EVA SCHUBERT

Religion and Citizenship: Multiple identities in the modern world

With the support of the Simons Foundation, SFU students were invited by the Institute for the Humanities to submit written proposals that focused on issues related to citizenship. **Eva Schubert,** recent SFU graduate in history, presented the following selected paper on November 8, 2006, at SFU Harbour Centre.

> *The main hope of harmony in our world lies in the plurality of our identities, which cut across each other and work against sharp divisions around one single hardened line of vehement division that allegedly cannot be resisted.*
>
> —Amartya Sen, 2006

> *The mechanisms underlying that cognitive and technological-economic growth on which modern society depends for its legitimacy, require pluralism among cognitive explorers and well as among producers, and it is consequently incompatible with any imposition of a social consensus.*
>
> —Ernest Gellner, 1994

Citizenship is a political idea. It is linked to concepts of social and political rights and the status of individuals vis a vis the State. The proper scope of citizenship and its primary purpose is a subject of some dispute. Recent events in the world that seem to link religious beliefs to political actions—sometimes of a terrifying and incomprehensible nature—have only served to reinforce a well documented western insistence on the separation of Church and State, not just as institutions, but even as ideas. What possible logic could attend a paper that proposes a desirable, and even necessary, connection between religion and citizenship in the modern world?

In the following pages I will briefly trace the history and evolution of the concept of citizenship and examine its vital function in modern democratic states, most notably its application to Canadian political ideals and diverse publics. The traditional model of the secular public square will be critically analyzed with reference to its history, promises, and relevance for a globalized population, which can no longer claim to share roughly similar cultural and religious traditions. Finally, I will explore the ways in which an updated vision of the relationship between religious reasoning and civic action can contribute to a powerful new social imaginary with enough scope to incorporate the widely varied range of communities, associations, and individuals that inhabit the Canadian public sphere.

Religious radicalism throughout the world seems more prevalent today than ever and makes temperate discussion of religion and citizenship difficult. I will not be arguing for any kind of institutional religious authority in state policy. Versions of theocracy, old and new, have demonstrated the abuses that result from any coupling of governance with absolutes, religious, or otherwise. Throughout this paper, I will argue that religious loyalty can furnish an inclusive sense of community identity and a model of moral reasoning that transcends immediate, subjective political issues. Both of these factors are essential features of a democracy that functions in its fullest sense: not merely as a system of voting, but as a vibrant social model which offers the opportunity for the realization of plural conceptions of the

good. To put it another way, religious identity is capable of supplying both the motivation and the tools required for a robust, engaged sense of citizenship, with all its attendant rights and responsibilities. I am not asserting that only religion can provide these tools, but rather that its capacity to do so in a modern society has been overlooked. Without a concept of citizenship strong enough to sustain and welcome groups that fall outside of traditional western assumptions about legitimate and rational sources of civic activity, Canada risks largely denuding the concept of relevance for its modern public. This would not only render citizenship a mainly marginal and meaningless notion, it would also divest Canada of one of its richest sources of legitimacy and direction: a strong civil society.

The history of citizenship is lengthy; it was first developed in ancient Greece most prominently by Plato in his work "The Republic" and by Aristotle, but it is also evident in the ideas of Stoic philosophers such as Cato and later Cicero. From the beginning, citizenship delineated an individual's position in relation to the state, which sought to balance certain rights claimed with responsibilities exercised toward the *polis*, or city-state. Immediately then, citizenship requires a certain sense of loyalty and distinct identity. This sense is bounded by the limits of that state and the community of other citizens who share in this dual mantle of privilege and obligation. But not everyone subject to the state was eligible for citizenship—a status mostly reserved for urban males and inherited. Such status presumed participation in public affairs and the processes of governance (Heater, 2004). This idea was unique in that aspired to transcend the obligations discharged towards more traditional objects, such as kin groups, patrons, and kings. Loyalty and connection was thus moved beyond the personal, and directed toward a more abstract, collective entity: the state. Citizenship became a new source of identity and a new communal bond, linking individuals in a wider relationship than their private interests would otherwise provide.

