CHARISMATIC-MESSIANIC CAPACITIES TO TRANSCEND
THE GIVEN WORLD OF MODERNITY: THE NEW CULTURAL-POLITICAL PROBLEMS
IN POST-COLD WAR WORLD

by

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Charasmatic-Messianic Capacities to Transcend the Given World of Modernity

The new Cultural-Political Problems in Post-Cold War World

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1.Politics and Values after the Cold War

The end of the Cold War not only liberated Europe from the threats of the former Eastern superpower and its bureaucratic socialism, but also gave birth to great hopes.Many dreams of an open world and borderless cooperation between nations,races,cultures and civilizations arose in the hearts of the people coming from East and West, embracing eachother at the top of the Berlin Wall in November 1989.

Five years later:doubt seems to be more apparent on the political agenda than hope. In connection with the 50th anniversary of the end of

the Second World war and of the Holocaust,dark shadows of the German past
are returning and demand a new German identity,now as a member of Western
civilization. After German reunification,many Germans from the former East
lost not only their jobs but their personal identity too. In 1989 almost
no one could foresee the tremendous individual identity-problems for people
shifting from one social system to another.

But the most precarious situation is taking place   in former
Yugoslavia.The ghosts of the European Middle-Ages are rising from their
graves. The battle of Kosovo between Moslems and Christians started
symbolically a new. The uprising of cultural-religious based borderlines
between members of Orthodoxy,Islam and Catholicism is more than shocking,it
is nearly unbelievable, in any case for European elites proud of their
Enlightenment heritage.

Viewing these and many other similar developments in the present time,
Samuel Huntington's both ambitious and ambiguous essay "The Clash of
Civilisations?" and the following worldwide debate [1] deliver a highly
stimulating starting point for discussing backgrounds and outlooks for
the time being after the end of the Cold War.

I agree to some of Huntington's basic theses, first of all to his
proposal to replace the Cold War paradigm with another one taking into
account the new socio-political developments in the time being. World
politics is no longer dominated by political, military, ideological and
economic interests of the super-powers and their allies. The division
between the First, Second and Third world has become meaningless. Essential
to the new developments is the emergence of formerly subjected nations,
particularly in the Far East and in the Near East, on the stage of world
politics, joining the West in being political subjects representing their
own materialistic and idealistic interests. Maybe, Huntington is also right

in his assertion the central conflicts in the years to come will occur between the USA and China.

Using the term "clash of civilizations" Huntington introduces a "post-Cold War" paradigm highlighting two background developments which seem to him essential for deeper understanding of politics in the coming years.

The first point is: global conflicts in the post-Cold War phase "...will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics." [2] Unlike Arnold Toynbee who identified 21 civilizations,Huntington is satisfied with "...seven or eight major civilizations. These include Western,Confucian,Japanese,Islamic,Hindu,Slavic-Orthodox,Latin America and possibly African civilization. The most important conflicts of the future will occur along the cultural fault lines separating these civilizations from one another." [3]

Some of Huntington' critics denounce in their responses [4] that Huntington's civilizational paradigm can scarcely help in understanding important present conflicts like the Iran/Irak war ,commonly known, to be carried out within the Islamic civilization and not between civilizations. But I think, he is correct with defending [5] his civilizational paradigm by reference to Thomas Kuhn: a new paradigm does not have to serve a framework to interprete every fact available. A paradigm should provide a better instrument than the former one, and indeed,viewing the present time, clash of civilizations seems to me much more illuminating than the earlier three World model.

