THE EXPANSION OF POST-SECULAR INFLUENCE BY CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS SUCH AS CHRISTIAN ZIONISTS

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ABSTRACT

This research work discusses the various ideas on, and various roles of Christian belief that affect communities, national and international policies. To do this, initially the origins and characteristics of phenomena such as; secularism, post-secular era, de-secularization have been briefly examined with the help of various scholars' perspectives. Following these, the next step has been to share knowledge to understand the topics focused, Christian denominations such as Evangelicalism and Christian Zionism. The historical background and the development processes of these denominations have been briefly reviewed. Lastly, the third chapter have been formulated by examining the developments regarding the contemporary roles of these Christian denominations, with the perspectives, constructed by the information from the first two chapters. As a result of these evaluations; today it can be argued that the Enlightenment's restrictive effects on church and religion's influence on public sphere, seem not much that prevailing in some fields within aforementioned societies and their politics.

Key Words: Secular, De-secular, Post-secular, Christian Zionism, Evangelicalism, Evangelism, Pentecostalism, Religious Expansionism.

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"HİRİSTİYAN SİYONİZMİ GİBİ HİRİSTİYAN MEZHEPLERİNİN POST-SEKÜLER ETKİ YAYILIMI"

ÖZET

Bu araştırma çalışmasıyla; toplumları, ulusal ve uluslararası politikaları etkileyen Hıristiyan inancı üzerine çeşitli düşünceler ve çeşitli roller tartışılmıştır. Bu amaçla öncelikle sekülerleşme, post-seküler çağ ve de-sekülerleşme gibi olguların kökeni ve özellikleri çeşitli bilim insanlarının perspektiflerinden yardım alınarak kısaca incelenmiştir. Devamında sonraki aşamayı; odak konuları olarak Evangelikalizm ve Hıristiyan Siyonizmi gibi Hıristiyan mezheplerini anlamaya yönelik bilgi paylaşımı oluşturmuştur. Bu Hıristiyan mezheplerinin tarihi arka planı ve gelişim süreçleri kısaca ele alınmıştır. Son olarak, ilk iki bölüm bilgileriyle inşa edilen perspektiflerle bahse konu Hıristiyan mezheplerinin güncel rollerine ilişkin incelemelerle son bölüm oluşturulmuştur. Bu değerlendirmelerin sonucunda günümüzde; Aydınlanmanın kilise ve dinin kamusal alandaki tesirini kısıtlayıcı etkilerinin, çeşitli alanlarda bahse konu toplumlar ve politikaları için fazla geçerli gözükmediği iddia edilebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Seküler, De-seküler, Post-seküler, Hıristiyan Siyonizmi, Evanjelikalizm, Evanjelizm, Pentekostalizm, Dini Yayılmacılık.

INTRODUCTION

There have been very important developments regarding religions around the world which may be interpreted as the emergence of post-secular era for Christian societies. Most of the masses and even philosophers prefer not to focus on the religious causes or results of these developments. The aim of this research paper is to understand the religious developments mostly within the Christian world by evaluating the increasing influence and expansion of Protestants such as; Evangelicals, Christian Zionists, Pentecostals and their effects on national or international policies.

To begin with, it is important to understand how religious policies can find paths or ways to development and expansion within

the secular western states. So, the relation of Christians with their secular states will be examined in brief.

On Secularization & Secularism

From the last periods of the middle-ages and following the emergence of so-called enlightenment, some Western philosophers have been developing arguments against the immense power and influence of Church in the governing process of their communities.

Some scholars argue that 'secularity', which is related with seeding the origins of Judeophobia and Islamophobia, is the result of a very long process beginning with Spanish Reconquista, the many wars of religions and the threat that 'Turks' represented in the 16th and 17th centuries (Salvatore cited in Challand, 2014).

Secularization is described as the historical process by which, society becomes no more dominated by the church just as the decline of ecclesiastical control and revolt of scholars 'against the narrowness, intolerance and dogmatism of the church' (Swomney, cited in Doerr, 1998). The implementations of medieval church and clerics seem to have provided more than enough justifications to some of the peoples of Europe to demand change.

Whereas; what some of the societal changes brought by secularization seem questionable. Some scholars argue that secularism has tried to frame 'religion' as chaotic, irrational, and dangerous, to control and isolate religion from public life, and position secularism as neutral, rational and peaceful ... (Mavelli & Petito, cited in Delgado, 2017). This idea of establishment of secular control over Christian religion by modelling justifications can be interpreted as the derailing the struggle of diminishing the control of the church.

Interestingly, some of the supporters of secularization had been arguing that the wars of religions had been causing constant violence. On the other hand, Professor Jose Casanova (2011), argues that even with the segregation between church and politics in Europe, the interval between 1914 and 1989 was the most brutal and bloody time span for centuries and was the 'product of modern secular ideologies' (cited in May et al., 2014). This example may be interpreted as the promises of secularism may not have utterly been fulfilled enough to satisfy the societal needs.

