

The End of the End of History

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Abstract:

In this essay I will first examine why the religious right constitutes a significant challenge to liberal, democracies. By the latter I do not mean the ideological sense of liberal, but pluralistic democracies that uphold human rights and values, free and fair elections, and the autonomy of institutions from religious and political interference. I will then make the theoretical distinction between a democratic republic and a sophiacratic “republic,” and argue that theocracy resembles the latter more than the former. Finally, I will note that the end of the end of democracy heralds a new “cold war” between fundamentalist religions and liberal democracies. The use of the “war on terror”—a phony war that should never have begun, is making converts to the cause of fundamentalist Islam, and squanders tax revenues—by the Bush administration heralds the end of the end of history and a new use of Orwellian tactics by the right. Reports of the end of history have been “greatly exaggerated”; the religious right is a serious challenge and even a threat to liberal democracies.

Keywords: Democracy, (End of) History, Orwell, Religious right, Sophiacratic republic

Resumen:

En el presente ensayo, examinaré primeramente por qué las posiciones políticas de derecha de base religiosa constituyen un importante problema para las democracias liberales. Con este último término no me refiero al liberalismo como ideología política, sino a las democracias pluralistas que defienden los derechos y valores humanos, los procesos electorales libres y transparentes, y la autonomía de las instituciones con respecto a las injerencias por parte de instancias económicas y religiosas. Seguidamente, plantearé una distinción entre una república democrática y una "república" sofocrática, arguyendo que la teocracia se asemeja más a la segunda que a la primera. Finalmente, haré notar que el final del final de la democracia anuncia una nueva "guerra fría" entre fundamentalismos religiosos y democracias liberales. El uso de la "guerra contra el terror" – una guerra falaz, que nunca debió haber siquiera comenzado, y que fomenta el aumento del número de partidarios del fundamentalismo islamista, además del despilfarro de los fondos públicos procedentes de los impuestos – por parte de la administración Bush anuncia el final del final de la historia, y el inicio del uso de tácticas dignas de Orwell por parte de la derecha. Las proclamas del final de la historia han sido "enormemente exageradas"; la derecha religiosa constituye un serio problema, e incluso una amenaza, para las democracias liberales.

Palabras Clave: Democracia, (fin de la) historia, Orwell, derecha religiosa, república sofocrática.

I. At the end of the Cold War, an employee in the State Department, borrowing a page from Hegel, stated that the "end of history" has been reached. Fukuyama's well-known book argued that the end of the Cold War has decided the issue between communism and capitalism, between rule by the Communist Party and liberal, bourgeois democracy¹. The reason, he thought, is that there was no competitor to liberal democracy left after the Cold War.²

As the disaster of the World Trade Center has shown, fundamentalist religion has arisen as an "antithesis" to this absolute and final political "synthesis." However, I will argue that this challenge is not confined to the Islamic world. Fundamentalist religious parties and their allies are on the march in several different countries with different religious cultures, including India, Iran, Israel, and even the U.S. In India the BG party, which is openly pro-Hindu, won a majority and formed a government before its recent defeat. It remains one of the largest parties in India and its bellicose rhetoric brought the country to the verge of a nuclear war with Pakistan. In Israel, the Likud Party is composed of many factions among which a religious segment forms a prominent and powerful bloc. Moreover, the two openly religious parties in Israel often form the balance of power in the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, between Labor and Likud, and use this power as leverage to win concessions or influence policy. In the U.S., the "social conservatives" form the backbone of the Republican Party and often dictate its policies. But it is above all in Iran, where the mullahs rule with an iron fist, that the features of religious "republics" are most clearly exhibited.

¹ I am indebted to Dr. David Díaz Soto for many helpful comments and suggested corrections of an original draft of this article.

² Fukuyama, F., *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York: Free Press, 1992.

Organized religions and liberal democracy were allied during the cold war in the face of a common foe. But the alliance of the Roman Catholic Church and the fascists during the Spanish Civil War should alert us to the fact that the Church did not view democracy as its ideal. The Church also viewed fascism as more of a “bulwark” against “godless Stalinist communism” than Western democracy³. Now that communism is waning, the differences between hierarchical religions and progressive democracies may lead to an open breach.

Most Christian Churches are organized as hierarchies, not democracies, particularly the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox churches. While Vatican II introduced some reforms, including some say for bishops and cardinals from a variety of cultures, ultimate power remains in the hands of the pope and is transmitted through a world-wide bureaucracy with layers of power, from cardinals to deacons. Laymen have little say in either the doctrine or workings of the Church. This hierarchical form of organization is not confined to Roman Catholics, since the Orthodox Church, Anglicans, Methodists, and other denominations have similar forms of organization, although there is usually more input and power in the hands of non-clerics in many Protestant denominations. The point is that the very organization of some religions is more akin to monarchy or aristocracy than representative government.

The separation of Church and State that characterizes many modern democracies is not a universally revered value. On the contrary, in theocracies the political ruler is often a religious head as well. In England, the monarch has such a double role as political and religious head of the country, and this used to be an office of the Tsar of Russia and several other European sovereigns, as well. Many of the monarchical forms of rule in classical Islam, notably the Caliph of Baghdad, combined the political and religious roles and heads of state were also religious leaders. However, these kinds are not the only forms of government that combine the religious and political roles in one leader. The pope was also a political leader in the not so distant past, when he reigned over the Papal States of Italy, which were later liberated during the Risorgimento. Pope Pius IX refused to have anything to do with the new Italian government and actively conspired to provoke its downfall. Another example of a theocracy, and one much older than that of Iran, was in Tibet before the Maoist Revolution. Because of the charisma of the Dalai Lama to some Westerners, the fact that Buddhist monks ruled Tibet is often overlooked.

Islam split early in its history between the Shia and the Sunni majority. In the former, the predominant sect in Iran and Iraq, clerical mullahs play a leading role in the life of society. When the revolt against the Shah succeeded in the late seventies, he was not replaced by a secular or pluralistic democracy. One cleric, the Ayatollah Khomeini, attained supreme authority, and his followers, in a brief civil war, turned on their erstwhile allies on the left and killed, jailed or exiled thousands of the regime’s opponents. Khomeini declared that he would give Iran an “Islamic Republic,” which in fact meant that the Shia clerics have a veto power over any laws passed by the Iranian parliament. The supreme Ayatollah decides if policies are compatible with the Shia interpretation of the Islamic code of law, and he can undo the consensus of the legislature. Recently, the Grand Ayatollah refused to allow certain democratic reforms and he and other clerics disenfranchised reform politicians from running for elections. Since the Quran is the ultimate source for the law in an “Islamic Republic,” the harsh punishments contained in the former are currently practiced in Iran, including stoning as a punishment for adultery.

