



## **THE PROBLEM OF SECULARISM AND RELIGIOSITY IN MODERN PHILOSOPHY**

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<b>Received:</b> July 8 <sup>th</sup> 2021 <b>Accepted:</b> August 8 <sup>th</sup> 2021 <b>Published:</b> September 22 <sup>th</sup> 2021	<p>In the modern world, the principles of secular society dominate, on the one hand, and on the other, the process of the initial revival of religious consciousness, one of the ancient sources of popular culture. That is why religion has become a social institution on the agenda of many issues related to the role and status of modern society. In this sense, a thorough scientific analysis of the categories of "religiosity" and "secular", which for a long time were mutually opposed, shows the relevance of the subject.</p> <p>The article explores the terms "religiosity" and "secularism" from the point of view of history and logic: commented on the lexical meaning of the word, its comparative and critical analysis of the definitions of different authors. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of the views of modern philosophers on this issue, the analysis of theoretical views proposed by various academic schools. General and specific aspects of the description and approach are highlighted, the author's own views on them are described and definitions of the concept of "secularization" and "religious" are developed. Based on recent studies, general theoretical conclusions are given.</p>
<b>Keywords:</b> Religiosity, secularism, rationalism, irrationalism, harmony, religious consciousness, secular identity, social welfare, social decline	

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Historically, issues of religiosity and secular society, their relationship, have been interpreted on the basis of different interpretations, sometimes they have been viewed as mutually exclusive principles. These issues are especially important in today's society, which is on the path of democratic development. In particular, President Sh. Mirziyoyev emphasized the harmony of our religious and national values: "We cherish our sacred religion as an embodiment of our eternal values" (Mirziyoyev M., 2017: 3). Indeed, the balanced relationship between the two spheres is a matter directly related to the present and future of the political-economic, spiritual-spiritual sphere.

Many issues concerning the place, position and importance of religion in a secular society have not been resolved, although there is legislation on religious freedom. From this point of view, the definition of the content of the concepts of "religiosity" and "secularism", the systematic study of events and phenomena associated with them is of both theoretical and practical importance

### **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

In researching this topic, dictionaries and encyclopedias on philosophy, dissertations and

monographs that are directly related to the subject have been widely used, published in English, Russian and Uzbek in recent years. Especially written in English Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy / Ed. Edward N. Zalta. – Stanford: Stanford Press, 2007; Encyclopedia of philosophy / Ed. Donald M. Borchert. — 2nd ed. — New York: Thomson Gale, 2006; Edward C. Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy. — London: Routledge, as well as the following publications in Russian and Uzbek were widely used: M.A. Maslina. Encyclopedia of russian philosophy. — Moscow, 2007; Philosophical encyclopedia / Nazarov Q. and others. - T.: Publishing House of the National Society of Philosophers of Uzbekistan, 2004. In addition, the 2005 encyclopedia of Religion, edited by L. Jones, was widely used

### **III. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

In the study of the topic, the method of comparative analysis of the etymology, definition, brief history of both categories and their interpretations and interpretations by experts was used.

Moreover, along with a critical analysis of the modern views of Eastern and Western scholars on the harmony of secularism and religion, the author's personal conclusions are based on evidence. In this regard, Farah's monograph "Secularization and Religion" and T. Assad's research "Formation of the



secular: Christianity, Islam, modernity" served as a methodological source. The article provides a paradigmatic analysis of the categories of secularism and religiosity based on the above sources. In

#### **IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The main reason for studying the concept of "religion" in the twentieth century was due to the spread of the theory of secularism. Although this term is currently used in many fields of knowledge, in the literature there is no consensus on its content. The term is also not defined in encyclopedias and annotated dictionaries of philosophy published in English and Russian (Edward C., 1998: 8680, Gritsianov A., 2001: 1312, Zalta N., 2007: 6151, Maslina., 2007: 736, M Stepin V., 2010: 696). The definition of this term can be observed only in research in the field of sociology and religion. In particular, S.A. Kravchenko gives the following definitions: "Religion - 1) is a characteristic feature of the mind and behavior of individuals, which reflects their belief in mythical and divine things. 2) According to G. Simmel, religiosity is a form of social relations that arises due to the relationship between the interpersonal god "(Kravchenko S., 2004: 351).

E.D. Rutkevich defines the term as follows: "Religion is a quality of an individual and a group, which is the belief in, worshiping, or believing in supernatural forces on objects and objects that are considered sacred, and which is involved in behavior and actions in religious and non-religious spheres. reflects "(Osipov G., Moskvichev L., 2014: 389). Also, N. Darren also defines the term "religion" in this context (Darren E., 2015: 390).

This concept expresses the interdependence of religion and certain social subjects, reflecting the complex qualitative characteristics of religion. If the concept of "religion" is considered a specific type of social relations and institutions within a holistic social system or a special form of social consciousness, then the term "religion" refers to the religious influence on the consciousness and behavior of the individual, as well as social and demographic groups. In this sense, religiosity refers to a particular state of an individual, group, or community that believes in supernatural forces. V., who conducted research on this issue. I. Garadja, D. M. Ugrinovich and I. N. The Yablokovs considered religiosity to be a reflection of the social quality of an individual or group, religious consciousness, religious morality, and religious relations.