More interestingly, former president of American Humanist Association, Edd Doerr interprets the difference between secularization and secularism. He argues that "secularization is not the same as secularism and is not the enemy of the religion. Its goal

is religious neutrality, not hostility toward religion" (Doerr, 1998: 37). He further argues that desecularization "poses serious threats to religious freedom, personal and intellectual freedom, and democratic values and institutions" (Doerr, 1998: 38). Evaluating the acceptability of these arguments is beyond the scope of this essay. But it can be argued that some of the wrong policies of some Christian religious authorities may have resulted in antagonism against some of the Church policies or creation of some kind of hostility against religion.

On the other hand, some scholars blame secularization for privileging the non-religious public sphere over the private sphere of faith and also for placing religion into private sphere which devalued religion since public space is regarded as politically superior to the private (May et al., 2014: 335, 338). Whereas some scholars highlight that "exclusion of religion from the public sphere is not its destiny, and modernity does not have to damage religion" (Jewdokimow, 2015:230).

It is an undeniable fact today that church, in most of the developed countries, functions as a medium of political information and activism. Julien Winandy (citing Weithman, 2002) argues that United States churches operate as venues of political socialization mostly for those marginalized populaces who in other ways could not find chance to develop communal awareness. She also emphasizes that the churches function as a spokesperson and a lobby for those people who don't have other voice in political discourse and because of these facts, excluding religious reasons from political argument would develop into an exclusion them from democratic processes and leading to political marginalization (Winandy, 2015: 844).

Also, according to some Christian philosophers, secularization has also been transformed into some kind of a problematic ideology. This is evident in recent arguments. In brief; some scholars argue that secularization 'Protestanized' religion and the different 'religions' that do not fit nicely what religion 'ought to be' become subordinate and problematic (Brown et al., cited in May et al., 2014: 335). Whereas according to Karpov (2010), secularist political and ideological authorities may marginalize religious communities that may be the majority of the population under the authority's command. Considering abovementioned opinions, it can be argued that some kinds of modernity's secularization frameworks may have been designed to 'Protestanize' some religions.

On the other hand, it is worth thinking on how states of secular communities justify and name their struggle against religious fundamentalism. Do these states, societies use secular notions against other religions or do secular states, communities still use religious notions and phenomenon? While mentioning about cultural relativism, derived from postmodern critique of reason, Jürgen Habermas (2008) argues that cultural relativism is also "shared by those militant Christians who fight Islamic fundamentalism while proudly claiming that the Enlightenment culture either as part and parcel of the tradition of Roman Catholicism or as the specific offshoot of Protestantism". It can be argued that some of the contemporary groups in the states of secular communities still use religious phenomenon or ideologies.

Considering the arguments illustrated briefly above, and considering there have been much more arguments and suggestions for or against secularization and secularism, one can conclude to the idea that, some implementations regarding secularization become more questionable because of various kinds of derailing activities and secularism has lost various levels of grounds against church and religion after the developments that occurred since the very first emergence of the idea of secularism.

On Post-Secular or Post-Secularism

Having demonstrated some of the discussions about secularism, we are moving now on to examine the ideas about church, religion and the post-secular discourse.

To begin with, it is necessary here to clarify post-secular discourse. While describing post-secular societies Jürgen Habermas (2008) emphasized that religion maintains a social influence and relevance, while the secularistic certainty that 'religion will fade away globally in the course of modernization' is losing ground.

Interestingly, one of the main defenders of the secularization theory, Peter L. Berger has changed his mind, witnessing that the secularization theory was essentially mistaken. He confirms "the world is just as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever" (Berger, cited in Costa, 2015). Thus, post-secularism can be defined as questioning the Enlightenment's handling of religion and, during the times when secularism has appeared increasingly discredited, invocations of post-secularism have begun to proliferate (Furani, 2014).

Inspired by prominent German sociologist Max Weber, Dustin Byrd (2017) argues that: rationalization and bureaucratization disconnected Man from what religion once provided, a complete

explanation of reality and orientation of action. Also, he suggests that rationalization left him isolated, and modern disenchanted man experienced himself locked within an "iron cage" without religious or metaphysical relief. Byrd further emphasizes that the modern world that promised both worldly abundance and immunity from past and misguided dogmas, failed to replace the connectedness and perception of ontological and eschatological certainty that man once possessed within a religious universe. As a result of the mentioned issues above, Byrd concludes that, a gate for religion was left open by the defeat of modernity to adequately address man's psychological and spiritual necessities outside of his material needs (Byrd, 2017: 8). These arguments may be interpreted as the brief descriptions of some of the justifications regarding the emergence of post-secular world view.