³ A recent study of these events by a former priest is James Carroll’s *Constantine’s Sword, The Church and the Jews, A History*, New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2001.

The late Rabbi Meir Kahane remarked that the Bible does not talk about democracy. He is right. The notion and practice of democracy was Greek; republicanism is Roman. Moreover, Christians and Muslims look to the Old Testament for guidance on many issues and the political life of the Old Testament is not a democracy. Democratic and progressive values are viewed as a threat to traditional religions and to the way of life they entail.

The religious way of life is totalistic in the sense that there is a religious reason and meaning given to all daily practices; a religious interpretation put on all events. Just as political totalitarianism interpreted all of life in political terms, so extremely religious ways of life do so in religious terms. I am not claiming that these religions are totalitarian in the political sense, but that they involve totalistic belief systems not unlike political ideologies. Indeed, several students of totalitarianism have seen the connection between strong religious belief and fanatic political ideologues. Eric Hoffer described the latter as “true believers.”⁴

Since the way of life involved is total there is room for totalistic ways of thinking. In Afghanistan, the Taliban wanted to return to a strict form of Islam that involved setting back the clock and a reversal of all the institutions and customs of secular society. U.S. fundamentalists are also tempted to think in such terms; this is the meaning of Pat Buchanan’s notion of “culture war.” One total way of life and of looking at the world is “at war” with another in this view, the view of the fundamentalists, and therefore of the religious fanatics, who feel threatened by a world that would make them irrelevant. The secular world is quite happily materialistic and does not seem to need religion or have any use for the faith-based meaning put on daily life and events. Indeed, the young of both Iran and the U.S. prefer MTV to religious practices.

Some fundamentalist movements invoke religion as a basis for violence. Violence justified by religion is an old story. As Solzhenitsyn noted, a religious belief fortified the wills of the Inquisitors, who used torture to extract confessions.⁵ The witchcraft trials throughout Europe provide another example; hundreds of victims, both Catholic and Protestant were burned at the stake for the crime of “witchcraft” or for deviating from the “one true faith” during the Inquisition. But a more distant religious inspired event is perhaps more important in this context: the Crusades. It was the religious leadership of medieval Europe that called for a war to liberate the “Holy Land.” Modern Islam has not forgotten what they considered an invasion by soldiers representing a hostile religion, and Al Qaeda has openly compared U.S. soldiers to crusaders. However, it should be noted that Islam was spread as much by the sword as by the word, and captured modern Palestine, northern Africa and other areas from the Byzantine Empire through war, even occupying much of the Iberian Peninsula.⁶ Meanwhile, George W. Bush declared that his decision to invade Iraq has divine “approval.”⁷

There are many other countries where fundamentalists have attempted to impose religious laws on the whole society, notably in the Sudan and Nigeria. In the former, the Islamists in the north tried to impose the Islamic code on Christians and animists in the south. This attempt hampered efforts to broker a peace deal in one of the longest civil wars in Africa. In northern Nigeria, which is predominantly Muslim but religiously mixed,

⁴ Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer*, N.Y.: Harper, 1951

⁵ Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr Isaevich *The Gulag Archipelago, 1918-1956: an experiment in literary investigation*, trans. Thomas P. Whitney and Harry Willetts; New York : Harper & Row, 1985.

⁶ Lapidus, Ira M., *A History of Islamic Societies* , 2nd Ed. Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002. Cf. Gabrieli, Francesco, *The Arabs: A Compact History*, trans. by Salvator Attanasio, Greenwood Publ. Group, 1981.

⁷ See Suskind, Ron, “Faith, Certainty and the Presidency of George W. Bush,” *New York Times*, 17/10/04

violence also occurred, as a result of the effort by fundamentalists to impose Islamic law on the non-Muslim minority. Last but not least is the effort by fundamentalists in the U.S. to castrate sex education, teach “creationism” in public schools, reverse *Roe vs. Wade* and impose other fundamentalist “values” on the majority⁸.

The aims of the fundamentalists are not democratic. The paradigm case is in Algeria, where in an odd paradox, the army had to void an election to save democracy. It was apparent that the fundamentalist religious party had won; they promised, Nazi-like, to abolish elections if they came to power. They used the election to try to impose a fundamentalist regime. The army had to use anti-democratic tactics to save democracy. The same paradox faces democratic forces in many countries, e.g. in Turkey, where the army forced fundamentalists to remove Islamic clothing in the Parliament.

The point is that there is a potential risk of civil war in many “democracies”, pitting modernists against fundamentalists. I say this because the fundamentalists have proven willing to use violence to get their way where the ballot has not proven effective for helping them to accomplish their ends. Al Qaeda has launched secession movements in the Phillipines and other countries with Islamic minorities. Fanatic rabbis have encouraged the assassination of Prime Minister Sharon. In the U.S., anti-abortion extremists have killed doctors and other health care professionals. However, even where they do not resort to violence, these fanatics, fundamentalists and extremists constitute a threat to democratic and pluralist values.

Another challenge is sheer numbers. Biblical injunctions to “increase and multiply” are taken seriously by fundamentalists, and they are increasing their number faster than more secular citizens who are environmentally conscious of the effects of overpopulation. This fact is also a threat to the reduction of human impact on the environment. If such trends continue, fundamentalists may outbreed their opponents. It is clear that they care little about environmental issues, since their transcendent orientation denies the ultimate value of the world. Their focus is on the next world, and some extremists have contended that if destruction of the environment leads to the end of the world, it may be a good thing from a religious point of view, ushering in Armageddon⁹. Indeed, the Bush administration has been the most anti-environmental in recent history. By increasing their numbers faster than their opponents, fundamentalists may constitute the majority in many countries in the future. They would not need to shoot their way to power.

Technical progress is neither value-free nor universally revered. Liberalism as technical progress (whose formula is the widespread belief that “the underlying causes of social unrest are poverty, industry will alleviate this”) should have received a rude awakening in Iran. Secular liberals assume that all underlying causes of discontent are economic and that technical progress will ultimately solve many or most of the economic problems of the Third World.¹⁰ Instead, the underlying causes of the appeal of fundamentalist religions were ignored in the West and Iran was treated as a pariah state. Religion provides hope in desperate times for the dispossessed, which is why Hezbollah is centered in the Palestinian refugee camps. Liberals have forgotten the nationalist challenge to this dream from just a short while ago. Wealth did not prevent nationalism from bubbling to the surface in the former Yugoslavia and tearing the country apart.

