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RELIGION AND DEMOCRACY: POINTS OF AGREEMENT, POINTS OF CONTROVERSY

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“Parting morality from politics is the founding act of modern democracy”.

“Reference to senses or beauty, love for another human being – are beyond the scope of politics, regardless of how essential they are to our lives. We all require a contact with the absolute, which is not an appropriate match for political projects”.

Tzvetan Todorov

INTRODUCTION

Introductorily, it should be observed that the discussed problem's significance is increasingly pressing as our interest drifts towards societies dominated by great, universalizing religions Islam being only one of them. From the above, a question arises of whether the notions of religion and democracy, as mentioned in the title, are reconcilable within a single order in the first place. In his deliberations, Bohdan Chwedeńczyk inclines to the view that three types of relations may be distinguished in this respect: religion favours democracy; is indifferent to democracy; or is harmful to

democracy¹. The discussion of the above opinion has, respectively, developed threefold. In one point of view, religion is by nature contradictory to the democratic order, it is in a sense its direct opposite. In other words, we face a choice of opting either for religion or democracy. Supporters of an alternative viewpoint claim that in the long run, a democratic system is not viable without the basis of notions such as religion, and therefore religion does play a vital part in the social order. It serves members of the public by satisfying those of their needs that do not belong to the scope of duties performed by the state and its institutions. Finally, the third approach basically acknowledges the fact that no definitive claims can be made as to the possibility of agreement between religion and democracy. I must admit that the latter is closest to my personal stance in this respect. Naturally, through careful selection of examples, arguments to support the first or the second of the mentioned opinions can be easily produced. There have been numerous examples of academic and journalistic articles advocating one of the clear-cut standpoints, which seem not to leave much room for discussion. However, the issue becomes far more multifarious when taking into account the complexity of religious and political issues analysed in both theoretical and practical perspective.

RELIGION, DEMOCRACY, CAPITALIST ECONOMY

As a result of the complexity of the problem religion can be considered as a historical, social or theological phenomenon². Religion tends to be treated as a set of features characteristic of its historical forms. Thus it is assumed that particular religions emerged at a certain time, when their history began. According to Mircea Eliade we are faced here with the

¹ B. Chwedeńczuk in the article "Religia a demokracja", *Bez Dogmatu* 1993, no. 1. Compare: A. Stepan, Religion, Democracy, and The "Twin Tolerations", *Journal of Democracy* 2000, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 37–57.

² See for example: Z.J. Zdybicka, *Człowiek i religia*, Lublin 1978; *Religia w świecie współczesnym. Zarys problematyki religiologicznej*, (ed.) H. Zimoń SVD, Lublin 2000; M. Marczewska-Rytko, *Religie niechrześcijańskie w Polsce*, Lublin 1997; P. Załęcki, "Religia jako ideologia poznawcza", [in:] *Kulturowe instrumentarium panowania*, (eds.) R. Paradowski, P. Załęcki, Toruń 2001, pp. 201–212.

manifestations of *sacrum* in history and the ways of human communication with it³. In another formulation, religion is seen as an essential part of the social system. Thus, it cannot be understood in isolation from society. Religion is identified as an important factor in solving crisis situations and protecting against chaos, anomy and alienation. In terms of the theological approach religion is a phenomenon of divine origin, the revelation of the Absolute, human response to the revelation of the divine. Religion is described here in a normative fashion, since it is declared what religion should be within the framework of the accepted revelation.

The development of a religion is greatly dependant on religious organisation⁴, be it uniform or loosely-knit, as is the case with Hinduism. Terms such as denominational groups, churches and sects are commonly utilized. The idea of a “denominational group” refers to the organisational system of religious communities. To date, scientific literature lacks an accurate definition of a denominational group, as well as a genealogical hierarchy of fractions, variations, sects, movements and minor denominations. Similar difficulties are encountered while attempting to define such terms as a “church” or “sect”. By principle, in the realm of the Catholic religion, the organisational systems are referred to as Churches, the same also refers to Buddhism in the USA. Within other religious communities, the terminology varies, we encounter “denominational groups”, “religious associations”, “religious brotherhoods”, “denominational associations” or “religious organisations”. Particular religions may take diverse shapes in terms of the rituals and doctrine, viewed both historically and contemporarily. The various forms religion may adopt, ranging from institutionalised entities to sacred scriptures, codes of conduct, rituals or collective ecstasy, have the potential of being both harmful and desirable from the perspective of the state and society’s functioning⁵.