Even in its early stages, the concept of citizenship, with its enlarged sense of community, encountered controversy about how broadly such a sense of obligation should apply. The Roman philosopher Seneca wrote of an "extended . . . sense of fellowship all over the globe, declaring that the universe is our native land with the intention that there be a larger arena for the practice of virtue" (Heater, 2004, pp. 2–4). This idea has been called cosmopolitan citizenship and has enjoyed perennial, if fluctuating appeal throughout the evolution of the idea of citizenship.

Despite the conflict of loyalties inherent in the competition between local and global senses of community and obligation, the practice of citizenship has been wedded to national contexts. Of course the evolution of nationhood comes long after the small city-state model of Greek political thought. Nonetheless, as noted Canadian social philosopher Will Kymlicka (1995) observes, Western political theorists persist in building upon an idealized version of the Greek polis, conceived of as an entity with linguistic, historical, and cultural homogeneity. The problems that this assumption creates in the Canadian context—only one of many—where populations are divided by very different loyalties and visions of the social good, will be examined more fully at a later point.

Returning to Seneca and his vision of citizenship for the moment, it is useful to ask what its original functions and virtues were, before applying the meaning of citizenship to a modern context. In Greek thought citizenship was a status that recognized fitness for political participation in a revolving cycle of duties pertaining to the ruler and the ruled. This status carried with it the qualification to hold an executive or judicial office and participate in public debates that influenced the formation of policy. A speech by the famed fourth century Athenian orator Pericles reveals the participatory nature of Greek citizenship "we do not say that a man who takes no interest in politics minds his own business; we say he has no business here at all"

(Heater, 2004, pp. 4–5). The citizen then is one who has an active interest in the collective good, which motivates him to participate in public activities and debate. It is obvious that these qualities are superfluous in a context in which the individual is not in a position to have any effect on the formation of policy or the shape of power. Thus, "citizenship" cannot properly be the possession of an individual merely because he is the subject of a state or sovereign.

CITIZENSHIP IN THE MODERN WORLD

The virtues peculiar to citizenship are variously elaborated and emphasized depending on one's existing political philosophy. As noted, the status involves a balance of rights and responsibilities, the exercise of which constitutes civic virtue. The responsibilities of citizens commonly include the duty to bear arms in defense of the state, to pay taxes for its support, and to obey its laws. The rights of citizens include access to the judicial system, protection from criminal predation, voting, and a claim on the state to uphold its commitment to human rights in relation to that individual citizen. Modern citizenship does not specify property ownership, gender, or age as qualifications, though the full exercise of its rights may be unequal for reasons varying from personal inclination or ability, to impediments of an economic or legal nature. Feminist critics, especially Ruth Lister (1997), have noted that the universalist claims of citizenship are frequently complicated by issues of gender (and disabled) access to the full exercise of citizenship activities. This is not to say that the goals of fully participatory citizenship are unrealistic, but rather that they should be considered with conscious reflection on their empirical limitations precisely because this is the only way that we can make the ideal more realizable.

The status of citizenship provides an equalizing level of claims and obligations within specified limits, so that particular social or economic classes do not normatively bear a grossly inordinate share of obligations, while other groups enjoy untrammeled privileges over them (Janowski, 1998). To be more specific, Michael Walzer (2004) explains that the status of citizenship establishes a set of relationships that make domination impossible, so that while one citizen may have a higher status than his fellows in the judicial realm for example, by virtue of holding the office of judge, he is not therefore given more privileges in other areas, as by being taxed less or being free to break particular laws (Walzer, 1983; Heater, 2004).

So far this account of citizenship has recounted a list of passive rights and responsibilities, such as could be provided in the service of a benevolent ruler. Those with a commitment to a conservative political position tend to emphasize patriotism, loyalty, and civic engagement as the focus of civic virtue. Those with more liberal political positions tend to direct more attention to the exercise of individual freedom and the protection of human rights as the core values of citizenship. In fact, neither set of objectives is possible independent of the other. Civic engagement and loyalty can only be nurtured in a state that permits an active civil society and provides opportunities for the realization of diverse ambitions and goods. Conversely, the protection of human rights and individual liberty can only be ensured by active engagement with civil society and a posture of vigilance toward the state (Taylor, 2004).