⁸ We should not forget that in the recent U.S. election the 22% or so who claimed that their priorities in voting were “moral values” are a distinct minority, despite their muscle flexing.

⁹ Google the “rapture and end times” for literally hundreds of articles on this topic.

¹⁰ See for example, Weinberg, Alvin, “Can Technology Replace Social Engineering?” from *University of Chicago Magazine*, 59 (Oct. 1966) pp. 6-10, for the notion of “the Technological Fix.”

Other values ignored by modern, secular, liberal ideology may predominate in men's hearts — notably religion¹¹. Among other needs of human beings that technical progress does not address, it certainly does not fulfill the spiritual needs of humans. I am not criticizing religion here. The relations between church and state will always be a matter of tension. While liberals may be aghast at the teaching of creationism in schools, they are more supportive of figures like the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., whose use of religion for progressive purposes made him an ally of the left. While the role of religion in a plural, democratic society may be problematic, its influence is undeniable.

II. Theocracy is the rule of clerics, in which they interpret the will of God as the basis for law and government. Theocrats do not want power within a democracy. Ultimately they want to replace democracy. Fundamentalist religion is hierarchical in conception and often in structure,¹² not democratic or equalitarian: God is at the apex as the source of the world.¹³ The religion is interpreted as an exclusive creed and no alternative readings of it are allowed. The model here, following a God-centered perspective, is hierarchical, not equalitarian. A hierarchy constitutes a vertical form of authority, with an independent religion or “Church” ruling over both the government and the society with a vertical chain of command. Law is based on religious texts, scriptures or interpretations. This model can be seen in the recent regime in Afghanistan, in which an extreme reading of Islamic law was imposed. Women were not allowed to hold jobs, go out in public without a male relative, or vote, and endured many other restrictions. However, anyone who thinks that such views are confined to Islam should study the pronouncements of Pat Robertson, the fundamentalist Republican Presidential candidate, who wants to turn the U.S. into a “Christian” republic.

Moreover, theocracy is sophiocratic.¹⁴ “Under God” is not direct divine rule but his commands as interpreted by clerics: “theologian-kings,” whose model is the Platonic Republic, in which the “wise” ruled. Theocracy is a form of sophiocracy, since the literate function of the clerics is to interpret the sacred texts and articulate a uniting creed¹⁵ In the perspective of the clerics, only they are wise enough, and learned enough in the sacred text and commentaries, to grasp the correct intent of the text and judge its correct application. The clerics represent one faction within the intellectual category, that is, the minority within society with an intellectual role, especially in those “religions of the book” that value literacy.¹⁶ The sophiocratic claim to a “republic” is that they “represent” the will of God, the

¹¹ Cf. the phrase the “culture” of poverty, i.e. that there is a distinct culture among the poor.

¹² While Islam is not always officially hierarchical in structure, the imams, or learned men in the congregation have a social prestige above others in the community. Islam historically produced semi-theocracies politically, in that Islamic law was supreme. The Islamists wish to impose this model on modern societies, sometimes with direct (Iran) or indirect (Saudi Arabia) rule by the clerics. I am indebted to Dr. David Soto for suggestions with respect to clarifying this point.

¹³ Cf. the U.S. Declaration of Independence, which claimed divine origin for the Enlightenment values of equality, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. God is the source of rights and higher in authority than any government or secular ruler.

¹⁴ For an extensive discussion of sophiocracy, see McDonald, Hugh P., *Political Philosophy and Ideology: A Critique of Political Essentialism*, Lanham, MD, University Press of America, 1997.

¹⁵ For an example of religiously influenced public standards see Peden, Joseph R. and Glahe, Fred R., eds., *The American Family and the State.*, San Francisco, Calif.: Pacific Research Institute for Public Policy, 1986, ch. 4.

¹⁶ Briefly, the generic intellectual factions are: (1) Clerics, the religious officials, especially in those “religions of the book” where literacy is valued, the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition. (2) A second group consists in unattached intellectuals who correspond to a categorical division of religious and intellectual functions. This group arose in rebellion against clerics during the Enlightenment —professional teachers, journalists, pamphleteers and other non-clerical intellectuals. As a result, they tend to have political interests, if not leanings. Subgroups of (2)

general will, the “true” will of the people, of the masses or workers, and so on. To “represent” someone’s interests can be sophiocratic, a conceiving of the general, the identity element in all differences.¹⁷ Yet “representation” without recourse is sophiocratic, rather than democratic. The crucial difference is that one need not consult to represent: representing the workers’ “true interests” or “objective interests” or those of the “German nation,” the “faithful,” etc., regardless of their expressed wishes. Some representational theories are a disguised form of Platonism, where the “guardians” rule for the masses, which is justified by the division of labor, degrees of intelligence and virtue, and other grounds (Plato’s *Republic*). Indeed, consulting the masses might spoil the purity of the doctrine with compromise, partisan interests and other extraneous factors. There are of course times when courage and leadership have been revealed in representatives—voting for something right that may be politically costly.¹⁸ And slavish representation may be a representation of evil. But the terms “republic” and “representation” should not mislead us about the true structure and processes of such regimes.

The counterargument against procedural democracy, as opposed to anti-democratic political thought, has come in two forms, from the “Machiavellians” and the school of Dahl. The Machiavellians are a group of Italian political realists who wrote at the beginning of the 20th century. They argued that elites always end up ruling and that ostensive democratic revolutions disguise a “circulation of elites,” with one elite replacing another.¹⁹ What apparently seem to be democracies are in fact aristocracies or oligarchies. Robert Dahl has argued that there is no continuing faction that forms a majority, but that the majority is a shifting consensus. He concludes that “majorities rule” not *the* majority.²⁰ It is unclear why this constitutes a major challenge to democracy, however, since a shifting majority is still a majority and the shifts in the constitution of the winning majority from election to election may be a strength, not a weakness.

that may become an independent force may include technicians and certain types of educated professionals, such as lawyers. (3) The scientific and academic “estate” dependent upon research grants, universities, etc. Ancient philosophers tended to serve all three functions, but modern intellectuals tend to ally themselves with one or another.

The rise of unattached intellectuals also marked the point at which higher education was freed from its function as a predominantly upper class perquisite (cf. the Brahmin caste) run by clerics, and became open to talented individuals from all classes, or those with the appropriate interests and inclinations. The “New Clerks” (roughly groups 2 and 3 above, although 3 was present in Medieval times within universities sponsored by religions, are not a fixed class based on inheritance, but a “mobile” class based on talent and interests.

