

Max Weber in Iran: Does Islamic Protestantism Matter?

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1. Introduction

The year 2005 is the hundredth anniversary of Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism*¹. In his work, Weber argued that material conditions such as structural, legal, and institutional factors were insufficient by themselves for development in Europe. The unique set of moral values associated with the Protestant ethics, he argued, were the cultural conditions most conducive to the spirit of capitalism in the West.² The thesis also put forward the possibility of treating culture in general, and religion in particular, as a cause of political phenomena, i.e., the contribution of the reformed religion to the rise of democracy.

This year also Iranians celebrate the hundredth anniversary of Iran's Constitutional Revolution (*enghelabe mashrouteh*) in 1905 – the first and foremost event in the modern history of Iran. In the Constitutional era some Iranian intellectuals, among the first generation of modern Iranian intelligentsia, called for an “Islamic Protestantism”.³ For this group of intellectuals, Protestantism was instrumental in challenging the hegemony of the institutionalized religion and the legitimacy of the clerical authority. The ‘protestantization’ of Islam, they argued, not only would cease the power of clergy over the masses, releasing people's potential for social change, but it also pushes both religion and religious public to come to terms with the possibilities and conditions of modernity. The goal, however, was not achieved.

The second resurgence and revival of “Islamic Protestantism” took place in the 1960s. Dr. Ali Shariati, a lay progressive reformist intellectual educated in Sorbonne, took the initiative for a radical reform in Islamic thought in Iran. For Shariati, “Islamic Protestantism” was less about theological and more about social reforms. The core component of his argument was that if you want to liberate the religious public, you need first to liberate the religion itself. Nonetheless, Shariati's anticlericalism, ironically, served the clergy: in the midst of the 1979 revolutionary upheaval Shariati's message was lost. The rise of a post-revolutionary clerical regime, thanks to the strength of clerical institutions and the revolutionary charismatic leadership, served, not the spirit of “Islamic Protestantism,” but the strength of Islamism.

Two decades after the establishment of the Islamic Republic under the rule of clerical authority in Iran, the third and the most recent wave of “Islamic Protestantism” emerged. On 19 June 2002, in a controversial speech given at a commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the death of Ali Shariati in Tehran, Dr. Hashem Aghajari, a reformist college professor, called for the necessity and the urgency of “Islamic Protestantism”. As a result, he was first sentenced to death, but eventually imprisoned by the clerical

¹ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Rutledge, 1992[1904-1905]).

² Ibid. p.19.

³ In the Constitutional era of the 1900s, although not necessarily religious individuals, such intellectuals as Akhundzadeh, Malkam Khan, Agha Khan Kermani, and Jamal al-din Afghani called for Islamic Protestantism.

authority. Aghajari said that as “the Protestant movement wanted to rescue Christianity from the clergy and the Church hierarchy,” so modern Muslims must do something similar. Today under the clerical rule, he argued, “more than ever we need the ‘Islamic humanism’ and ‘Islamic Protestantism’ that Shariati advocated.”⁴

What is shared in all three waves of “Islamic Protestantism” is the message, which implies that the application and development of Weber’s Protestant ethic in a Muslim country has more to do with de-institutionalization of religious interpretations dominated by clergy. Islamic Protestantism, it is argued, is capable of resolving a tension between modernity/democracy and Islam by ‘disenchanted’ religious sacred, pluralizing religious thoughts, and secularizing the Islamic public. Being a solution from ‘within’, Islamic Protestantism is seen an essential factor in making democracy work in the Muslim world. For all these reasons Weber’s ideas concerning the correlation between culture and democracy deserve a fresh look.

This paper has a number of purposes. It assesses the contribution of culture/religion to the rise of democracy in a Muslim society. The survey offers a brief review of the key major arguments and points to the flaw and failure of culturalism; the significance and yet secondary nature of cultural/religious factor in democratization; the scope and function of religion in Iran; and eventually the relevance and the necessity of “Islamic Protestantism” in democratic transition and consolidation in Iran.

2. Culture versus Culturalism

The Islamic world has a poor record in terms of development and democracy. What is the major source of this failure? Is it religion and culture or other political, economic, institutional and historical factors intrinsic to the Muslim societies that contribute to the current Muslim predicament? What are the possible remedies for change in the Muslim World? Change in Islam or change in Muslim societies? Is Islam monolithic, impervious to progressive change, and essentially anti-democratic?

Scholars are divided on the role and the relevance of culture and religion in development and democracy. Transitologists question all preconditions, including the cultural conditions, for democracy. The experience of the “Third Wave” democratization, they argue, suggests that countries with different cultures, economy, history and institution experienced successful democratic transitions. They put much emphasis on the role of “human agency”, i.e., the choice made by social and political actors, and less on cultural and economic preconditions.⁵

Political economists challenge the notion of cultural precondition for democracy. For theorists of political economy, democracy needs socio-economic, not cultural, preconditions. Culture is a residual factor. Modernization and economic development determine the fate and future of a given country. Fred Halliday suggests that it is not religion but “certain other social and political features” shared by Muslim societies that hinder democracy in the Muslim World. “Though some of these features tend to be legitimized in terms of Islamic doctrine, there is nothing specifically ‘Islamic’ about them.” He adds,

⁴ Hashem Aghajari, “Islamic Protestantism,” *Faith: the Journal of the International League of Religious Socialists*, <http://ilrs.org/faith/aghajaritext.html> 2004.