Nowadays, the concept of democracy is usually more specifically translated as liberal democracy, while democratic order is similarly equivalent

³ M. Eliade, “History of Religious Ideas”, vol. 1: *From the Stone to the Eleusian Mysteries*, The University of Chicago Press, 1981.

⁴ See for example: M. Marczevska-Rytka, “Religious Communities as Interest Groups”, *Polish Political Science Yearbook* 2003, pp. 143–162.

⁵ Compare: A.N. Whitehead, *Religion in the Making*, New York 1996.

to liberal-democratic order⁶. While maintaining rationality, we may discuss the acceptance of democratic rules as a plausible basis. It will be a sort of a social and political mechanism as delimited by the guidelines formulated by Robert A. Dahl and supplemented by other researchers⁷. From the perspective of these deliberations, the key factor is the fact that there is no such thing as one democracy, a decreed democratic order. Naturally, as stated above, there are certain underlining, indispensable rules for a system to be treated as democratic. However, rightful distinctions have been made by, for instance, Alfred Stepan and Juan J. Linz, who differentiated between consolidated and unconsolidated democracies⁸. The problem was in fact also noted by Dahl, who clearly distinguished the ideal and systems aspiring to it. Furthermore, there are the issues stemming from various historical backgrounds and cultural roots. One of the most noteworthy questions is that of compatibility between the western type of democracy and the cultural conditioning of other civilisations. The above is in fact a significant question in these deliberations, as particular civilisational systems tend to turn to specific religious systems for the definition of roles to be played by the individual, the society, state and law in the established social order. Probably the most common mistake made in attempting to answer the question, is oversimplifying the perspective of the liberal-democratic order (in particular its practical side) in Western Europe and the USA as contrasted with the socio-political order in other parts of the world.

As astutely observed by Owen Chadwick, it would be difficult to imagine the law and the police defending the honour of constituents who fail to be honourable enough to demand an honest election⁹. Later, he carries on with

⁶ Compare: M. Marczevska-Rytko, "Liberalizm a demokracja", [in:] *Ideologia, doktryny i ruch polityczny współczesnego liberalizmu*, (eds.) E. Olszewski, Z. Tymoszuk, Lublin 2004, p. 131–148. M. Marczevska-Rytko, "Globalization and Democracy: Challenges for European Enlargement", [in:] *Research and Scholarship in Integration Processes. Poland–USA–EU*, (eds.) E.H. Oleksy, B. Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, Łódź 2003, pp. 147–157.

⁷ R.A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, New Haven 1971.

⁸ J.J. Linz, A. Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracies", *Journal of Democracy* 1996, January, pp. 34–51.

⁹ O. Chadwick, "Demokracja a religia", [in:] *Europa i społeczeństwo obywatelskie. Rozmowy w Castel Gandolfo*, introduction K. Michalski, Warszawa 1994, p. 129.

a regrettable conclusion that most of us take to tyrants easily, provided that they share our views and make us wealthier¹⁰. Chadwick's thoughts on democracy and religion boil down to a number of key issues. Firstly, the author openly supports the ideas of the liberal-democratic order, claiming that any government must beware of the extreme. On the one hand, it should be strong enough to ensure the stability, on the other, weak enough not to endanger individual and minority freedoms. Consequently, a justified question may arise of whether it can tolerate the freedom of those standing against freedom itself. It ought to be observed that practice usually aims towards limiting the freedom of its adversaries. One of the leading liberals of the 20th century, Isaiah Berlin, was a devoted advocate of this particular approach. Secondly, no political system, particularly a democratic one, can survive without a moral principles behind it. The acknowledgement of the claim that the liberal-democratic order is the most rational solution for contemporary societies, does not provide sufficient protection from abuse which may arise from various sources and in a multitude of ways. Thirdly, securing social loyalty is directly tied to the guarantee of religious freedoms, which in turn attract other kinds of liberty. Fourthly, the only viable justification for a non-democratic political system is a crisis on the state scale. Fifthly, democracy needs moralists, prophets and saints, however, not to play the roles of philosopher-kings, as they tend to fail miserably as such, but rather because without their charisma and inspiring influence, democracy drifts towards materialism and diminishes¹¹.

