

Summary

The book analyses the current debate on religion and secularity in the public sphere. The academic discussion on this topic is pursued against the background of often dramatic political disputes and events which are linked to relations between the Western and Islamic interests and values. It is linked to other cultural and religious circles as well. An idea of secular public sphere making rational decisions faces challenges here.

The book offers texts of important contemporary thinkers: Jürgen Habermas (Germany), Charles Taylor (Canada), Alessandro Ferrara (Italy), and Hans-Herbert Kögler (USA). An illuminating introductory study was written by Ondřej Štěch (Czech Republic), who is also an editor of the book. They all focus mainly on political philosophy, with partial analyses also in other fields of the humanities and the social sciences. Habermas focuses on religion in the public sphere, and distinguishes between secular and religious reasoning in order to contribute to mutual understanding between the two kinds of reasoning and practice. Charles Taylor does not support such an epistemic differentiation as a solution, and tries to find a political solution of the problem. He attempts to make a political redefinition of secularism. Alessandro Ferrara offers a broader point of view by following a distinction between multiple modernities, and developing his analyses of multiple democracies. He recommends an up-date of the motto: *cuius religio, eius res publica*. In the end, in his critical analysis, Hans-Herbert Kögler addresses an issue of evil in relation to religion and ethics.

The chapters to the book can be considered contributions to better mutual interactions between secular and religious perspectives. The authors of the chapters

do not want to formulate points of view which would try to assimilate various perspectives because they want to respect their plurality. At the same time, they want a mutual respect between the perspectives on the commonly shared basis.