



Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship between Democracy and Religion.

Désiré Louis NIZIGIYIMANA*

Jean Berchmans NDIHOKUBWAYO**

Abstract

The nature of influence between democracy and religion has remained in scholarly research a domain which is underexplored. Yet, conflicting interests may arise between democracy and religion particularly for the issue of the legitimacy of authority. On the one hand, religion claim to have authority on people's lives on spiritual, moral, social and even on political levels. On the other hand, the state claims to be the owner of legitimate political authority. This paper explores the nature of influence between Democracy and religion in order to offer some normative guidance on how the mutual influence between Democracy and Religion can be positively channeled to promote democratic stability and avoid potential relational antagonisms.

Key words: Democracy, religion, State, secularism, religious influence.

Received: 08.08.2020

Accepted: 15.12.2020

* Dr NIZIGIYIMANA Désiré Louis, Lecturer at University of Burundi, Faculty of Humanities and social Sciences, Department of History and Political Science, Email: nizidel@yahoo.fr , [Orcid: 0000-0003-0618-3162](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0618-3162)

** Assistant Lecturer at University of Burundi, Faculty of Humanities and social Sciences, Department of History and Political Science, Email: ndihoj.berchmans@gmail.com, [Orcid:0000-0001-8026-2067](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8026-2067)

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

Introduction.

The nature of relationship between democracy and religion has become in contemporary time an area of a particular philosophical interest. In fact, recent events such as religion linked violence or religion's positive influence on political change and democratic rule have motivated some fundamental philosophical questions such as: how far are religion inspired political ideas relevant for democracy? Or, are democratic ideals compatible with religious ideas? What is the nature of mutual influence between democracy and religion? Should religion be given an open space to officially play a political role in the state? Etc. One of the most fundamental philosophical issues in the debate on the relationship between democracy and religion is the issue of authority. On the one hand, the state claims to be the owner of legitimate political authority. On the other hand, religion claims to have different forms of authorities in various areas of people's lives such as spiritual, moral, social, cultural and even at some extent on the political. These claims over the legitimacy of authority between democracy and religion are at the basis of possible relational antagonisms as these two phenomena are both endowed with an unavoidable mutual influence.

In specific terms, in a democratic society, it is the people who rule as they are the owners of the constitution-making power which attribute to them an unalienable political right to decide over the political form the state should take. The term 'the

people', however, connotes nothing else than a body of individual members of the state who are, at the same time, political actors and adepts in various religious denominations within any given state. Thus, from the very central role the people play in any democratic state as political actors and religious adepts, democracy and religion have an unavoidable mutual influence grounded on the people's preferences vis-à-vis the political organization of the society. The relationship between democracy and religion largely depends on how people's political preferences are rooted in religion or are based on secular reasons, also on which form of differentiation¹ exists between the state's authority and religious bodies. Departing from that central philosophical assumption, this paper will consider Rawls's separation approach between state and religion to investigate whether his defended separation model is an adequate perspective for ensuring a non-antagonistic co-existence between democracy and religion within the state. The paper will structurally have four parts. The first part will use a historico-structuralist perspective to demonstrate how democracy met religion, and how the very initial type of influence democracy had on religion partly justifies the roots of modern secular state's form. The second part will consider Rawls's separatist model on the relationship between a democratic state and religion to analyze the relevance of religion

¹ Differentiation is a term borrowed from sociology which connotes the degree of mutual autonomy between religious bodies and state institutions in their foundational legal authority which is the extent of each entity's authority over the other's prerogatives to govern itself (See Berger 1967)

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

inspired political ideas to democratic political deals. A particular emphasis will be put on demonstrating how the lack of a clear delimitation of spheres of action between the state and religion is source of possible antagonisms between democracy and religion, and how the state's self-given secular status does not ensure any form of delimitation of mutual influence between the two phenomena. Using a contextual approach, the analysis will demonstrate how the separation model fails to fully attain its purported goal by proving to be inadequate to prevent ideological influence between democracy and religion. The third part will then extend the discussion to the normative to argue that given the nature of the flaws in the separation model and the unavailability of the existing mutual influence between democracy and religion, an ideal type of relationship between the two should be grounded on a restructured separation model which is based on overlapping consensus. The fourth part will examine the relevance of this model to contemporary secularized West and to its possible future social changes.