⁵ See, for example, Guillermo O’Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

to be drawn into an argument about any necessary incompatibility, or for that matter compatibility, between Islam and democracy is to accept precisely the false premise that there is one true, traditionally established 'Islamic' answer to the question, and this timeless 'Islam' rules social and political practices. There is no such answer and no such 'Islam'.⁶

For Halliday, Islam is so broad that

it is possible to catch almost any fish one wants. It is, like all the great religions, a reservoir of values, symbols and ideas from which it is possible to derive a contemporary politics and social code: the answer as to why this or that interpretation was put upon Islam resides therefore, not in the religion and its text itself, but in the contemporary needs of those articulating Islamic politics.⁷

In similar vein Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan argue that it is quite possible to explain the different outcomes of democratization without considering the religious factor. Other factors by themselves can explain the success or the failure of democratization.⁸

Culturalists, by contrast, put much emphasis on the role of culture. A mild version of culturalism suggests that culture does matter and matters a lot. A stronger version maintains that not only certain cultures and religions are more suitable for democracy, but some cultures/religions are *essentially* antidemocratic. Culturalism or cultural essentialism, in this sense, is a form of scripturalism with two seemingly opposite versions of Western Orientalists and Muslim apologists. They both argue that Western and non-Western societies essentially differ in their civilizations and cultures. The crisis of modernity and the absence of democracy in the Muslim world, they argue, is the fact of "Muslim Exceptionalism." Many Orientalists suggest that "everything from representative democracy and rational thought to the art of novel and the essay are not only western in origin but also uniquely suited to its culture, and native to its temperate climes."⁹

Ernest Gellner argues that Muslim societies are essentially different than others in that "no secularization has taken place in the world of Islam."¹⁰ In *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion*, he argues that Islam has been exceptionally immune to the forces

⁶ Fred Halliday, *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation* (London: Tauris, 1996), p. 116.

⁷ Fred Halliday, "The Politics of Islamic Fundamentalism: Iran, Tunisia and the Challenge to the Secular State" in A.S. Ahmed and H. Donnan (eds.), *Islam, Globalization and Postmodernity* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 96.

⁸ Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 452-3.

⁹ One interpretation of Max Weber's famous work, *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, makes the case of modernity as essentially western; See *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: 1992), pp. 13-31. Also for Kundera's intervention in the debate, see *The Art of the Novel* (New York: 1984), quoted in Abbas Milani, *Lost Wisdom: Rethinking Modernity in Iran* (Mega Publisher, 2004), p. 10.

¹⁰ Ernest Gellner, "Islam and Marxism: Some Comparisons," *International Affairs* 67 (January 1991) 2; also, see Gellner, *Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and its Rivals* (New York: Penguin, 1994) 15-29.

of secularization. Indeed, modernization has simply increased this immunization.¹¹ By the same token, Bernard Lewis and Samuel Huntington maintain that Western culture is unique and essentially different from other civilizations and in particular from Islam.¹² While “in Islam, God is Caesar,” in the West “God and Caesar, church and state, spiritual and temporal authority, have been a prevailing dualism.”¹³ Huntington suggests that “[t]he underlying problem for the West is not Islamic fundamentalism. It is Islam, a different civilization whose people are convinced of the superiority of their culture and obsessed with the inferiority of their power.”¹⁴ For Huntington, it is not “Islamic fundamentalism” but the “fundamental” essence of Islam that makes it incompatible with modernity and democracy. Similarly, the inevitable fusion of religion and politics, Bernard Lewis argues, is something that historically and intellectually attach to Islam.¹⁵

Huntington’s essentialism, as Joe Casanova put it, eventually made him to suggest that “democracy may be a civilizational achievement of the Christian West and therefore not easily transferable to other civilizations or world religions other than through Western hegemonic imposition or through the conversion to Western norms.”¹⁶ “Islamic mind” and democracy are therefore mutually exclusive.¹⁷

In his critique of cultural essentialism, Nasr Hamed Abu Zeid disputes such claim, arguing that,

it is hard to accept the claim that there something inherently wrong with the ‘Islamic Mind’. To speak about an ‘Islamic Mind’ in abstraction from all constrains of geography and history, and in isolation from the social and cultural conditioning of Islamic societies, can only lead us into unrealistic, even metaphysical, speculations. Instead, it is more realistic to look for the root of this panic reaction to critique in the crisis of modernization and complicated relationship between the Islamic world and the West.¹⁸

Similarly, Talal Asad suggests that both Islamists and Western Orientalists share “the idea that Islam was originally – and therefore essentially – a theocratic state;”¹⁹ but, for the Islamists, “this history constituted the betrayal of a sacred ideal that Muslims are required as believers to restore;” and for the Orientalists, “it defines a schizophrenic compromise that has always prevented a progressive reform of Islam.”²⁰ The Islamic state is not that much product of some Islamic essence as “it is the product of modern

¹¹ Ernest Gellner, *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion* (New York: Rutledge, 1992)

¹² Bernard Lewis, “The Roots of Muslim Rage,” *Atlantic Monthly* (September 1990).

¹³ Samuel P. Huntington, *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the Modern World* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996) 70.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p.217

¹⁵ Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

¹⁶ Jose Casanova, “Civil Society and Religion: Retrospective Reflections on Catholicism and Prospective Reflections on Islam,” *Social Research*. Vol. 68, No. 4 (Winter 2001) 1050-1051.

¹⁷ For best models of this approach, see Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of world Order*; Bernard Lewis, *What went Wrong?: The Clash Between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East*, (New York: Perennial, 2003); Bernard Lewis, “Islam and Liberal Democracy,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, February 1993.

¹⁸ Nasr Hamed Abu Zeid, “Heaven, Which Way?” *ALAhram* 12-18 September 2002.

