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Religion within the Limits of Democracy

Some Models for Southeast Europe

Abstract

In this paper, I identify some examples of cultural clash that involve religion, review some proposed solutions to such clashes, and discuss whether religion in any sense can be part of that solution. I also provide some models of religion within the limits of democracy – models which, I suggest, are relevant to the democracies in Southeast Europe. In presenting these models, I claim that a fruitful approach is found in the recent work of the Canadian philosopher, Charles Taylor.

Key words

cultural clash, democracy, culture, Southeast Europe, Charles Taylor, Samuel Huntington, Jürgen Habermas, Jacques Maritain

Samuel Huntington's controversial 1993 essay, "The Clash of Civilizations?,"[1] expanded in 1996 – with the question mark removed – as *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*,[2] made popular the view that, in the contemporary world – i.e., after the fall of communism and the end of the Cold War – the primary source of conflict will be people's cultural, including their religious, identities, and not ideology or economics.[3] Huntington's analysis acquired a significant following after the events of "9/11" – the attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York City and on the Pentagon, on September 11, 2001 – and, even some 10 years after these events, it continues to influence how many people see international political and social relations.

[1]
Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?," *Foreign Affairs* 72 (Summer 1993), pp. 22–49.

[2]
Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

[3]
Huntington writes: "The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural." ("The Clash of Civilizations?," p. 22) In the subsequent book, Huntington writes: "In the post-Cold War world, the most important distinctions among peoples are not ideological, political, or economic. They are cultural. Peoples and nations are attempting to answer the most basic question humans can face: Who are we? And they are answering that question in the traditional way human beings have answered it, by reference to the things that mean most to them. People define themselves in terms of ancestry, *religion*, language, history, values, customs, and institutions. They identify with cultural groups: tribes, ethnic groups, religious communities, nations, and, at the broadest level, civilizations." *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, p. 21 [emphasis mine].

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Huntington's thesis of a clash of *civilizations* has been challenged by many,[4] but less grandiosely it seems that one might still claim that there are clashes of *cultures,* particularly where religion is involved. Recently, in works such as *A Secular Age*, by Charles Taylor, *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, by Hent de Vries, José Casanova's *Public Religions in the Modern World*, and Jürgen Habermas's "Religion in the Public Sphere,"[5] much attention has been given to how religion – at least in the sense of 'that which expresses one's ultimate commitments'– is part of, or is drawn into, debates about putative clashes of culture, particularly within democracies. For example, in the United States, the phenomenon of 'red' states and 'blue' states – marking differences between the urban and rural, traditionalists and progressives, and internationalists and protectionists – not infrequently also reflects deep disagreement about the relation of religion and the secular, as well as about religion itself.

The place of religion in the public sphere, then, is a challenge for democracies. It has been a challenge for long-standing democracies, such as the United States, Canada, France, and Great Britain, a challenge complicated by their distinctive respective histories and understandings of democratic principles, particularly the nature of human rights. The challenge is different, and per-haps even greater, for the new democracies that do not have a lengthy history of civil society, where religion has long been marginalized, and where open discourse among believers and non-believers about the place of religion has been limited or forbidden. Indeed, there may even be some expectation – for participation in international agreements and covenants, such as those of the United Nations or of the European Union – that there be a clear response to this challenge in a way that respects the human rights of all citizens, as well as the particular social and political culture of the state or nation concerned.

In this paper, I want to identify some examples within democracies of cul-tural clash that involves religion, review some proposed solutions to such clashes, and discuss whether religion in any sense can be part of that solution. Here, then, I provide some models of religion within the limits of democracy – models which are relevant to the democracies in Southeastern Europe pre-cisely because they are new democracies, and because these models have benefitted, at least indirectly, from the experience of the lengthy histories and traditions of democratic regimes in Europe, South Asia, and North America. In presenting these models, I will claim that a particularly fruitful approach is found in the recent work of the Canadian philosopher, Charles Taylor.