Ralph Dahrendorf considers the issue in discussion in yet another, economic context¹². He main theses brought forward by the researcher may be summarised in a number of points. Firstly, democracy and free market economy constitute useful mechanisms of transformation, through which human problems may be solved in the social dimension. It would be excessive to demand of the mechanisms to do more than that, for instance to provide moral norms. Secondly, capitalist economy has been through a number of developmental stages in the process of its transformation.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 133.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 143.

¹² R. Dahrendorf, "Wypełnianie luk", [in:] P. Śpiewak (choice), *Konstytucjonalizm. Demokracja. Wolność*, Warszawa 1996, p. 218–221.

Initially, the emphasis was placed on accumulation, restraining direct consumption, and investment, which was directly reflected in Max Weber's works on the impact of protestant ethics upon the development of capitalism. The subsequent phase looked back to hedonism, the direct utilisation of the fruit of one's labour, an increase in consumptionism. One of the most accurate depictions of this phase can be found in Bell's *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*¹³. Finally, the third phase is characterised by the increasing importance of credit in the stimulation of economic growth. This final phase is particularly problematic from the moral standpoint. As observed by Dahrendorf, democracy and free market economy bring about the emergence of numerous gaps which need to be filled. This, in turn, results in a tendency to resort to theories and ideas which have little to do with democracy. It is enough to call upon the examples of nationalism and fundamentalism. Positive examples of this process can also be observed, however, in the solutions utilised in the united States, Switzerland or Great Britain.

The discussed tendencies were also noted by Irving Kristol, in whose opinion we are dealing with a process of gradually departing from the bourgeoisie ethos towards hedonist models¹⁴. The currently observed crisis of capitalist societies is, in the author's opinion, directly caused by the fact that a part of the society no longer finds the presently applied models satisfactory, judging them as too commonplace. He observes the crisis of capitalism as related to the crisis of faith, rather than something connected to the sphere of economy. In his opinion, capitalism is unable to satisfy the needs of citizens without the support of religion, without relying on the Judaeo-Christian tradition. As it is now, capitalism faces utopian demands and should it try to cope with them, it is bound to crumble. The author continues to propose a thesis of a direct relation between the breakdown of religion and the deteriorating condition of capitalism.¹⁵ Furthermore, he stresses the fact that the institutions which in the past epoch served as the solid foundation of capitalism – organised religion, family and educational system – are now becoming unreliable, controversial and inefficient. In

¹³ D. Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, New York 1996.

¹⁴ Compare: I. Kristol, *Republican Virtue Vs. Servile Institutions*, Bloomington 1974. I. Kristol, "The Capitalist Future", <http://www.aei.org/boyer/kristol.htm>

¹⁵ Compare: J.M. Wall, "Religious Freedom: Tensions and Contentions", *The Christian Century*, 15 January 1992, pp. 35–36.

a democratic society, as stressed by Kristol, virtues, and religion for that matter, can succeed through the private sector: family, Churches or other discretionary associations. In the public sector, on the other hand, only minimal involvement of the members of the public is required.

In the above context, the question set forth by lord Dahrendorf is: to what extent can the Church or Churches provide both the sense of membership and at the same time the moral spine, i.e. the values not provided by democratic institutions and free market economy. In an attempt to answer the question, the researcher points to the complex area of Church-state relations and stresses its characteristic feature, i.e. the requirement of a non-fundamentalist Church and a moral state. For that, however, a strong civil society is required.

RELIGION AND DEMOCRACY IN FRENCH AND AMERICAN MODELS

Problems faced in social practice are numerous and varied. The example discussed herein will refer to France and the banning of Muslim head scarves in schools. Naturally, the underlining issue was much broader, however, it was the scarf controversy that found its way to mass media and started a heated dispute. According to the act of the parliament of February 2004, religious symbols were banned from schools as they were claimed to infringe the rule of secular state. A French philosopher, Alain Finkelkraut, went as far as openly stating that schools ought to adhere to the fundamental rules of the Republic, such as the separation of Church and state¹⁶. Rules which are often forgotten and needed to be reminded of and confirmed. Ever since Europe stepped out of the Middle Ages, Christianity has lost the monopoly for sainthood. There are other, equally sacred values. He continues to state that secularity constitutes the basis of the French state and has served as the counterbalance for the omnipotence of the Catholic Church. Considering the above, he notes that it would be more than peculiar, should the state capable of emancipating itself from the powerful influence of Catholicism,

¹⁶ "Tylko chusta jest wykluczona, Alain Finkelkraut w rozmowie z Anną Bikont", *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2004, no. 17-18, p. 20.

be now defeated by Islamic radicalism. In fact, it is exactly because nowadays Catholics are outnumbered by Muslims, that the idea of secularity must again be evoked. It is not religious persecution, it is a remainder of the existence of civil space¹⁷.