These factions very roughly align with the three main problems in Kant: representing God, man and universe.

¹⁷ That the subject can “represent” is a modern paradox. The Cartesian subject, the founding model of modern thought, represents external reality in the mind. Thus the will of the nation, the working class, of God, can be “represented” without consultation. The denouement of this model is the intellectual as revolutionary in Lenin’s “What Is To Be Done” (Lenin, Vladimir Illich, *What is to be done?*, trans. by S. V. and Patricia Utechin, ed. S. V. Utechin, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), where intellectuals, not workers, lead the revolution which reforms subjects in accord with the “book”.

¹⁸ See for example, John F. Kennedy’s famous Profiles in Courage.

¹⁹ See Pareto, V., *The rise and fall of the elites: An application of theoretical sociology* (Totowa NJ: Bedminster Press, 1968). For an account of this school, see Burnham, James, *The Machiavellians, Defenders of Freedom*, (New York: The John Day Co. Inc., 1943). Because of the association of a prominent member of this school with Mussolini, they are not widely studied. Burnham himself went from Trotskyite to neo-con. His political views after his Trotsky period, expressed in his book (Burnham) *The Managerial Revolution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1960), influenced Orwell, whom I will discuss later.

²⁰ Dahl, Robert A., *A Preface to Democratic Theory*, Chicago Univ. of Chicago Press, 1956.

Democracy means ultimate sovereignty of the majority of the people. In its representative form this means accountability—the people have recourse (elections, recall, etc.) against bad representation. Thus political representation is not incompatible with democracy. However, political representation in the form of “representing” the interests of the majority without consulting them is sophiacratic. The great American defender of democracy, John Dewey, who argued that democracy is a way of life, explicitly excluded this phony kind of “representation” from genuine democracy.²¹ Only the majority can speak for “society,” the “public,” or the people.²²

Non-democratic “representation” (dictators, clerics, and parties) is thereby excluded. Representative and even pure democracy, as in some New England villages, in which the entire community votes on town issues, can exhibit monarchical and aristocratic elements in the form of leaders, molders of opinion, respected elders, and so on. The United States, inter alia, has a mixed constitution, based to some degree on the government of ancient Rome, in which the President is seen as comparable to a constitutional monarch, while the U.S. Supreme Court is like an aristocracy. But these and other factors are influences, not ultimate. Schumpeter spoke of “competition for leadership” or the rule of a competitive but minority political class.²³ However, “competition for leadership” has more to do with sophiacratic representation than democracy as such.²⁴ This emphasis seems more appropriate to a fascist “republic” than equalitarian democracy: Il Duce, Der Führer, El Caudillo and the like. Again, non-democratic forms of a “republic” can “compete” for the people’s loyalty, but remain beyond its recourse. But on the other hand, if the people have recourse, no elite can rule without its approval, as the 1932 U.S. election showed. Thus the fact of elites does not mean that there can never be a democracy, although elites constitute a challenge to democracy.

III. The Republican Party in the U.S. misses the Cold War. One conservative columnist, William Krystol, openly stated in the nineties that conservatives lack a unifying issue with the demise of the Soviet Empire. “Anti-communism” was the unifying glue that held libertarian and traditionalist, economic and social conservatives together. He saw the danger of the conservative alliance coming apart, especially over issues like abortion, where libertarians within the (U.S.) Republican party differ significantly from social conservatives. Fortunately, a unifying issue came along just in time. The World Trade Center fiasco provided the rationale for increasing the proportion of the federal budget for defense, killing the “peace dividend.” It also allowed the state security apparatus unprecedented surveillance powers. The so-called “Patriot Act” even allows access by the government to what books citizens read at the library. It also provided the chance to divert tax revenues from social programs to corporations like Halliburton, using the scare tactics of the “war on terror” as a justification.

Although the Bush administration has not made the war on terror a straightforward Christian-Islamic war, that is how it is portrayed in much of the Islamic world. The Islamic press has emphasized the unwavering and uncritical U.S. support for Israel, that it has

²¹ Dewey, John, *The Public and its Problems*, Chicago: Swallow Press, 1927 (1st. ed., 1953).

²² The Algerian exception that I mentioned above notwithstanding. Since it was the army that intervened to prevent the results of the election being carried out, this is really military dictatorship. Nevertheless, it does present a problem for democracy, which Plato and Aristotle realized, of democracy ending in tyranny. Another example, pointed out by Dr. David Díaz Soto, is the external imposition of democracy by invasion, e.g. the U.S. in Iraq. In the latter case, the masses accepted democracy, since the majority turned out to vote in post-war elections.

²³ Schumpeter, Joseph, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, New York: Harper and Row, 1942, p. 269.

²⁴ G.W. Bush makes a fuss about his “leadership” especially in time of war.

invaded an Islamic country, Iraq, that its troops occupy one of the holiest places in Islam, and so on. Since the Christian fundamentalists who support the Bush administration are not fond of Islam, and view it as a rival, if not a threat, the hidden message is the demonization of Islam as the satanic enemy, or at least of Islamic extremists as such.

Even the characterization of our period as the “war on terror,” with the “free world” arrayed against the terrorists is a reversion to Cold War and Orwellian tactics. George Orwell was the satirist of the Cold War. In his famous novel *1984*, Orwell emphasized certain prominent features of the cold war that also characterize the “war on terror.” One is a division of the world into saints and devils. Just as anti-communists regarded the Soviet Union as the “evil empire,” so do apologists for the war on terror paint the “terrorists” as satanic. Al-Qaeda paints the U.S. in equally Satanic terms: “the Great Satan,” to quote Khoumeni.

In the novel, “Oceania” is at war first with “Eurasia” and then with “Eastasia.” Orwell was satirizing the change in the West from an alliance with the Soviet Union during World War II to its becoming the main enemy during the Cold War. Similarly, The U.S. was a *de facto* ally of Saddam Hussein’s Iraq during its war with Iran in the eighties. Then this regime became the “enemy”.