The most active responsibility of the citizen is the exercise of his informed judgment and commitment to the collective good in monitoring the state's actions with regard to a common standard of conduct—a kind of transcendent ethical code. This is not achieved merely by blind patriotism which reflexively supports one's government and country, nor is it a posture that de-legitimates the government whenever it diverges from an individual's perception of appropriate action. Citizenship is not merely about respecting the law, but actively measuring that law and government against a standard of justice that must apply

to all members of society, not merely by policies which advance personal interests (Heater, 2004). The active citizen then is one who exercises moral agency in his judgment of his state and society.

In fact, it is this consciousness of larger ethical principles that frequently expands the boundaries of citizen concern from mere national to cosmopolitan causes, directing attention not merely to domestic policy with its immediate personal relevance, but also to national foreign policy and positions. The citizen must balance a respect for the rule of law and toleration of various points of view with a deep personal commitment to justice even when the law and majority opinion seem to slight it. Civic virtue then is the golden mean between unquestioning obedience of the state, and intolerance of all views and policies that one does not personally espouse. It is the willingness to focus attention on matters that may not contribute to personal aggrandizement, and the ability to direct time and support to a vision of shared political and social benefit (Edward, 1991). This normative principle is derived from the Greek concept of *isonomia*, which envisions the participation of citizens in the exercise of communal aspirations (Vernant, 1982). These are not qualities that appear at random; they require cultivation and development. The subject of how active and virtuous citizens may be produced will be discussed later.

Clearly, the democratic nature of the modern Western state, overtly tracing its derivation from Greek political thought, requires more than electoral participation to sustain its promise of political, social, and personal freedom. A larger vision of the role of individuals practicing the virtues of citizenship to keep governments accountable is required to complement and ensure the legal attribution of individual rights, as it was in Greek times. One of the critical differences between authoritarian states and democratic ones is the presence of civil society. This term refers to a sphere of public activity and interaction that transcends private individual interests, and is not dominated by the power of the state (Gellner, 1994). It is the realm in which people form associations and alliances based on common interests. These activities may range from reading and bowling clubs, to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) dedicated to social issues and policy change. Most importantly, civil society is a sphere in which people can exchange ideas, debate issues, and mobilize themselves in associations of interest which may advance their views through the power of numbers. Individuals, even in free democratic states, have very limited ability to effect change, but if they have the freedom to associate then they may indeed exercise an effective role in the governance of their state.

So far we have looked at the characteristics of the good citizen, and indicated where the qualities of effective citizenship may be exercised. This sketch is normative, invoking Greek ideals and democratic aspirations. There is however a large gap between this picture and the actual behavior of Canadian citizens. Robert Putnam (2000) recently wrote about the decline of civil society and its product—social capital—in his popular book *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Though Putnam studied organizations in the United States, similar patterns can be observed in Canada. Social capital is the currency of trust generated by social networks that allows cooperation, collaboration, and normative standards of reciprocity. As Putnam is quick to point out, its cohesive properties are not invariably positive; it can be used to enable and enhance the activities of terrorists (Putnam, 2000). In tracing the decline of social capital, Putnam distinguishes bonding capital from bridging capital. Bonding is what occurs when we socialize with people who are very similar to ourselves, with shared racial, religious, or communal markers. Bridging is the interaction between people with dissimilar backgrounds and traits, which commonly occurs around a shared interest, such as a sport or hobby. It is this latter variant that

is essential for transcending obvious personal loyalties and building social cooperation in the larger civic context.