**1. Historical background of the relation between
Religion and the State.**

It is generally accepted that religion is much older than democracy, and that the relationship between the state and religion differed in the pre and post democratic era. From the historical background, the relation between the state and religion was marked by a close collaboration between the Church and the

state especially in the West. For instance, until 18th century, kings would participate in the Election of the Pope in the Catholic Church, and these could also participate in any other nominations of Church leaders. A similar type of mutual collaboration could be observed in political consultation especially concerning some political decision making such as waging a war. A Close collaboration could also be observed in the spiritual guidance of political leaders. In this perspective, political leadership in some western kingdoms and states was heavily influenced by catholic religious and spiritual ethic. In addition, there was a quasi fusion between the church and the state. In some western countries and kingdoms, such as the Roman Empire, Catholicism was taken as the religion of the state, and a form of spiritual and cultural identity. In this perspective the religious and political spheres were almost fused, exercising a clear mutual influence based on a close collaboration in many domains such as political, social and spiritual².

Moreover, there were some similarities in the structural form of leadership between religion and the political society. In fact, during the time of kingdoms, either in the west or in many other parts of the world, the leadership of any political society was triangular. The king was at the top as the sovereign and the most powerful political figure in the kingdom. Princes and other

² Bokenkortter, Thomas. *A concise History of the Catholic Church*. Revised Edition. New York: A division of Doubleday & Company, 1979,pp 179-191.

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

political figures came next in the political rank of the ruling team. The chat would then go increasing its dimension and decreasing the political influence until it ends with simple peasants who were at the lowest level of political influence. The political power was to be exercised from the top down to the bottom towards the general peasants who were usually the main focus and the target of political action.

A similar structural form of leadership was and is still observable in different religions. For instance, in Christian religions, God is seen as the sovereign King who holds all powers to rule the world and heavens. Jesus Christ is seen as the sharer of the leadership and the divinity of God (his “father”) and at the same time participating in the human nature of human beings. Church leaders come next as spiritual ruling team who play the role of intermediaries between God and the faithful. At the bottom of the triangle stand all the faithful (Christians) whose participation in the rank and its accompanying spiritual and moral conduct are purported to afford for them “salvation”.³

The above forms of leadership in religion and state share one essential character. Leadership is based on a certain concentration of powers in the hands of either a spiritual figure (God or gods) and some human intermediaries, or it is concentrated in the hands of a political figure (a king). The rest of participants are dependant

³ Holmes, J. Derek and Bernard W. Bickers. *A Short History of Catholic Church*. Wellwood: Burns & Oates, 1983, pp 81-84.

either directly or indirectly to the power of the ultimate ruler. This platform of leadership does not only express a form of parallelism in the leadership form between the state and religion, but it also expresses a form for congruence in the political and the religious governing styles. And structurally, the people took the lowest position in both forms of leaderships. The people are, in addition, dependent on the power of the sovereign (either God or the king). This structured governing approach reduced the people's participation in the system to the sole acceptance of decisions and code of conduct from the highly ranked political or spiritual authority or the sovereign.

The change of state's form from monarchy to the democratic form came with a new structural form of leadership which incarnated a total paradigm shift in the form of political leadership, in the locus of political power, and also in the relation between church and state. In fact, democracy moved from the concentration of political power to a shared political form of leadership. Concretely, from the time of enlightenment and more precisely with the French Revolution, in any form of democracy (liberal or social), the constitution-making power is no longer concentrated in the hand of the sovereign ruler but it has been moved into the hands of the people. The people have become bearers of the constitution making power. In this perspective, they are endowed with a political capability to choose their political leaders and determine the political form of their own political

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

existence as a state⁴. The people have become responsible for their own political destiny, and important actors in political decision making. The move of the constitution-making power from a unique sovereign to the people brings a new structure of the leadership with a reversed triangular form, in which the people who initially stood at the lowest level of the political society became the main actors in the political organization of their own society. The newly formed leadership scheme stands in opposition to the religious form of leadership which remained with the power concentrated to a supreme and sovereign power (God) and some spiritual and human figures.

