

THE WEAKENING OF THE UNIVERSAL PROJECT OF MODERNITY IN THE CONTEXT OF GROWING MULTICULTURALISM, MIGRATION, AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

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Abstract

The article is devoted to an analysis of the weakening of the universal project of modernity, the growth of multiculturalism and migration, and the expansion of religious diversity. It examines key concepts that describe the weakening of the universal project of modernity and the expansion of religious diversity under the conditions of modernization, globalization, and cultural pluralism.

Keywords: Project of modernity, multiculturalism, religious diversity, post-secularity.

Introduction

Annotatsiya. Maqola modernlikning universal loyihasining zaiflashuvi, multikulturalizm va migratsiyaning kuchayishi hamda diniy xilma-xillikning kengayishi tahliliga bag‘ishlangan. Unda modernizatsiya, globallashuv va madaniy plyuralizm sharoitida modernlikning universal loyihasining zaiflashuvi va diniy xilma-xillikning kengayishini tavsiflovchi asosiy tushunchalar ko‘rib chiqiladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: modernlik loyihasi, multikulturalizm, diniy xilma-xillik, postsekulyarlik.

Аннотация

Статья посвящена анализу ослабления универсального проекта модерности, роста мультикультурализма и миграции, а также расширения религиозного разнообразия. В ней рассматриваются ключевые концепты, описывающие ослабление универсального проекта модерности и расширение религиозного разнообразия в условиях модернизации, глобализации и культурного плюрализма.

Ключевые слова: проект модерности, мультикультурализм, религиозное разнообразие, постсекулярность.



Introduction

The relationship between the state and religion has undergone constant change throughout history. Whereas religion once played a central role in governance and political life, many countries gradually adopted the idea of secularism—the separation of church and state and the limitation of religious influence in the public sphere. It was widely assumed that with the development of science, education, and democracy, the significance of religion would gradually decline.

However, by the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, it became clear that religion had not disappeared from public life. On the contrary, it continues to influence politics, culture, and people's values, sometimes in new and transformed forms. In this context, the concept of post-secularity emerged, reflecting an attempt to reconsider the role of religion within the modern secular state. This perspective makes it possible to understand how dialogue between the state, religious organizations, and society as a whole is being shaped today.

The methodological framework of the study includes a theoretical analysis of classical and contemporary approaches to secularization and post-secularity, as well as an examination of the evolution of state–religion relations in modern political-philosophical and sociological thought, drawing on the works of Jürgen Habermas, Anthony Giddens, Zygmunt Bauman, Ulrich Beck, Peter Berger, Gilles Kepel, and Samuel Huntington. Particular attention is paid to the weakening of the universal project of modernity, the growth of multiculturalism, the intensification of migration processes, and the expansion of religious diversity.

Discussion

From the second half of the twentieth century to the early twenty-first century, the secular paradigm began to lose its universality. The notion of post-secularity emerged as a concept that recognizes the persistent presence of religion in the public sphere, the need for institutional dialogue between the state and religious actors, and the formation of new models of cooperation that go beyond the classical secular divide. Jürgen Habermas, a German philosopher and sociologist, analyzed how secular states and religion can coexist within modern democracies, emphasizing the importance of dialogue, mutual recognition, and rational deliberation on issues of public significance. He viewed post-secularity as a condition of contemporary society in which religion has not disappeared despite processes of secularization and continues to play a meaningful role in the public sphere. Habermas argued that secular societies must acknowledge the enduring presence of religious communities and learn to engage with them constructively [1].

A key idea in Habermas's thought is the necessity of dialogue between secular reason and religious consciousness. Religious arguments may participate in public debates, but they must be translated into a universal, rational language accessible to all citizens. According to Habermas, a post-secular society does not represent a rejection of secularism; rather, it entails its rethinking under conditions of cultural and religious pluralism [2].

Post-secularity does not imply a rejection of the principles of the secular state; rather, it presupposes a more flexible, contextual, and pluralistic understanding of their application, one that takes into account cultural differences, the social role of religious institutions, and the



potential value complementarity of religious and secular discourses. Thus, the transition from secularism to post-secularity signifies a transformation of state–religion relations from rigid institutional separation toward models of open interaction, in which religion is viewed not as an archaic remnant but as a meaningful social resource capable of contributing to the formation of social norms, institutions of civil society, and cultural identities. This evolution points to a shift toward a more complex, multidimensional structure of the public sphere, where the religious and the secular coexist in a mode of mutual recognition and normative dialogue.

The decline of monolithic secular ideologies represents a socio-historical process in which large universalist non-religious ideologies—once claiming to provide comprehensive interpretations of the social world and to shape a unified project of societal development—lose their former legitimacy, normative force, and explanatory capacity.

The weakening of the idea of secularism is a long and complex sociocultural process in which earlier assumptions about how society should develop cease to persuade and to explain social reality. The foundations upon which understandings of progress were built in the modern era no longer function as they once did. Anthony Giddens, one of the most prominent British sociologists of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries and a leading theorist of modernity, sought to explain how contemporary society is structured and why individuals live under conditions of constant uncertainty. In *The Consequences of Modernity*, he emphasizes how modernity undergoes radical transformation and generates new forms of risk. He also argues that modernity is losing its former stability and that universal institutions no longer operate uniformly across different contexts [3].

The project of secularism was built on the belief that all societies develop in roughly the same way and follow a single, uniform path. It was assumed that this path leads to greater rational thinking, the advancement of science and technology, a reduction in the influence of religion, the strengthening of the state, and the emergence of autonomous, responsible individuals. This model was thought to be universally applicable across all countries and historical periods, serving as a common benchmark for the world.