Social capital in all its forms is an essential foundation for civil society and its role in the exercise of active citizenship. The apparent increase in social atomization has been variously attributed to a number of sources. Not least of these has been the loss of a shared national ethic or sense of commonality, a casualty of the multicultural mosaic that has become the symbol of Canadian culture. Emphasis on difference, without a counterbalancing foundation of social solidarity may disable not only opportunities for interaction and "bridging capital" but also a far more significant potential for the broad alliances of interest necessary to effect social change. Ethnic and cultural differences are quickly evident and inescapable. They may be the source of celebrations of diversity or socio-cultural fragmentation, depending on whether any larger source of identity is available to transcend these particular markers of difference. Active citizenship is itself partly constitutive of a larger sense of community because it assumes an obligation to serve the public good (Heater, 2004).

One of the markers which frequently crosses over ethnic and cultural particularities is religion. Beneath these banners of doctrinal or practical norms, individuals from widely divergent ethnicities, cultures, classes, and even linguistic heritages can locate a very powerful, shared identity. In fact, religious groups and associations are some of the most fruitful generators of social capital because they foster networks of shared values and, frequently, resources. However, the suggestion that religious identities or values can have a valuable and constructive role in active citizenship or civil society is not popular and indeed is the frequent victim of instantaneous dismissal. Why? Because religion, in Western secular democracies, is regarded as a primary source of dispute, division, and incivility.

RELIGION AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The history of the separation of Church and State can be traced back to the seventeenth century and the brutal European Wars of Religion, the culmination of the insistence on parallel religious/political loyalties that was eliminating the hegemony of the Roman Catholic Church and destroying Western Europe. The institutional partition of religion and politics into separate spheres became a key feature of the eighteenth century Enlightenment with its emphasis on individual religious freedom and rationality. This "disestablishment" of religion led to the secularization of the public sphere and the state (Casanova, 1994). Religion was relegated to the private sphere.

Sociological theories of modernity, including the well-known work of Emile Durkheim and Max Weber (Casanova, 1994), have predicted that although religion played a necessary role in human evolution, it is increasingly displaced by modernity. In other words, religion is bound up with outdated ways of seeing the world, and therefore modernization is inexorably also secularization. This theory enjoyed great popularity, particularly in the 1950s as U.S. modernization ideology was exported to developing countries seen as suffering under the weight of backward traditions and archaic religious beliefs (Heclo, 2003; McClay, 2003). However, the passage of time has not confirmed the supposedly inevitable disappearance of religion. In fact, not only in North America, but also in Europe, the cradle of Enlightenment skepticism, religious claims have been resurgent in political and public debate (Casanova, 1994).

In the face of these contradictions, a more nuanced definition of secularism is required to make sense of evidence that both supports and contradicts older theories of secular modernity. José Casanova (1994) offers a tripartite definition of secularization. The first kind of secularization is evident in structural differentiation, which asserts that the "fusion of the religious

and political community is incompatible with the modern principle of citizenship." It entails the "institutional autonomy" of the state, the economy, science, law et cetera, from subservience to institutional religious norms. The second type of secularization refers to the decline in religious beliefs and practices. Finally, the third kind of secularization is the privatization of religion, which eliminates its legitimate participation in public debate.

Casanova distinguishes between the correlation of these various strains of secularization to definitions of modernity, as opposed to dominant historical trends peculiar to Western democratic states. The first kind of secularization, (institutional separation) Casanova asserts is "the valid core of the theory of secularization" and "a general modern structural trend" (p.212). I agree with this claim because one of the defining features of citizenship (essential to modern democracies) is individual agency and moral judgment. The individual whose judgment is coerced by institutional authority is not a free civic or moral agent and becomes instead a pawn in larger power struggles. Clearly, for a genuinely democratic system to be viable, individuals must be able to exercise their own judgment of policy, and this must be invested with efficacy. When these judgments are made by an existing official religious institution, the issue becomes a struggle between the authority of Church and State.

The other two kinds of secularization are far less convincingly attached to theories of modernity and the democratic state. There are many examples of modern states in which religious belief is extremely active, and in which religious groups act in civic space, without limiting themselves to the performance of mere religious functions, such as congregational services. Most obvious is the trajectory of the United States, which cannot be easily excused as lagging in the drive toward modernity, and which nevertheless fails to follow the Western European paradigm of a largely agnostic or atheist society (Casanova, 1994). The evident religiosity of the American population was noted by observers as early as Alexis de Tocqueville and remains a feature of public life.

