



## SECULARIZATION OF POLITICAL CULTURE: A STUDY

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### Abstract:

Aim of this research paper was to view secularization of political culture from both east and west world as from developed and developing countries point of view. When Lucian Pye and his colleague Verba (1965) as well as Almond and Verba (1963) attempted to integrate political culture from political development point of view; the unification of Italy and Soviet Russia, a need for secularization of political culture became the need of every nation. After the Second World War and introduction of Third World, things for applying democratic political nations became challenges for them, especially in those countries where religion was a power of specific religious group. Principle of secularism and secularization of politics proved lifelines for modern societies and democratic civilization. Paper found secularization of political culture in the United States, Britain and other western countries as they have been integrated with structural political ideologies and offered opportunities to their public to approach to the assets being availed by the government for them.

**Key Words:** *Secularization, political culture, democratic, political personality, nation's individuality, reinvention, unification.*

### Introduction:

'Politics is always more than the mere words and actions of the professed politicians; yet at moments seems to shrink to the antics of little, scheming, and power thirsty men. Yet politics can only be the acts of specific individuals of whom the few can so readily overshadow the many.' (Pye and Verba 1965) The very statement of Lucian Pye and Sidney Verba defines the concept of politics and the purpose of people being involved in politics. This reflects the culture of politics of modern era where there is a thirst for power; ignoring real notions behind. Therefore, if there is a politics



system that is favorable to the value system of the people, it automatically gets preference. Hence, the concept of political culture; dedicates a particular value system, has become widely accepted in political science after the Second World War.

Gordon Allport, a famous psychologist, while studying various aspects of person's personality, defined personality and suggests that each individual has his own personality. Like so, Sociologist, Lucian Pye, based on this individuality and the definition has stated that just as each individual has his own personality and individuality, the nation also has a separate individuality. The existence of such individuality is reflected in the culture of the nation. Every nation has its own unique culture. The nation is also proud of that culture. Every person living in a society has certain characteristics. Those traits make up a person's personality. Those traits are created from social and political conditions. But every person's political personality is different. This varied personality of an individual is reflected through his political discussions and his expression. A person's political personality is considered as an aggressor when he advocates an attack on neighboring country. If the same opinion is shared by the majority of people in the society then that country and the society is considered to be aggressor. Consequently, the culture of that country was also marked as aggressive. As the social and economic conditions of each country are different, the political culture of each country is also different. (Dr. Patil, 2017)

### **The Nation of Secularization:**

According to Alfonso Agote (2014), 'as sociological idea, secularization is a process pertaining to modern societies whereby religious doctrine and organizations experience diminished social influences because of the expansion of rationalism, science and technology that accompanies the process of industrialization and modernization. Being a complex process, it entails many individuals, social and political dimension within a religion.' Giving example of European society, Bellah (1964) constructs an evolutionary typology that underscores the importance of a series of aspects that are implicit in the notion of religious change as envisaged by the European societies. The sociologist of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries have shown their concern towards the decline of societies on the basis of religious institutions and their hindrance in social development. Therefore, the notion of secularization though may not admit



longer influences over the mindset of an individual in the society, is sufficient to pour something in their mind. With reference to the political life of a nation, Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) abandoned the mainstays of morality; so goes the argument, in order to observe political life as it actually existed, rather than as it should exist.

### **Political Culture:**

Stephen Chilton (1988) in his article 'Defining Political Culture' has stated that the term 'Political Culture' was first proposed by Gabriel Almond in 1956. The term according to him promised to solve in a scientific, cross-culturally valid way the micro-macro problem: the classic problem specifying how people affect their political system, and vice-versa. Almond in 1956 defined political culture as, 'particular pattern of orientations to political actions. Geir Helgensen and Soren Thomsen (2007) in their project 'Politics, Culture, and Self' have noted that since the World War II and its post-era, political ideologies among the third world has been under influenced with different political changes especially, with the influence of communism of East and Liberal Democracy of West. This not only affected the entire political function of the Third World, but also changed the political and social balance of superpowers; which, with intention effects on political culture. Therefore, the society and community in which a person grows up, he learns the perceptions, feelings, notions etc. of the people about politics and reflects it in his personality.

The attitude, beliefs, perceptions and orientations of the people towards the political system are embedded in the political culture of that society. Jeffery Goldfarb (2012) when he talks about the reinvention of Political Culture, he means to say the changing nature of people of a country due to fundamental political changes. Therefore, he refers Political Culture as part of Political life, even though it has not been recognized by political observers.

### **Secularization of Political Culture:**

As stated by Barnes (1986), "Political Culture is a set of beliefs and assumptions developed by a given group in its efforts to cope with the problem of external adaption in internal integration," integrates the attitude political integration through political culture. Therefore, a nation's political culture is the particular distribution patterns of orientations toward political object among the members of the nation. Diana Owens



(2009) considers, 'political culture can be viewed as nation's political personality.' Diana's view towards political culture can well be signified when these political personalities of nations are integrated in unified secularization process. Secularization of political culture, therefore, is a broad concept.

A change in consciousness about the political system is at the core of this process of political culture. The process of developing a more realistic and clear understanding of the political system is called secularization of political culture. In the traditional society, public lacked a clear understanding of the function and structure of the political system. In modern times, the public's awareness is developing that the function and structure of the political system exist in a clear and autonomous manner. Of course, not all people are aware of this. But the development of consciousness, albeit to a limited degree is, is considered a sign of secularization of political culture. For the success of any political system, structural awareness among the people is essential. In modern time, political and interest groups are considered important structure form the point of view of the exchange process.

The process of political bargaining cannot become effective unless the people are aware of their function and importance. Therefore, for the life of the political system, the secularization of the political culture is necessary. The political culture of the United States, Britain, and the West has been widely unified from this point of view. Therefore, American Political Culture, frequently, is characterized in terms of divisiveness and conflict. This conflict is between competing sub-cultures in an ever-present fact of the United States. Fiorina (2005) when looks back and states that cultural conflict was manifested in economic rifts between agrarian and industrial interests, this conflict overcame with changed political systems like unification and secularization. Association, integration and implementation civilization, educational opportunities, literacy, communication systems and means as well as cognitive development towards human life and religious integration have proved parallel substances in secularization of political culture in these developed countries.

Secularization of political culture in developing countries comparatively weak as no structural policies and political process as well opportunities of civic culture have been guaranteed by the political authorities. Although structure-related cognitions are



developed in such countries, individual lack pragmatic cognition. For that, democratic attitude, importance of merit principle, peaceful transfer of power, respect for opposition party opinions, share in power for all social elements, equal opportunities of all religious organizations are needed of the secularization of national culture.

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