On the other hand,Huntington's paradigm of the post-Cold war world points to the tremendous importance of cultural and particularly religious traditions for the self-understanding of civilizations and people's,group's and individual's search for their identity: "Civilizations are

differentiated from each other by history,language,tradition and,most important,religion." [6] This is the reason for Huntington's concluding response to his critics: "Faith and family,blood and belief,are what people identify with and what they will fight and die for." [7]

As already said,former Yugoslavia demonstrates indeed the growing importance of religion for people's identity. In earlier times of Soviet hegemony, religion scarcely played a role among Serbs and Bosniaks. Now a revitalization of Serbian,Bosnian and Croatian centuries old nationalities goes hand in hand with a revival of religions and denominations , more or less irrespective of the individuals' personal persuasion. Unlike former Yugoslavia, in the reunited Germany denominational differences are without any political relevance. Nevertheless,in Germany is the modern pluralistic and federal political system providing a fertile soil for the uprising of tremendous culturally based identity problems.

Huntington's post-Cold war paradigm does not lack a certain degree of plausibility. There really are new kinds of socio-political conflicts of interests deeply influenced by the search for cultural and religious identities. I do not intend to go into the details valid to further investigations. What I want to do in the following is to criticize Huntington's consequences.

At the very end of his introductory article he gives an outlook: "For the relevant future,there will be no universal civilization,but instead a world of different civilizations,each of which will have to learn to coexist with the others." [8] But what do we have to learn? To build new walls around our civilizations,nations,cities or minds,more effective than the Berlin Wall was? Or does it mean a new version of the model of an open world which has been so highly effective in proving the cultural-moral

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superiority of the Western system over bureaucratic socialism?

Huntington's ambiguity relative to practical consequences of his
clashing paradigm is not an accident. It follows from two mistakes.

The first one is a weakness in his conception of political
sciences. Huntington confuses description and evaluation, or with other
words: the correlation between scientific-theoretical and normative-
practical points of view. Huntington's idea of civilizations learning how
to coexist in a pluralistic universe pregnant with civilizational conflicts
serves the "Is" but not the "Ought". It delivers a description only and
neglects normative rules,such as those which have already been established
and other ones that ought to become introduced in the present being.

There are at least the following three rules which are acknowledged
worldwide, for example by the UN and many cross cultural institutions:

Firstly: Conflicts - international and national ones -,within and
between civilizations,are to be resolved by means of legal enforcement,till
up to a just war - irrespective of whether such a thing as a just war is
possible in the time of mass determination means.

Secondly:Conflicts are to be settled by negotiations, querying given
rights,norms,rules,contracts etc. whether or not they are valid according
to the principle of justice: equal rights to equals and unequal distribution
to unequal merits.

Finally: Conflicts between individuals,groups,nations or
civilizations are to be worked out by means of discourses about the
validity of the basic values which are the stimulating forces for the
social subjects mentioned above.   With the exception of the first point
which goes back to Augustin and Thomas,these rules are offsprings of the
Enlightenment and basic values for a modern civilized commonwealth of

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different and divergent cultures.

Of course, these normative principles are mixed up in our everyday political agenda with many relapses into a premodern state of nature,into the use of unreflected military and civil,materialistic and idealistic modes of coercion. Nevertheless,the three normative practical principles are far from being useless.On the contrary,the worldwide unexpected collapse of the Soviet imperium was to a high degree a consequence of the superiority of Western values to the bureaucratic ones of a perverted socialism.Not NATO's weapons but Gorbachev's conversion to the Western values set the ball rolling. Any attempt to understand political realities in our time without taking into account the practical normative aspects is avoiding reality.

Huntington's second mistake is a fundamental ambiguity related to incorporating the clash of civilizations into an overarching framework of modernity. I agree to Huntington's principle saying: the post-Cold War world is different from the times of Cold War,but it is also differentiated from modernity in the early 20th century or in the time of 19th century and so on.Consequently, you cannot use the standards of a former period of modernity to understanding and setting the conflicts in the time being. To a certain extent, the three rules mentioned above,legal enforcement,plead for rights and value discourse,are specific to modernity at all.But in concreto there are tremendous differences very important to understanding what is going on today.

World War I,but more importantly World War II, were conflicts carried out by means of military weapons,pleading for national and international rights and value-persuasions. The Western alliance (to a certain extent the Soviet-Union too)was deeply informed by the 18th century values of freedom and justice and they were right in using the language of Human Rights.