¹⁹ Talal Asad, “Europe against Islam: Islam in Europe,” *The Muslim World* 87:2 (April 1997) 191.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 190-191.

politics and the modernizing state.”²¹ The modern construction of reality created the discourse of Islamism. Islamism, like other forms of culturalism, is a political discourse as well as a modern construction in response and reaction to the experience of modernity. “The essentialist construction of Islam was thoroughly modern in the sense that modernity demanded an essentialist standardization of the world.”²²

There is, indeed, no such thing as *Islamic* state. Islamic Republic of Iran, the only modern example of so-called theocracy, put the interest of the state above that of religion. Ayatollah Khomeini, the founding father of the Islamic Republic, argued that Islamic state “is among the most important of divine laws and has priority over all peripheral divine orders.” The survival of the Islamic state has priority over “prayers, fasting, and pilgrimage (hajj).” He explicitly argued that “*the government is empowered to unilaterally revoke the Shari’a agreements... when those agreements are contrary to the interests of the country.*”²³

Explicit then to this argument is that it is politics not religion that dominates the law, including the religious law (*Shari’a*). In religious or secular authoritarian states, as Ann Elizabeth Mayer put it, there is a “tendency for law to be subordinated to politics.”²⁴

From a different theoretical approach, Norris and Inglehart challenge the core component of culturalism. They suggest that the more vulnerable people are the more religious they become. “Rich societies are becoming more secular but the world as a whole is becoming more religious.”²⁵ There is a correlation between the rise and significance of religion in the developing world and “their levels of economic and human development”, “socioeconomic equality” and consequently their “sense of existential security.”²⁶ Nonetheless, contrary to Huntington’s theory, there “is no reason why this growing cultural divergence must inevitably lead to violent, but it is a cleavage that fanatics and demagogues can size, to use for their own ends.”²⁷

According to Norris and Inglehart, the data and empirical evidence suggest that “when political attitudes are compared far from a clash of values, there is a minimal difference between the Muslim world and the West.”²⁸ Both “Muslim and Western societies are similar in their positive orientation toward democratic ideals.”²⁹ They argue that “the most basic cultural fault line between the West and Islam does not concern democracy;” it concerns social values of gender equality and sexual liberation. The difference on social values, however, does not support cultural essentialism: Support for social values such as gender equality and tolerance of divorce and homosexuality are not

²¹ Ibid. 190

²² Richard Schulze, “Is there an Islamic Modernity?” in *The Islamic World and the West: An Introduction to Political Cultures and International Relations*, ed, Kai Hafez (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2000), p. 24.

²³ For the full text see BBC *Summery of World Broadcasts*, 8 January 1988 quoted in Anoushirvan Ehteshami, “Islam, Muslim Politics and Democracy,” *Democratization*, Vol. 11, No.4, August 2004, pp. 90-110, p. 95.

²⁴ Ann Elizabeth Mayer, “Islamic Law as a Core for Political Law: The Withering of an Islamist Illusion,” *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol.7, No.3 (2002), pp. 117-42, p. 120.

²⁵ Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004) p. p.217.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid. 154.

²⁹ Ibid. p.155.

originally “Western Christian traditions.” These are “cultural changes linked with high levels of economic development.”³⁰

More importantly, “support for democracy is surprisingly whispered among Islamic publics, even among those who live in authoritarian societies.”³¹ Why then the majority of Muslim societies are not democracies? Norris and Inglehart clearly suggest that “the results urge strong caution in generalizing from the type of regime to the state of public opinion.”³² The authoritarian regimes, Islamist or otherwise, do not represent the state of Muslims public opinion.

It is legitimate therefore to argue that culture does matter; it does not, however, exist by itself. “It would be naïve to believe that culture is neutral: in virtually every society, it legitimates the established social order – partly because the dominant elite try to shape it to help perpetuate their rights.” Hence, “the assertion that culture is intimately linked with power is crucial to understanding politics in the Muslim world.”³³ For Inglehart, the key question is what group is in possession of culture? Cultural norms may simply be tools of the ruling elite.³⁴

Culture “is the way a society understands and organizes human life. It both influences and is deeply influenced by the economy, the state, technological development and political arrangements of the society at large.”³⁵ Culturalism overlooks the significance of ‘human agency’. People are not locked into particular elements of their culture; they do change and make change, too. They are not “passive objects devoid of resources other than derived from their society.”³⁶ History suggests that borrowing from other cultures and adapting to local use has been the central phenomenon of human history.³⁷

Cultures change. “What leads to cultural changes is that life experiences of a new generation give rise to new perceptions of reality.”³⁸ The new generation in Muslim countries holds new perceptions of reality. In many cases, it is argued, Western-style institutions of nation-states, electoral, political party, and educational systems have replaced the traditional ones. The new generation has a new perception of the place of women in society. “Woman judges and lawyers are now present in 44 of the 57 Muslim countries.” Bangladesh, Pakistan and Turkey “have already had woman prime ministers.” Today women participate in elections in all but one Muslim country. “Polygamy was

³⁰ Ibid. p.222.

³¹ Ibid. p.155.

³² Ibid.

³³ Mahmood Monshipori, “The Politics of Culture and Human Rights in Iran: Globalizing and Localizing Dynamics,” in Mahmood Monshipouri, et al, eds. *Constructing Human Rights in the Age of globalization*, (Armonk: M.E. Sharp, 2003), p.122.

³⁴ Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and post modernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in Forty-three Societies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p.26, quoted in Monshipori, p. 122.

³⁵ Bhikhu Parekh, “Non-ethnocentric Universalism,” in Tim Dunne and Nicholas J. Wheeler, eds. *Human Rights in Global Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).Parekh, p. 134.

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ William H. Mc Neill, “Decline of the west?” *New York Review of Books*, 9 January 1997, 21, quoted in Ken Booth, “Three Tyrannies,” in Tim Dunne and Nicholas J. Wheeler, eds. *Human Rights in Global Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 49.