1. Defining 'culture' and 'cultural clash'

Before turning to the specific issue identified in the title of this paper, it may be helpful to consider briefly what is meant by 'culture.'[6]

1.1. Culture

The word 'culture' is an ambiguous one; it is used in many senses, and there is substantial disagreement on what, exactly, the term means.

The classic definition of 'culture' is generally held to be that provided by the anthropologist, Sir Edward Burnett Tylor, at the beginning of his *Primitive Culture* (1871),[7] Tylor writes:

"Culture (…) is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."

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But, since Tylor's time, the term 'culture' has come to be understood in a variety of ways. For example, in their *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* (1952),[8] Alfred L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn note some 164 different senses of the term. Moreover, in the past quarter century, much of the research and discussion in the social sciences and humanities has adopted a rather expansive model of the notion of culture. Today, for example, we speak of a 'culture of science' or a 'culture of health,' which seems roughly equivalent to 'ideology.' Thus, the term 'culture' may be explained, in a very broad sense, as 'a collection of representations or ideas shared by and pervasive through a group of individuals.' Such a description provides a heuristic norm or a regulative idea in thinking about culture without being a complete definition – or even claiming that 'culture' can be defined. Moreover, on this account, it is clear that religion – in the etymological sense of *religare*, as that which ties, fastens or binds people to one another – is at least part of culture if not, in its particular instances, a culture itself.

1.2. Cultural clash

Pacē Huntington, 'clash' generally suggests an event of relatively short duration, as distinct from a struggle or a war. Of course, some clashes repeat, and so overall may not be short term, but they still are distinguished from conflicts that are more comprehensive, such as a war. The notion of 'clash,' nevertheless, usually indicates that there is not only a difference of opinion or opposition, but a confrontation and conflict, where emotions tend to run high and, so, may often involve violence. We can speak of clashes, in varying degrees, such as misunderstandings, disagreements, inconsistencies, impasses, conflicts, and perhaps even incommensurabilities.

Clashes occur among individuals, teams, communities, classes, ideologies, and more. A clash of *cultures*, then, can have the form, of cultural misunderstandings, cultural disagreements, cultural incommensurabilities, cultural impasses, and overt cultural conflicts.

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See Samuel P. Huntington (ed.), *The Clash of Civilizations?: The Debate* (New York: Foreign Affairs, 1996); See also Edward W. Said, "The Clash of Ignorance," *The Nation*, 22 October 2001, pp. 11–13; Amartya Sen, "What Clash of Civilizations?," *Slate Magazine*, 29 March 2006, www.slate.com/id/2138731/, accessed 15 December 2011; this essay is adapted from Sen's book *Identity and Violence* (New York: Norton, 2006); J. Fox, "Paradigm Lost: Huntington's Unfulfilled Clash of Civilizations Prediction into the 21st Century," *International Politics* 42 (2005), pp. 428–457; Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, Denisa Mindruta, "Was Huntington Right? Testing Cultural Legacies and the Civilization Border," *International Politics* 39 (2002), pp. 193–213.

5
Jürgen Habermas, "Religion in the Public Sphere," *European Journal of Philosophy* 14 (2006), pp. 1–25. See also his works: *The*

Dialectics of Secularization: *On Reason and Religion* (with Joseph Ratzinger) (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005); *Between Naturalism and Religion: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008).

6
See my "Culture and Pluralism in Philosophy," in: William Sweet (ed.), *Philosophy, Culture, and Pluralism*, (Aylmer, QC: Editions du scribe, 2002).

7
Edward Burnett Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom*, 2 vols. (London: J. Murray, 1871).

8
Alfred L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, *Culture: a Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* (Cambridge, MA: The Museum, 1952).

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2. Cultural clash and religion

There is, arguably, a wide range of examples of cultural clash, Disagreements
– particularly when they are about values, beliefs, and practices, and not just
facts – can be, or can lead to, clashes. Some clashes occur when there is
a deep lack of mutual understanding, and the confrontation immediate and
direct, such as that between the wealthy and the dispossessed, the urban and
the rural, and the young and the old. And some clashes may occur when the
parties seem to understand one another all too well – when the disagreement
is not just over a value or belief, but over sets of values and sets of beliefs,
and the corresponding social, political, and economic structures that go with
them – such as those who press the demands of the market versus those who
emphasise non-economic values.