The paradigm shift which occurred with the advent of democratic state's form, more precisely within the time of enlightenment, did not only change the structural framework of the relationship between the state and religion or the locus of power, but it also transformed the basis on which that relationship is built. In fact, democracy introduced participatory political approach in which the people rule. This approach replaced the previously held political approach based on centralized political power. The shift of the political power from the sovereign to the people had some consequences to the relationship between the state and religion. For instance, faith was replaced by reason for

⁴ Schmitt, Carl. *Constitutional Theory* (1928), trans. by J. Seitzer. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008, p 139

any form of public deliberation⁵. This change marked a relational demarcation between democracy and religion from which a democratic state's form is inherently armed with the germs of secularization. It is also defensible that western secularization developed on the basis of this idea of self-reliance and self-determination generated from the shift of the constituent power from a supreme and sovereign figure to the people and its accompanying liberal ideals. Secular state's form can then be interpreted as an evolutionary political stage in human history, which was initiated and influenced by the idea of autonomy and people's self-reliance in determining their own destiny on political and even on religious levels.

2. Scrutinizing the nature of mutual influence between democracy and Religion, and its political implications.

Besides the aforementioned structural discrepancies between democracy and religion and the historical paradigm shift which occurred with the advent of democratic form of the state, religion has influenced and continues to positively or negatively influence democracy and democratization processes in various parts of the world. For instance, in Turkey, after decades of secular nationalist military regime, an Islamic party took over in 2002 after elections. This new rule deepened democracy in the country and is now

⁵ Stout, Jeffrey. *Democracy & Tradition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004 p.76

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

advocating for Turkey's entry in the European Union. In addition, the teachings of the Second Vatican Council in the Catholic Church encouraged the processes of democratization in Poland, Brazil and Philippines⁶. These are among many other recent examples in which religion played a positive role in endorsing democratization. It is also important to note that religion can play an anti-democratic role. For example, it is indubitable that the terrorist attacks in 2001 in the USA have some religious connotation. Some justificatory claims were put that perpetrators (some Muslim radicals) were trying to manifest their opposition against the country global democratization policy and its eventual accompanying global political imperialism⁷. Consequently, it is thus defensible that democracy and religion have some mutual influence which can take either a positive or a negative form.

One of the basic questions in the philosophical debate over the relationship between democracy and religion is which political model should guide the relationship between democracy and religion in order to positively channel their mutual influence and also to avoid a possible confrontational form of co-existence within the state. Some models have been proposed in scholarly circles. One among existing models is the separatist model. According to this model, the state is a neutral body vis-à-vis any

⁶ Philpot, Daniel. "Explaining the Political Ambivalence of Religion". In *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 101, no. 3 August 2007. Pp 505-525, p. 505

⁷ *ibid*

form of religion. Religions can freely operate in the state, but they do not have an open space for political action. Religions belong to the private domain, and remain outside the public sphere. This is the model which is common within liberal democratic states. Religious organizations can participate in some public activities such as education or health sector, but they do not benefit any public funding. Another model is integrationist model which takes one religion or a group of distinct religions and give them a constitutional status as official religion(s). Some examples in western countries would be England and Denmark which have established Churches⁸.

John Rawls is one of defenders of the separation model as an ideal perspective of ensuring the state's neutrality. More interestingly, the separation model which he proposes does not only focus on the spheres of action for democracy and religion, but more importantly, he focuses on the conceptualization of their mutual position within a democratic state. He tries to respond to one important philosophical question which seeks to elucidate whether religious ideas are relevant for public discourse. More concretely, his intention is to clarify whether religious ideas can be used in public deliberations whose objective is to give or to enhance the democratic form of the society. He concludes that while religious inspired political ideas can be accepted as

⁸ De Gruchy, W. John. *Christianity and Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995., p. 89

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

comprehensive doctrines, they cannot be chosen among possible principles for building a neutral democratic state⁹.

