

Review of: "Free Speech Regimes and Democratic Cooperation"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The author gives a good exposition of the problems raised, bringing up numerous examples to illustrate them, although in my opinion a little too much, as this leaves much less room for possible solutions, which is, after all, what the work seems to be trying to do. Moreover, it is not clear whether the aim is merely to expose a situation and a problem, and how it has evolved (especially with regard to South Korea-Japan relations in this area), or whether the article aims to propose a solution (or a way forward) to it.

I think it would be desirable to clarify the summary of the article, because, although it is perhaps understandable the subject of the study, the author's position in this respect is not well reflected. Thus, in the abstract, the author positions himself in favour of less cooperation between democratic regimes with different discursive regimes; in contrast, in the paper one can see the concern about this situation of antagonism between different democratic regimes, especially between South Korea and Japan with regard to the discourses surrounding Japanese colonialism. Moreover, although not entirely openly, the author seems to advocate the adoption of the procedural rights (PR) perspective for the solution of the problem. If this is so, I think he should state it openly and argue further to substantiate it. In addition, what the author seems to mean is that it would be highly desirable to overcome tensions due to discursive antagonism between democratic nations in order to avoid rapprochement with the surrounding communist countries (i.e. North Korea and also China, although there is no consensus among all scholars to consider China communist, despite the political dominance of its Communist Party, given the nature of its economy, fully embedded in market mechanisms, and the enormous social differences that exist). Thus, the researcher's real objective seems to be to prevent so-called communist countries from taking advantage of or benefiting from the confrontation between democratic (understood to be capitalist and anti-communist) nations. Countries, on the other hand, opposed to South Korea in the current geopolitical rivalries.

Although this is a different issue, it would be very interesting to be able to explain why or how this "culture war" festering could have come about within and between democratic nations, even if they are mature democracies. Before the predominant adoption of a transnational victims' rights (VR) perspective, initially left-wing, procedural rights (PR) were supposed to prevail. However, this has not been enough for rational public deliberation to take hold, as J. S. Mill hoped, or for people in the minority to feel free to gain, with well-founded arguments, the support of the majority for their views, as R. Dahl aspired to. Therefore, trying to return to this initial situation, which has not borne the expected fruits, without understanding why the democratic debate has deteriorated, seems an exercise of good will, but without much future. Ignoring power differentials (within and between nations) as a (seemingly inexhaustible) source of rivalries, antagonisms

and exclusions, and pretending to bridge the consequences of this situation only through open and unrestrained public debate, is part of the classical liberal argument. However, it has clearly not avoided not only misleading and biased discourse, but also open conflicts and confrontations, sometimes with catastrophic consequences. These clashes are not infrequently sustained between democratic countries, or even initiated by them, as a result of the prevalence of their economic interests (linked to geostrategic ones). In my view, the author does not take this sufficiently into account, which I think is made clear when he does not mention the United States as a key player in the Korean War between 1950 and 1953, which caused the greatest number of casualties compared to the other contenders.