Another example that I wish to mention is that of the United States of America. As observed by Bryan R. Wilson, among others, religious diversity has been a norm from the very first days of the state¹⁸. Consequently, religious pluralism constitutes a significant element of the American constitution. In the reality of progressing religious diversification, the traditional concept of the Church proved impossible to maintain. In the pluralist society of the USA, new denominations appeared, with their own liturgical, architectonic or even ecclesial style, until then reserved for traditional Churches. It was directly related to what Milton Yinger referred to as a multilevel and to some extent syncretic pattern of American religiousness (i.e. the division into Churches, denominations and sects)¹⁹. The wide variety of religious organisations had – in his opinion – greatly influenced the formal separation from the state, tolerance, religious rebirth and evangelism, or ecumenism. Samuel P. Huntington supports this opinion by confirming that in the United States, we can observe an increase in the importance of religion and religiousness in the spheres of both private and public life²⁰. His comment on the above reads: a majority of Americans believe that the traditional morality is being eroded – be it due to the influence of other cultures growing in influence in America and pursuing other values, or to the impact of

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 21. Compare: Z. Drozdowicz, “Wielość religijna – wzbogacenie czy zagrożenie społeczeństwa monokulturowego? Przykład Francji”, [in:] *Przezwyciężanie barier w integrującej się Europie*, (eds.) Z. Drozdowicz, Z.W. Puślecki, Poznań 2000, pp. 277–286. H. Łakomy, *Państwo a Kościół we Francji. Historia i współczesność*, Kraków 1999. “Religia praw człowieka. Paul Thibaud w rozmowie z Markiem Rapackim”, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2–3 June 2001, pp. 22–23.

¹⁸ See: B.R. Wilson, “A Typology of Sects in a Dynamic and Comparative Perspective”, *Archives de Sociologie des Religions* 1963, no. 16, p. 49–63; B.R. Wilson, “Religia w zsekularyzowanym społeczeństwie”, [in:] W. Piwowarski (choice), *Socjologia religii. Antologia tekstów*, Kraków 1998. See also: M. Grabowska, “Duch religii, duch wolności”, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 15 June 1991, pp. 8–9.

¹⁹ J.M. Yinger, *Religion, Society and the Individual*, New York 1957.

²⁰ “Wielkie przebudzenie. Samuel P. Huntington w rozmowie z Arturem Domosłowskim”, „*Gazeta Wyborcza*”, 11–12 December 2004, p. 13.

secular relativism popular among the so called intelligentsia. The relativist approach boils down to the belief that an unambiguous distinction between good and evil is not possible. And Americans find that alarming. They are also disturbed by e.g. the influence of television. The things that children can watch undermine the rule of traditional morality. The concern does not contradict the secular nature of the state and democracy. On the one hand, we have the separation of church and state, on the other, instances of religiousness in the public life. The later include such manifestations as prayer before various public meetings and sessions of the Congress, the active participation of particular denominations' representatives in mass media, particularly television. The same can be observed in the army. The specifics of the North American model lies in the fact that religion remains independent from the state and the particular denominations must compete with each other in attracting new followers. In reference to the public life in the USA, the term "civil" religion is often applied²¹. It is the opinion of a number of researchers, that the religious rebirth in America is highly conservative by nature.

The origins of the systematic differences between France and the united States may be traced back to the dissimilarity of values and rules characteristic for the period of Enlightenment²². Typically, the French and the Anglo-Scottish Enlightenment can be distinguished. In the context of our deliberations, the former was characterised by the acceptance of certain dogmatic truths about the human nature and history; the conviction of the selected group's ability to work for the common good; the drive towards establishing a secular society, where the already existing religions were to be replaced by a "civil" religion, rational humanism; the idea of progress understood as a mission carried out against the opposition of tradition, customs, habits; the focus on strength rather than freedom, the conviction

²¹ M. Cristi, "Theoretical Remarks on Civil Religion and Politics: A Global and Comparative Perspective", [in:] *Religion in A Changing Europe. Between Pluralism and Fundamentalism. Selected Problems*, (ed.) M. Marczevska-Rytka, Lublin 2003, p. 175–202. See also: G. Himmelfarb, "Jak demokratycznie bronić demokracji?", *ResPublica Nowa* 2004, no. 4, pp. 53–55.