Orwell noted that the ideological mentality during the Cold War could be described as “doublethink.” He described “doublethink” or “reality control” as “to know and not to know, to be conscious of complete truthfulness while telling carefully constructed lies, to hold simultaneously two opinions which canceled out, knowing them to be contradictory, and believing both of them, to use logic against logic, to repudiate morality while laying claim to it, to believe democracy was impossible, and that the Party was the guardian of democracy, to forget whatever it was necessary to forget, then to draw it back into memory again at the moment it was needed, and then promptly to forget it again...to even understand the word doublethink involved the use of doublethink”²⁵. In other words, doublethink was essentially logical inconsistency. One is not supposed to apply standards to one’s own “side” that one applies to the other “side,” the “enemy.” When the U.S. armed forces kill innocent civilians, it is “collateral damage.” When Al-Qaeda does so, it is “terrorism.” The angelic side can do no wrong; the satanic side is never right. The presence and imperial reach of the U.S. armed forces in Islamic countries is ignored, as is the U.S. invasion of a sovereign country, Iraq. The fact that Iraq just happens to have one of the largest proven oil reserves is remembered when invasion apologists argue that the war will not be costly but then immediately forgotten when it comes to justifying the war itself. Freedom is invoked as a rationale for the war, and promptly forgotten when the Constitution of Iraq discriminates against women. (Similarly, Al-Qaeda, in the name of Islam, also kills innocent civilians, including Muslims, in direct violation of the Quran and, the document they ostensibly hold sacred.²⁶ In other words both “sides” hope to profit in different ways from warfare).

The Slogans of the “Party” exhibit another form of doublethink, equating logical contraries, for example, “war is peace.” Similarly, the so-called “Patriot Act” is an attack upon traditional liberties, and therefore un-patriotic, since it destroys values of freedom that can be considered foundational to the United States of America. The Bush Administration’s “Save the Forest” initiative allowed lumber companies to finally get their hands on trees that had previously been protected. Karl Rove, a key Bush advisor, has proven a master of

²⁵ Orwell, Georges, *1984*, New York: Signet/ New American Library, 1961 ed. pp. 32-33.

²⁶ *Qur’an* 60:8; *Saheeh Muslim* #1744; *Saheeh Al-Buchari* #6871 and 3015.

this technique as well as misinformation in general.²⁷ Some in the Administration still insisted during the 2004 presidential campaign that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction (Rice, Rumsfeld), that it is allied with the terrorists, and that it is somehow connected with the World Trade Center bombing. Credulous voters went to the polls believing this “prolefeed.”²⁸

Applying consistent standards would be “thoughtcrime,” which Orwell characterizes as the “only crime.” Thoughtcrime consists in any deviation from orthodoxy. “Crimestop” was the habit of stopping short just before “thoughtcrime.” “It includes the power of not grasping analogies, of failing to perceive logical errors, or misunderstanding the simplest arguments if they are inimical to ‘Ingsoc’ (the official ideology of the “Party” in 1984), and of being bored or repelled by any train of thought which is capable of leading in a heretical direction.”²⁹ These terms are not simply satiric; they describe certain patterns of thought and speech in our age.³⁰ Similarly, the thought that we may be installing a regime in Iraq that resembles that in Iran, with religious figures holding the ultimate power, is never mentioned by the Administration.

Orwell also believed that much of the Cold War was a phony war deliberately contrived to keep the Party in power. By continually stressing the “war on terror,” the “Party” can continue to create a war mentality, and thereby justify its policies. The stress by the Bush Administration on possible terrorist acts, complete with color-coded “danger” levels, keeps the population at a state of constant alert. Since the war in Afghanistan seemed in the early part of the decade to be winding down and might no longer provide the level of threat needed to keep the masses cowed and supportive, the Iraq invasion had as a bonus the continuation of war fever. Saddam Hussein, despite his many faults, was no friend to Al-Qaeda, and indeed was considered too secular by them. Nor was he a threat to the U.S. The war was begun with phony premises and need never have been fought.

Orwell believed that early (democratic) socialists had forgotten the Church as institution of power. Socialists believed that what is not hereditary could not be permanent. But the Church was united across the centuries by a unifying creed, a model for the totalitarian Party in 1984, united by fanatic belief in a common ideology.³¹ Orwell argued that equalitarian socialism had been replaced by a trend towards hierarchical organization. Now we have slipped back into an age of religiously inspired warfare in which religious creeds

²⁷ A web site service was created during the election to chronicle and correct these Orwellian distortions by the administration, the “Daily Misedad”.

²⁸ The term “prolefeed” is from 1984. Compare the “totalitarian personality” described by Erich Fromm in his book *Escape from Freedom* (New York: Avon, 1941/1970).

²⁹ Orwell, 1984, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

³⁰ Thus his book is not simply a critique of totalitarianism, much less the Soviet Union, since Orwell thought that both sides in the Cold War used similar tactics, including propaganda. This is indicated by the fact that the plot of the novel takes place in England, not the U.S.S.R. Moreover, he believed that totalitarian ideas had taken root among intellectuals “everywhere.” I mention this in response to Dr. Díaz Soto’s point that “Some interpreters and critics of Orwell have said that the *real and only* targets of Orwell’s satire were the Communist party and the Soviet government, and that he was a disabused ex-leftist converted into a conservatist, and supportive of U.S.’s cold war politics.” On the contrary, he was also targeting right-wing totalitarianism and totalitarian tendencies everywhere. For Orwell’s comments on 1984, including this one, see *In Front of Your Nose: The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*, Vol. IV, 1945-1950, ed. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, NY: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1968.

³¹ Orwell believed that many Stalinists were drawn from the “new clerics,” that is, unattached intellectuals. Stalin started out as a candidate for priesthood in the Orthodox Church. Be this as it may, it should always be kept in mind that any intellectual faction could form the basis for an intellectual-sophiacratic regime based on an exclusive set of values.

are again being used to define the parameters of belief and to set national policies. If progressives buy into these policies, progressive causes will receive an unprecedented de facto setback.

Mr. Bush stated during the election debates that “freedom is on the march.” But a libertarian outcome is unlikely in Iraq. The overwhelming majority of Iraqis are Shiite Muslims, who support their clerics as unofficial leaders in society. A more likely outcome is a moderate theocracy, modeled on Iran with the use of Islamic religious law as the standard for public law. This outcome will only fuel the new cold war between fundamentalists of different religions. Progressives and democrats will find themselves caught in the middle between two unpalatable fundamentalist alternatives: Sharia or The Pentateuch.