We believe that if we evaluate religiosity as a product of social change and new religious movements, the long history of this concept will be overlooked. It should be noted that religiosity has always had its influence to one degree or another,

addition, a critical analysis of the moral-creator socioeconomic hypothesis and the secular-democratic socioeconomic hypothesis put forward by G. Paul's article in the journal *Evolutionary Psychology*.

regardless of the beliefs of each person. In this sense, religiosity is, in essence, a key feature of the human personality that determines many aspects of a person's activities.

B.Holdcroft explains the term as follows: "Religion is a complex concept that is difficult to define for at least two reasons. The first reason is due to its vague and imperfect feature in English. The word religion has synonyms such as religiosity, orthodoxy, faith, belief, piousness, devotion, holiness. The second reason is that the principle of religiosity is the subject of research in several disciplines, each of which has its own interpretation of the subject "(Holdcroft B., 2006: 196). Another synonym for this term is defined in the *Encyclopedia of Religion* as follows: The term "religion" is often used to mean "sacred." Some sources state that the word is etymologically derived from the Latin word "sacrum," meaning belief in gods and their power, and was later used in the sense of baptizing people in remembrance of the gods (Jones L. 2005: 7964). Although words denoting religiosity in different languages have several meanings, it is appropriate here to refer to the definition of a word that is antonymous in content to the term secularism.

In our opinion, "religion" is the manifestation of the cultural and social life, behavior, values, relationships and other behaviors of social subjects, as well as the teaching, guidance and is a concept that implies a relatively stable reflection of instructions.

We must also dwell on the term 'secularism', which is the second part of the subject. The term "secularism" is defined in the Uzbek dictionary as a word that refers to the real, material world, life, the meaning of life (Madvaliev A., 2006: 644).

D.Bayaliev explains this concept as follows: "Secular ideology refers to the world and human life not by the divine power beyond and above it, but by the single reality of the material world in which it lives, in which ideals, values, based on rational logical thinking and experience, a set of ideas and views " The scholar's view that secularism is based on logical reasoning is debatable. Indeed, among secular ideologies there are also irrational, irrational, illogical ideas and views that are not related to religion. As a proof of our opinion, it is expedient to cite ideologies that lead to political-economic, socio-cultural and spiritual-psychological decline, such as anarchism, antagonism, amoraism, apathy, totalitarianism, chauvinism, which are devoid of religious beliefs.

G. Demidov defines this term as follows: "Secularism is a comprehensive rule that is critical of



any religion and does not criticize itself. In this process, the center of gravity always favors the so-called "secular" worldview. Therefore, any reality that enters the gravitational field of secularism is constantly undergoing transformation "(Demidov G., 2016: 395). The scholar views secularism as contradictory to religiosity and emphasizes that secularism is a priority in all areas. In our view, secularism has largely limited the influence of religious institutions in the political, economic, and scientific spheres, but has not completely replaced religion in other spheres. Also, secularism does not constitute a conflict with religion, and it manifests itself as a reality related to religious beliefs due to its nature. In this sense, secularism, like other principles, is not a perfect principle without criticism.

Ch. Taylor, in contrast to others, connects this concept with Western Christian culture: "Secularism is inherent in traditional Christian culture, and there is no analogue in Islam. Therefore, the Muslim society cannot adapt to the secular order "(Taylor Ch., 2015: 221). Undoubtedly, the process of secularization first occurred in the Western Christian world. However, this process, like other regions, affected the Muslim world in the East.

S. Farax connects the concept of secularism with the history of enlightenment rationalism. He recalls that in the New Age there was a growing tendency in Western Europe to recognize all reasonable events as reality, and that proponents of such a view argued that there was nothing outside of nature. The scientist writes about this situation: "In the first stage of rational thinking, the connection with metaphysics was completely severed. Most philosophers did not deal with matters of morality and theology. In the following period, the followers of enlightenment, positivism, scientism, atheism created a new god to replace the religious consciousness. The deity of the representatives of this line is thought and science, and the term "secularism", based on secular consciousness, "excluded all religious beliefs from the field of science" (Farah S., 2008: 72). Although Farax's views on the historical development of secularism are consistent, his views on the replacement of the traditional divine phenomenon with science are debatable.

T.Asad emphasizes that these two concepts are not rigid, they are due to a historical process and depend on the formation of the modern situation. In his view, secularism is a category that combines morality, knowledge, and emotion in modern social life (Asad T., 2003: 25). Unlike many experts, he does not contrast secularism with religiosity and views religion as a social necessity related to the characteristics of time and space.

When we look at the definitions of this term, we see that there are three main interpretations of it from a socio-philosophical point of view:

According to the first interpretation, secularism is opposed to religiosity through overt or covert ideas. The firm rejection of religiosity and its full support for secularism as an alternative is a distinctive feature of this type of interpretation. This interpretation has been observed since the time when secular culture, which emerged under the influence of the process of secularization, began to take precedence. In the recent past, the former Soviet Union's widespread application of atheism to society and "whoever is not with us is against us" (as quoted by V.I. Lenin in his April 11, 1919 speech at the UN General Assembly) as an example. In fact, secularism does not deny religiosity and views it as a social phenomenon.