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Nazi-Germany was to a high degree influenced by another set of modern, but perverted, values, first of all racism and nationalism, and arguing for a biologistically misused "right to live". On both sides, conduct of war occurred in all the three planes. The Cold War followed the same scheme with the difference that it was structured by the antagonism of Marxism-Socialism on the one side, and Western Values combined with competitive market economy on the other one.

But what is essential to the post-Cold war world? There are at least two points:

Firstly: Both the World Wars happened within the European-American Western modernity. After the last war, modernity, its values and its institutions, spread from the West to more or less all regions of the world. Modernity has become essential to the world. Humanity has shifted from a philosophically reflected ideal in the 18th century into a real overarching cluster of humans in the world.

Secondly: Modernity, its values and therefore its institutions, are in crisis. This crisis is deeply different in each civilization. I fully agree with Huntington polemising against unifying descriptions of the world today by using terms like "one world", "universal civilization", "universal culture", "common culture" [8] , insofar as those paradigms are ideologically (mis)used to veiling the real conflicts and differences in the world today.

But Huntington's replacement of the harmonious symbols mentioned before, with his paradigm of cultural diversion, seems to me only veiling the other way round. It fails to interprete the complicated mixture of values that are common in the world today and other ones which are deeply controversial within and between civilizations.

Modern values in common are first of all the values of technology, competitive market system for most of the civilizations, and

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positive law grounded on justice. Other values like tolerance and Western
life forms are highly controversial ,particularly in comparison to many
of the traditional, cultural and religious values of each civilization.

    In the post-Cold War world, value conflicts have become a very
emotionally heated struggle between different and divergent interpretations
of modernity . The value conflicts within and between the civilizations are
one of the most significant sources of a worldwide weakness of modern
civilizations' value-consciousness. It is a fertile soil for civil wars like
in former Yugoslavia and worldwide struggles between fundamentalists and
non-fundamentalists vehemently fought within and between the civilizations.
    Contrary to popular opinions,the weak are mostly more aggressive than
the strong,namely because of the unpredictability of their reactions. The
most bloody German violence in the Second World War happened in the last
months in the period of greatest weakness. Given that mass media reported
correctly,the sarin assassination in Tokyo on the subway some weeks ago
happened because the leader of the sect expected a crushing police action
to finish his plot.
    The new thing happening in politics today all over the world, seems
to me the erosion of value consciousness in the West and many non-Western
civilizations. Confusion in values is a first rank source of weaknesses and
possible aggressions. A worldwide discourse with the aim to clearing and
to stabilizing the consciousness of values viewing the special challenges
of humanity as an overarching cluster of humans ,seems to me one of the
most important demands of the present time.
    Value discourse is no longer an academic enterprise far removed from
the political agenda. Practical debates about the value relatedness of
political issues are first rank subjects in the present time. The Gulf war

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may serve as an example. The American President was highly concerned with evaluating the use of weapons for a just war.The mass media did all they could do obscure all facts, which were contrary to the picture of a clean just war.

Summing up my reflections about the paradigm "clash of civilizations":

The post-Cold War world is a new leaf in the trial and error history of modernity,and nobody can really say whether this new chapter will be written by the means of "blood and iron" - to use a famous phrase of Bismarck - or rather with words,persuasion and more or less institutionalized value-discourses.

In my opinion,Huntington's concern,the diversion of cultures,is only the one side,the other one,namely modernity's coercion to living and working together in a world driven by values and inflicted by a specific post-Cold war value-crisis is no less important.

I rather would like to speak about "the contest of civilizations" in order to highlight that the conflict of our days within and between the civilizations should be understood as a series of conflicts about different and divergent interpretations of the values,the institutions and the practice of modernity.Furthermore,in refusing harmonistic symbols like "cultural universe" correctly criticized by Huntington,I prefer the conception of a pluralistic universe of cultures,in "which each culture is tied to every other culture by the bonds of reciprocity."[10]

Based upon these reflections on the level of political sciences, I will turn now to the value discourse on a more philosophical background.