A number of the cultural clashes most often referred to today, however, are
ones involving religion.[9] Huntington himself writes: "The revitalization of
religion throughout much of the world is reinforcing these cultural differ-
ences."[10] Among the more obvious examples are the confrontations between
secular authorities and religious groups (and, conversely, religious authorities
and secularists) – but also those within and among religious groups them-
selves. For example, we see clashes among Catholics and Protestants; Shi'a
and Sunni; Hindu, Muslim, and Christian, and so on. In a more subtle way
these latter clashes or conflicts may even be "internal" to a religion – e.g.,
between "moderates" or "progressives," and "traditionalists."

Consider the following examples of conflicts and apparent clashes that involve
religion and that have taken place in contemporary secular democracies:

In India, particularly over the past two decades, there have been increased
clashes between Hindu nationalist groups and Muslims,[11] but also between
these Hindu groups and Christians – what is called "communal violence."
These clashes include the demolition of the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya in 1992
(allegedly perpetrated by Hindu organizations like the Shiv Sena Party, the
Bharatiya Janata Party, and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad); the Godhra Train
fire in which 59 Hindu pilgrims returning from the disputed site of the Babri
Mosque perished in a train fire at the Godhra railway station in Gujarat; and
the subsequent Gujarat riots of 2002, where it is estimated that over a thou-
sand people – mostly Muslims – were killed. Such clashes continue to this
day. For example, organisations such as the SIMI (Students Islamic Move-
ment of India) are believed by many to be responsible for the 11 July 2006
Mumbai train bombings, in which nearly 200 people were killed.

On a more modest scale, in Canada, there have been clashes and conflicts
among established communities and minorities or recent immigrants (par-
ticularly those from Asia and Africa who bring with them strong religious
commitments). For example, in 2007, the town council of Hérouxville, in
the Canadian province of Québec, passed a motion to establish a "code of
behavior for immigrants, concerning practices which the residents deemed
unsuitable for life in Hérouxville – such as carrying a weapon to school (even
if symbolic)" – an obvious reference to Sikhism – "and covering one's face"[12]
– a reference to the Islamic practice of wearing the *hijab*. The council also de-
clared that stoning women or burning them alive, female genital cutting, and
the like were prohibited. This resolution sparked a nation-wide debate about
how to address and engage religion-related cultural difference and, as a result,
there has been an ongoing debate about the "reasonable accommodation" of
difference.[13]

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On a wider scale, one can note the clashes and tensions between southern European countries (where Christianity and the Enlightenment traditions have formed the ethos) and the nearby predominantly Islamic countries. One example of such clash is over the issue of the admission of Turkey into the European Union. While those opposed have often argued that there are a number of economic and political reasons why Turkey's accession is not possible – for example, that Turkey has opened only 11 of 35 policy chapters that need to be negotiated – many have argued that, at its root, the issue is a profound religious and cultural difference.[14]

3. Understanding Religious-Cultural Clash

How are people – particularly citizens in democracies which have a commitment to basic democratic freedoms such as freedom of religion, of association, of speech, and the like – to react and respond to such cases?

3.1 Identifying genuine clash

A first and perspicacious question is to ask whether (apparent) cultural clashes are *genuine* cultural clashes – whether the clashes are, for example, a product of differences of national or ethnic or cultural or religious identity, or whether there are more specific geo-political factors at play.

Thus, while conflicts between a "secular" West and the Islamic world, for example, may seem to some to be about religion or culture (including cultural identity), the issues at the base, it has been argued, are more political or economic – about access to resources such as oil, or about establishing spheres of economic and political influence for states or trans-national corporations. Or, again, "clashes" of religions may be surrogate conflicts arising from political domination, oppression, or colonialism – or efforts to resist

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Thus it is fair to say (as many of the critics of Huntington have pointed out) that there can be clashes of cultures *within* states and regions, and not primarily "externally," among what Huntington identifies as 'civilizations.'