Similarly, what Giorgi Areshidze argues can be interpreted as; peaceful coexistence of religious and secular citizens by convergence on religious freedom does not require believing citizens to accept all the epistemic criteria of modern rationalism and secularism at the expense of their own religious traditions and, religious moderation in the modern world can provide an appealing route (2017: 735).

Whereas Benjamin Schewel argues that secularization theory neglects religion's close connection with modernity's historical formation and solely secular accounts of human affairs hamper our capability to navigate and react to the challenges confronting contemporary society. As a result, he suggests moving beyond of the tendency to exclude religion from the public sphere to utilize its capacity of uniquely contribution to the achievement of many social goods (Schevel, 2014: 50,59). It can be argued that post-secular scholars suggest inclusion of religion in societal life to benefit from its possible positive advantages.

In the same way, Phillips (2014) argue that in the post-secular space the political society may once again utilize resources from the church, since the strict distinction between religion and politics proved unachievable to sustain.

If we think about post-secularism within the international relations, John A. Rees outlines that recently, the research on international relations has taken a 'post-secular turn' and this has resulted in the birth of a renewed focus on the political agency of 'religion' (May et al. 2014: 346). Likewise, regarding national politics, an example from Israel may be interpreted as a kind of post-secular governance. Samantha May and her colleagues argue that, national-

religious settler movement has systematically penetrated the state apparatus in order to pursue its parochial interests and redevelop Israel's otherwise secular national identity and politics (2014: 345).

To sum up, the ideal definition of post-secular understanding varies according to how one society has experienced or explored secular implementations. So, the precise understanding may be what Furani (2014) emphasizes: the post-secular corresponds to an overcoming of a past launched by the Protestant Reformation and by the following expansion of Europe's dominion in the world.

On De-Secularization, Counter-Secularization

De-secularization, as a reaction to previous or continuing secularization, is defined as a process of counter-secularization with all or some of the tendencies of; de-privatization (resurgence of religion to public sphere), resurgence of religious beliefs and practices, reconciliation between formerly secularized institutions and religious norms both formal and informal, revival of religious content in subsystems of culture like arts and philosophy, changes in society's religion-related substratum (Karpov, 2010: 250). De-secularization can be seen within diverse fields by the implementations of various kinds.

Denés Kiss (2015) argues that secularizing interventions in Eastern Europe between 1945 and 1989 such as nationalization of religious education, religious health and social institutions or banning the economic activities of churches was not seen legitimate by large groups and this resulted in de-secularization processes after the regime change. To sum up, religion continue to unsettle the rational nature of secular politics through symbolism, rhetoric, images, narratives, histories, myths, values and experiences (May et al., 2014). Some groups or authorities may defend the role of secularization, but some other groups and authorities may seek de-secularization.

Just as the marginalization of religion in public institutions was accomplished by secularizing activists, de-secularizing activists are defined as individuals and groups who actively support re-establishing the role of religion in social institutions and culture (Karpov, 2010). What are their motivations, how do they formulate ideological background and are there international or global influencers within these activists can be some of the questions one can ask.

De-secularization can also affect foreign policy. De-secularization affects international relations and global strategies. Yagil Levy (2018) argue that since the 1970s, partial de-secularization of American

politics has begun with the growing ties between evangelical churches, Republican party and neo-conservatives and this policy strengthened with promotion of aggressive foreign policy.

Social learning theories may also be utilized to understand secularization and de-secularization. Sympathy with religion may also be constructed. Here, the functions of social elites play important roles to define directions. Alex Mesoudi (2009) argues that "religion is expected to rise in countries in which educated and high-status individuals tend to be more religious than low-status individuals, and to decline in countries in which high-status individuals have below-average religiosity" (cited in Meisenberg, 2011: 319). It can be argued that controlling elites may give a way to control religiosity of societies. Whereas elites may contradict society and resist societal change needs. Inspired by Peter Berger, Karpov (2010) illustrates that according to de-secularization thesis, counter-secularization movements express mass discontent with secular elites and elite ideology of secularism which may be imagined as revolts against irreligious or anti-religious elites.

Another important finding may be about de-secularization processes experienced in the Western armies. Analysing the armies of both United States of America and Israel, Levy (2018) argues that de-secularization of both armed forces can be seen in various forms such as; religious intolerance, theologizing military deployments, using religiosity to motivate sacrifice and justify violence, associating good soldiering with religiosity and the desecularization mostly promoted by the most radical groups; Evangelicals and National ultra-Orthodox respectively.

