristics of Political Belief Systems” has handled the outcome of political conflict in terms of the characteristics of political belief systems that have been put forward in the fourth chapter. The third section “6.3. Political Conflict as Rhetoric of Control: A Critical Point of View Against Agency” constitutes a criticism of the distinction between knowledge and political belief that this work has done in the fourth chapter with Foucault and Nietzsche’s take on knowledge. The fourth section “6.4. Political Belief as Both Nurturing and Nurtured by Political Conflict” has established the positive outcome of political conflict in terms of bringing together self-consciousness with the requirements of political belief systems that form the personal belief system.

The questions that have been addressed in this thesis are not new; many people have dealt with the subject of conflict, whether they see the conflict as political or not. Political conflict underpins the formation of our self-consciousness. Becoming aware of one’s political belief system is possible by getting into conflict with others. This is why this personal project of searching for a ground to contributing to the idea political conflict can be beneficial and to understanding how it can function to contribute to the fulfillment of personal self-consciousness by leading to an examination of political belief systems is the center of this thesis. Underlying the importance of this work is the need to understand that involvement in political conflict is necessary for the establishment of political belief system. Thus, the significance of scepticism that meets with political beliefs has been pointed out. In the search of truth, embracing political conflict and embracing scepticism to check against our political belief systems that tell us how to live are the cornerstone. Regardless of given objectives of political systems that demand to determine our unique lives, that demand to impose predetermined decent subjectivities on us, we should see the political decisions that we make for ourselves and by ourselves. Especially when it is the case that the society is deeply shaped by political systems that set out to making humans easier to control, thus creating a model of “good citizen” to be fit in. Both totalitarian regimes and more democratic ones impose a daily life style to each and every citizen and evaluate their citizens on the basis of some check list. The risk, while being a good citizen before the political system, is to

refrain from political conflict, thus failing to accomplish one's authenticity. Any definition that comes from above would be inaccurate, anyway, since each person is to attend political conflict by herself.

Political conflict does not mean conflicting for the sake of conflict. It has an aim. The aim is to build one's self-consciousness and one's authenticity by checking her political belief system against other individuals. Involvement in political conflict should strive for constructing one's own meaning of life that shapes her political belief system together with scepticism. Otherwise, it becomes a conflict that has little, if any, contribution to the formation of self-consciousness. The self construction ability of human beings refers to the possibility of living an authentic life that is special for the person herself. There is a value judgment involved "in the name of which the rebel refuses to approve the condition in which he finds himself" (Camus, 1956, p. 15). "Awareness develops from every act of rebellion: the sudden, dazzling perception that there is something in man with which he can identify himself" (Camus, 1956, p. 11). Rebellion; that is, involvement in political conflict, makes a human being "aware". Every act of rebellion is a contribution to the level of awareness of the person. The more rebellious you are, the more self-conscious a person you are. The act of rebellion carries a person far beyond the point she reaches by simply refusing. Refusing does not entail active involvement in the process; it is only a rejection. What matters is to exceed the bounds that she fixed for her antagonist. Thus, what was at first her obstinate resistance becomes the whole woman now. She becomes self-conscious; she proclaims the part of herself that she wants to be respected preferable to everything. It becomes for her the supreme good. "With rebellion awareness is born" (Camus, 1956, p. 11). However, there should not be a tendency within this understanding to romanticize political conflict and its effect on our political belief systems. As has been emphasized, the active reflection and the aim to build one's self-consciousness and authenticity should be involved in the process. It requires a constant struggle with both the agents around us and with our own self, which forms the methodology of destruction.

How to confront political conflict matters most. The "how" of it is the methodology of destruction caused by the effect of political conflict on political belief systems. All political contexts can address to human reason in one way or another; no opposition between reason and belief has been drawn on. It is understood for the aims of this

work that a person's life belongs only to her and only she is entitled to expose herself to political conflicts in order to examine her political belief system on which she operates in life. This means that any intervention from outside with an intention to change the person is despised. This would be a blow against the formation of her self-consciousness and her authenticity. Therefore, imposition of political conflict on individuals is denied. Instead, she should be willing to construct the meaning of her own life through the building of her self-consciousness and through the examination of her political belief system. In the adventure of self-building, any stereotyped form of education is rejected because of its disrespect for the person's authenticity. In addition, such formal education kills her wonder for herself and for the world, accepting rules and regulations that are taught to her.

In this work the necessity and inevitability, as well as the positive contribution of political conflict to political belief systems have been defended. It would be very interesting to set out determining some criteria that help measure methodologically the level of involvement in political conflicts and the level of critical thinking and examining one's own political belief system. This could be an interesting point of departure for a future project.

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