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S. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, p. 28.

11

Asghar Ali Engineer, "Communal Riots – 2002," *South Asia Citizens Web*, 17 January 2003, http://www.sacw.net/2002/EngineerJan03.html, accessed 15 December 2011.

12

"Hérouxville Drops Some Rules from Controversial Code," *CBC News*, 13 February 2007, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/story/2007/02/13/qc-herouxville20070213.html, accessed 15 December 2011.

13

In February 2007, the government of the province of Québec established a two-person commission – the Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cul-tural Differences – to investigate the issue of reasonable accommodation. One of the two commissioners was Charles Taylor.

14

On 18 September 2004, Pope Benedict XVI (then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger) gave a speech to pastoral workers in the diocese of Velletri. In *Il Giornale del Popolo* (Lugano, Switzerland). Ratzinger was reported to have said: "Historically and culturally, Turkey has little in common with Europe; for this reason, it would be a great error to incorporate it into the European Union. It would be better for Turkey to become a bridge between Europe and the Arab world, or to form together with that world its own cultural continent. Europe is not a geographical concept, but a cultural one, formed in a sometimes conflictual historical process centered upon the Christian faith, and it is a matter of fact that the Ottoman Empire was always in opposition to Europe." Cited in Massimo Franco, *Parallel Empires: The Vatican and the United States – Two Centuries of Alliance and Conflict* (New York: Doubleday Religion, 2009), p. 189.

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them. For example, it is sometimes held that, despite the lengthy history of *prima facie* religious conflict in Northern Ireland, "The Troubles" – the clashes there from 1969 to 1997 – were more over economic oppression of the large working class (usually Catholic) population in the country than religion as such.

Still, many of the major clashes that one finds are *not* just economic or political, and frequently draw on other, more fundamental conflicts. Religious and cultural identities and allegiances are often the product of centuries and, therefore, far more enduring than differences of ideologies and politics. Even if the origin of some clashes is, for example, economic, they can become more broadly cultural – i.e., a matter of religious and cultural identity. Thus, clashes of established communities with new immigrants may initially have been over the availability of employment, but then were solidified over matters of race, culture, or religion. This is not to suggest, however, that cultural clashes are arbitrary or idiosyncratic. For many, debates about religion are debates about what is real and authoritative, not just about matters of private opinion or belief, and so religion will inevitably claim a place or a presence in the public arena.

3.2. Explaining clash

A second question, then, is "*Why* are there such clashes?". Some have argued that there is something characteristic of certain religious cultures that leads to opposition and conflict – for example, the tendency to have comprehensive doctrines or "universalistic" visions, or to offer universalistic solutions. Clash among some monotheistic religions, for example, seems to be due to the fact that they propose "universalistic" accounts of reality, are resistant to revision, compromise, or change, and thereby "exclude" and reject other accounts.

Some have said that cultural clashes involving religion and religious identity are due, in part, to philosophical presuppositions – for example, where one culture reflects individualism and the other has a view of the person as a fundamentally social being, or, again, where one reflects a materialist and naturalist account of reality and the other the reality of the spiritual or the transcendent. Indeed, the root of some clashes *within* religious cultures and traditions seems to be less a matter of the original revelation, and more about assumptions made concerning what human nature is.

Some argue that the source of much clash may lie elsewhere still. Here, the clash may not lie in culture as such, but in different underlying metaphysics and, thereby, epistemological *systems* and sets of values. Although it is clear that differences of culture are not absolute – after all, no member of any culture or society accepts all of that society's beliefs, values, and rules entirely – there are still broad differences among cultures on the "foundational understandings about how the world is and should be organized."[15] For example, the attitude towards authority in many countries of Asia seems to be different from what one tends to find in the West; in Asia, one does not generally place authority into question; underlying this is a metaphysical commitment to a worldview that roots epistemology, politics, justice, and ethics in authority and tradition. In the West, however, there has been a lengthy tradition of analysing, interpreting, and challenging authority, such as that found during the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and, most recently, Postmodernity.