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2. The Dilemma of Modernity and the Contest of Civilizations

As already said, the crucial problem for humans' coming to terms with modernity, is to live together in social clusters – may they be families, groups, nations or civilizations – and to have some modern values in common, whereas other values, coming from the traditional basic world-views, divide them in different social groups with different cultural or moral behaviors.

The Rushdie case, which is dicussed worldwide in highly emotional terms, may serve as an example for the problem's relevance to political and cultural life of the present time.

As is well known, there are Islamic fundamentalists demanding death for Rushdie and tolerance to Islam at the same time. Their argument is: Tolerance in favor of Islam means tolerating the authentic Moslem values. Anti-Islam pamphlets in the style of Rushdie's are intolerable for authentic Moslems.

Totally contrary to this argument, people educated in the Western value-system are saying: Violations of the freedom of speech – may they be done by governments, fundamentalistic groups, individuals or whatever – are intolerable for every authentic Western modern value-consciousness.

The problem highlighted by the Rushdie case is the balance between the values of tolerance and authenticity within frameworks of fundamentally different and divergent world-views. This issue of balancing values in connection with divergent materialistically and idealistically civilizational frameworks points to a real dilemma insolvable by means of traditional discourses searching for consensus and persuasions according to (our) Western optimism in evaluating the

methods of rationality.

The dilemma posed by the Rushdie case seems to be the famous "peak of the iceberg". Due to the so-called human condition, humans are biologically and culturally determined at the same time. This is a source of permanent conflicts: Humans by nature are hungry,thirsty,jealous and ambitious; they love and they hate, they feel ashamed and are searching for the feeling of pride in this or that. But they are thirsty,hungry,jealous,anxious or ashamed as people belonging to a special social cluster,informed by particular cultural values. Thus,they feel,think,hope and fear as members of lower-,middle-, or upperclass families,as Germans,Americans,Japans or whatever. They act as lovers according to their liberal or conservative ideas of love and family,of sexuality and morality,they feel ashamed or proud owing to their more or less unconsciously working membership of certain civilizations or cultures and their traditional symbols. Thus, the divergent and conflicting sets of cultural value-systems do not work as rational orientations alone,they are deeply rooted in the individuals' and groups' search for identity.

The dilemma of balancing the values of tolerance and authenticity is emerging in all civilizations which have taken up at least some values of modernity. In the very longest time of history people lived in the state of nature: Natural clusters like families,tribes, closed national and/or cultural communities, dominated the individuals prescribing how to live,to think,to love,to hate or whatever.

Modernity gave birth to the ideas of freedom and justice, and consequently the dilemmas mentioned above emerged. Now they are omnipresent in each cluster of human beings, in each family, each class-room, each society and most of all within and between the civilizations. They all are claiming their authenticity and tolerance to their own ways of life,their

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own cultures, world views,religions and so on.

The mixture of modern values and traditional ones,based upon the emotional heritage of the human past, is a very essential source of clashing civilizations. As I already said in the first paragraph,Huntington's civilizational paradigm is lacking reflections about the normative points of view. In behalf of my counter-concept of a "contest of civilization" I will turn now   to some   deepergoing philosophical reflections about the problems of common and different values.

The   highest substantial values of modernity, more or less acknowledged all over the world,are freedom and life. They both are rights and goods at the same time. Freedom is the right to live as a self-responsible subject of his or her life, respectively the symbol for independence of a certain body politics. Freedom is a political good in so far as it means a constitutional order guaranteeing the rights of the citizens. The value of life means the chance to develop the biological and cultural heritage into a way of life according to the own ideas what a "good life" (Aristotle) is all about.

Justice is the highest procedural value of modernity. Justice is also a right and a good. The first one is the formal principle mentioned above: equal rights for equals, and unequal distribution for unequals. Justice as moral value prohibits the so-called double standard and demands applying norms and rules according to equal standards for each and every member of the social cluster, consistently and continually. Justice as a good is the institution which more or less successfully guarantees equal rights to each and every citizen.