Like Canada, America is a nation of settlers whom in its early days were often fleeing from nations in which religious conformity was strictly enforced and had political consequences. Consequently, a strong emphasis on religious freedom is evident in American society; this is reflected in the comments of President John F. Kennedy:

> *I believe in an America where the separation of church and state is absolute . . .and where no man is denied public office merely because his religion differs from the President who might appoint him or the people who might elect him . . . For while this year it may be a Catholic against whom the finger of suspicion is pointed, in other years it has been, and may someday be again, a Jew—or a Quaker—or a Unitarian—or a Baptist. It was Virginia's harassment of Baptist preachers, for example, that helped lead to Jefferson's statute of religious freedom. Today I may be the victim—but tomorrow it may be you—until the whole fabric of our harmonious society is ripped at a time of great national peril* (Kennedy, 1960).

The diversity of the American population, which has continued to increase, has made any national model of identity which incorporates specific religious features (or their absence) impractical. Instead, a broader sense of American identity has been forged based on valuing opportunities and freedoms possible within that national context.

Canada has long eschewed the "melting pot" metaphor of American immigrant integration. Instead, we have consciously privileged a more diverse and inclusive vision of Canadian society, which instead of demanding the surrender of other identities in favor of a national template, has celebrated the contributions these varied backgrounds can make to our national identity. However, despite the embrace of ethnic, linguistic, and cultural identities, religious

identity is a more problematic addition to the public square. It is not enough merely to have a strong sense of nationality, in order to exercise effective citizenship in the legal and political spheres (Heater, 2004).

As we have noted, social capital, particularly "bridging" with people who are not from one's own ethnic or cultural group, is an essential prerequisite for an effective civil society. Unless very different groups can interact in this way, they become insular communities with subjective interests and claims. While minority rights and group rights are a legitimate topic which has much exercised Canadian thinkers—most prominently Will Kymlicka (1995)—the very nature of effective multicultural citizenship requires the capacity to see beyond particular personal and group interests, and engage with a concept of the larger civic good. This shared interest has the potential to unite citizens across communal lines and exert influence on the governance of their state.

What is sufficient to create this kind of cooperation? Philosopher John Rawls claimed that the source of unity in modern societies is a shared conception of justice; "although a well-ordered society is divided and pluralistic . . . public agreement on questions of political and social justice supports ties of civic friendship and secures the bonds of association" (Rawls, 1980, p. 540; see also Kymlicka, 1995, p. 187). While shared values are necessary they are not sufficient to create action in civic space: shared identity is required. Kymlicka (1995) points out that despite great similarities in values evident in the comparison of secessionist states with their nations of origin (he uses Swedes and Norwegians), no basis for cooperation or unity around a shared notion of the good is evident. He also observes that the obvious sources of shared identity—commonality of history, language, or religion—are exactly what is lacking in Canada's diverse multicultural population. Because these common factors are palpably absent, what is sufficient to produce a shared sense of loyalty and identity associated with the nationstate where no personal markers of existing commonality are broad enough? For widely disparate groups, allegiance to the larger polity is only possible if it is seen as "the context within which their national identity is nurtured, rather than subordinated" (Kymlicka, 1995, p. 185–189). In other words, the cohesion of a multicultural state like Canada is not founded on a pre-existing cultural or racial homogeneity, nor on an assimilationist cultural policy, but rather draws upon its capacity to provide a society in which plural histories and aspirations are possible. The effective delivery of such a promise creates a stake for diverse groups in sustaining the national and civic context in which they can exercise various liberties and realize a wide range of aspirations.