³⁸ Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and post modernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in Forty-three Societies*, pp.26-27, quoted in Mahmood Monshipori, “The Politics of Culture and Human Rights in Iran”, p.122.

made illegal in Tunisia and Iran almost 40 years ago and is becoming rarer and rarer everywhere.” Despite all the change in their perceptions, Muslims still hold a poor record in terms of development and democracy. Isn’t it therefore safe to suggest that democracy requires not cultural/religious, but political and institutional reforms? “The quest for a Muslim Luther,” it is argued, “is based on a double misunderstanding. The first is the belief that the present crisis in Muslim countries is rooted in Islam as a belief system rather than as an existential reality. The second is that reforming the belief system would automatically translate into moderate politics.” The real issue is not theological but “political reform expressed through a simple question: how could Muslims secure a meaningful say in running their countries?”³⁹

To summarize, there is no simple causal relations between culture/religion and political outcomes and yet some sort of correlations do exist. “Cultural analysis,” as Jan-Erik Lane and Svante Ersson put it, “has not yet arrived at any definitive findings, supported by strong empirical evidence, concerning cultural causality, at least not in relation to macro outcomes.”⁴⁰ As for relations between political culture and democratization, while culture can hardly be described as the *cause* in the *transition* to democracy, it certainly has significant *effects* in the *consolidation* of democracy. Democratic political culture, as Larry Diamond put it, is central in the consolidation of democracy. Democracy, he argues, “requires a distinctive set of political values and orientations from its citizens: moderation, tolerance, civility, efficacy, knowledge, participation.”⁴¹

Religious traditions do not determine the outcome of political process. There is no linear causal relationship between religious traditions and successful democratization. Religion is a secondary factor in sociopolitical change. Nonetheless, a socially or politically dominant religious discourse/interpretation plays its own role to shape both political culture and democratic outcomes. It certainly matters what interpretation of a religion dominates the sociopolitical field. Interpretations differ in their core elements and thus might contribute to different outcomes.

It is true that cultures changes; it is also true that religious traditions are multi-vocal. And yet, “in the political ‘real’ world one has to deal with ‘actually existing’ systems and ideological tendencies, not the interpretations of a handful of ‘liberally’ inclined intellectuals.”⁴² There is a clear correlation between the hegemonic culture and the dominant religious interpretation, on the one hand, and the quality and consolidation of democracy, on the other.

The religious traditions shape the values, practices, and beliefs of people even if they never set foot in a religious institution. The religious traditions shape worldviews

³⁹ Amir Taheri, “What Muslims Need Is Political, Not Religious, Reform,” *Gulf News*, January 12, 2005, <http://www.benadorassociates.com/article/1098>

⁴⁰ Jan-Erik Lane and Svante Ersson, *Culture and Politics: A Comparative Analysis* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2002), p. 302.

⁴¹ Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1999), p. 161.

⁴² John Anderson, “Does God Matter, and If So Whose God? Religion and Democratization,” *Democratization*, Vol. 11, No. 4, August 2004, pp. 192-217, p. 207.

and define cultural zones. “The historically predominant religious tradition of a given society tends to leave a lasting impact on religious beliefs and other social norms.”

History suggests that “cultural change is path-dependent.”⁴³ This path for change in Muslim societies is partly depended on, though not determined by, dominant traditional version of clerical Islam. Clerical Islam and its traditional Islamic legal codes, the *Shari’a*, disregard modern democratic individual rights, rights of women and minorities. Despite their occasional support for *electoral* democracy, the dominant intellectual trends in the Muslim world remain problematic with regard to the issue of human rights. Abdullahi Ahmad An-Na’im, a Muslim reformist, clearly addresses this problem and passionately calls for the necessity of reform. He argues that,

Unless the basis of modern Islamic law is shifted away from those texts of the Quran and Sunnah of the Madinah stage [traditions of the Prophet back in seventh century], which constituted the foundations of the construction of Shari’a, there is no way of avoiding drastic and serious violation of universal standards of human rights. There is no way to abolish slavery as a legal institution and no way to eliminate all forms and shades of discrimination against women and non-Muslims as long as we remain bound by the framework of Shari’a.⁴⁴

3. Protestantism and Islamic Protestantism

The individual relationship with God, the notion of egalitarianism, and the acceptance of religious diversity in Protestantism played a part as cultural conditions conducive to Western democracy. According to Steve Bruce, Reformation gave a boost to the notion of autonomous individual: “people are more than their social roles;” and “despite their social roles, people are much-of-a-muchness.”⁴⁵ The Reformation rose up the “free-standing individual” and put an end to “the system in which religious officials could placate God on behalf of the community.” It also “created a powerful cat that would eventually escape the theocratic bag.” Moreover, “by removing the special role of the clergy as intermediaries between God and his creation, the Reformers laid the foundations for egalitarianism.” The Reformers also “gave a new impetus to lay activism.” Indeed, “lay participation without the mediation of the clergy created a model in the sphere of religion for what later became the ethos of modern democracy.” The Reformation also caused cultural diversity. “The Reformers shifted the basis of religion from an authoritarian and hierarchical epistemology (in which the truth was available only to a very small number of people) to an essentially democratic one.”⁴⁶

All of this, of course, was “unintended consequences.” The leading reformers of Protestantism were not democrats but highly authoritarian. Protestantism produced its own authoritarian polity. Nonetheless, by promoting lay activism, factionalism, egalitarianism, and individual autonomy it brought some “unintended” democratic

⁴³ Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular*, p.220.

⁴⁴ Abdullahi Ahmad An-Na’im, *Toward an Islamic Reformation* (Syracuse: NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990), p. 180.

⁴⁵ Steve Bruce, “Did Protestantism Create Democracy?” *Democratization*, Vol. 11, No.4, August 2004, pp. 3-20, p. 6.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* p. 7.

outcomes.⁴⁷ The paradox of Protestantism was that it simultaneously hold an “open epistemology and an insistence that there was only one truth that created pluralism.” Thanks to economic and political modernization, the “open epistemology” won the battle and pushed the believers to appreciate toleration and the neutrality of state in religious matters.⁴⁸ It obviously “took a long time and much conflict before that basic egalitarianism was translated into a language of civil liberties and human rights,”⁴⁹ but gradually the privileges of the upper class were extended to the common people.

Can Muslims repeat the experience of Protestantism in their own socio-cultural context? For culturalists, the answer is no, due to the essential differences between Christianity and Islam. Culturalists, both Western Orientalists and Islamist apologists, argue that Islam, more than any other religions, mandates a particular way of public/political life specified in the Quran and thus essentially endorse theocracy. Islam, it is argued, provides a ‘blueprint’ for Islamic state and the clerics (*ulama*) represent a sole political class entitled to represent both religious and political authority.