Tolerance is nothing but a value subjected   to justice or a consequence of justice, and authenticity is nothing but a consequence of

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the substantial values of freedom and life. The problem we are faced with now ,is the question of whether a deeper ethical interpretation of the three highest values of modernity may help to a more clarifying practice in the dilemmas mentioned above.

In the contemporary debate, there are two rival concepts for action-orientation related to the values of modernity, the liberal and the traditional ones. These concepts are newly discussed under the terms "universalism" and "communitarianism", represented by J.Rawls and others in the former, and A.MacIntyre and M.Walzer in the latter.

The battle cry of the liberals is the superiority of the right over the good: In the perspective of the liberals, there is only one resolution left open: freedom and life for each and every culture and way of life,irrespective of the question of content. The liberal principle says: each culture and each way of life is unique and should not be compared and ranked with others.

But its consequence is: cultures holding the opinion that all cultures are unique and that they should not be compared and ranked as wholes are superior to those others not sharing such an opinion.[11] The counter-concept points to the values of traditions.To live in a tradition proved good in a long history,particularly the traditions of family life,marriage,patriotism, is not only a good but the only way for stabilizing the torn societies in modernity, and the best starting point for living in modern intercultural settings. The main concern of the communitarian position is stabilizing one's own tradition.

On both sides strong points and weaknesses are mixed up. The liberal claim for rights is deeply eesential for any cross-cultural practice, and the communitarian concern to tradition-based authenticity no less important.

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It is true – for the sake of tolerance – different cultures and different
ways of life cannot be compared or ranked as wholes, and it is also
true, that humans are deeply in need for sane traditions. Viewing the value
related civilizational conflicts, neither the former conception nor the
latter can really help to lower the conflict of values, respectively of
value-informed interests. But on the horizons of both sides emerge the
ghosts of fundamentalism and pure decisionism.

In my opinion, two other conceptions are available, which take account
of both the models mentioned before, and point in the direction of an
effective intercultural practice of reciprocity.
The one concept is the idea of an intercultural value discourse presented
by Agnes Heller.[12] It reflects first of all the practice of reciprocity,
"...the most crucial aspect of modernity." [13] The other blueprint is the
project of "mutual respect", published by Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson.[14]
Their concern is extenting the concept of tolerance from a symplifying
"neutrality" to a more positive practice of communication between subjects
of divergent basic worldviews. "Like toleration, mutual respect is a form of
agreeing to disagree. But mutual respect demands more than toleration. It
requires a favorable attitude toward, and constructive interaction with, the
persons with whom one disagrees."[15]

This concept is first of all thought as a guideline for rational value
discourses between individuals of divergent basic world views. But it is
valid for intercultural discourses too. Both ideas, the first one of Heller
and the other one of Gutmann and Thompson will be used in the following
proposal for a contest of civilizations.

The goal of an intercultural value discourse never can be to compare
and to rank basic world views, cultural or religious ones, but to test
distinct values and value related practices. One essential point of view

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is the question whether values are conducive for coming to terms with the challenges of modernity in the specific cultural environment and with regard to humanity as an overarching assembly of all human races and civilizations.

An other deeper point of view raises the question, which value of the other world view can be helpful for a better understanding of values in the own tradition. Thus,Protestantism has to learn from Eastern religions with regard to mysticism, the practice of which has been an essential part of Christianity,but was more or less forgotten in the time of overemphasis of rationalism.

Essential to value discourse is the principle: no one of the different basic world views,cultures,religions or ways of life is good or bad as a whole. In each of them are good and bad sides mixed up, particularly due to the fact that they all are deeply rooted in their specific socio-political tradition .

We should enter into the value discourse on the background of our own authentic values, but ready to expect values better than our own ones in the traditions of the other ,which may be helpful to correct deficiencies in our theory and practice, viewing the tremendous socio-political challenges of the present time. That is what contest of civilizations is all about.

