
A CONSIDERATION TOWARD THE HISTORICAL AND
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF SECULARISM

Historical background:

Worldly process background comes back to Westphalia compromise which means the transfer of church – supervised lands to anti – spiritual and political leaders.¹

This compromise was signed at the end of thirty – year religious wars and became a new basis for divisions in Europe.

The main background of secularism must be traced in Christianity – (from the beginning, during medieval period, during Renaissance and after that) – in order to gain a clear and methodic knowledge.

Since Christianity was more spiritual than political, Jesus Christ clearly declared the separation between God and Kaiser and also between religion and politics in some of his sayings. "what is for Kaiser pay to him and what is God's pay to God" or "World is not included in my rule domain".

Just as God is the eternal nature in comparison with the universe, Christianity was independent of earthly utopia, i.e., Room Emperor. Christianity kept its distance from government – ancient city and formed a principle which said religion was independent of government – city and is not grafted to its fate.

Also we have to consider the historical note that because Christianity had stood beside a lawful and preformed society and government like that of the Room Emperor, it didn't have that much historical possibility and capacity for being or becoming political through which it could keep its distance from the dominant political atmosphere and be the beginning and designer of a totally different political system.²

Early Christian's isolation, solitude, and their deep thinking about the next world was some show a natural reaction to the dominance of Room Emperor's principles and Jewish religion.

In this case Bernard Lewis writes as follows:

"Christianity sometimes faced caution, but it more dealt with surprise and torture, So Christianity inevitably separated itself from the government and formed its own organization – i.e. – the Christian church, the leadership structure and organization 'the hierarchy and the laws and their courts.'³

¹ Wilson, B.(1992) Religion in sociological perspective, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Page:159.

² Maurice, Barber, political Modernism, Ahmadi Abdol-Vahab, Age publishing firm, 1386, P.41.

³ Middle East, 2000 years of History, from Christianity Emerge up to now, Bernhard Lewis, Hassan kamshad, Ney, 1389, p.42.

However, apart from the historical background and secularism in Christianity, we like Pratt who defined Christianity as "the incurable anisotropy between modernism and religion."⁴

Such an incurable anisotropy appears in different fields like the separation between politics and religion, the fainting of religious beliefs and values, the oppositeness and invasion among religion and science. Etc.

Principal Focuses of Secularism :

As a philosophical theory, secularism which is reflected in several sciences such as political science and sociology has tow main focuses which must be paid special attention in order to know and criticize such a theory.

First, intellectuality, scientific approach, progress, and intellectualization have a great oppositeness, invasion, and distance with religion, theism, and wanting of afterlife.

Max Webber, a prominent feature in modern sociology, writes as follow :

"Our era's fate have tied with intellectuality, contemplation, and the most important of all " wiping off spell from the face of the world :

[but through discrediting religion and the meaning it brought to values and moral.]

The greatest and most eternal values have gone backward from the area of general life".⁵

Second, with the worldly progress and success of mankind, the article of religion market will have less value, the listeners of religion's message will be less, and the disciples of religion's commands will be chosen from among inexperienced and unlearned people.

This fact warrants a kind of possible prediction.

For the explanation of the first focus we can refer to Kasirer's saying which describes the atmosphere of explanatory era: ⁶

"Human must choose between freedom and slavery, between clear awareness and unclear sympathy, and between science and faith and for the man of new era there is no hesitation in such a choice."

According to Webber although religion has resisted agaist the spell and traditions existed before it and establishes a type of intellectuality and use it, the more worldly intellectuality, calculation, and mankind's focus on economical system increases, the more distance he will have from religion.

Webber's view can be seen in thinker's thoughts and manipulations of the explanatory period like Wetter, Heum, and others.

⁴ Pratt, V.(1970), Religion and secularization, Macmillan, 6. Britain.

⁵ Webber, M., (1970), "science as a vacation", P155.

⁶ Sociological contemplations toward secularism, Had: Jalili, TarheNou, 1385, p.40.

The second focus which talks about an assumed, idealistic reality in future has been formed on the basis of secularism defender's views and their historical and social studies. That is, they have assumed that the beginning of scientific and intellectual revolutions will put an end to the religions and spiritual trends of the talented and in this way we can explain and predict secularism.