The Muslim reformers, by contrast, have challenged the intellectual and political components of this argument. For them, neither Islam provides a blueprint for Islamic state nor do clergy hold legitimacy to represent Islam. According to the Muslim reformers, an Islamic Reform, which was called under different titles of Islamic Protestantism, Islamic Humanism and Islamic Renaissance, is the path to liberate both Islam and Muslims from the bandage of reactionary scripturalism and the supremacy of clericalism.

3.1: Max Weber in Iran?

Ali Shariati (1933-1978), a lay religious intellectual educated at Sorbonne, laid the foundation for a radical reform in religious discourse in Iran. Shariati, the most popular and influential Iranian intellectual in the twentieth century, died before the 1979 Revolution. His controversial ideas, however, have remained very much alive in the post-revolutionary debates concerning the conditions and the necessity of reform in Islamic discourse.

In the same way that Max Weber had discovered Protestantism to be the major force responsible for social change in Western society, Ali Shariati reached the same conclusion about Islam and believed that Islam could function the same way. Shariati argues,

To emancipate and guide the people, to give birth to a new love, faith, and dynamism, and to shed light on people’s hearts and minds and make them aware of various elements of ignorance, superstition, cruelty and degeneration in contemporary Islamic societies, an intelligentsia (*rushanfeker*) should start with ‘religion.’ By that I mean our peculiar religious culture and not the one predominant today. The intelligentsia should begin by an ‘Islamic Protestantism’ similar to that of Christianity in the Middle Ages, destroying all the degenerating factors which, in the name of Islam, have stymied and stupefied the process of

⁴⁷ Steve Bruce, *Politics and Religion* (Cambridge: Polity, 2003), pp. 244-54. Also, Steve Bruce, “Did Protestantism Create Democracy?” pp.6-7.

⁴⁸ Steve Bruce, “Did Protestantism Create Democracy?” p. 10.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* p. 12.

thinking and the fate of the society, and giving birth to new thoughts and new movements.⁵⁰

For Shariati, the project of ‘Islamic Protestantism’ aimed to “extract and refine the enormous resources of the society and convert the degenerating and jamming agents into energy and movement.” This movement needs to “bridge the ever-widening gap between the ‘island of the intelligentsia’ and the ‘shore of the masses’”. Moreover, Islamic Protestantism “makes the weapon of religion inaccessible to those who have undeservedly armed themselves with it.” Finally, it “eliminates the spirit of imitation and obedience, which is the hallmark of the traditional religion, and replaces it with a critical revolutionary, aggressive spirit of independent reasoning (*Ijtihad*).” For Shariati, “all of these may be accomplished through a religious reformist movement, which will extract and refine the enormous accumulation of energy in the society, and will enlighten the era and will awaken the present generation.”⁵¹

Like Emil Durkheim, Shariati believed in the dichotomy of religion as located between movement and institution. Religion as a movement represented his version of Islam and as an institution referred to what he called *mazhab-e sonnti* that is a collection of dogma or traditional religion. “Religion,” he maintains, “has two aspects; one is antagonistic to the other. For example, no body has hatred against religion as much as I do and no body has hope in religion as much as I do.”⁵²

For Shariati, the scope and the nature of Islamic Reformation are encapsulated in the trilogy of “liberty, equality, and spirituality.” Islam, he argues, must be reinterpreted in line of freedom of individual (*azadi*), social justice (*barabari*), and constructive and progressive spirituality (*erfan*). In doing so, Islam must maintain a systematic critique of three systems of power: political dictatorship (*esetbdad*), material injustice (*estesmar*), and religious alienation (*estehmar*) – cultural hegemony in the Gramscian sense. By referring to the clerical cultural hegemony, Shariati charged that the clergy were trying to gain ‘monopolistic control’ over the interpretation of Islam in order to set up a ‘clerical despotism’ (*estebdade ruhani*); this would be, in his words, ‘the worst and the most oppressive form of despotism possible in human history’.⁵³ During the last years of his life he wrote that “if the legacy of Mohammad Mosaddeq [the leader of Iran’s Oil Nationalization Movement in the 1950s] was to define an economy without oil revenue, my pride is to define as Islam without clergy.”⁵⁴ For Shariati, no one can represent God in sociopolitical matters; you can replace, Shariati boldly put it, the very term of ‘God’ with that of the ‘people’ in all Quranic verses concerning ‘social’ issues. In society God

⁵⁰ Ali Shariati, *Collected Works, Vol. 20: Where shall we Begin* (Tehran: 1981) <http://www.shariati.com/begin/begin7.html>

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ali Shariati, *Collected Works, Vol.1.* (Tehran: 1981).

means nothing but people. It was, indeed, “precisely over this issue of clerical authority that Shariati called for an Islamic Renaissance and Reformation.”⁵⁵

Contemporary Iran, Shariati frequently pointed out, was at a stage of development similar to that of pre-reformation Europe. The Iranian intelligentsia “needed to learn from Luther and Calvin, to take up tasks appropriate for their environment, and always to keep in mind that the Shiite *ulama*, unlike the medieval European clergy, enjoyed a great deal of influence over the city bourgeoisie as well as over the urban and rural masses.” To perform such a historical revolutionary task the cardinal question was ‘where is Iran in the historical process?’ and he answered that contemporary Iran was neither in the twentieth century, nor in the age of the industrial revolution, but still in the age of faith in the late feudal era just on the eve of the Renaissance.