The second interpretation reflects secularism as irreligion. In this case, the concept of "secularism" is interpreted more lightly and broadly, and even if there is no question of a firm rejection of religion, it maintains a certain distance from it. This type of interpretation is a peculiar liberal form of secularism in a secular position. According to this interpretation, secularism should not have a religious meaning.

According to the third interpretation, the concept of "secularism" is not expressed as an anti-religious approach. This type of interpretation of the principle of secularism is relatively broad and ideologically neutral, but differs in its sharpness from a philosophical point of view. According to this interpretation, the secular origin is a non-religious reality. At the same time, the issue is not with the subject's denial or objective denial of religiosity, but with how positive it is in terms of secularism. This definition gave rise to a separate objective philosophical-scientific approach to the question of secularism and religiosity.

In our view, it is expedient to promote an interpretation of secularism in broad and narrow senses. In a broad sense, secularism is everything that is inherent in the existence of a real society, events, processes and features of their existence, while in the narrow sense, this concept exists without the influence of religion and religious views, formed and developed on the basis of its own internal laws. reflects all aspects.

At the same time, "secularism" as a concept has a political and legal meaning, implying the protection of a pluralistic worldview by the state without special privileges to certain religious teachings. According to the principle of rationalism, the fact that ideas and views are inherently rational or irrational does not serve as a criterion for secularism.

G. Paul conducted his research based on the analysis of a number of indicators of 17 developed democracies, whose international databases and



reports are relatively complete. The study compiled a list based on a sequence of low-performing countries from countries with high levels of religion: USA, Ireland, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, the Netherlands, Norway, England, Germany, France, Denmark, Japan, Sweden.

He assessed the well-being of the society on the basis of the following 25 socio-economic indicators: murder, suicide (suicide among young people studied separately), child mortality, life expectancy, cases of speech and trauma (adolescents with this disease studied separately), the number of abortions among minors, the birth rate of women between the ages of 15-17, the number of marriages and divorces, alcohol consumption, life expectancy, per capita income, imbalances in property, poverty, corruption, unemployment, society degree of heterogeneity, number of migrants and environmental status and other indicators (Paul G., 2009: 441). The article provides a detailed analysis of the relationship between these indicators in the countries surveyed. The study concluded that the higher the level of religiosity among the population, the lower the level of social welfare. In his view, religiosity is a relatively shallow, flexible, and changing psychological mechanism that helps to overcome stress and anxiety in societies with low levels of socio-economic stability and protection. He also sees the mass renunciation of the "Creator-God" as a natural human response to the improvement of living conditions.

In our opinion, it is not expedient to compare these two categories. First, while religion is an important part of the spiritual life of man and society, it cannot be a direct determinant of material well-being, and religiosity is not the only cause and source of a nation's cultural development. Second, secularization is not a hypothesis that needs to be defined, but a process that is clearly manifested and confirmed in the socio-cultural sphere.

Although the main criterion of secularism is freedom, the main focus in this issue is on universally recognized international standards of human rights and freedoms, democratic principles and secular education. It is a guarantee of the independent activity of secular society institutions and religious organizations with a neutral approach to different worldviews and a legal basis. In this sense, secular society does not allow the absolutization of ideologies of a particular religion or atheistic nature and so on. At

the same time, religiosity, as an integral part of secularism, requires adaptation to its criteria.

Therefore, in the democratic processes taking place in the world, the socio-political activity of various religious organizations is increasing, and the quality of the value system, which represents the common interests of mankind, is trying to manifest itself. In particular, since the middle of the twentieth century, the leaders of Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, the world's religions, have signed a number of documents stating that democracy, the constitutional state, secular education, human rights and freedom of conscience do not contradict their beliefs. This indicates that religious teachings strive for mutual harmony as a result of conformity to the principles of secularism.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

**First**, secularism and religiosity are not contradictory concepts. In this sense, it is inappropriate to compare the two concepts and generalize one of them. After all, they are a different way of looking at the essence of human life, and the object of both is one - human life.

**Second**, pluralism has played an important role in the human worldview as a basic criterion of the principle of secularism, human rights, aimed at ensuring human dignity, and its perception of itself as a free independent entity. There are two mechanisms that drive these principles, the first is to separate the state from the religious organization, and the second is to ensure the neutrality of the state towards religions.

**Third**, if true secularism continues to be open to debate, if it develops on the basis of respect for different moral values, it becomes a universal social ideology. It is also possible to evaluate the secular approach towards enlightenment, which follows the universal moral norms in accordance with science, as the most advanced and creative.

**Fourth**, the complex dialectic of religiosity and secularism is of particular importance to both sides. These two views have their own objective and subjective factors, as well as the characteristics of space and time. There is a huge socio-cultural potential in religious teachings. It is necessary to strive for their harmony through the effective and creative use of this potential in the reform of the spiritual and moral sphere, in strict adherence to the rules and norms of secular society.



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