A Brief Analysis :

Undoubtedly the positions of the church during the Renaissance and medieval period have been influential in the formation of such an opinion and desire , and advertising it among the new thinkers because we talk about real affair – (what is) – so we have to search its origin in its own particular historical atmosphere and happenings.

In the investigation and criticism of the first focal view, we talk about accuracy testing and right philosophical and scientific examination.

Furthermore, in criticizing the second view, we talk about possible affairs, i.e., did future occur according to secularism defender's predictions or not? And if not why?

Secularism :

According to the content of this paper, the backings of secularism gets clear. When this view, which supervises one process, appears in the figure of a definite school and political view, a theory called "secularism" is born which means "independence and separation between religion and politics".

The main point in political secularism is that combining personal areas like religion and ownership in political territory is absolutely wrong and forbidden because general – political area was separated from private area personal territory after the Renaissance and political Modernism and individuals' independence from the government was declared.

One of prominent features of the above view is John Lock who districts country affairs from religions ones in a paper called " ".

From Lock's point of view, church and government are different because of their nature and purpose.

In order to explain John Lock's view about such a separation, Maurice Barbier says as follow : "Government is an institution with physical and worldly nature, which only traces worldly and physical purposes by worldly and physical means. Political power deals only with spiritual affairs. Religion is related neither to government nor to civil government. In fact, political power has no authority in spiritual affairs, so it can't do anything in this field. As a result and in contrast with Hobs ⁷, Christian government can't exist."⁸

⁷ Maurice Barbier, Religion et politique dans la pensee modern, p.131-137.

⁸ Maurice Barbier, political Modernism, Ahmadi Abdolvahab, p147.

This part of John Lock's view supervises modern government and its goal and he deal with the church in other sections of his theory. According to Lock, the church is also a free and self – wanted society because every person chooses his religion and church freely. So freedom of opinion and religion is out of government's authority and only related to the person himself.

According to Lock's approach. The church does and must exist, but with it's own independence. So it is confirmed that there is a distinct and separate area beside government. This is the area of personal. Conscience and belief and spiritual problems.

Lock declared personal freedom in religions matters and the independence of church from the government. In fact, by doing so he separated the individual and religion from political society and power.

References

- 1- Barbier , Religion et politique dans la pensee modern , p.131-137. ¹ . Maurice Barbier , political Modernism , Ahmadi Abdolvahab .
- 2- Maurice, Barbier , political Modernism . Ahmadi Abdol-Vahab, Age publishing firm , 1386,
- 3- Middle East , 2000 years of History , from Christianity Emerge up to now , Berhard Lewis , Hassan kamshad, Ney , 1389.
- 4- Pratt , V.(1970) . Religion and secularization , Macmillan , 6. Britain .
- 5- Sociological contemplations toward secularism , Had: Jalili , TarheNou , 1385, p.40. Maurice Webber, M. , (1970) , "science as a vacation" .
- 6- Wilson, B.(1992) Religion in sociological perspective , Oxford : Oxford University Press.

Նկատառումներ աշխարհապաշտության պատմական և տեսական նախապայմանների ոլորտում

Աշխարհապաշտության ուղղության կամ ինչպես ընդունված է այն անվանել սեկուլարիզմի ուսումնասիրության համար, որը վերջին տասնամյակների բաղաքական ուսումնասիրությունների գլխավոր առարկաներից է. ավելի լավ է ուշադրություն դարձնել դրա գործընթացներին և իմաստներին, որպեսզի կարողանանք պարզորոշ նկարագրել դրանից բխող տեսությունները: Սեկուլարիզմ բառը ծագել է «սեկուլոմ» բառից, որը նշանակում է ժամանակ, որը ժամանակի ընթացքում ենթարկվել է որոշակի փոփոխությունների: Այս բազմիմաստ ձևությոն իմաստային առումով նման է «բելաիզմ» ձևության: Սույն հոդվածում ուշադրության են արժանացել և ըննարկվել այս երկու երևույթների միջև գոյություն ունեցող կապն ու պատմության ընթացքում աշխարհապաշտական իշխանությունների ձևավորման գործընթացները: Հոդվածը վերլուծության միջոցով ուսումնասիրության է ենթարկում սեկուլարիզմի կամ աշխարհապաշտության նախապայմանների և ձևավորման սկզբունքի պատմությունը: