

## **The Principle of Secularity of State in the Documents and Internal Institutions of Religious Associations of Russia and Italy**

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**Abstract:** The research studies the treatment of religious organizations of the principle of secularity of the state, its understanding of the canon law doctrine and internal confessional documents. It is noted that positive attitude to the constitutional principle of secularity is characteristic for the majority of religious communities in Italy and the Russian Federation however, there are some differences in understanding this principle and its implementation. The study considers the official positions of the majority (with the largest number of followers) of religious organizations. As a result of the analysis, the authors indicate general aspects of understanding the secular character of the state with which all religious organizations in Russia and Italy are in solidarity. The researchers also emphasize that to reflect the attitude of religious denominations to the secular character of the state in the Russian Federation a uniform form of program documents is applied. There is a lack of unified approach on this issue in religious associations of Italy.

**Key words:** Religion, Italy, Russia, secular state, religious associations, ecclesiastical law

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### **INTRODUCTION**

According to Giuseppe Dalla Torre, professor of the Chair of Canon and Ecclesiastical Law of St. Maria Assuntskaya Free University, despite the fact that for decades the scholars lawyers have discussed the issue of understanding secularity, much success has not been achieved on this point. He writes: “there were good investigations of common, theoretical issues but it seems to me that from the point of view of doctrinal, conceptual approaches there have not been made tangible steps forward. In other words, there has not been achieved the convergence of sense of that clear, common which would help in the development of church state relations, even though in a variety of approaches and cultural moves”.

Therefore, we consider it important to find out the attitude of the very religious institutions to the principles of secularity of the state its understanding of the doctrine of canon law and internal confessional documents. Such knowledge is of practical importance for several reasons:

“Secular and canon law (lex canonica), being the phenomena of the legal and public order, Pchelintsev (2009) writes are in system correlation” but for that very reason “the task of juridical science is to identify these are as of contact.

The doctrine of theologians themselves can influence or even change the understanding of secularity in the country. So, Fadeyev V.I. noting the influence of religious doctrines and teachings on the development of legal science, writes: “many concepts of the modern theory of state and law are as noted in the literature, secularized theological concepts” (Fadeyev, 2013).

For building effective state confessional relations at all levels of government: federal, regional and municipal. A constructive dialogue is hardly probable without revealing conceptions of religious organizations on the issue of secularity

According to Fadeyev (2013), “religion as the experience of many countries shows is often a factor of society integration, a state forming factor”. Thus if all or even most of the religious associations express a positive attitude to the constitutional principle of secularism, present the respect for the fundamental law of the Russian Federation, it will have a positive influence on the development of public relations by the state and religious associations

Fortaking into account the legislative activities in order to achieve parity between the mutual interests of believers and the state as federal and regional legislative bodies, carrying out the normative regulation of relations in different spheres, must know the attitude of

confessions to the concept of “mutual non-interference”. In addition in recent times, one can see the representatives of religions in a variety of expert advice and consulting and advisory bodies at the federal and regional levels

It is important to note that most religious communities in Italy and the Russian Federation are characterized by a positive attitude to the constitutional principle of secularism, however, there are some differences in understand this principle and its implementation. We will try to consider the official positions of the majority confessions, reflected in their doctrine in the statements of their leaders in case of the absence of fundamental developments of this issue.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

In addition to scientific methods when writing this research special methods of scientific cognition were widely used.

In particular to consider the principle of secularism with regard to the change of positions of the Catholic church and other religions in different historical periods, the historical and legal method was used.

The methods of analysis and synthesis, as well as application of the systematic approach facilitated to disclose prerequisites of relations between the state and church and conditions of securing of the principle of non interference in each other's affairs. In addition, the use of these methods provided the opportunity to consider the formation of a secular character of the state in Italy and Russia as a holistic phenomenon and to establish the relationship between its constituent parts.

The comparative legal method was the principal of the private legal methods used in carrying out this study, because it served the achievement of its objective: to identify the distinctive features and the similarities in the understanding and implementation of the principle of secularity of various religious communities of the mentioned states.

**Transformation of the position of Catholic church concerning the idea of religious freedom and secularity of the state in Italy; historical aspect:** The specifics of attitude of the Catholic church to secularism in Italy is conditioned by the peculiarities of historical formation of the Italian state, namely the existence of the Papal state with the Roman Pontiff as the head on the territory of the modern Italian state for more than one century.

