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### MAIN FEATURES OF SECULAR THINKING IN THE PROCESS OF COMMUNITY RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES EXPANSION

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**Abstract:** This article examines the relationship between secular thinking and the expansion of community rights and opportunities. It analyzes the main features of secularism, such as rationalism, critical thinking, tolerance, and pluralism, and demonstrates how these principles can contribute to the expansion of community rights and opportunities. Special attention is given to how secularism can help overcome discrimination and inequality, as well as create a more just and inclusive society.

**Keywords:** Secularism, Community Rights and Opportunities Expansion, Rationalism, Critical Thinking, Tolerance, Pluralism, Discrimination, Inequality, Justice, Inclusivity.

Modern discussions on the influence of religion on politics are not only relevant but also shape future directions. The question of the separation of faith and politics once again becomes the focus of historical attention. The politicization of religion and the religious orientation of politics stimulate the search for new approaches to the relationship between faith and society, faith and politics. This determines the themes of research. One of the key aspects here is the return of religion to the public space with a variety of theoretical interpretations: from alarming warnings about the risks of church involvement in politics to the need to consider religious differences not only in private but also in the spheres of politics, civil society, law, and socio-economic relations. The influence of religious ideas on various aspects of public policy, ranging from human relations with a higher power to institutional forms of political activity, brings to the forefront a number of epistemological questions without answering which it is impossible to theoretically explain contemporary socio-political processes.

Abandoning linear understanding of modernization, when its prospects lost unequivocal normativity and turned into a wide range of value variations, determines the multifaceted nature of the civilizational approach to research. On the one hand, it still carries the imprint of Enlightenment ideas; on the other hand, voices claiming that "culture matters" [Culture matters... 2000] are increasingly heard, and that the civilizational specificity of different types of societies influences the algorithms of political processes. In these conditions, religion, as the most stable element of civilizational identity, is positioned as the basis of geopolitical scenarios.

#### Main Features of Secular Thinking:

- 1. Rationalism: Secularism is based on a belief in the power of reason and logic. It rejects dogma and superstition, relying instead on scientific methods and empirical evidence.
- 2. Critical Thinking: Secularism encourages critical thinking and skepticism. It teaches people to ask questions, analyze information, and not to accept anything on faith without sufficient evidence.
- 3. Tolerance: Secularism advocates tolerance towards people with different views and beliefs, including religious ones. It recognizes the right of every individual to freedom of conscience and expression.
- 4. Pluralism: Secularism values pluralism the diversity of ideas, opinions, and cultures. It rejects the monopoly of any single ideology, whether religious or secular.

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Secular thinking can play an important role in the process of expanding community rights and opportunities. Here are a few examples:

- \*\*Equality:\*\* Secularism promotes equality of all people before the law, regardless of their religious beliefs. It fights against discrimination based on religion, race, gender, sexual orientation, and other characteristics.
- \*\*Justice:\*\* Secularism strives to create a more just society, where all people have equal opportunities for development and self-realization. It addresses poverty, inequality, and other social issues.
- \*\*Democracy:\*\* Secularism is a necessary condition for the development of democracy. It ensures freedom of speech, assembly, and the press, and guarantees that no religious group has a dominant position in society.
- \*\*Development:\*\* Secularism contributes to the development of science, education, and culture. It creates conditions for innovation and progress in all spheres of life.
- \*\*Overcoming Discrimination and Inequality: \*\* Secularism can help overcome discrimination and inequality, which often have a religious basis. For example, secular laws may prohibit discrimination based on religion in education, employment, and other areas of life.
- \*\*Creating a More Just and Inclusive Society:\*\* Secularism can help create a more just and inclusive society, where all people feel respected and valued. It fosters dialogue between people with different views and beliefs and helps find common values that can unite society.

In conclusion, Secularism is not just the absence of religion. It is a system of values based on rationalism, critical thinking, tolerance, and pluralism. These values can play an important role in the process of expanding community rights and opportunities, helping to overcome discrimination and inequality, and create a more just and inclusive society.

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