Since the second half of the twentieth century, the idea that there is a single universal path of development for all societies has increasingly been questioned and has lost its former authority. The world has become more culturally and politically diverse, inequalities between countries have become more pronounced, and the trajectories of their development are highly varied. All of this demonstrates that the notion of progress as a linear and universally shared process is overly simplistic.

At the same time, the belief that only rational, scientific thinking can be considered the sole source of “valid” knowledge is being challenged. The modernist image of the individual—as a fully autonomous and independent subject supposedly in complete control of their own life—is also being called into question.

Under such conditions, it becomes clear that modernity can take multiple forms, that history does not follow a single line but unfolds along diverse paths, and that societal development is heavily influenced by culture. The universal idea of modernization gradually loses its force: instead of one overarching model, a plurality of approaches emerges. Each society charts its own course, combining traditions, new practices, and innovative forms of organization.



Contemporary life ceases to be a single, unified project and instead becomes a space where different interpretations, cultural programs, and institutional experiments coexist.

Zygmunt Bauman, one of the most influential sociologists and philosophers of the twentieth century, known for his studies of modernity, postmodernity, and globalization, explores in his book *Liquid Modernity* the unstable, “liquid” contemporary world, where old rules collapse and individuals are forced to adapt continuously. His ideas are directly related to the themes of multiple modernities and the polycentric development of society [4].

Since the second half of the twentieth century, the notion of a single path of development for all societies has begun to disintegrate. People have come to understand that progress does not follow a single trajectory, and that each society seeks its own path. The world has become far more diverse and multicultural, where traditions coexist with new practices, and different societies create their own models of life. Contemporary society has transformed into a space where multiple ideas, approaches, and forms of social organization coexist. Late twentieth-century sociologists such as Ulrich Beck, Eisenstadt, Bauman, and Giddens wrote about the end of universal modernity, the rise of multiculturalism, and the diversity of development models. Their works demonstrate that modernity is no longer a single, unified project but a field of multiple cultural and social experiments.

The increase in cultural diversity, active migration processes, and the growth of different religions are closely interconnected and together profoundly reshape the social structure and cultural life of contemporary societies. Large-scale international migration, driven by globalization, economic inequality, and political conflicts, makes societies more culturally and religiously diverse. In host countries, traditional notions of cultural homogeneity no longer hold, and models gradually emerge that accommodate multiple identities, languages, and values.

Samuel Huntington, an American political scientist and one of the most influential theorists of international relations in the late twentieth century, argues in his book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* that after the Cold War, the main conflicts in the world arise not from ideologies or economics but from cultural and religious differences. He views religion as a foundation of civilizational identity and a key factor in global politics [5].

Ulrich Beck, one of the leading German sociologists of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, known for his research on globalization, risk, and social change, demonstrates in his book *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* that contemporary society faces new global risks—from environmental and technological disasters to economic crises. These risks are distributed unevenly, with some groups suffering more than others. Globalization intensifies cultural and social diversity, and individuals become more individualized, which simultaneously increases uncertainty and instability. Traditional institutions—such as the state, the family, and religion—lose their former universal authority, and the classical model of modernity no longer adequately addresses the challenges of the contemporary world [6].

Multiculturalism has developed as a way to manage the growing cultural diversity within societies. It entails respect for different cultural and religious traditions, the protection of



minority rights, and the creation of rules that allow various groups to maintain their practices while simultaneously participating in the broader life of the country.

Religion in contemporary society has become more diverse. Within a single country, different faiths, denominations, and religious practices may coexist. This challenges traditional assumptions that religion gradually loses its social significance and prompts the state to seek more flexible ways of engaging with diverse religious communities.

Charles Taylor, a Canadian philosopher and social theorist, and one of the leading contemporary thinkers on religion, identity, multiculturalism, and secularity, discusses in his book *A Secular Age* how religion is changing in the modern world. He demonstrates that religion does not disappear but becomes more diverse and individualized, with people choosing their faith consciously. Taylor argues that contemporary society must recognize cultural and religious diversity, protect minority rights, and create a space for the coexistence of different cultural traditions. He critiques the idea that religion will gradually vanish from public life and instead maintains that it will strengthen and become an important element of identity [7].

Gilles Kepel, a French political scientist and researcher of contemporary Islam, studies how religion influences politics and culture, as well as issues of radicalization and the development of religious movements. In his major works, *The War for Muslim Minds* (2004) and *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (2000), he provides a detailed analysis of the interaction between Islamic movements and the modern world. Kepel views Islam not only as a personal faith but also as a social and political force that actively shapes the behavior of individuals and groups. He demonstrates that religion can mobilize societies, establish cultural norms, and create political movements. Kepel shows that radicalization in the Islamic world is not reducible to religious doctrine; rather, it is closely linked to social, economic, and political crises of contemporary society and particularly affects young people. For many young individuals, turning to religion becomes a way to seek identity, dignity, and a sense of purpose in conditions of instability and uncertainty [8].

Conclusion

Today, the universal project of modernity is losing its force as societies face growing multiculturalism, migration, and religious diversity. Secularism alone can no longer fully explain or guide social life, and post-secular approaches show that religion still plays an important role in public life.

Each society now follows its own path, blending traditions, new practices, and innovative forms of organization. Modernity is no longer a single, uniform project but a space where different cultures, religions, and social ideas coexist and interact. Understanding this diversity is key to building inclusive, cohesive societies where everyone can participate and be recognized.

Thus, the increase in migration, cultural diversity, and religious pluralism leads to the emergence of new forms of social complexity. In this context, the principles of civic integration, legal regulation, and social consensus require serious rethinking.



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