Important to note is how John Rawls defends his proposed separation model. In his lecture entitled, *The Idea of Public Reason Revised* (1997), John Rawls argues that public deliberation should use the language that everybody understands. In this regard, public deliberation should use the language of reason alone, and avoid any form of religious implications. In other terms, Rawls argues that public deliberations should be fundamentally secular. In elaborating his view, Rawls asserts that, in public deliberations, people come with their various comprehensive doctrines which can be political, social and even religious. But the ideas which contribute to the construction of the political society can only be selected from the secular ones. In his view, religious ideas should not be used in public deliberations for two reasons. On the one hand, religion inspired political ideas are grounded on a certain irreconcilable religious pluralism which prevents deliberators from reaching any form of consensus. On the other hand, religion inspired political reasons may fail to convince people who do not hold a certain doctrinal background in given religious beliefs. Consequently, religious beliefs can only be accepted among possible comprehensive doctrines, but

⁹ Rawls, John. "The idea of Public Reason Revised" in *The University of Chicago Law Review*. Vol. 64. No.3 Summer 1997. pp: 765-787, p. 761

they should not be used for any form of political decision making¹⁰.

While Rawls's proposed separation model allows religion inspired political ideas to be part of public deliberation as comprehensive doctrines, such ideas are initially judged to be irrelevant to the final political decision making of the deliberation. In other words, in Rawls' separation model, political ideals are separate from religious ideas. Political decision making solely involves secular ideas. However, as will be demonstrated below, this separation approach cannot prevent ideological influence between democracy and religion. It can also lead to a confrontational co-existence between democracy and religion within the state wherever there is a dominant religious denomination with a strong and active political theology¹¹.

One of the leading arguments in defense for the separation model, as expressed in the above scholarly view, is the secular nature of a democratic state. A democratic state must remain neutral vis-à-vis religious diversity. This is the fundamental

¹⁰ Rawls, John. "The idea of Public Reason Revised" in *The University of Chicago Law Review*. Vol. 64. No.3 Summer 1997, pp 698-774)

¹¹ Political theology is a set of ideas that a religious body holds regarding some domains such as legitimate political authority, justice, the nature of salvation, the obligations of religious believers towards the political order, etc. References to those questions can be found in central doctrines of a religious body. Held political theologies informs the way a religious body interpret political authority of the state (From Philpot, 2007, 507: *Explaining the Political Ambivalence of Religion*)

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

argument which supports the view that state's neutrality is a response to religious pluralism. Yet, as has been mentioned, religion and democracy has an unavoidable mutual influence. In view of the separation model, the state takes a secular stand in its relationship with religion. Religion, however, does not necessarily give up its possible political influence to the state's political orientation.

In fact, in a constitutional democracy, it is the people whose decision gives the political form to the state. The people are, however, individual members of religious denominations within the state. Yet, when people participate in the political organization of the society, they do not do so in religious vacuum especially when they are strong religious believers. Strongly held religious beliefs can have a sound ideological influence to people's political preferences. For instance, in its global policy of promoting democratization, the United States of America has underlined the importance of understanding religion's influence on democracy and an examination of the compatibility of local dominant religious beliefs and democratic culture¹². Strongly held religious beliefs can either be barriers to democratization or enhance democratic processes.

Moreover, religion has inherent but hidden political aspects. Most of world religions emphasize the notion of

¹² Philpot, Daniel. "Explaining the Political Ambivalence of Religion". In *The Americal Political Science Review*, Vol. 101, no. 3 August 2007. Pp 505-525.

salvation as a worldly rooted doctrine. In fact, for many religious bodies, one's ethical life in the world is a precondition one's future happiness. Yet, religion expects the state's political authority to create an adequate political environment which would allow people to have both human and spiritual fulfillment. Some religions have strong political theology which even proposes a standard of the political organization of the society. Concretely, similarly to political parties, religious bodies contain shared views about the nature of legitimate political authority. Such views can be found in doctrinal teachings of religions in form of political theology. And these can be adapted to different circumstances of time and place, and subsequently be used to take a certain political stand towards the political organization of the society. This political dimension of religion is much emphasized within Islam in which *Shari'a* is prone to play a political role in organizing the society¹³. For instance, Muslims wildly hold that political authority should meet the standards of *shari'a* or the pathway to God¹⁴. Consequently, many religions have an inherent political dimension which is usually active in their relationship with the state.