According to Ervand Abrahamian, the Islamic Reformation was such a difficult task, because the precedent and centuries of history were clearly on the side of the clergy (*ulama*) and their conventional/clerical interpretation of Islam. Furthermore, the question was who is better equipped to judge what is true Islam? Is it the traditional *ulama* or the modern Western-educated intellectuals? There was also a practical problem: Luther and Calvin in the West had succeeded, both because they had been accomplished Biblical scholars capable of challenging the church on its own ground, and because they had enrolled the active support of monarchs and local states against Rome. The equivalent would have been to ally with the Shah against clergy, which Shariati, as an opposition figure, was not willing to do so.⁵⁶

Mehrzad Boroujerdi criticizes Shariati “for his naiveté in wanting to imitate the Protestant Reformation.” Shariati, he argues, “was not willing to acknowledge that in an age of modernity and universal secularization, Islamic Protestantism was not capable of duplicating the revolutionary consequences of Luther’s revolt.”⁵⁷ By contrast, for Hashem Aghajari, a college professor who recently called for an Islamic Protestantism, “Islamic Protestantism is still logical, practical and humanist. It is thoughtful and progressive.” The issue is not much of duplication of Protestantism, but an urgent need for “a religion that respects the rights of all – a progressive religion, rather than a traditional religion that tramples the people.” Hence, “today, more than ever,” he argues, “we need the ‘Islamic humanism’ and ‘Islamic Protestantism’ that Dr. Shariati advocated.” He also maintains that “the difference between our time and Shariati’s time is that then, the clergy did not have power. Today, Islam is in power; clerics are in the government. That is why Islamic Protestantism has become much more important today.” The issue has become more sensitive, Aghajari argues, because the religious institutions “have become a sort of government institution.” Finally, “Islamic Protestantism is something we need,” he argues, “because when our religious understanding and thought are betrayed, we must constantly refer back to our own religious frame of reference. In Shiite Islam they call it *Ijtihad*.” The previous generations of religious scholars understood Islam in their own way; their interpretations are neither central to the faith nor “a driving force for progress and advancement. It will become a cause of continued

⁵⁵ Ervand Abrahamian, *Radical Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris 1989), p. 119.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 123-24.

⁵⁷ Mehrzad Boroujerdi, *Iranian Intellectuals and the West: The Tormented Triumph of Nativism* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University press, 1996), P.115.

backwardness.” Indeed, “n Islam,” Aghajari claims, “we never had a class of clergy; some clerical titles were created as recently as 50 or 60 years ago. This type of hierarchy in [contemporary clerical institution] is an imitation of the Church.”⁵⁸

Abdulkarim Soroush, a leading lay religious reformist in the post-revolutionary Iran, discuss the same issue in a much more sophisticated way. He suggests that Islam, the “last religion is already here but the last understanding of religion has not yet arrived.” We need to distinguish, at once, “between religion and our knowledge of religion,” and also “between personal knowledge of religion and religious knowledge.”⁵⁹ “Religious knowledge” is a “human knowledge” and thus is “incomplete, impure, insufficient, and culture-bound.”⁶⁰ Islam allows “both false righteousness and true virtue.”⁶¹ Indeed, “false interpretations and improper conclusions are still, indubitably, fruits of the doctrine.”⁶² “Let us not forget that Islam is nothing but a series of interpretations of Islam, therefore we need a total reinterpretation rather than a local minor redress.”⁶³ Our interpretations and our religious Knowledge are subject to “contraction and expansion”. Reforming religious knowledge means replacing “one understanding of religion with another.”⁶⁴

3.2: Islamic Protestantism: Political, Private, or Public Religion?

Islamism advocates political Islam. Politicization of religion implies that state is in charge of religion. This obviously violates the very foundation of democracy. Should Islamic Protestantism then support privatization of religion? Does democracy require private religion? Can Islam be privatized? Privatization of religion, in general, represents the idea that the elimination of religion from the public sphere is a condition of democracy. It also implies that religion and democracy can leave together if and only if religious domain remains in the private life.

There is no doubt that the “relocation” of the religious institutions from the “state” and from “political society” to “civil society” is the first necessary step for having any models of democracy. Yet, this relocation does not necessarily correspond to the “privatization” of religion.⁶⁵ It is generally accepted that if religious domain remains in

⁵⁸ Hashem Aghajari, “Islamic Protestantism,” *Faith: the Journal of the International League of Religious Socialists*.

⁵⁹ Abdulkarim Soroush, *Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam* (Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 34-37.

⁶⁰ Ibid. 32.

⁶¹ Ibid. 86.

⁶² Ibid. p.84.

⁶³ Abdulkarim Soroush, *Abstract of the Speech* in the ‘Islam and Democracy’ conference in Mashhad, http://www.drSORoush.com/English/By_DrSoroush/E-CMB-20041126-Islam_and_Democracy-conference_in_Mashhad.html

⁶⁴ Abdulkarim Soroush, *Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam*, p. 33.

⁶⁵ Jose Casanova, “Civil Society and Religion: Retrospective Reflections on Catholicism and Prospective Reflections on Islam.” *Social Research*, Vol. 68, No. 4 (Winter 2001). 1047; also for a more detailed analysis of this view, see Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of

the *private* life, religion and democracy can live together, “for democracy is not atheistic and it does not demand that citizens be so either.” Yet, in “many democratic countries, religious symbolism is strongly present in the *public* sphere.” Eliminating religion from the public sphere is not “a condition of democracy.” The public role of religion does not harm democracy if religion “does not regard itself as the legitimate holder of power.”⁶⁶ Hence, the third alternative may be called “civil public religion.”