²² Compare for example: M. Marczevska-Rytka, "Neokonserwatyści amerykańscy na przykładzie Irvinga Kristola", [in:] *Konserwatyzm. Historia i współczesność*, (ed.) S. Stępień, Lublin 2003, pp. 159–162.

that progress is within the intellectual capacity of the elite. On the other hand, the Anglo-Scottish Enlightenment is based on the distrust towards the dogmas of the human nature and the significance of history; doubt of the ability and willingness of those in power to work for common good; the drive towards establishing a system of religious tolerance; the treatment of religion as a “private matter” and including it as such in the system of a secular society; the idea of progress understood socially, involving the development of trade, gradual improvement in morality and customs, popularisation of knowledge; the importance of personal freedoms and a more “liberal” society.

To quote Irving Kristol, the radical tradition of the French Enlightenment was the source of the socialist thought, which stems from the belief that for the improvement of human fate it is necessary to shift the social ladder, including, naturally, the religious order²³. In turn, the Anglo-Scottish tradition perceives institutionalised religion as a functional element from the perspective of a properly functioning social order. It is treated as the provider of spiritual guidance. The reasons for the destabilisation of Europe are seen in the renouncing the need for such guidance and the attempts to discredit the Judaeo-Christian tradition by radical-rationalist liberalism. In the reality of the USA, it stresses the significance of the fact that even if the American constitution does mention separation of church and state, practically it is impossible to part religion and the state. The above is directly connected to the belief that only religion can provide a sense of moral responsibility. Kristol continues much further: it is the task of the government to propagate the Judaeo-Christian tradition, because otherwise, the civilisation of liberalism would be deprived of its anchorage. Norman Davis adds that the British Empire of the nineteenth century was built on a uniform ideological system and religious foundations²⁴. It was structured around the sense of mission for the good of the whole humanity, based on the protestant vision of Christianity. In Davis’s opinion, the need for religion

²³ I. Kristol, *Wyznania jedyne prawdziwego neokonserwatysty*, Instytut Konserwatywny w Polsce – Wektory 1987; I. Kristol, “The American Revolution as a Successful Revolution” [in:] *America’s Continuing Revolution. An Act of Conservatism*, Washington 1973, pp. 3–21.

²⁴ Ideowa próżnia na Zachodzie jest bardzo groźna. Rozmowa z Normanem Davisem, [in:] B. Wildstein, *Profile wieku*, Warszawa 2000, s. 101.

and God is a natural human trait. But religion is not synonymous to a church. Nowadays, many people maintain their faith although they have turned away from the Church as an institution. However, in most cases an institution is needed to shape human beliefs, convictions and intuitions and guide them towards some specified goal. Not every human being, practicing his own religion, can live peacefully with his neighbours. Religion is may often generate conflict²⁵.

ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY

As observed by Roger Scruton, the western civilisation has left behind its faith and holy scriptures, investing its trust not in religious dogmas but rather in unimpeded discussion, the process of trial and error and the ability to question any truth²⁶. The author contrasts two civilisational models. On the one hand, he places the West, which comprises Europe and the United States, based on the Judaeo-Christian traditions. On the other, there is the Islamic civilisation, unified by the common faith based on the Koran and Sunna. Consequently, it has developed a vision of society and a system of values completely different from the Western ones. In Scruton's opinion, should the Western civilisation limit itself to offer only freedom, it is condemned to extinction. Furthermore, waving the flag of freedom under the nose of religious prohibitions constitutes an act of aggression, and as such threatens retaliation by those whose religiousness has been insulted²⁷. Bernard Lewis – one of the most prominent experts on the problems of Islam – mentions two attitudes characteristic of the modern world of Islam and indicating the root of the social evil as well as the way it can be eliminated²⁸. The first of the attitudes was personified by Kemal Atatürk in Turkey, who saw the source of the problem in the social domination of Islam and deemed it necessary to separate religion from the state. In other words,

²⁵ Ibidem.

²⁶ R Scruton, *Zachód i cała reszta. Globalizacja a zagrożenie terrorystyczne*, trans. T. Bieroń, Poznań 2003, p. 8.

²⁷ Ibidem.