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3.3. Models of response to clash

A third question, however, is how one – particularly one who is a member of a broadly democratic state – might respond to such clashes, be they apparent or genuine. In the philosophical literature, one notes a number of different – though not necessarily incompatible – responses. At the general level, there is a range of approaches that one might take to cultural clash, particularly that involving religion.

One response is that of Richard Rorty. In his 1993 Oxford Amnesty lecture on "Human Rights,"[16] Rorty looks at examples of clash, war, and dehumanization – at that time, between Muslims and non-Muslims in the former Yugoslavia. Rorty's response to such clash is not to provide arguments about what it is to be human, how all human beings are equal, and so on, but, rather, to concentrate "on manipulating sentiments, on sentimental education,"[17] so that people come to *feel* and *see* the world differently and adopt positive attitudes towards others. If we come to see those of other cultures and traditions as "like us,"[18] Rorty believes, we will be less likely to degrade and dehumanize them.

A second, very different response is the model of public reason described by John Rawls. Such an approach requires that people set aside their own comprehensive views of the good, that they accept a particular political theory (i.e., democratic liberalism) for procedural purposes, and that people give "publicly accessible reasons" for their views if they wish to participate in debates in the public sphere.[19] This ensures a political culture of liberty and mutual respect, where citizens take each other seriously. The job of philosophers, for Rawls, is to help to articulate this model of public reason and the corresponding basic practical principles of action.

A third kind of solution is that suggested by the recent work of Jürgen Habermas.[20] Like Rawls, Habermas believes that we need to create a political culture of mutual respect and "civility." The way to do this, however, is, first, to encourage the widest public or citizen participation possible. While politicians are expected to observe the convention of public reason, this stricture does not apply to all who wish to participate. If societies wish to encourage broad public participation, they need to avoid the creation of an asymmetrical burden on believers. So while believers may be called on to provide reasons in a way intelligible to the secularist, secularists must themselves engage in "a self-reflective transcending of a secularist self-understanding of Modernity."[21]

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See Thomas Philbeck, "Metaphysical Commitments: A Precondition of Cultural Clash," *Philosophy, Culture, and Traditions* 6 (2010), pp. 99–114.

16

Richard Rorty, "Human Rights, Rationality and Sentimentality," in: Stephen Shute, Susan Hurley (eds.), *On Human Rights* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), pp. 111–134.

17

Ibid., p. 122.

18

Ibid., p. 123.

19

John Rawls, "The Idea of Public Reason Revisited," in: *John Rawls: Collected Papers*, ed. Samuel Freeman (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999[1997]); see also John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

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See J. Habermas, "Religion in the Public Sphere;" J. Habermas , J. Ratzinger, *The Dialectics of Secularization*.

21

See J. Habermas, "Religion in the Public Sphere," p. 15.

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A somewhat different response is found in the writings of philosophers who emphasise the existence of universal ethical and political principles of dignity, respect, and human rights. Among these authors are figures such as Immanuel Kant, but also the French philosopher Jacques Maritain (who had a profound influence on the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948). On this model, persons are recognized as beings with dignity, but they are also fundamentally social beings. It is in light of these features that they have rights, but also obligations – particularly the obligation to promote civic friendship.[22] Such friendship can help to avoid or mitigate clash. This emphasis on respect of the person rejects materialism, consumerism, and moral relativism on the one hand, but also exclusivist, intolerant religion on the other.