Nonetheless, while Rawls's defended separation model can offer a strong and concise basis for differentiation, it

¹³ Buruma, Ian. *Taming the Gods: Religion and Democracy on Three Continents*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010, p 47

¹⁴ Philpot, Daniel. "Explaining the Political Ambivalence of Religion". In *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 101, no. 3 August 2007, p. 50

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

overlooks the above complexity in the mutual relationship between democracy and religion. While the state is a neutral body with a legitimate political authority, religion also claims to have a say vis-à-vis the political organization of society. These claimed authorities meet in the people who are at the same time political actors and religious adepts. Rawls separation model focuses on the secular nature of the state. In his view, public deliberation should always enhance the secular nature of the state. Though Rawls does not argue that religious reasoning is politically invalid, his conclusion is against the religious ideas' involvement in political decision making. While his separation model offers a clear distinction of spheres of action between religion and the state, his defended approach would not favor a reconciled co-existence between the state's political authority and religion's political inclination. Therefore, Rawls proposed separation model might lead to confrontational relational approach between the state and religious bodies.

Concretely, the state in its secular form has a self-given limit to keep its neutrality vis-à-vis religious bodies. Yet, religion does not necessarily respect such a limit. In this regard, Rawls approach can be interpreted as an enforcement of a limit to religion's possible political influence. This may lead to a confrontational relationship between the democratic state and religion wherever there is in the state a dominant religion endowed with a strong and active political theology.

The relationship between democracy and religion can become antagonistic in two ways. Firstly, a dominant religion in a given state can take a form of political unity of the people, and then use its political theology as people's political identity. In this regard, such a religion becomes a strong voting bloc which uses its political theology to seek a certain political orientation of the society. Under such condition, the state secular nature is threatened, and the state may struggle to maintain its secular political form. An example here might be the case of Turkey whose ruling party is an Islamic party. Founding a political party around religion requires at some extent converting the political theology into a form of political identity. When such a political party has an absolute majority of people within the state, it becomes a treat to the secular form of the state. Secondly, the relation between democracy and religion become antagonistic when the legislative finds some difficulties in establishing some types of laws due to the opposition of the people inspired by some held religious beliefs. For instance, in 2002, Kenyan people rejected the constitution for the unique reason that it endorses some practices such as homosexuality, abortion, death penalty which were judged by the majority of the people to be incompatible with their Christian beliefs and convictions¹⁵. Therefore, depending on the state's approach to separation model, on religious dominant political theology and the believers'

¹⁵ See Hekima Review, No 147, February 2003.

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

religious convictions, religion and democracy can have an antagonistic or a peaceful co-existence within the state.

Yet, it is important to note that religion and democracy are not necessarily incompatible. Democracy and religion do not necessarily have confrontational co-existence in some democratic states whose political system allows the existence of an established religion or religions. The United Kingdom is an example. The state has adopted the Anglican Church as the state religion for centuries, and this did not bring any known confrontational consequences between the two institutions. Even though the non-confrontational co-existence between democracy and Anglicanism in England might depend on many other factors such as the political theology of the Anglican Church or people's satisfaction with the existing political organization of the society on different levels such as political economic and social, the case of England remains a sound example of a possible compatibility between democracy and an established religion within the state.