The contest of civilization is a specifically modern concept. It assumes that humanity is a real overarching cluster of humans in different and divergent cultures and that some modern values are in common while other ones are not. Particularly mutual respect, the basic virtue of the value discourse is a specific modern virtue,because of its close interrelationship with the modern value of communicative rationality.

Rationality is first of all a very effective instrument for proving

the different truth claims of scientific or other statements.But
rationality, also in its best form ,remains a (very) weak force in the
fields of motivation. This gap between rationality as the first rank
value of proving truth claims and deeper rooted emotional ressources is
one and perhaps the most virulent source of clashing civilizations,it is
the dilemma of modernity all over the world.

This dilemma is ermerging in in all civilizations which have
transgressed the threshold from the state of nature into modernity. In the
very longest time of history people lived in the state of nature: Natural
clusters like families,tribes,closed national and/or cultural communities,
dominated the individuals prescribing how to live,to think,to love,to hate
or whatever.

The biologically based needs for love,friendship and community, are
more or less virtues of neighborhood-relationships. They all are
particularistical. These virtues became culturally determined by
universalistic principles in modernity, for example with help of the Judean-
Christian concept of an universalistically structured love to one's
neighbor.

Kant's idealistic construct of an ethics of conviction tried to
combine the unversalistic aspects with the particularistic ones: The
Categorical Imperative commands to respect humanity as an universalstic
idea in each and every individual. But this construct proved to be
ineffective viewing the tremendous socio-political problems in the
present time. It remains without real sources of motivation. The dilemma of
modernity is the gap between the universalistically oriented challenges
on the one hand, and the particularistically structured motivation
forces on the other.

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If one wants to call modernity's present state a crisis - and many people are doing so, from different points of view - the core of the crisis cannot be seen in a pretended aggressivity in human nature or in Freud's basic contradiction between nature and culture. I would prefer to speak about a spiritual crisis. What I call the dilemma of modernity, namely the gap between universalistic challenges and particularistic motivation forces, seems to me first of all a spiritual weakness.

The great question to be discussed in my concluding paragraph is the problem of motivation: What can motivate humans, individuals, groups, elites coming from different basic world-views to solve their problems no longer by force - military or cultural-religious coercions, but by means of value discourses? Viewing the deeply emotionally rooted divergent basic value-orientations, rationality seems to be a very weak means. Can we hope for other, spiritual, charismatic messianic forces?

3.Charismatic-Messianic Spirituality - Hope for Cross-Cultural Changes?

In his late essays, Max Weber anticipated many of the questions I raised in both the paragraphs above.   Therefore I will take my startingpoint for some reflections about the consequences of modernity's dilemmas with Weber.

About hundred years ago, Max Weber created the symbol "iron cage"[10] for describing the situation of modern people. As captives of their own tremendously successfully operating instrumental reason, modern people built up for the first time in history a "disenchanted world" under an

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empty heaven. "Gods and Demons" – Weber's symbols for the values – are arising from their graves and rule over the individuals,nations,cultural spheres and civilizations, creating a pluralism of conflicting value-orientations. How to live in such a world remained an open question[17] for Weber till up to the end of his life in 1920.

Weber's far-sighting analysis of the time proved to be much more realistically than the optimistic outlooks of his contemporaries. But Weber's own perspectivess are far away from a dark endtime atmosphere in the way of Oswald Spengler's famous book "The End of the Occident". From Weber's point of view, modernity's fate remains open,and – to a certain extent – it is up to the modern people,to choose,what will happen to them as inhabitants of the "iron cage" and to the world of modernity.

In his almost prophetic outlooks, Weber's attention was concentrated on two subjects: the ethics of responsibility and the problem of charisma. Both aspects are to be seen in close relationship. They interpret eachother.

Essential to Weber's ethics of responsibility – contrary to the ethics of conviction mentioned before – is humans' responsibility for consequences and side effects of their doings, speech acts included. This principle is valid for individuals,groups, nations,for all of them as subjects intervening into the world.