One danger is falling into the trap and treating the phony war seriously. If progressives make such issues their own, they will have unwittingly adopted the conservative-fundamentalist agenda. This would be a serious mistake, one that indeed the U.S. Democratic Party made in 2004. Their candidate was “Bush light,” since he did not seriously question the war as a whole. Nor did he propose to withdraw from Iraq quickly. Although it may take longer, the best strategy is the truth: to “stay on message”³² that this is a phony war, with the underlying motive not of liberating Iraq, but of having a friendly face in the presidential palace of a country that has one of the world’s largest reserves of petroleum. Have we forgotten the obvious? That “W”³³ is an oilman and that the Saudis bailed out his company, when it faced bankruptcy? The “insurgency” will eventually catch up to the lack of planning by the administration during the invasion. The administration knew that a draft would be politically unpopular and invaded with too few troops to police the country adequately. Despite the attempt of the administration to hide the body bags, the casualties eventually gave all but the most fanatic second thoughts about this phony war. It was phony as it was fought under phony pretenses against a virtually prostrate regime.³⁴ It is phony in the implicit message it sends about a war against Islam. Above all, it is phony in the attempt to create a world of false alternatives: U.S. imperialism or the spread of terror.

Many commentators have noted that the U.S. invasion has had the opposite effect: it has increased recruitment by “extremist” Islamic groups. It has increased, in other words, the perception that this is a religious war. To continue in this light is to feed Islamic fundamentalism and thus to *create* a new “cold war” between fundamentalisms. The war enhances the anti-democratic forces within Islam, including theocracy. It also increases the influence of fundamentalists in the U.S. A nightmare scenario: the future as Bible toting Christians at war with Taliban-like regimes. Public schools in the U.S. with school prayers, dress codes, “creationist” science and “abstinence” sexual education. Abortion outlawed. Gays in the closet and women in the home. A return to the stultifying and plastic society of the fifties. Or worse, a return to the Reformation era and the atrocities of religious wars.

The whole legacy of the Bush Administration is like a nightmare from which, unfortunately, we will not wake up. Debating the rights and wrongs of the war on terror has the feel of theater of the absurd, since in a sane world, these events would never have happened. It is difficult to take the issues it raises seriously since the entire “war on terror” is phony: it was created *ex nihilo* to justify a real war for oil. Indeed, we can imagine an alternate history of peace in the last 8 years in which the U.S. slowly withdrew all its troops

³² I kidnapped this phrase from the Republican playbook. Bush’s advisors urged him to “stay on message,” that is, don’t get caught up in another political perspective, or issues from within the other perspective.

³³ (George) W. (Bush).

³⁴ Although the war is ostensibly over, following Obama’s declaration to such effect on early 2009, the conflicts on the area are certainly still going on.

from the Middle East, denying “militant” Islam its ostensive issue. In this scenario, the US would not have expanded militarily, but contracted. The “Patriot Act” would not have been required, nor the surveillance state that is now in place. The “peace dividend” would have been realized, allowing for more spending on desperately needed alternative energy and education. The key to this alternative, in which there would have been no new “cold war,” would be the development of alternative fuels. In other words, if Al Gore had been certified—since he did indeed receive the majority—the war over control of oil would never have taken place, and the developed world would be moving toward a sustainable future.

If we are to avoid such a nightmare, we must keep alive an alternative version of reality, an alternative philosophy. One way is to take a page from the “Bushwhackers” and emphasize values. For all their talk of values, they wouldn’t know a value if one came up and bit them in the *hone*.³⁵ With their misinformation campaign about the war, it is obvious that they do not believe in the value of truth. Science is under attack by an administration sucking up to fundamentalists and their preposterous views on evolution and biology (“creationism”). Bush packed a commission to investigate Global Warming with political allies. Even they had to concede the role of human-caused emissions in increasing Global Warming.³⁶ The report found that global warming was already causing draught, damaging farms and changing migration patterns. But the administration continued its denial of the role of carbon-based fuels in the increase despite overwhelming evidence.

The conservatives do not really believe in the value of charity: the much-maligned “welfare state” and the “war on poverty” took religious virtues like charity much more seriously than the conservatives do. Again, we may also ask: Is a belief in charity, and that “all are equal in the eyes of God,” reconcilable with a corporate culture in which executives earn a salary as much as 450 times what the average worker earns?³⁷ Are naked greed and blind self-interest reconcilable with the Sermon on the Mount? Are tax cuts for the richest at the expense of the poorest? If the conservatives are so much “pro-life,” as they profess to be on the issue of abortion, how can they possibly be in favor of a war in which both civilians and soldiers have died needlessly for control of oil? Or, the Bush administration’s “relaxation” of pollution controls, originally designed to save lives? If they are for the “liberty” of gun owners, why not the liberty to read books without “Big Brother” looking over your shoulder? Is gay-bashing actually “loving your neighbor?” Is the war “turning the other cheek?” Similarly, social conservatives claim to be “pro-life,” but they ignore, downplay or try to justify killing innocent civilians as “collateral damage.”

Such issues constitute the “internal contradictions” of the conservative movement, which has tried to reconcile libertarian values of freedom with the non-libertarian “values” of hierarchical religious fundamentalism. These internal contradictions span irreconcilable opposites, like ostensive “freedom” from state interference with actual policies designed to curtail or eliminate freedom, including interference with a woman’s right to choose, an increase in public and private surveillance, unconstitutional imposition of religious strictures, sexual restrictions, and an increase in corporate power over employees and communities. Some corporations monitor employee use of computers; Others, notably *Wal-Mart*, often take over the local economy, forcing small firms out of business. Almost all

³⁵ For those not familiar: “Bushwhackers” means the Bush administration; *hone* is Gaelic for *ass*.

³⁶ See Revkin, Andrew C., and Seelye, Katherine Q., “Panel Tells Bush Global Warming is Getting Worse: President Sought Report on Issue After Rejecting World Pact,” *New York Times*, June 2001.

³⁷ Conservatives are also distorting both the future danger to the Social Security system and the feasibility of the “privatization” alternative. Imagine if young people lose all their money in the stock market: how will they live once they retire? Social Security was set up after the Great Crash of 1929 precisely to help those who were destitute due to the Crash.

contribute funds towards selected political candidates in corporate financing of elections. The hierarchical model of the corporation is even suggested as a cure for mismanagement in government, which some preach should be “run like a business,” despite corporate scandals (Enron, Tyco) and failures: most evidently, that of the banks in 2008 that unleashed the present global crisis; here we may see a good example of conservative “doublethink.” Indeed, without the government to bail them out, the economy would be in even worse shape.