What is civil public religion? And *why* does it matter? The concept of public religion should not resemble political religion. Here public never means to replace the private, nor does it mean political. It also has to be distinguished from Rousseau’s and Durkheim’s concept of “civil religion,” which endorses a form of top-down religious development. Public religion is an alternative notion, which characterizes a kind of bottom-up societal expression. It might resemble Alexis de Tocqueville’s well-known celebration of voluntary associations. Public religion refers, to use a phrase coined by Benjamin Franklin, to a form of “civic faith” within a republic.⁶⁷

Nonetheless, a key question still remains unanswered: *why* public religion? First, religion inevitably has and will find its own way to influence the “public” sphere; so it is “better to recognize this and make such religion a subject of citizen observation and debate than to keep it covert and leave it unacknowledged.”⁶⁸ Unlike the Enlightenment philosophers, Tocqueville remained skeptical of the prediction that religion would decline and become politically irrelevant with the process of modernization and the advance of democracy. Interestingly, he “thought that the incorporation of ordinary people into democratic politics would only increase the relevance of religion for modern politics.”⁶⁹

Traditional secularization theory is now widely challenged. Peter Berger, one of the foremost advocates of secularization in the 1960s, admits that “[t]he world today, with some exceptions...is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever.”⁷⁰ Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, two leading modernization theorists, suggest that “there is no worldwide decline of religiosity, or of the role of religion in politics: this is a phenomenon of industrial and postindustrial society.”⁷¹ Furthermore, “[t]here is no question that the relationship between church and state has changed dramatically. Nevertheless, religion continues to have a major impact on politics.”⁷² Moreover, “[e]ven in highly secular societies, the historical legacy of given religions continues to shape worldviews and to define cultural zones.”⁷³ The religious traditions

Chicago Press, 1994); Robert Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

⁶⁶Lahouari Addi, “Political Islam and Democracy: The Case of Algeria,” in Axel Hadenius, ed., *Democracy’s Victory and Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 116.

⁶⁷Martin E. Marty, *Religion and the Republic: The American Circumstance* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987).

⁶⁸Martin E. Marty and Edith L. Blumhofer, *Public Religion in America Today*. University of Chicago, http://marty-center.uchicago.edu/research/publicreligion_today.shtml

⁶⁹Jose Casanova, “Civil Society and Religion: Retrospective Reflections on Catholicism and Prospective Reflections on Islam,” p. 1048.

⁷⁰Peter L. Berger, ed., *The Desecularization of the World* (Washington: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1999) p. 2.

⁷¹Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular*, p. 229.

⁷²Ibid. p.196.

⁷³Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000)

shape the values, practices, and beliefs of people even if they never set foot in a religious institution. For these reasons, by entering the public sphere, “religions and normative traditions are forced to confront and possibly come to terms with modern normative structures.”⁷⁴ Such a public encounter may permit the reflexive rationalization of religious discourses.

Second, by questioning the absolutist principles of inhuman morality of the state’s security doctrines and the market’s impersonal and amoral self-regulation, civil public religion could play a role of counterbalance against those two major power centers, i.e., state and market. Jürgen Habermas divides the public sphere into three spheres of state, market, and civil society, and puts much emphasis on civil society in order to balance the powers of state and market. He refers to “state” “market” and “civil society” as three mechanisms of social integration and suggests that modern societies meet their needs for integration by balancing these three resources.⁷⁵ Accordingly, it is legitimate to suggest that civil public religion, being exclusively part and parcel of civil society, could play its *public* role while remaining far from any state-sponsored *political* role. An active public religion in civil society differs at once from a private isolated religion and from a political ideology of the state. Moreover, environmental and ecological concerns are not well addressed by hidden or individualized religion. It is in the public expression of religion that the environment will be faced with respect to ethics.⁷⁶

The function and scope of civil public religion can also be interpreted in line of theories of “social capital”. Theories of social capital were initially developed by Pierre Bourdieu and James Coleman.⁷⁷ It was, however, Robert Putnam’s works, which generated widespread debates about political and social consequences of social capital.⁷⁸ Social capital encourages the production of private and public goods. Social capital, Putnam argues, means “connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them.”⁷⁹ Social capital promotes ‘civic engagement’, strengthens democratic citizenship, encourages political participation, and facilitates good governance. For Putnam, religious communities can play a significant part for a stronger civil society.

Third, the most significant line of reasoning for the relevance and the rationale of civil public religion lie in its unique ability to challenge and dismantle uncivil political religion. In a time of brutal domestic politics and in a society where religion still dominates the public discourse, religion can best be overcome by religion: creative forms, not non-religion, will set out to attract the hearts of those who have used God against

⁷⁴ Jose Casanova, “Civil Society and Religion: Retrospective Reflections on Catholicism and Prospective Reflections on Islam,” pp. 1048-49.

⁷⁵ Jürgen Habermas, “Three Normative Models of Democracy.” Pp. 21-30 in Seyla Benhabib, ed., *Democracy and Difference: Contesting Boundaries of the Political* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996).

⁷⁶ Martin E. Marty and Edith L. Blumhofer, *Public Religion in America Today*. University of Chicago.

⁷⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *Reproduction in Education, Culture and Society* (London: Sage, 1970); James S. Coleman, “Social capital in the creation of human capital,” *American Journal of Sociology*, 1998, 94: 95-120.

⁷⁸ Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000)

⁷⁹ Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, p. 19.

humanity.⁸⁰ In the context of the Muslim world, Abdullahi An-Na'im reminds us, one must not to "abandon the field to the fundamentalists, who [could] succeed in carrying the vast majority of the population with them by citing religious authority for their policies and theories."⁸¹

Islamic Protestantism makes sense only in this context, because it introduces counter religious arguments in order to balance the public role of religion. In a time and place, like that of the Muslim world today, where Islamist religious discourses are active in the public sphere, an isolated privatized religion, no matter how liberal or democratic is, serves not democratic change but the status quo. If "cultural change is path-dependent,"⁸² Muslim countries need to take their own path to democracy.