But attention to the consequences in this formal understanding is not yet the whole thing. Weber's idea of the ethics of responsibility exceeds the pragmatic command to estimate the consequences of one's own actings. For Weber,humans are responsible also for their own value-orientations behind their moral consciousness, but such a responsibility has to be more than a reflection in one's own heart. The principle of responsibility commands to test one's own values in viewing the

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consequences of the values for a common civilization. Such testing presupposes the readiness to enter into a value discourse.[18] Thus,Weber's ethics of responsibility proves to be very illuminating to the concept of value discourse I dealt with in the second paragraph.

Weber's understanding of charisma has nearly nothing to do with the popular use of the word charisma in many mass media in the preswnt time,saying: Charisma is rhetoric power. Of course, for users of such a foolish notion of charisma, no criterion is available for discriminating Hitler's demonic rhetoric power from illuminating rationality of seriously arguing individuals in past and present time.
Charisma in Weber's original understanding is the spiritual force,with the power of which values become institutionalized and legitimized.

As a prominent example,the so-called ascetic Protestantism was used by Weber for analyzing the working of charisma. The startingpoint of the competitive market system (Capitalism) occurred in Europe at the end of the 17th century in circles of Protestants who introduced a special understanding of Christian ethics of charity,the innerworldly asceticism, into the world of economics.

The Charisma of a strongly religious motivated persuasion of being chosen by God motivated people to orienting their professional life to the values of highest economic efficiency and personal austerity. Material wealth became the proof ob being chosen by God. As is well known,in combination with the introduction of the positive law and the development of technology, capitalism became the most efficiently economic system the world has seen till now.

After having introduced a special new order or arrangement in reality of public or personal life, charisma can fade.It is the power of newbegins.

The Enlightenment was a charismatic movement too because it was

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introducing and legitimizing the power of reason for public and personal life.

Charisma is not religion, but there are very close interrelationships between both. Essence of religion is to transcend the given world with the means of different individual and collective practices. According to diverse cultural environments , the World's religions developed many different ways for channelling world-transcending outlooks and charism atic power into theory and practice of basic world views. One of these channels may be the practice of mysticism ,an other one - most essential to Christianity - the virtues faith,hope and charity,or finally the power of illuminating human beings' reason.

Due to Western cultural expieriences of the present time, religion is more or less concentrated around the personal problems of individuals' search for a "good life" (in the sense of Aristotle). In this cultural environment, charismatic power may be working in the way of introducing of basic trust in individuals' and groups' capacitiy to tell his or her life-story.[10]

But in context of modernity's dilemmas, the subject to be dealt with, is the problem of the "messianic", it means future-related, outlooks. What is needed viewing modernity's dilemma ,is charismatic power conducive to motivate people to overcome the gap between universal challenges and particularistic behaviors, and to legitimate institutions of value discourse.

But in this point a serious consequential problem is to be faced. It is the question of criterion. Given,there are individuals,groups,movements claiming of legitimacy of their charisma, one needs criteria for discerning true from pretended claims. Here,we are confronted with truth claims. They cannot sufficiently redeemed with the

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means of subjective feelings or yardsticks coming from a specific basic world view. The question of criteria is a challenge to a modern philosophy of religion which uses groundings, which can be acknowledged crossculturally by members of different and divergent cultures.

My proposal is that pragmatism can serve as such a criterion: truth is the capacity of solving problems. Truth of charisma is the capacity of solving problems of ultimate concern - tu use the term of Paul Tillich - and issues of ultimate concern are such ones, which are decisive with regard to the question of being and not being. I think the issue of modernity's dilemma is a problem of survival and therefore a question of beeing or notbeing.

Using the term pragmatic for the practice of problem solving - as Charles Peirce did in his philosophical groundings - the philosophy of religion has been a pragmatically oriented branch of philosophy from the beginnings in the 18th century till now. The first problem to be solved philosophically was the struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism.Later on till up to the present time,real or pretended contradictions between science and religion became the first rank problems to be solved by the philosophy of religion.