A fifth, particularly interesting, approach, and one which offers not only a theoretical but a practical response, is that of Charles Taylor.[23] Taylor acknowledges the clash or tension between contemporary secularism and religion in the West. He also notes the emphasis in democracies on personal autonomy, authenticity, and the public sphere as a neutral, if not secular, sphere. As a philosopher who is engaged in the public sphere, he thinks that religion need respond to – and, to an extent, accept – secularism. Yet, as a Christian, he is interested in the future of Christianity in such an environment. For Taylor, there is no fundamental conflict between people with faith and those without. Clash within religion and between religion and secularism can be avoided, however, only when people of faith come to recognize the virtues of secularism, and seek to become more "catholic" – seeking "to accommodate pluralism, democracy and freedom of conscience."[24] Taylor's response to "clash," then, is to insist that people adopt a commitment to the other, acknowledge the value of human flourishing, and promote a vision of civic mutuality – and he sees this as a task for people of religious faith, perhaps even more than for the non-religious person.

There are, then, a number of theoretical models for how to respond to religious cultural clash: sentimental education, public reason, a genuinely "neutral" secularism, universal moral principles, and (religiously-inspired) dialogue. The differences in these preceding models concerning approach, process, and the role of the state, specifically concerning the presence of religion in the public sphere, are, if not evident, easily inferred. One can see, here, different models of how religion might "fit" – i.e., might have a presence – within democracy. Most of these authors do not, however, enter into detail on how these models might be implemented. Perhaps one reason for this is that suggesting how, *practically*, such approaches can work is a matter of public policy, not philosophy.

The work of Charles Taylor is, however, arguably an exception. Unlike the other authors mentioned above, Taylor has had a role in developing and articulating public policy as a candidate (four times) for political office, as the Vice President of a major political party, and most recently as a co-commissioner of the "Consultative Commission on Accommodation Practices related to Cultural Differences" established by the Canadian province of Québec.

For Taylor, the practical response is to start "at home," i.e., locally; that, before being concerned with international dialogue or dialogue with non-believers, it may prove more fruitful to address the clashes within one's own society, and attempt to create a space in which one can work with those with whom one disagrees. In his role on the "Commission on Accommodation," Taylor dealt specifically with how "reasonable accommodation" of diverse religious practices (such as wearing a kirpan or a crucifix) should be managed, what

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model of secularism – or, better, laicity – should be adopted, and how this might inform both political and judicial decisions.[25] Taylor's answer is that reasonable accommodation is *not* required if the practice interferes with the function of a person who serves the public, if it contravenes state neutrality, or, more generally, if the practice – even wearing a religious symbol – has (or is perceived to have) a discriminating character. Taylor does, however, admit that this is context dependent – that a strongly secular Québec, for example, has a higher standard of state neutrality (e.g., regarding public prayer or the display of religious symbols, such as a crucifix) than a less strongly secular "rest of Canada."

Each of the authors referred to above offers a model, and provides a way, of addressing cultural clash – particularly, clash that involves religion. They are models that are designed especially for those who live in contemporary liberal democracies. Without denying that many citizens of democratic states see the importance and value of religion, all of these models propose a way of resolving or dissolving clash by understanding religion *within* the limits of democracy.

4. The role of religion in responding to cultural clash

Religion, as we have seen, has been drawn into, and has become part of, the debates and disagreements among the various world views and practices, It has been part of some clashes and responsible for some clashes. Indeed, some clashes today are not just clashes of culture but clashes of *religious* cultures. But might *religion* have a role in addressing cultural clash?

Charles Taylor suggests that it does. For Taylor, Christianity offers a model of the separation of the religious from the secular – exemplified in the New Testament notion of "render unto Caesar…". But, at the same time, he argues that Christians need not and should not abandon the secular. Christianity can offer a model of charity, self sacrifice, renouncing or overcoming violence, and so on, that culminates in the notion of loving one's enemies. This recognition of the distinction of the religious and the secular is, Taylor holds, part of a means of addressing clash and, therefore, a task for Christians, which Christian institutions should better emulate. (One can extend this point, I would suggest, by noting that this view of religion is not a uniquely Christian view.)

Religion may have a role in addressing clash in other ways. Religion is, admittedly, by its very etymology, 'binding' and 'unifying,' but, to begin with, this does not mean uniformity or homogeneity. There are also tensions or

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Jacques Maritain, *The Person and the Common Good* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966), p. 47.