Religious identity can and does contribute to exactly this kind of national loyalty and civic engagement. The Canadian Survey of Giving, Volunteering, and Participating, released in June 2006, (p. 15) shows that a majority of the fourteen percent of Canadians who regularly donate their time and money are religiously active. 48% of regular church attendees qualified as "top donors," whereas only 16% of those who did not attend qualified in this category. These figures are not peculiar to Canada. Robert Putnam's (2000) study of civic activity in America revealed a definite link between religious affiliation and broader civic ties. He found that 75%-80% of church members gave regularly to charity, compared with 50%-60% of non-members. The volunteering figures showed an even broader gap: 50%-60% of church-members were active as compared with 30-35% of non-members. These figures do not refer to religious activities alone; Putnam found that the religious demographic was also more likely to visit friends frequently, be involved in external volunteer associations, or hold club memberships. Furthermore, religious communities can foster a sense of fraternity or solidarity, a consciousness of community interest that draws the individual outside the range of his own particular concerns which is an essential lesson for wider civic engagement (Heater, 2004).

It may be argued here that religious affiliation extended beyond the private sphere can also produce sectarian tendencies, which privilege doctrinal proscriptions of the good and foster an uncivil dogmatism about public affairs. It is for this reason that the secular public sphere has been touted as a rational, objective framework for progressive public debate. This view presupposes that the secular view is neutral. Of course, this isn't the case. The enforced secularism of the public sphere supposes, implicitly if not more openly, that religion is everything that secularism supposedly is not—irrational, anti-modern, divisive, and violent. This assumption can only be perceived as neutral by those whose views it supports—namely those without an attachment to non-secular sources of value. In fact, tolerant civic identities and strong religious values are not broadly antithetical. In Britain, the Islamic Human Rights Commission reported that eighty percent of British Muslims do not perceive any contradiction between being observant of their faith and being good British citizens (Bodi, 2006).

A cursory glance at the history of the twentieth century should be enough to remind us that the absence of religion is no more a guarantor of peace, unity, and reason than its predecessors. The secular genocides of the Soviet Union, Cambodia, and Rwanda should be enough to dispel any illusions of a moral enlightenment in the disenchanted age (Sajoo, 2003). What is not required is a choice between the hegemony of state religion or state secularism in an attempt to locate the lesser evil. Any system, given exclusive authority over public life will marginalize and oppress. Our best hope may be the kind of civil society that Ernest Gellner describes as an "ideological stalemate"(Gellners, 1994, p. 78). This is not an invitation to a relativist chaos, but rather the refusal to accord sole legitimacy to any particular ideology in determining the rules of civil discourse. To quote Gellner again, "social cooperation, loyalty, and solidarity do not now presuppose a shared faith. They may, in fact, presuppose the absence of a wholly shared and seriously, unambiguously upheld conviction" (p. 96). Once again, this does not deny the need for serious convictions-only that it is not necessary that others share their particular details in order to cooperate and share civic space.

If the existence of divergent religious convictions demanded the institutional separation of Church and State in order to live peaceably in seventeenth century Europe, where so many linguistic, historical, ethnic, and cultural markers were shared, what is required of diverse nations like Canada in the twenty-first century? The division of religious and political authority provided space for freedom of speech, thought, and eventually participation, which encouraged much scientific and cultural flourishing. Yet, contrary to the prophecies of secularism's proponents, religion has not disappeared. The institutional separation of church and state does not entail that religion has nothing to offer the modern public sphere of civil society. As already noted, religious associations do much to engage individuals in wider circles of interest and foster bonds of solidarity and participation, which in an atomized age are ever scarcer qualities.

Aside from these measurable contributions to the public sphere, which contribute to the motivation for civic engagement, religious loyalties may offer something at least as valuable: an ethical compass. Citizenship requires not only partaking in a sense of civic interest, it also demands the rigorous exercise of evaluating state policies in relation to a sense of justice and the civic good. Without a deep commitment to ethical principles, and the practice of participating in efforts for communal benefit, citizenship becomes no more than a legal title, and its bearers are subjects—not individuals with moral and civic agency. It is not my intention to suggest that only religious identity can furnish the ingredients for effective citizenship, but rather that it can be a valuable source that we would be ill-advised to squander.