Christian Denominations Such As; Christian Zionism, Evangelicalism

After having brief research on contemporary phenomenons related with post-secularity, it is now time to turning focus to understand some of the developments regarding some of groups within the Christian faith. Researchers usually get confused while trying to understand the relations and connections of various Christian belief groups, especially when some people or communities believe beyond the 'borders' of their group's commons. Describing clearly the specialities of various Christian groups and their connections with each other is beyond the limits of this essay. Some of the sub-groups may also believe the other groups' teachings, so

definitions may not reflect the clear borders of beliefs. But some information and related understandings of Christian Zionism, Evangelicalism and Pentecostalism will be examined.

To begin with, Protestantism is a form of Christianity originated during 16th century as a reaction to Roman Catholic Church doctrines and practices (Marty et al., 2018). Some of the major branches of Protestantism can be described as Anglicanism, Lutheranism, Pentecostalism, Methodism. The complex structure of the branches may be seen in the chart below.
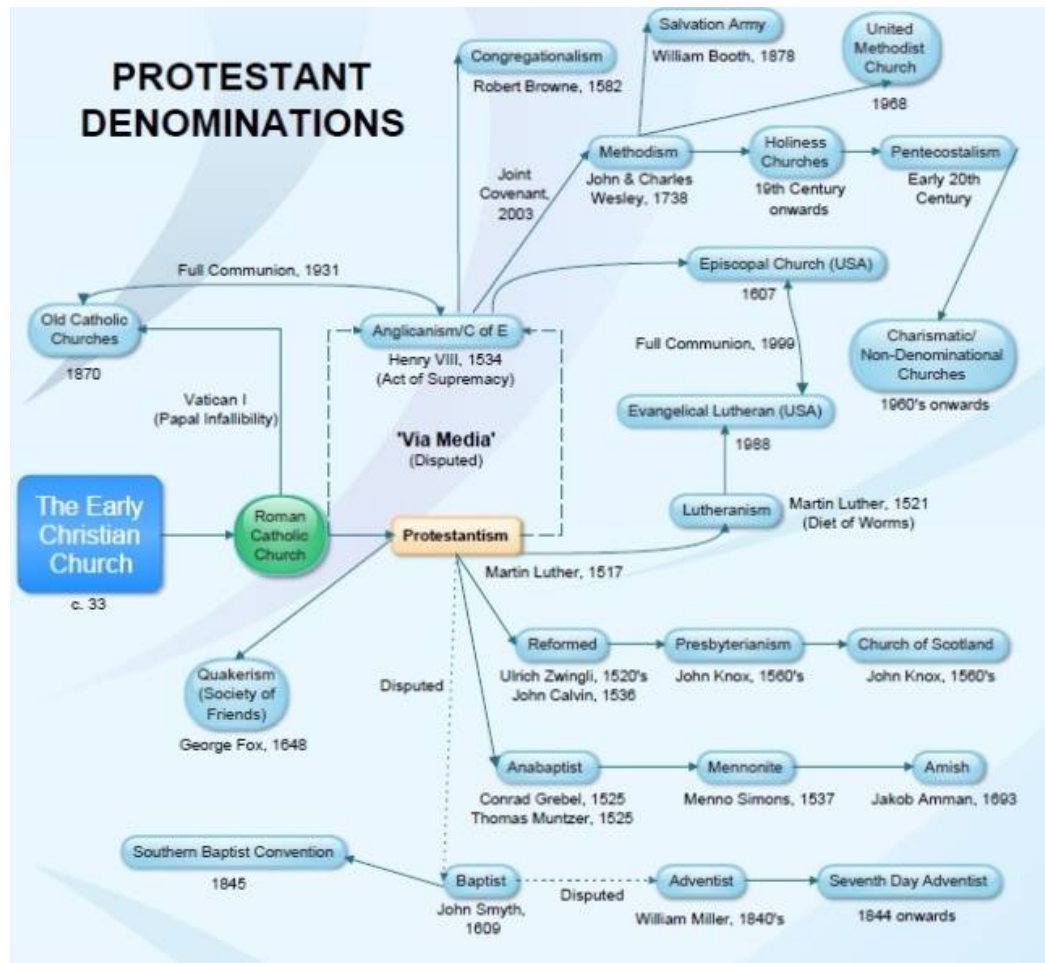

Chart 1: Protestant Denominations. Source: Protestanism.co.uk

It is important to emphasize the fact that some Christians define Evangelism, as a different phenomenon than Evangelicalism. They argue that Evangelism is not the same belief system as Evangelicalism. Evangelism is sharing the good news about God with those who have not heard yet, with the intention of converting those into Christianity (Brown,2013). In North America, until 1865,

churches used to look for an outpouring revival from God to awaken his people from lethargy but after 1870, churches seemed to seek less for revival and moved to evangelistic campaigns (Severance, 2010). Evangelists' philosophy can be found in Tisha Brown's words: "far too many people in our world today view the Church as a judgmental, restrictive, irrelevant institution; a place that caused pain and suffering to them and to others they know and love. This sad reality makes it crucial that we find ways to approach evangelism for today's Church that is tempered by the love to which John refers."(Brown, 2013: 59). On the other hand Evangelicalism may have various differences.