In its classic period in the 18th and 19th century I.Kant evaluated religion as a basic world view which is a necessary postulate for solving the main problem of modern morality, namely the unsolvable conflict between moral duty and personal inclination. Schleiermacher experienced religion as feeling of the Universe which is solving our existential problems of loneliness in a meaningless world. Finally,for Hegel religious truth became the illuminating idea for solving the riddle of history. A pragmatic philosophy in present time should be related to the dilemma of modernity and reflect rational criteria of evaluation charismatic-messianic capacities to

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transcend the dead end roads of modernity.

At the end of my paper and summing up my concern, I will raise some questions: Is religious darkness the essence of our experiences of modernity or can we observe the dawn of charismatic-messianism? Worldwide terrorism and violence, hunger and misery in the South, tremendous identity-problems in the West and ecological threats are speaking in favor of the former, worldwide beginnings of cross-cultural value-discourse are pleading for the latter.

Anyway, in my special field of investigation, the present time seems to me a challenge to a new version of a pragmatically oriented philosophy of religion.

1. Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations?, A Foreign Affairs Reader, New York, 1993.

2. Samuel Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations", Foreign Affairs, New York, Volume 72, No.3, p.22.

3. ibid. p.25.

4. Comments: Responses to Samuel P. Huntington's "The Clash of civilizations?", Foreign Affairs Volume 72 No.4, New York 1993

5. Samuel P. Huntington, If Not Civilizations, What? Paradigms of the Post-Cold War World, Foreign Affairs, New York, Volume 72 No.5, 1993, p.186.

6. Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations?", Foreign Affairs, Volume 72

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No.3,New York 1993,p.25

7.Samuel P.Huntington,If Not Civilizations,What?",Foreign Affairs,Volume 72
No.5,New York 1993,p.194.

8.Samuel P.Huntington,The Clash of Civilizations,Foreign Affairs,Volume 72
No.3,New York 1993,p.49.

9.Samuel P.Huntington,If Not Civilization,What?,Foreign Affairs,Volume 72
No.5, New York 1993,p.191-192.

10.Agnes Heller,Beyond Justice,p.323.

11.This reflection is indebted to Agnes Heller,Beyond Justice,Oxford
1987,p.42.

12.In her books: Beyond Justice,Oxford 1987,: Can Modernity
Survive",University of California Press,Berkeley and Los Angeles 1990. "All
cultures in a discourse situation can make reference to their own values as
ones embedded in their own form of life.The aim of such a discourse is
consensus on an entirely new intercultural arrangement." ibid. p.159.

13.ibid. p.148.

14.Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson,Moral Conflict and Political Consensus,in:
Ethics 101 (October 1990): p.64-88. similar ideas are published by: Charles
Larmore,'Political Liberalism',Political Theory,3,1990,p.339-360. See also:
Charles Taylor,The Malaise of Modernity,Concord,Ontario,1991.

15.ibd. p.76

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16.Max Weber,Science as a Vocation,in :Gerth and Mills,eds.,From Max Weber,p.181.

17."Many old gods arise from their graves,disenchanted and in form of impersonal forces; they strive to gain power over our lives and resume again their eternal struggle with one another. What is hard for modern man,and especially for the younger generation,is to measure up to an everyday life of this kind." Ibid.p.148.

18.Weber's concept of a close relationship between the ethics of responsibility and practical discourses is fundamentally inverstigated by: Wolfgang Schluchter,Religion und Lebensführung, Vol.1 :Studien zu Max Webers Kultur- und Werttheorie,Suhrkamp,Frankfurt 1991,pp.314-333.

19. I have dealt with this subject in :Helmut Fritzsche,Wahrheit und Geschichte als Inhalte der Theologie,in: An den Quellen des lebendigen Wassers,Neukirchen-Vluyn 1993,pp.107-117.