It is progressives who take moral values like non-violence and helping those in need seriously. It is progressives who wish to extend moral values, in the form of moral consideration, to larger groups of people: minorities and women, gays; and even beyond, to animals and the environment. Progressives should emphasize again and again that the war was misconceived, misrepresented and immoral. It is the warmongers who are immoral, who in practice do not believe in “moral values,” both by lying to the American public about weapons of mass destruction, the connection of Saddam Hussein to Al-Qaeda, etc.; and also by supporting the killing of civilians and soldiers alike to make a grab for the oil fields. Bush’s own cabinet secretary spilled the beans on the administration’s planning for the Iraq war well before 9/11/01.³⁸ If these points are stressed often enough, even true-believing fundamentalists may realize the immorality of their “leaders.”

It should be kept in mind that where progressives have stressed liberty issues, they have won elections. An example is the election of progressive governor L. Douglas Wilder of Virginia, whose campaign emphasized the dangers of the surveillance society in the context of the abortion debate (He campaigned on the pro-choice slogan, “keep the government out of the bedroom.”) In other words, parents, not the government, should decide whether to have children or not. As of now, the fundamentalists are in the minority, at least in the United States, and many economic conservatives are uneasy about their alliance with anti-abortion, anti-Darwin social conservatives. Pat Robinson did quite poorly in the Republican primaries, even in the area of the southern United States informally known as the “Bible Belt”.

IV. The ethical dimension of the coming age of religious warfare involves the question: “Why be moral?”; that is: why is killing innocent people wrong? The moral question is, why should religious fanatics be subject to moral duties and respect the intrinsic value of innocent persons? Killing in the name of an exclusive religious creed is based on belief that one religion is the true one. Thus it involves the particularity of a religious culture, i.e. one kind of cultural relativism, viz. that religious belief is higher than human rights, or exempt from human rights, based on divine command.³⁹ Other examples of cultures that have claimed exemption from universal human rights are the in the Sudan, where one tribe has traditionally enslaved another, in the claim of “Asian values” in China, despite the Marxist inspiration for the Communist government there, in the use of female genital mutilation in some African cultures, and in the treatment of women in Afghanistan. Why should those in

³⁸ Former Treasury Secretary Paul O’Neill told the news program “60 Minutes” that regime change in Iraq was the main topic at the very first meeting of Bush’s National Security Council—a full eight months before 9/11. O’Neill said, “It was all about finding a way to do it. That was the tone of it. The president saying ‘Go find me a way to do this’.” O’Neill subsequently authored a book documenting these allegations. (I am indebted to the “Daily Misdread” on these points, as well as accounts in the New York Times.)

³⁹ Again, I have to answer to the comments of Dr. Díaz ^{soto}, who reads this as absolutism, not relativism, since such fanatics believe they have a right to follow their religion without regard to rights recognized world-wide. But this relativizes human rights and thereby the religion involved. Human rights are regarded as a product of Western culture, which does not extend to other cultures, which have their own rules. We may infer that the other cultures regard it as legitimate to follow their own cultural rules.

other cultures pay attention to values identified with the West, viz. human rights? However, in the context of our age, the issue is religiously justified violence, whether a jihad, the Inquisition, “God-given” land, and any other claims based on exclusive creeds. There are not simply theoretical issues at stake in the debate over ethical relativism, but practical ones as well.

One answer is practical, and it derives from the philosophy of non-violence articulated by Mahatma Gandhi and Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.⁴⁰ King argued that violence begets violence and initiates a cycle of revenge that can only end in a downward spiral, as in the self-destruction of Lebanon in the eighties. In the Middle Ages, at the end of the Crusades, and despite all the blood that was spilled during them, the outcome was a situation in which little had changed from the beginning to the final outcome. Despite a brief “Kingdom of Jerusalem” established by the knights, the “Holy Land” ultimately reverted to Islamic rule. All the blood spilt was useless judged by the standard of achieving Christian control. The same outcome is likely in any attempt to impose democracy at the point of the sword.

A second answer is that killing people in the name of religion is morally hypocritical. All religions would agree with the commandment, “Thou shalt not kill.” Although many exempt war, they at least frown upon killing innocent people. Moreover, they claim universality for such commandments within the faithful, and some project that at a future point the entire world will believe in their creed. That is, such religions implicitly believe in the universality of their truth and their ethic. If killing innocent civilians is wrong, how can religion be used to justify it?

On the question of values, we can turn tables and ask: Why we should be tolerant of intolerant cultures and religions at all? Religious fanatics expect toleration, but do not extend it to others, such as gays. We may remember here the murder of the Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh by a fanatic Muslim, who was enraged at his documentary about the mistreatment of Dutch Islamic women. The murderer, Muhammed Bouyeri stated “that armed jihad was the only option of Muslims in the Netherlands and that democracy was always a violation of Islam because laws cannot be produced by humans but only by Allah.”⁴¹ But why should minority religions have a right to expect such tolerance? It can only be if tolerance is a universal value that all cultures and religions should respect and practice. But then cultural/religious relativism has at least one exception. Do we have a duty to respect the rights of others? It is hard to see how we can claim that others have a right and deny that we have a duty to respect such a right. Rights entail duties from others to respect the exercise of such rights, or they are sham rights.

The issue is whether human rights are simply a posit of Western culture or universal. Since, whatever their origin, human rights have been recognized by all members of the United Nations, which has formulated the “United Nations Declaration of Human Rights,” rights are regarded as universal. To the argument that “rights” are a term of Western origin, progressives can reply that “gravity” is also a concept of Western origin. But the force of gravity is not limited to the West, as anyone in the world can prove to herself. The origin of a concept is not a limitation on its universality. Regarding normative concepts in particular, the lack of any instance of such rights is no argument against their universal validity:

⁴⁰ King, M.L., “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” reprinted in Estey, G. and Hunter, D., eds., *Nonviolence: A Reader in the Ethics of Action*, Waltham: Xerox College Publications, 1971. See also the article by Gandhi.

⁴¹“[Media Silence on Van Gogh Killer’s Islam Views.](http://www.nisnews.nl/public/110507_1.htm)” NIS News. 2007-11-05. http://www.nisnews.nl/public/110507_1.htm.

modern rights theorists have argued that rights are moral rights. They are valid as obligations regardless of whether individuals or governments honor them⁴².