The challenge facing Canada in the twenty-first century is that of maintaining its own com-

mitment to the value of diversity. This national vision has been expressed in the policy of multiculturalism, which welcomes the expression of distinctive traditions and identities within the larger Canadian polity. This policy of openness and the belief in the compatibility of various ethno-cultural identities with a broad national loyalty has been rewarded with active cultural and community expressions in the public sphere. However, the expression of particular identities and loyalties unbalanced by a sense of broader national community can lead to what critics have called "plural monoculturalism," a set of parallel communities that may exist in the same place but do not share any sense of common identity.

There are two lessons that can be drawn from the multicultural experience so far. First, that virtues of "tolerance" and cultural diversity do integrate Canadian immigrants effectively by not demanding that they choose between their history and their new habitus. By allowing them to incorporate the older traditions and manners into the new national identity, marginalization and ghettoization are reduced. Conversely, the exclusion of certain aspects of identity from legitimacy in the public sphere has the potential to alienate. This act creates a barrier that defines the "other"—demarcating the features that differentiate him from those who are included in the social imaginary of Canadian identity. Of course a national identity must exclude certain features in order to exist at all, but what features are excluded and why is a critical question.

Considering the arguments I have advanced for the inclusion of religion as part of legitimate civic identity, what could justify its exclusion? One would have to maintain one or more of the following convictions:

- all religions with public expression are dangerous to civil society;
- any religion that encourages more than private exercises of piety is somehow irrational, or backward;
- some religions are "safe" but others are inherently dangerous;
- religious identity is distinct from other markers in that it has a determining influence on all of an individual's behaviours and beliefs.

The first three objections can be addressed by pointing to the statistics we have already examined, which show that religious identity strongly contributes to civic loyalty, social capital, and cooperation. It is also necessary to note again that there is an enormous difference between permitting the expression of various sources of values, and allowing them to be forced on others—as through an institutional authority. Indeed, as we have already noted, the rigid institutional commitment to secularism is not neutral and therefore not immune from this criticism; it may be perceived as just as oppressive by those with religious identities.

William Galston (2005) invokes the term "value pluralism" to denote different objective goods which cannot necessarily be objectively ranked. Within the limits of liberty (he does not defend an unlimited relativist position) there exists a range of legitimate variations from which permissible choices can be made. Pluralism requires more than mere "tolerance" of different groups, cultures, and ideas; it demands an active engagement with them. This is a dynamic interaction in which both sides are changed and enriched. It can only take place in a society where the rules of civility prevent groups from being deemed illegitimate civic actors by virtue merely of difference, instead of offense. Engaging religion in pluralist civic space moderates more authoritarian religious impulses because the same space that permits what some religions may object to is the space that allows them to exist. *It creates a "stake" for religious groups in maintaining a plural civil society, because their own freedoms depend on it.* Competing in the public eye for legitimacy invites peaceful engagement, whereas exclusion generates defensive and condemnatory reactions. Institutional privatization must be maintained, but attempting to restrict religious

voices to the private sphere alone fails the test of pluralism.

The final objection, that religious identity is somehow of a different nature than cultural or ethnic markers, that it is subsuming, and therefore perhaps not capable of integration in a pluralist context has been addressed by Amartya Sen (2006) in his recent book *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*. He stresses the plurality of identity markers, of loyalties, interests, and affiliations that contribute to an individual's identity. To reduce that designation to any one of the component characteristics is to create the "illusion of destiny" and to deny the vital role that individual reasoning and choice play in assigning importance to some markers over others. Similarly, the construction of a particular identity trait (and its limits) may also influence the effect it has on its bearer.

To insist that religious loyalties are incompatible with rational civic identity or that strong religious belief cannot possibly be accompanied by moderate political views creates the danger it tries to avoid. To quote Sen:

> *If choices do exist and yet it is assumed that they are not there, the use of reasoning may well be replaced by uncritical acceptance of conformist behavior, no matter how rejectable it may be. Typically, such conformism tends to have conservative implications, and works in the direction of shielding old customs and practices from intelligent scrutiny.* (2006, p. 9)

The other possible effect of the denial of reasoning and plurality in the construction of identity is the "discovery" that the identity in question is endangered, and therefore demands or justifies any number of intolerant or violent measures (Sen, 2006).

