

The Separation of Church and State: Four Neglected Aspects of the Original Context

(An abstract)

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This is a short article which aims at recovering the original meaning of the separation of the Church and State. The author points out that: (1) The current understanding of Church-State separation has been too much broadened and extended in its meaning. (2) Church-State separation, in its original understanding, implies a dynamic mode of mutual confinement; but it is, nowadays, regarded as one-way. (3) The unequal distribution of power today between the Church and the State ends up with just one authority for check-and-balance — the secular authority. (4) The separation principle does not just emphasize separation and independence but stresses a close relation of the Church with the society and its culture, ethical morals and spiritual values.