Evangelicals are Protestant Christians who are Bible-centric, conversion-centric, crucicentric, and mission-centric (Bebbington cited in Bowman, 2011). Whereas Carlo Aldrovandi (2011) from Bradford university argues that Evangelical Zionism de-humanizes Jews into abstract beings, mythic players furthering an impending drama of Christian salvation. On the other hand,, 'Christians United for Israel's spiritual leader Pastor John Hagge "implicitly blames the Israelites themselves for the Holocaust, and recognizes in Hitler and the Nazi movement those 'historical forces' whereby God 'mysteriously' advanced His redemptive plan based on a Jewish restoration in Palestine" (Spector cited in Aldrovandi, 2011). Whereas regarding Palestine, Chetty's arguments are worth thinking. Illegal Jewish settlements in Palestinian Territory warrant Israel forces to station Palestine but it should be noted that Jesus tells to love neighbour as one loves himself/herself and also, "Arabs are descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom God also blesses" (Chetty, 2014).

Against Christian Zionism, in the year 2006, churches in Jerusalem declared 'The Jerusalem Declaration on Christian Zionism'. These churches against Christian Zionism policies were: The Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem (Catholic), the Syriac Orthodox Archdiocese of Jerusalem, then Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

The Jerusalem Declaration on Christian Zionism emphasized some arguments such as; "We categorically reject Christian Zionist doctrines as false teaching that corrupts the biblical message of love, justice and reconciliation" and also; "We call upon all people to reject the narrow world view of Christian Zionism and other ideologies that privilege one people at the expense of others" (Jerusalem Decleration,

2006). Following this declaration, Christian Zionists posted their response message[1] signed by the representatives of Christian Friends of Israel, International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, Bridges For Peace organizations.

It becomes clear with this declaration that some Evangelicals and some Lutherans and others may oppose Christian Zionism whereas some of them support Zionism. Also, there may be differences between Dispensationalists and the Biblical Zionists. So, again it is vital to emphasize that regarding Zionism or desecularization or else, there may be different groups or ideologies and there may not be clear positions or borders. Whereas the aim of this essay is not defining various belief groups but understanding the arguments about their strategies and actions which may illustrate expansion of post-secular implementations. Thus, brief information presentation about these beliefs will help us in understanding the post-secular developments.

Some other scholars also argue that Christian Zionism has hermeneutical problems. One of the problems may be about the concept of promised land. Du Toit (2017) argues that "...in the New Testament God's kingdom is portrayed in such a way that the inheritance of the land is incorporated, fulfilled but transferred to believers in Christ, not as an earthly territory, but as an inheritance of eternal rest in Christ" furthermore, Du Toit emphasizes: "according to Paul the 'Jerusalem above', not an earthly Jerusalem...", and "...even the temple has been fulfilled in believers; they themselves are God's temple ..." (2017: 6).

In one of her speeches, Rabbi Laurie, Zimmerman defines Christian Zionists as: "Protestant fundamentalists who believe that the modern State of Israel is the fulfillment of a Biblical mandate and that the land from the Euphrates to the Nile belongs exclusively and eternally to the Jews" (Zimmerman, 2007).

On the other hand, according to Khan (2018); Zionist Jews were in need of Christian's support and in 1867, John Nelson Darby retranslated the New Testament with changes that construct new doctrine of Dispensationalism, of the Christian Zionism. Khan also argues that Darby is accused of corrupting the Bible and Christian Zionism, ultimately helped the establishment of Israel.

Anglican theologian Stephan Sizer finds Dispensational Premillennialism, which is foundational to Christian Zionism, problematic and uses the term 'bad theology' while describing the problem (Rood & Rood, 2011). Whereas in past, "the visit of John

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[1]The Joint Response Message can be found at:https://int.icej.org/media/jerusalem-declaration-christian-zionism02.12.18

Nelson Darby, the founder of dispensationalism, to the United States (US), catalysed a dispensationalist movement and an evangelical revival" (Chetty, 2014). Christian Zionism in US originates from the beginning of the years after 1630, when 20.000 Puritans, considering themselves as the new chosen people escaped the 'sinful secularism of Western Europe' (Finney, 2016: 21). And according to Stephen Sizer (2002), "Dispensational Christian Zionism, which is the dominant form of Christian Zionism in America, with its teaching on the Rapture of the Church, the rebuilding of the Temple and imminent battle of Armageddon, is pervasive within mainline evangelical, charismatic and independent denominations including the Assemblies of God, Pentecostal and Southern Baptists as well as many of the independent mega-churches". Interestingly, Dale Crowley (cited in Sizer, 2002) claims that "they are led by 80,000 fundamentalist pastors, their views disseminated by 1,000 Christian radio stations as well as 100 Christian TV stations".

Moreover, Tristan Sturm (2017) from Queen's University Belfast, argues that the post-9/11 geopolitical vision of U.S. Christian Zionists were dominated by demonizing and dividing language between absolute good and evil just as George W. Bush's language of 'axis of evil'. Sturm interprets this, within the apocalyptic geopolitics of Christian Zionists: evil door—was over there, it had an address, and it was knocking on Israel's God's address. And after 9/11 terror attacks, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, it has been easy to convince the masses that history is unravelling precisely as dispensationalism predicted (Chetty, 2014).

Heightened apocalyptic expectations might explain why Christian Zionists support ethically dubious activities like Israeli settlement organizations and radical groups such as Temple Mount Faithful, which is dedicated to the rebuilding of the Jewish temple at any cost (Bush, 2009:148).

Whereas some of the prominent Christian Zionists argue that supporting Israel was God's foreign policy (Kirkpatrick, 2006), so-called Israel Defence Forces is God's army and Israelian Prime Minister is an analogue for the divine right of a king (Hitchcock, 2002).

On the other hand, in his article titled "Fear Under Construction: Islamophobia Within American Christian Zionism", Steven Fink argues that "American Christian Zionist leaders connect Islam categorically with violence" and also, they have two tendencies to lead laypeople to uncritically accept their ideas; first, they

"commonly present an ethos of unique personal authority" and secondly they have tendency to "impute divine mandate upon their narrative as if obedience to God requires acceptance of whatever they say" (Fink, 2014:32, 39.40).

Another group of Christians that will be mentioned in this research is Pentecostals. So, what are the characteristics of this group? It can be argued that Pentecostals in general, also support Zionism. They use similar language as John Calvin when describing church as 'spiritual Israel' and in one of the articles of the *Pentecostal Evangel*, which was previously named *Weekly Evangel*, S. A. Jamieson in 1916 argued: God would drive the Turk out of Palestine and cause his ancient people to get it. (Williams, 2015: 163).

According to Singleton (2011) "the term 'Pentecostal' refers to an ever-increasing sub-group of Protestant denominations or independent churches who place a strong emphasis on the so-called 'gifts of the spirit', which include speaking in tongues, being slain in the Spirit, prophecy, visions and miraculous healing".

Similar to above mentioned belief groups; according to British-Israelism which is also known as Anglo-Israelism, persons who descended from Anglo-Saxon ancestry are descended directly from the so-called ten lost tribes of Israel whereas according to a prominent historian of Mormonism, Mormonism sees membership in the Church of Jesus Christ as defining "the Saints are literally adopted into Israel and are thereupon brought into the covenant by virtue of their membership in the tribes of Israel" (Shipps, 1987; Horsman, 1981; cited in Williams, 2015). Interestingly, charismatic evangelical transformation in Latin America also motivated by a myth that describes the communities as the descendants of the Iberian Jews who were forced to convert to Christianity during the Inquisition (Carpenedo, 2018). There are some other narrations saying that these Jewish people escaping inquisition have also migrated to the American Southwest, Colombia and even India (Forero, 2012).

All of the mentioned belief groups have one crucial speciality in common: it can be argued that all of them can somehow be related to Zionism.

Developments Illustrating Post-Secular Expansion of Christian Denominations

In this part of the research, we will evaluate the past and present post-secular developments and trends regarding some Christian denominations.

To begin with, it can be argued that Evangelicals have currently great capacity to influence or control some societies, some states and global policies in some fields. The examples which will be mentioned below may be interpreted as the evidences of desecularization within the post-secular era.

Suggesting that the conjunction of the "cowboy capitalism" with the most militant section of American Christianity creates the greatest threat to democracy, William E. Connoly (2005) argues that the electronic news media currently function as the echo chamber of the capitalist-evangelical complex, doubling and tripling the problems democratic movements face in developing economic security, reducing inequality, and promoting multidimensional pluralism.

Moreover, inspired by Victoria Clark, Lawrence Anderson (2010) argues that "in the English speaking world, we witness the greatest number of Christian Zionists tirelessly trying to influence both the British and American governments to 'bless' the Jews by giving them someone else's territory" (2010: 605). Also, regarding political power, Irvine Anderson argues that "when it comes to exercising influence in the U.S. Congress, the more balanced message of these churches loses out to the better organized and more aggressively persistent Christian Zionist-Jewish Zionist alliance" (Anderson, 2010: 608).