²⁸ “Nie można pogodzić tradycyjnego islamu z prawami człowieka. Rozmowa z Bernardem Lewisem”, [in:] B. Wildstein, *Profile wieku...*, p. 34.

religion ought to be reduced to the sphere of denomination, ritual, prayer and morality. Social life ought to be regulated by the political process. The Turkish reformers believed that through those means they would be able to secure democracy, freedom and progress. The spiritual leader of the opposite faction is ayatollah Ruhollah M. Khomeini in Iran. The advocates of this standpoint claim that the root of evil and reason for social decadence lies in the departure from the guidelines and values of Islam. At this point it should be clarified, that Islam is here also understood as a way of life, the legal system and the method of government. As rightfully noted by Lewis, the western model of democracy has, in certain periods in history, been greatly appreciated in Muslim states. Nowadays, however, the weight is shifted otherwise and the Muslim fundamentalism is growing in power, whose social vision does not allow a place for democracy²⁹. He continues to observe that fundamentalism is in fact a defensive reaction against various attitudes, customs and ideas carried by the modern world, against secularisation of the state, emancipation of women³⁰. These are the issues of interest for the people leaving in those countries. The problem of democracy seems abstract to them, virtually unrelated to their everyday lives. In fact, only in the case of Turkey here is a democratic system to discuss in the first place, although even there the fundamentalist movement is highly influential. In other countries, including Iran, there are certain democratic institutions such, for instance, elections. However, they have little to do with the essence of democracy, they are treated more as ceremonies, a sort of an embellishment. Interestingly, we may mention a number of countries of other cultural and civilisational backgrounds, where the predominant position of religion does not contradict the fully operational democratic order they exercise. Such countries include India, Japan or Israel.

²⁹ See for example: M. Marczevska-Rytka, "Religious Fundamentalism: Theoretical Problems", *Polish Political Science Yearbook* 2007, pp. 215–223.

³⁰ "Nie można pogodzić tradycyjnego islamu...", p. 37. Compare: *Islam a demokracja*, (ed.) A. Mrozek-Dumanowska, Warszawa 1999. J. Kynge, "Zakwe-fiony postęp", *Forum* 1997, no. 22, p. 9. *Debata: Islam i demokracja*, <http://pl.danielpipes.org/pf.php?id=1193>

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Traversing the history of the last two centuries, Michael Novak points to nihilism as the plague of today³¹. He says that two hundred years ago, intellectuals made an attempt to build a world based solely on reason, a world without God but they failed. They started by getting rid of God but in consequence lost the reason as well. According to him people believed that reason can function in the absence of God. It seemed to work for a number of generations, but in time it was discovered that the very foundation of reason had been lost. There was no support left for any universal truths. He concludes that people found themselves lost in a void. He terrible temptation arose to reforge the individual isolation and weakness into a collective power, to free oneself from the anxiety by investing in the ultimate, collective self confidence. Benjamin Barber was right to point out that we do need new forms of spirituality, new forms of community, fit for the modern world³². I do not wish to be force into a choice between the traditional Church and atheism. I do not wish to decide between a world of a patriarchal family and a radically consumerist world without family. We need a more flexible, new form of a family, which while being able to preserve many of the family values, will also be more open and more egalitarian. We need new forms of religion, which will allow us to aim for something better within ourselves, but will not reduce us to the traditional duties of religious obedience.

Ultimately, the model of a theocratic state is seen as a direct opposite of democracy, as was the atheist model propagated by the so called real socialism. We could add that the founders and advocates of the latter clothed themselves as servants of true democracy: pure, genuine, higher than the capitalist one. Moral and philosophical justification was provided by specifically understood science, naturally Marxist. We can therefore observe that the rejected models are those in which the institution of state invests its authority in propagation of an idea or system of values seen as the basis for the functioning of the community as a whole. As observed by Michał

³¹ "Plagą naszych czasów jest nihilizm. Rozmowa z Michaeliem Novakiem", [in:] B. Wildstein, *Profile wieku...*, p. 209.

³² "Ślizgamy się po bardzo cienkim lodzie. Rozmowa z Benjaminem Barberem"[in:]B. Wildstein, *Profile wieku...*, p. 129.

Pietrzak, the model of a secular state may only develop in the environment of democracy, where such a search is allowed by the conditions³³. Consequently, he stresses the importance of neutrality, which means the state not adhering to or propagating any religion, ideology or philosophy, the observance of the rules of pluralism and securing the rights granted by the freedom of conscience and religion³⁴.

³³ M. Pietrzak, "Demokratyczne państwo świeckie", [in:] *Konstytucjonalizm. Demokracja. Wolność...*, p. 199.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 202.