23

Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2007). See also David Cayley, "The Malaise of Modernity: Charles Taylor in Conversation," *Ideas* – CBC Radio (2011).

As Walter Schultz notes, in several respects, Taylor's project is one that is anticipated by and paralleled by Jacques Maritain earlier in the 20th century. Maritain's defence of an integral humanism and the articulation of rights were central in the development of the Uni-

versal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. See Walter Schultz, "Authenticity and Community: An Inquiry Concerning the Future of Christianity," *Philosophy, Culture, and Traditions* 7 (2011), pp. 31–50.

24

W. Schultz, "Authenticity and Community."

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Charles Taylor and Gérard Bouchard, *Building the Future: a Time for Reconciliation* (Quebec: Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement / Government of Quebec, 2008).

ambiguities, or even "mysteries" in religion. Such features, then, may suggest that there should be some humility in the public expression of religion. Moreover, if, as suggested above, religion is not to be identified simply with an institution or a set of doctrines, but with a "response" to an experience, it is – it must be – "open ended," for experience itself is open-ended. Finally, religion is not limited by culture. Not only do many religions thrive in different cultures, including cultures far from those of their origin, but different cultures may allow for new expressions of even traditional religions.

Addressing cultural clash, particularly clash that involves religion, then need not require passing laws or building new institutions. Taylor would suggest that the focus, instead, should be on changing public attitudes and beliefs. A more open pursuit of religion or, to be more precise, of the values that animate religion, may – scholars such as Taylor seem to suggest – be a useful first step to enlarge the space for dialogue and consensus, to influence the cultures in conflict, and, thereby, to address the clash. If one looks at the evidence of recent cultural clash, particularly in liberal democracies, efforts to bring about the resolution of conflict on the "macro-sociological level" have been remarkably *un*successful.

To extend Taylor's view, then, if religion has this character of being both unifying and open ended, of binding but conscious of its incompleteness and ambiguity, then we can see the possibility of it contributing to a dialogue among cultures, as well as to the possibility of critique and change in religions (or in secularism). Changes of attitude and belief, as evidenced by the pluralism and toleration characteristic of some western secular democracies such as Canada, remove many of the conditions for cultural (though perhaps not economic or political) conflict.

Religion – or the idea of religion – can, then, have a role in addressing clash. Religion in this broad sense – as open-ended, responsive to novelty, and recognizing pluralism and diversity – is characteristic of all the numerically great religions. Taylor recommends, then, that religions (re)turn to this model. Indeed it is, Taylor says, the only realistic way for religion to function in a secular age.

This is clearly not an easy task. It requires reflection on the nature of religion and will undoubtedly meet with opposition from some authorities. Moreover, it must be admitted that many efforts at overcoming clash have not worked or have been undermined by religious institutions, political interference, and economic exploitation. Taylor would argue, nevertheless, that his approach is the most practicable option open to secular democracies and, by extension, that it is a model for new democracies, such as those in Southeast Europe.

5. Conclusion

It is almost self-evident that the world is home to a diversity of cultures – and many countries, such as the new democracies of Southeast Europe are so as well. If culture is 'a collection of representations or ideas shared by and pervasive through a group of individuals,' it involves being aware of not only the different perspectives on reality, but the various practices and appropriate authorities to which they give rise. Because of the differences among cultures, there will almost inevitably be clashes – some minor, but some not. Religion has often been a part of such clashes, for religions are not only a part of culture, but may constitute cultures.

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In this short essay, I have identified some examples of cultural clash within major, modern liberal democracies, specifically of clash that involves religion. I have also presented some models of how to address such (potential and actual) clash. As we have seen, these clashes are of diverse kinds and degrees. The present paper has, however, also identified an approach to religion *within* the limits of democracy that seems particularly promising – that of Charles Taylor. If scholars such as Taylor are correct, then, not only are clash and conflict not irresolvable, but there are ways of responding to these clashes.