Canada is a country whose diverse population reflects the increasingly globalized world in which we live. The necessity of our interaction and cooperation with people who have very different histories, cultures, and beliefs from our own demands a view of individuals and societies that has the capacity to incorporate these complex relationships. Idealized views of a homogenous Greek polity where citizens are those who share most of their historical, cultural, and religious identity markers cannot serve as the foundation for theories of modern citizenship—if they ever could. What new foundation can we build, upon which to forge a common sense of identity large enough to enable us not only to cohabit but to cooperate in a democratic and just society? Locating civic legitimacy in adherence to an ideological discourse, whether institutionally secular or religious, will reinforce social fragmentation and disable many forms of civic participation.

Citizenship in the modern world is more important than ever. No political system, democratic or otherwise, automatically delivers freedom and justice. These benefits depend in no small part on the values, actions, and motivation of citizens who are not merely passive legal recipients of privileges, but active collaborators in the defense of human rights and government accountability. A pluralist ethos is required to enable diverse individuals to "bridge" their differences, discover a common commitment, and so doing privilege a shared and vibrant civic identity.

REFERENCES

Bodi, Faisal. (2006, September 1). Incoherent on cohesion. *The Guardian*. URL: http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/isfree/2006/sept/01/homeaffairs [January 6, 2009].

Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating. (2004). *CSGVP_ Highlights_ 2004_.en.pdf*, p.15. URL: http://www.givingandvolunteering.ca/reports.asp [September 25, 2006].

Casanova, José. (1994). *Public religions in the modern world*. University of Chicago Press.

Galston, William. (2005). *The practice of value pluralism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gellner, Ernest. (1994). *Conditions of liberty: Civil society and its rivals*. London: Hamish Hamilton Ltd.

Heater, Derek. (2004). *Citizenship: The civic ideal in world history, politics, and education*, (3rd ed.). New York: Manchester University Press.

Heclo, Hugh. (2003). An introduction to religion and public policy. In Hugh Heclo & Wilfred M. McClay (Eds.), *Religion returns to the public square: Faith and policy in America* (pp. 3-7). Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.

Janowski, Thomas. (1998). *Citizenship and civil society: A framework of rights and obligations in liberal, traditional, and social democratic regimes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kennedy, John F. (1960, September 12). *Address to the greater Houston Ministerial Association*. Houston, Texas.

Kundani, Arun. (2004, December 7). Report finds no contradiction in being British and Muslim. *Independent Race and Refugee News Network*. URL: http://www.irr.org.uk/2004/december/ak000008.html [January 1, 2009].

Kymlicka, Will. (1995). *Multicultural citizenship: Liberal theory of minority rights.* Gloucestershire: Clarendon Press.

Lister, Ruth. (1997). *Citizenship: Feminist perspectives*. London: MacMillan Press Ltd.

McClay, Wilfred M. (2003). Two concepts of secularism. In Hugh Heclo & Wilfred M. McClay (Eds.), *Religion returns to the public square: Faith and policy in America* (p. 32). Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.

Putnam, Robert D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Rawls, John. (1980). Kantian constructivism in moral theory. *Journal of Philosophy*, 77, 515-572.

Sajoo, Amyn. (2003, Summer). Freedom from secular fetters: Humanist fidelities in Islam. *Voices Across Boundaries*, Vol. 1, 58.

Sen, Amartya. (2006). *Identity and violence: The illusion of destiny*. London: W.B. Norton and Co. Ltd.

Shils, Edward. (1991, Winter). The virtue of civil society," in *Quarterly Journal of Comparative Politics 26*(1), 11-12.

Taylor, Charles. (2004). *Modern social imaginaries*. Duke University Press.

Vernant, Jean-Pierre. (1982). *The origins of Greek thought*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Walzer, Michael. (1983). *Spheres of justice: A defense of pluralism and equality*. New York, NY: Basic Books.