Another way of approaching these issues is what is called the “universality” of obligations and values in the face of jihad or crusades, whether Islamic, Christian, or any other religion. Progressives implicitly believe in the universality of some values, e.g. equality. The question is whether the value of persons is universal and inviolable. The answer of Kant would be that murder is simply wrong, for it cannot be consistently willed

V. Since democratic values are under assault, a response to fundamentalists concerning the issue of values is needed. It should be pointed out that fundamentalists are hostile to democracy precisely as a frustrated minority. Fundamentalists are also hostile to tolerance, freedom and other Enlightenment values. Conservatives in general do not believe that “all men are created equal.” They do not want a society of equals, but a hierarchy, in which authority comes from the top. They do not believe in the entire project of a science without bias, based solely on the value of truth. They are intellectually and sexually repressive. In other words, fundamentalists suppress all freedom in the name of an exclusive set of religious beliefs, an exclusive “truth” that would exclude any other truth. All values are subordinated to religious values, leaving no room for valid science, expressive art, free intellectual life, autonomous personal life, and many other hard-won values of the modern world. Fundamentalists would start a war over science: “creationism” vs. evolution.⁴³ That war is as much a metaphysical as a physical war, since it is over the shape of the reality of

⁴² A more nuanced view is possible here, substituting the generality of a rule for absolute inviolability. We may claim that there are exceptions to the rule against killing other humans for situations such as self-defense, defensive war and even capital punishment, and still uphold the rule. The rule holds normally or in general, but there are legitimate exceptions.

⁴³ A Catholic priest was said to have proposed the “Big Bang” theory of the universe in the hope that it could be reconciled with “intelligent design.” The thesis of the creation of the universe is not impossible, although there is no evidence at present to support it (cf. Stephen Hawking, *Stephen, A Brief History of Time, From the Big Bang to Black Holes*, (New York, Bantam, 1998) which argues against such an absolute beginning; Ernest

Sternglass, *Before the Big Bang, The Origins of the Universe and the Nature of Matter*, (London and New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1997/2001), which examines the period before the Big Bang from a naturalistic standpoint; and Suavé, Vincent, “Is the Big Bang Cosmology good science or rather creation “science” par excellence?” (paper presented at the 75th annual meeting of the American Association of the Advancement of Science (AAAS), Pacific Division, San Francisco State Univ., June 20-24, 1994.) However, the thesis of Biblical inerrancy and a literal reading of Genesis is simply preposterous in view of all the evidence for a much older Universe.

“Creationism,” if it is taught at all, should be confined to private religious education or to philosophy classes. It has no place in the science curriculum. All the evidence in biology, geology, physics, chemistry, botany, anthropology and every other historical science is against it. According to Bishop Usher, who carefully tabulated dates in the Bible, the world was created in 4004 B.C. (See Barnes, H.E., *An Intellectual and Cultural History of the Western World*, NY: Dover, 1937/1965, Vol. 3, on Usher.) However, dinosaur bones are much older. So are the overwhelming majority of animal and plant species. Humans originated at least 100,000 years ago. Geologists have pegged the age of the earth at 5 billion years. Paleontologists use carbon dating to date fossils and chemists to date anything containing carbon. These methods reveal a much older earth and the rise of life. Given the speed of light, some light from distant stars and galaxies has taken far more than 6000 years to reach us. As far as cosmology goes, the date of the universe is approximately 13 billion years. In other words: all the evidence, from every science, all of which is mutually reinforcing, is against “creationism.” (I am indebted to the late Prof. Steven J. Gould on the last point, that the scientific evidence is mutually reinforcing).

The latter is not a rival theory in any scientific sense and teaching that it is, is not only anti-scientific, but subverts the whole value of education, which includes training young minds to think critically and to expand their knowledge. Education should not be religious indoctrination. This is a point on which progressives should never yield. To compromise would be to sabotage the value of knowledge and destroy the values instilled by education.

Is this to make an absolute of science? But science is a self correcting enterprise in which older theories (Newton) are sometimes replaced by newer, superior ones (Einstein’s relativity). Science must earn its authority.

the future. Can science survive? One point we have tried to make is that conservatives and religious fanatics do not live up to their professed values, and therefore do not really believe in them.

Fundamentalists are fanatic and intolerant, not pragmatic and pluralistic. Fundamentalist religions cannot provide either a democratic or pluralist future since they collectively represent competing absolutisms. A victory of one fundamentalist religion over another would not usher in a new age but only more of the same hierarchy and repression.

Professors Richard Bernstein and Louis Menand have argued that pragmatism at its best is “an idea about ideas”. Ideals that are taken absolutely and exclusively often lead to violence. Menand’s example is the tragedy of the American Civil War in which tens of thousands of young men were sacrificed to try to uphold the South’s “peculiar institution,” slavery. Pragmatism recognizes plurality as a genuine good. Ideas should not be weapons, but as John Dewey argued, tools for improving life. Pluralism means that both of two “alternatives” should be tolerated, if feasible: avoiding “either-or” rigidity. The struggle of progressives will be to preserve a pluralist vision and the value of autonomy for non-religious institutions, to speak nothing of preserving human rights. They should not buy into the Republican-conservative doublethink about oil and religion. Religious liberals can be part of this struggle; the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a minister, whose vision and tactics of non-violence transformed a nation. Catholic progressives are making the same struggle within the church for plural voices, tolerance of diverse views, and democratic input, that progressives are making in the larger society. Progressives should beware of progressive fanaticisms that belie their professed values, for example the attempted banning of some religious garb in France.⁴⁴

Since progressives believe in education, they may overlook the fact that education can serve other ends and that there can be rival visions of the intellectual function. They may revere the life of the mind and this may blind them to the threat to democratic values from authoritarianism. They should keep in mind that hierarchy is seductive and entrenched in the structures of many institutions, from the military to the bureaucratic form of organization that is common to governments and corporations, as Max Weber pointed out. Education can be used to train elites, as it was for centuries. The *de facto* restrictions on higher education that come with the tactic of increasing tuition fit in well with hierarchical goals. Increasing gaps in salaries are also a sign of hierarchy. The democratic vision can be lost myopically through giving up hard-won access to universities by minorities and no longer providing the means for students to attend them. Hierarchy is not inevitable, any more than perpetual war or theocracy. But an alternative philosophy of values is required that inspires a progressive vision of a more equal, just, pluralistic and free society.

⁴⁴ Again, Dr. Díaz Soto has raised the point about banning religious garb in the “public space.” He states, “for example, in most Spanish public Universities, there is a Catholic chapel with regular religious service and an assigned priest; and on repeated occasions, associations of leftist and atheist students have protested against their presence inside the space of a public institution of such an allegedly laic State as Spain is.” But if tolerance is a value, it should extend to all, within moral limits. What is wrong with a voluntary religious service, so long as it is tolerated, not sponsored by a public institution, and no one is forced to attend? Why should such religious garb be banned if all sorts of fashions—and even (partial) nudity, are tolerated?