Does religion have a role in this response? I have suggested that, even though religion is a part of culture, it is not "limited" by culture. Religion may have resources to respond to cultural clash – even where religion itself is involved. Of course, in addition to determining what these resources are, and how they can be drawn on, one needs to take account of the nature and presence of democratic principles as well as the context – the history, traditions, and practices of the cultures. The devil, obviously, is in the details.

Must genuinely liberal democracies be what one might call secular democracies that retain, as Taylor suggests, a presence of the values of religions such as Christianity? Or, instead, can one expect people to abandon their view that they have a right to pursue their own good – for example, a good rooted in their religious faith – in their own way, and instead accept and seek a common good? How should newly-established democracies, such as those in Southeast Europe, respond to the challenges and clashes rooted in their distinctive histories while seeking to build robust democratic institutions and respect broadly democratic values? Which of the models presented in this short essay, if any, best fits the current realities in Southeast Europe? While these questions are being addressed, it may be useful to follow the example, even if not the principle, of those like Charles Taylor who insist that one start "at home" to create a space or an overlapping consensus in which one can work with others, and that one draw on one's own traditions and cultures to enlarge that space in a way that unifies rather than promotes clash.

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William Sweet

Religija unutar granica demokracije

Neki modeli za Jugoistočnu Europu

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Sažetak

U radu ću identificirati neke primjere kulturnih sukoba koji uključuju religiju, preispitati neka ponuđena rješenja takvih sukoba, i razmotriti može li religija u bilo kojem smislu biti dio tog rješenja. Također ću ponuditi neke modele religije unutar granica demokracije – modele za koje smatram da su relevantni za demokracije na jugoistoku Europe. U predstavljanju ovih modela, tvrdim da se plodonosan pristup može pronaći u recentnim djelima kanadskog filozofa Charlesa Taylora.

Ključne riječi

kulturni sukob, demokracija, kultura, Jugoistočna Europa, Charles Taylor, Samuel Huntington, Jürgen Habermas, Jacques Maritain

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William Sweet

Religion innerhalb der Schranken der Demokratie

Einige Modelle für Südosteuropa

Zusammenfassung

Im vorliegenden Aufsatz identifiziere ich eine Anzahl Exempel für religionsmotivierte kulturelle Auseinandersetzung, nehme einige Lösungskonzepte für solche Konflikte in Augenschein und diskutiere über die Tauglichkeit der Religion, in irgendeinem Sinne ein Bestandteil dieser Lösungswege zu werden. Darüber hinaus liefere ich einige Religionsentwürfe innerhalb der Demokratiegrenzen – Modelle, die sich meines Erachtens als maßgebend für die Demokratien Südosteuropas erzeigen. In der Präsentation der erwähnten Modelle vertrete ich die Ansicht, ein fruchtbares Angehen dieser Problematik zeichne sich im jüngsten Werk des kanadischen Philosophen Charles Taylor ab.

Schlüsselwörter

kulturelle Auseinandersetzung, Kultur, Demokratie, Südosteuropa, Charles Taylor, Samuel Huntington, Jürgen Habermas, Jacques Maritain

William Sweet

La religion à l'intérieur des limites de la démocratie

Quelques modèles pour l'Europe du Sud-Est

Résumé

Dans cet article, j'identifie quelques exemples de chocs culturels qui impliquent la religion, j'examine certaines solutions proposées pour de tels conflits, et j'aborde la question de savoir si la religion dans un quelconque sens puisse faire partie de cette solution. Egalement, je fournis quelques modèles de religion à l'intérieur des limites de la démocratie, des modèles qui, je le suggère, sont pertinents pour les démocraties du sud-est de l'Europe. En présentant ces modèles, j'affirme qu'une approche fructueuse se trouve dans les récents travaux du philosophe canadien Charles Taylor.

Mots-clés

choc culturel, démocratie, culture, Europe du Sud-Est, Charles Taylor, Samuel Huntington, Jürgen Habermas, Jacques Maritain