On the other hand, religion affects election campaign strategies. While describing his analysis on 2016 elections, John Fea argues that "to win the evangelical vote, these political candidates knew that they would have to convince the faithful that the Christian fabric of the country was unraveling, the nation's evangelical moorings were loosening, and the barbarians were amassing at the borders, ready for a violent takeover" (2018: 22). Due to the strenght of Christian Zionists, both Democrats and Republicans identify as pro-Israel and a 2015 "Bloomberg poll found that almost 60 percent of evangelicals say the United States should support Israel even if its interests diverge with U.S. interests" (Sturm, 2017: 17). Thus, with these informations it becomes more understandable what Finney in 2016 argued when he suggested that President Obama was under the same pressure as previous presidents to conform to a Christian Zionist Worldview … (Finney, 2016: 29).

Post-secular era state policies may be seen in state support to religious organizations. An example may be the support by government of Israel. Du Toit (2017) argues that "the state of Israel gave official encouragement to Christian Zionism by allowing the establishment of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem in

1980". Similarly, international zionist evangelical organizations, such as Bridges for Peace and the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, which have explicit political agenda, enjoys diplomatic status in several Central American Countries (Wagner, cited in Sizer, 2002).

The state's involvement in religion and religious people can clearly be seen in the American example. The top leader and influencer of the country, president Trump recently shared disturbing videos on social media which portrayed Muslims as violent, cruel and intolerant. Matthew Kaemingk (2018) interpreted Trump's strategy as furthering a dramatic epic that he has been composing about a "clash of civilizations", a story that far-right leaders in Europe have been using for 20 years now. Evangelical professor Matthew Kaemingk further emphasizes that "many evangelicals imbibe large amounts of toxic political media on a daily basis. An hour on Sunday morning talking about humility, forgiveness and hospitality cannot compete with a daily ride on the outrage merry-go-round of talk radio, cable news and social media. The devastating impact these daily practices have on Christian political wisdom cannot be overstated." (Kaemingk, 2018).

Whereas in Latin America, it can be argued that desecularization has been a continuing process for decades. According to his researches on the ground throughout Latin America, Daniel H. Levine (2008) argues that "by any measure there is now more religion, more instances and variety and accessibility of religion than ever before. Where a typical town or neighborhood once could be safely assumed to have one church, sparsely attended at that, one now finds multiple, competing religious offerings: evangelical chapels and charismatic movements, street preachers and radio or television programs. One cannot get off a bus, exit a train station, turn on a radio, or stand in a public square almost anywhere in the region without encountering some kind of preacher."(2008: 210).

The Evangelical influence building activities seem very active in focusing on cultural policies. For example in Brazil, as Doleac (2014) argues; Evangelical clothing companies are common, numerous best-selling albums are by Evangelical artists where Rock, hip-hop, samba, and gospel are increasingly in demand, the book market for Evangelical ideas is strong and counts dozens of best-sellers over the past years and also, street art is valued by Evangelical churches and flourished in the big cities.

Institutionally, increasing amount of church or religious organizations' influences can be seen throughout Latin America, or may be in a wider perspective, throughout the world. An example from Brazil may ease understanding how these kind of post-secular

developments designed: "In little over a quarter of a century, the Universal Church has accumulated followers, trained leaders, acquired legitimacy, created a formidable media empire, begun transnational outreach, and developed a self-conscious and very practical political strategy. Rather than establish a party of its own, the Universal Church has hedged its bets by maintaining a presence in many parties, counting on strong internal discipline to provide coherence. To ensure reliability, rank-and-file believers, including many professionals, were replaced as candidates by bishops and pastors" (Levine, 2008: 215).

Regarding Charismatic Evangelicals, Carpenedo (2018) defines them as 'Judaising Evangelicals' and she further argues that "Judaising Evangelical group is also articulating its international expansion within Latin American and African countries as well as the South of the US." These developments may also illustrate post-secular expansion of Christian Zionism.

Furthermore, it can be argued that the international politics regarding religious beliefs have been an arena of competition between Evangelicals and other religious groups. For example, Afro-Brazilian religions (mostly Candomblé and Umbanda religions) have been struggling against Evangelical hostility (Phillips, 2015). The historical development of these Afro-Brazilian religions are interesting. "Islam was the religion of many of the Hausa, Fulani, Yoruba, and other slaves brought to Brazil, but was subsumed by other practices that gave rise to Candomblé and Umbanda" (Harvard University, 2018). After these religions formulated, today, they are also under some of the Evangelicals' target. "Tactics range from propaganda blitzkriegs launched on blogs and YouTube videos to threats, violence and expulsions from drug gangs. Afro-Brazilian religious leaders and sympathizers are fighting back in court."(Phillips, 2015). Parishioners – including a handful of drug kingpins who control slums across Rio – are heeding the call to arms and for these evangelical criminals, Candomblé and Umbanda are Satan's work, and they must be stamped out (Muggah, 2017). Also regarding prisons, Muggah (2017) argues that state prisons are essentially governed by one of two competing drug trafficking organizations with the government only nominally in control and of the 100 faith-based organizations subcontracted to run social programs in prisons, 81 are evangelical churches. Thus, Charismatic Christianity has spread quickly through the criminal justice system (Muggah, 2017). Similarly a recent documentary illustrates that in Salvador, in a prison with country's