After demonstrating the complexities involved in the relationship between a democratic state and religious bodies, and the challenging limitation of their mutual influence, we may now return to Rawls' proposed separation model. One important question remains: how far can the separation model, in the form proposed by John Rawls be an ideal model for ensuring an adequate relationship between democracy and religion? Rawls argues that religion informed political ideas are inadequate for the

political organization of the society; and religion should remain in the private sphere. Yet, as has been demonstrated, any effort to limit the influence of religion from its influence to the political domain cannot fully succeed. People's religious convictions and beliefs always influence at some extent their political preferences with regard to the organization of the society. Given the central role the people play in a democratic state both as political actors and as religious adepts, the influence of religion to democracy becomes hardly avoidable especially when individual members of the society strongly hold some religious beliefs and convictions informed by a strong political theology from a given dominant religion.

In addition, it is also important to note that religion is a complex phenomenon. In fact, the influence of religion in people's lives and their decision making escapes any form political control. Though the state can retreat in its secular status as a way of self-protection against religious influence, religion's fluidity allows it to reach different angles in people's lives and to find its manner of playing a certain political role. In this regard, it can be defended that whenever democracy and religion co-exist within a state, their mutual influence is unavoidable. In this perspective, the separation model does not necessarily ensure a total isolation of religion to the private sphere or totally prevent religion from exercising political influence on the state's democratic form. In other words, the separation model as

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

defended by Rawls can only prevent direct or official involvement of religion in political decision making by setting the boundaries for differentiation, but this does not totally prevent or invalidate religion's political influence.

The contextualization of the separation model is crucial to any possible success of the separation model and may largely depend on the overall religious status of the state. As has been argued, people's religious convictions necessarily have a certain influence to their political decision. Yet, the people are the main deciding body with regard to the political organization of the society. It may be possible to sideline religions inspired political views from public deliberations, but those views might come in one form or the other, for instance, when public deliberation reaches at the referendum level, when the people are to take the final decision. In this regard, the separation model should be given a clear understanding in order to fit the overall religious and social context of the political society and thus allow non-confrontational relationship between democracy and religion.

What would then be an alternative approach to the separation model? An alternative separation model should be a revised separation model. In my view, public deliberation should not take any stand towards the nature of possible comprehensive doctrines that people hold. Public deliberation would only focus on elucidating the principles on which the political form of the state is to take roots. The principles on which the political society

is to build should be of secular nature, allowing the state to make its foundation on a secular basis. The role of public deliberation would then be to choose fundamental secular principles of building the society. For instance, people might agree on the principle of freedom for all citizens to enjoy political rights that entitle them freedom of expression, equality of opportunity, gender equality and other rights based political freedoms. Comprehensive doctrines would then provide rational justification elucidating why people should be entitled to such freedoms and why it is worthwhile for the people to endorse those principles. For instance, the principle of freedom can be given a theological justification such as people are to be free because God or gods created them as such, or freedom can be justified on ontological basis as a precondition for any human fulfillment. The justification would sorely depend on people's own comprehensive doctrines.

Allowing all form of political ideas to come to the spotlight of public deliberation is a good political perspective for examining the overall political ideals the people hold. This can provide a global view which can help to chose adequate principles for organizing the society. In addition, given the evidence that democracy and religion peacefully co-exist in some states which has adopted a state's religion, it is consequently defendable that democracy and religion are not incompatible. In this regard, the relationship between democracy and religion should be based on

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

a separation model which is based on a secular overlapping consensus, allowing different comprehensive doctrines to play a justificatory role. In this perspective, religious inspired political views would not have to be excluded as irrelevant to public deliberation. As religion is a complex phenomenon which can hardly be controlled either politically or socially, this approach would help different held political theologies to meet secular standards of the state without resorting to political confrontation.

Though this revised model refers to Rawls's theory of overlapping consensus, it takes a clear demarcation from Rawls's defended approach. For Rawls, Public deliberation mainly focus on people's held comprehensive doctrines in order to select among them possible secular principles for building the political society. His approach necessitates a procedural exclusion of religion inspired ideas in favor of secular ideas. It also requires a secular language of communication. In my alternative model, however, the determination of fundamental characteristics of an ideal political society comes first. This would clarify possible principles which are able to lead to that form of the society. In that procedure, people's own compressive doctrines should play a justificatory role for endorsing those political principles. This model would practically work in the reversed manner of Rawls's own proposal, and would ensure that the secular status of the state is preserved. In addition, this revised model might not require the language of public deliberation to be secular as Rawls proposes.