Islamic Reformation can better deal with the essentialist, antidemocratic religious discourses such as those of clerical authorities in Iran. Ayatollah Khomeini, the Champaign of the theory of the *velayat-e faqih* (the guardianship of a Muslim Jurist) suggests that "Islamic government does not correspond to any of the existing forms of government."⁸³ The Muslim rulers "are subject to a certain set of conditions in governing and administering the country, conditions that are set forth in the Noble Quran and the *Sunna* of the Prophet."⁸⁴ Similarly, Ayatollah Khamenei, Khomeini's successor, describes the exclusive merits of so-called "Islamic democracy" as to "*totally different* from the governments that claim to be popular and democratic in today's world."⁸⁵ In response to such religious essentialism, Abdulkarim Soroush, among other Iranian religious reformists, argues that,

We do not have religious and non-religious water or religious and non-religious wine. The same is true for justice, government, science, and philosophy. Even the subjects were to have an essence then their Islamization would be rather meaningless. As such, we can not have a science of sociology that is essentially religious or a philosophy that is essentially Islamic or Christian, the same way we *can not have a system of government that is essentially religious.*⁸⁶

4. Conclusion; Max Weber in Iran: Anticlericalism

Max Weber never intended to posit a deterministic relationship between beliefs and practice. "We can only proceed," Weber argues, "by investigating whether and at what points certain correlations between forms of religious beliefs and practical ethics

⁸⁰ Martin E. Marty and Edith L. Blumhofer, *Public Religion in America Today*. University of Chicago.

⁸¹ Abdullahi An-Na'im, *Toward an Islamic Reformation: Civil Liberties, Human Rights, and International Law* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1999), p. xii.

⁸² Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular*, p.220.

⁸³ Ruhollah Khomeini, "Islamic Government," *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini*, trans. and annotated by Hamid Algar (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1981) 61.

⁸⁴ Khomeini 55

⁸⁵ Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, speech on the anniversary of the 12th Shiite *imam* on October 22, 2002.

⁸⁶ Abdulkarim Soroush, "*Mana va Mabnaye Secularism [The Meaning and the Basis of Secularism].*"

Kiyan 26 (August-Sep. 1995): 4-13. p.11, quoted in M. Boroujerdi, "Subduing Globalization: The Challenge of the Indigenization of Movement," in *Globalization and the Muslim World: Culture, Religion, and Modernity*, eds. B. Schaebler and L. Stenborg (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004), 38.

can be worked out.”⁸⁷ In this essay, to follow the Weberian approach, we posed two central questions: Are there cultural preconditions for democracy? And how much difference does culture make in democratization? The rather weak conclusion of this essay is that religious beliefs, among other factors, shape people’s practice. They are, however, interpreted by individuals and shaped by sociopolitical circumstances. Religious traditions still matters, but play a secondary role in democratization.

There are democratic traditions in all cultures and religions. Cultures and religions are multi-vocal, but not all cultural or religious interpretations are *equally* support democracy. What matters most is therefore whether the dominant cultural attitude or religious discourse is democratic. Moreover, a democratic religious discourse can contribute to the growth and *consolidation* of democracy. Nonetheless, religious factor can hardly contribute to democratic *causation*.

There is no doubt that religious reforms have their own impact on political culture and eventually on political outcomes. A democratic political culture endorsed and influenced by a democratic religious discourse will last longer. Yet, a transition to democracy is not determined by the existence of a democratic religious discourse. Religion is not a precondition for democratization. As evidence suggests, despite the domination of clerical conservative Islamic discourse, Muslim societies, including those live under authoritarian regimes, maintain a positive orientation toward democracy.

Yet, there is a need for radical reform in the dominant clerical religious discourse in the Muslim World in order to come to terms with modern values of human rights and democracy. An Islamic Reformation can contribute to this goal by promoting pluralism and dismantling clerical scripturalism, i.e., Islamic Protestantism. The reform can also set the stage for a Muslim version of Vatican II style Catholicism in order to reform the clerical institutions. In either case the goal is to initiate an Islamic Humanism or an Islamic Renaissance.

Is Islamic Reformation a precondition for democratic transition? Is democracy in the Muslim world determined by the religious discourse? The answer, we argued, is no. There are other political, institutional, and economic factors involved in democratization overlooked by the school of culturalism and cultural essentialism. Nevertheless, the quality, condition, and consolidation of democracy are highly and heavily influenced by culture in general and religious traditions in particular. In the Muslim World, Iran included, where religion and religious institutions still mater, religious reform is needed. The vitality of religious reform, here Islamic Protestantism, is not so much a religious obligation but a civic responsibility for at least two reasons: first, as Ali Shariati put it, it “makes the weapon of religion inaccessible to those who have undeservedly armed themselves with it,...eliminates the spirit of imitation, ...extract and refine the enormous resources of the society and convert the jamming agents into energy...and bridges the ever-widening gap between the ‘island of the intelligentsia’ and the ‘shore of the masses.’”⁸⁸ Second, if the culture is “path-dependent” and tends to leave a lasting impact on all social norms, then people, religious or otherwise, are influenced by religious culture. As a distinguished Estonian scholar put it, in explaining the difference between

⁸⁷ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, p. 91.

⁸⁸ Ali Shariati, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20.

the Estonians and Russians worldviews, “we are all atheists; but I am a Lutheran atheist, and they are Orthodox atheists.”⁸⁹ A religious reform can play a part in a social reform.

Max Weber’s intellectual legacy can contribute to Iran’s democratization. Islamic Protestantism and its premise of “anticlericalism” matter. It matters, though in different ways, for both progressive religious and secular intellectuals. The latter considers it as a civic commitment and the former as both a divine duty and a civic commitment. For one, it helps democracy; for the other, it helps both religion and democracy. Anticlericalism is justified based on two different grounds. For a modern religious intelligentsia, it serves, at once, religious and political causes. For a secular intelligentsia, it is only a political goal. Richard Rorty, a towering contemporary political theorist, makes this explicit: “There are the ones who use ‘atheism’ as a rough synonym for ‘anticlericalism.’” And Rorty is now one of them, because “anticlericalism is a political view, not an epistemological or metaphysical one. It is the view that *ecclesiastical institutions*, despite all the good they do – despite all the comfort they provide to those in need or in despair – *are dangerous to the health of democratic societies.*”⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Norris and Inglehart, *Scared and Secular*, p. 17.

⁹⁰ Richard Rorty, “Anticlericalism and Atheism,” in Santiago Zabala ed., *The Future of Religion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005) p. 33. Italics are added.

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