most notorious gang members, a preacher of Evangelical Church clearly approves that to be a Christian is the only way out of a gang by saying "it's either Christianity or a black plastic bag" (Channel 4, 2018).

It is an undeniable fact today that democracy sometimes favours rich and money sometimes shapes domestic and international politics. Capital may influence democracies in a post-secular way. In Brasil, the newly elected president Jair Bolsonaro became known when his sons wore shirts of Mossad and Israel Defence Forces (Nord, 2018). Interestingly Bolsonaro, who declared his plan to move Brazilian Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, "was baptized in the Jordan River into the Assemblies of God, which has been pouring money into far-right politics in Brazil and around the world" (Ross, 2018).

Interestingly, apart from Protestants, some Catholics also experience post-secular developments. In Poland, Catholic Bishops and President Andrzei Duda declared Christ as the King of Poland. The prayer may be illustrating post-secular era as well: "In our hearts, Rule us, Christ! In our families, Rule us, Christ! ... In our schools and universities, Rule us, Christ! ... Through the Polish nation, rule us, Christ! ... We pledge to defend Your holy worship and preach Thy royal glory, Christ our King, we promise! We pledge to do Your will and protect the integrity of our consciences, Christ our King, we promise! We pledge to care for the sanctity of our families and the Christian education of children, Christ our King, we promise! [T]he King of kings and Lord of Rulers! We entrust the Polish people and Polish leaders to you. Make them exercise their power fairly and in accordance with Your laws. ... Rule us, Christ! Reign in our homeland and reign in every nation -- for the greater glory of the Most Holy Trinity and the salvation of mankind."(Chapman, 2016).

Another interesting development that may be interpreted as another post-secular implementation is from Germany. During his first interview since taking office, German Interior Minister Horst Seehofer declared that "Islam does not belong in Germany" (Huggler, 2018). Furthermore, according to a new law "every public building in the southern German state of Bavaria is now required to display a Christian cross at the entrance to greet visitors"(Shubert & Vonberg, 2018).

Whereas in Orthodox world, some voices calls for seperation of Churces. This is important because this development illustrates the role of churches in secular Europe within post-secular era. Ukranian president Mr Poroshenko declared that "here will be a national, autocephalous, Orthodox Church of Ukraine!","It's a question of our independence. It's a question of our national security. It's a question

of our statehood. It's a question of world geopolitics,"(McLaughlin, 2018). This decleration may illustrate the post-secular roles that the church plays in governance of states.

One more example from Europe, illustrating post-secular era may be the veil-ban implementations. Michaels (2018) argues that face-veil ban is the self-identification of the state in opposition to the visible religion of Islam. He further emphasizes that "in regulating face-veil, the state reconstructs itself as though it were a religion" and the state "ultimately invokes faith and subjection just like the religion it seeks to regulate" (Michaels, 2018: 243-4). The veil bans seem other evidences of post-secular because as Ralf Michaels emphasizes, in Europe where face-veil is banned, "the state requires a quasi-religious commitment from its citizens—and excommunicates those who do not, in word and deed, express their willingness to follow" (Michaels, 2018: 244).

CONCLUSION

This research paper discussed the various ideas on and roles of Christian denominations that affect national and international policies. After examining the origins of phenomenons such as; secular, post-secular, de-secularization, this research focused of contemporary situation after briefly examining Christian denominations such as Evangelicalism and Christian Zionism. Considering these evaluations, it can be argued that in some fields of social life and in various policies, the Enlightenment's restrictive effects on church and religion's influence seem not much that prevailing today.

In conclusion, it can be argued that the Christian societies have implicitly or explicitly been experiencing convergence to the increasing influence of church and religion. The evaluations within this research regarding Christian denominations such as Christian Zionism may illustrate the relevance of this argument. The contemporary expansion of church and religious influence may require awareness in various fields while designing policy and measures for the welfare of societies and the globe. Are these societies of these Christian denominations well aware of the contemporary developments that shape the combination of their beliefs with politics? Also, to what extent the religious influence will expand within these societies? Also, regarding the other societies, how have they been affected by the developments within these

Christian denominations, or have will the future developments will affect the other societies and what will be the policies that they may need to construct, may be some of the questions for future studies.

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