The secular value should only be maintained at the level of the principles whose aim is to organize the political society. This approach would help to avoid the inclination of some religions or religious bodies which would be tempted to use their political theologies as the basis of the political society. Yet, while this approach might not be totally immune from some practical challenges or resistance, it still has strong potential for allowing religious bodies and any democratic state to peacefully co-exist.

3. The relevance of the revised separation model to the secularized West.

Some religions in the Western have almost outlived their historical status. For instance, in many European countries, such as the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, France and others, the Christian Church is in its time of agony. The number of practicing Christians has been sensibly reduced, and the historical status of the Catholic Church on the continent has become part of history. While Christianity is declining, Islam is rapidly taking roots on the continent. The survey of United Nations of 1999 shows that from 1989 to 1998, the Muslim population in the Europe grew more than 100 percent. Islam is today Europe's second largest religion¹⁶.

¹⁶ Ranstorp, Magnus. "Terrorism in the Name of Religion". In *Journal of International Affairs* 50. Summer 1996, p.659.

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

While some concrete examples and scholarly finding have proven that Islam and Democracy are not inherently incompatible, it is indubitable that the process of democratization has been very slow in the Muslim dominated States. Though Islamic tradition have some important religious doctrines which can favor democracy such as *Shurah* (Cunsultation), *Ijma* (Consensus), *Ijtihad* (independent interpretative judgment), the same tradition prioritized the revealed law over legislated law¹⁷ . This narrows the possibility of the Islamic tradition to allow the establishment of a strong constitutionalism which would incarnate democratic values such as some forms of rights based freedoms people enjoy in a democratic state. In addition, Islam is more a way of life for its adepts with a strong political theology and not a mere doctrinal and tradition based religion (ibid.).

Consequently, given the aforementioned context of religion in Europe, there is a possibility of future change in the relation between democracy and religion. In view of the growing presence of Islam, it is possible in the near future for this religion to seek a political influence in some western countries. As has been demonstrated, state's secular nature cannot totally prevent the influence of religion on politics. There is always an open possibility of creating a strong political voting bloc based on religion and then overturn the political orientation of the society.

¹⁷ Philpot, Daniel. "Explaining the Political Ambivalence of Religion". In *The Americal Political Science Review*, Vol. 101, no. 3 August 2007, p.515

Islam has a strong political doctrinal basis which is politically oriented. Yet, such a political orientation might not necessarily incarnate some democratic values such as gender equality or other liberal ideals which are highly valued in western democratic states. Though it may be wrong to argue that the Islamization of the West will necessarily lead to undemocratic state's form, but some social and political changes would be unavoidable.

In addition, religion is a complex and a transnational phenomenon. This can allow and adapt this religion to the federal form of the European Union. In this perspective, the proposed form of ensuring an adequate relationship between democracy and religion as a form of overlapping consensus based on secular political principles would work as procedural way of ensuring a creation of a political society in which religion and the democratic form of the state co-exist in non-confrontational manner, at the same time securing the already established western democratic values. Blocking religious inspired political ideas might create frustration and enhance religious fundamentalism, and possibly fuel civil unrest or violence. Mutual influence between democracy and religion cannot be totally prevented. Ideological influence cannot be totally avoided. Religion can always find its manner of making a political push to the state towards a certain political orientation whenever there is religious bloc which is decidedly engaged to make an influential political change. The revised overlapping consensus separation model can help to

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

channel the mutual influence between democracy and religion to an adequate co-existence in the state. This can be performed by allowing religions ideas to play a justificatory role to the secular principles on which the political society is built. In this perspective, the aim of ensuring a non-confrontational co-existence between democracy and religion would always be largely secured in the future Western society, at the same time maintaining the secular nature of the state with its political ideals.

As has been demonstrated, it is indubitable that religion is a domain of political inspiration which can trigger either positive or negative influence to the political organization of the society. Scholars have tried to investigate the reason why religion is able to be either a contributor to the rule of law or a source of violence resorting to sociological or philosophical approaches based on the politics of religion. This area of relationship and mutual influence between democracy and religion is also another ground for elucidating this issue. Confrontational or peaceful co-existence between democracy and religion largely depend on how their mutual and quasi unavoidable relationship is politically channeled. Religion can play a political role by influencing a certain political orientation of the political society. But the nature of such an influence is still mostly determined by how these two phenomena are related to create a peaceful co-habitation and channel their unavoidable mutual influence.

References.

- Appleby, R. Scott. *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, violence and Reconciliation*. Lanham, ND: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000.
- Berger, L. Peter. *The Desecularisation of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*. Washington DC: Edmans/Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1999.
- Bokenkortter, Thomas. *A concise History of the Catholic Church*. Revised Edition. New York: A division of Doubleday & Company, 1979.
- Buruma, Ian. *Taming the Gods: Religion and Democracy on Three Continents*. Pinceton: Prenceton Universtiy Press, 2010.
- Casanova, Jose. *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- De Gruchy, W. John. *Christianity and Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Donno, Daniela, and Bruce Russett. "Islam, Authoritarianism, and Female Empowerment: What are the Linkages?" *World Politics* 56 (July): 582-607.

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

Flannery, Austin. O.P, ed. *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and
Post Conciliar Documents*. Northport, NY: Costello
Publishing Company, 1975.

Gifford, Paul. *The Christian Church and the Democratization of
Africa*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995.

Hashmi, Sohail. "Islamic ethics in International Society" In
International society: Diverse Ethical Perspectives, ed.
David R. Mapel and Terry Nardin. Princeton, NJ:
Princeton University Press, 1998.

Hoffman, Bruce. *Inside Terrorism*. New York: Columbia
University Press, 1998.

Holmes, J. Derek and Bernard W. Bickers. *A Short History of
Catholic Church*. Wellwood: Burns & Oates, 1983.

Huntington, P. Samuel. *The Third wave: Democratization in the
Late Twentieth Century*. Norman, OK: University of
Oklahoma Press, 1991.

Levene K. Nancy. *Spinoza's Revelation: Religion, Democracy,
and Reason*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,
2004.

Maddox, Graham. *Religion and the Rise of Democracy*. London:
Rutledge, 1996.

- Midlarsky, Magnus. "Democracy and Islam: Implications for Civilization Conflict and the Democratic Peace". *International Studies Quarterly* 42; September 1998: pp: 485-511.
- Phili, Isaac. *Proclaiming Political Pluralism: Churches and Political Transition*. London: Praeger, 2001.
- Philpot, Daniel. "Explaining the Political Ambivalence of Religion". In *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 101, no. 3 August 2007. Pp 505-525.
- Ramet, P.Stabrina. *Nihil Abstract: Religion, Politics and Social Change in East-Central Europe and Russia*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1998.
- Ranstorp, Magnus. "Terrorism in the Name of Religion". In *Journal of International Affairs* 50. Summer 1996. pp: 658-77.
- Rawls, John. "The idea of Public Reason Revised" in *The University of Chicago Law Review*. Vol. 64. No.3 Summer 1997. pp: 765-787.
- Sachedina, Abdulaziz Abdulhussein. *Islamic roots of Democratic Pluralism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Schmitt, Carl. *Constitutional Theory* (1928), trans. by J. Seitzer. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.

Religion and State's Secularity : A Critical Analysis of the Relationship
between Democracy and Religion.

Spruyt, Hendrik. *The Sovereign State and its Competitors.*

Princeton: Princeton University Press: 1994.

Stout, Jeffrey. *Democracy & Tradition.* Princeton: Princeton
University Press, 2004.

Wolfe. Christopher. *Essay on Faith and Liberal Democracy.*
London: University Press of America, 1987.

Yavuz, Hakan. *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey.* Oxford:
Oxford University Press, 2003.

Zakaria, Fareed. *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at
Home and Abroad.* New York: Norton, 2004.