In Italy, secular character of the state and manifestation of secularity, the principles of relations between the state and religious communities, the right to

religious freedom are studied within the framework of the special branch “ecclesiastical law” (*Diritto Ecclesiastico*) and it should be distinguished from *Diritto Canonico* canon law” which regulates the internal relations between the believers, clergy and members of religious orders of the Catholic Church.

However as Giuseppe Dalla Torre believes, the doctrine of canon law in the second half of the 20th century with some exceptions was not affected by the discussion very bright and constructive which had lasted more than two decades between experts in canon law.

There is an explanation to it. Firstly, the weak point of the study of this phenomenon within *Jus publicum ecclesiasticum externum* (“ecclesiastical public law”). This term emerged in the 16 and 17th centuries during the Counter Reformation; “in the intellectual and cultural climate of “siege”, the polemics with Protestantism, on the one hand and with the absolutist state, on the other hand, in the Catholic world a new paradigm of canon law was born”.

The church was declared *societas perfecta* that equated it with the state concerning the rights of self government. The “perfect” (*perfecta*) society is that one Eugenio Corecco, the Swiss canonist and Catholic Bishop of Lugano, indicates which has within itself all the necessary means of control and goal achievement. In legal terms, this model has been focused on the development of public law which is going through the period of rapid development in this era” (Corecco). Among the influential authors of this model it should be called the Italian cardinals of the Roman curia Cardinals Camillo Tarquini and Felice Cavagnis in 19th century and Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani (one of the conservative leaders of the second Vatican Council) in 20th century.

The canonists of that period announced the canon law to be the public right, comparable to that which was created by the European countries so there was no serious need in the development of the content of secularism its principles. The conception of the relationship of church and state as equal subjects developed within the framework of this paradigm has been serving as a partial basis in church state relations up to this day.

Secondly, in attention to the issues of secularism in the doctrine of canon law is due to the complexity of the development of a universal approach to it. For example, the secular character of the state in the countries of Latin America is the expression of certain political and cultural features and one can not just translate and apply them to the countries of the Anglo Saxon group. For that very reason such issues were outside the scope of the doctrine of canon law, the supporters of which strived for extensive affiliation and universalization.

In 1962 in the religious life of Italy the reoccurred an event of significant historic scale. Pope John 23 had opened 21th Ecumenical Council of the Catholic church which lasted until 1965 (this Council went down in history as the second Vatican one (here in after the Council)). This council significantly refreshed the position of the Catholic church regarding religious freedom and the idea of a secular state.

The Second Vatican Council approved the concept of "societas perfecta". Church as before was understood as the community of people and therefore, seen as a "perfect society" in the sense that its law order was not dependent on any other organization and it had the means to achieve its goals without the help of other communities. However, it had become even clearer since the second Vatican Council that the church had ontological difference from the secular states, the legal and institutional aspects of the church could not be conceived outside its supernatural beginning and end (Maurizio, 2009).

The point of convergence of the church and the world is a man, the realization of his function in the world and the transcendent salvation. Thus, the ecclesiological presuppositions of the church and the political community relations are understanding of the church as a divine and institutional community at the same time the presence of the church in the world but apart from a secular society the existence of the church for human use (Maurizio, 2009).

Thus in Paragraph 76 "The political community and the church" of the pastoral constitution "On the church in the modern world" (*Gaudium in terra*), distinguishing between church and the political community, one can see the prerequisites for the perception of the idea of a secular state: "In the areas of its activity the political community and church are autonomous and independent of each other."

However, both church and the community follow, although on different grounds, personal and social vocation of the same people. They will serve for common advantage more successful, the better they will develop robust collaboration between them, taking into account the circumstances of time and place <...>. The church itself uses transitory things, as required by its own mission. But it does not place its hopes on privileges granted by the civil power; moreover, it will refuse to implement certain legally obtained rights, if it is obvious that their using may shake the sincerity of its evidence and if the new conditions of life require different" (Pastoral, 1998).

Besides, based on this doctrine of the nature of Church, the Council needed to recognize religious freedom. Before the Council, the church argued that the

recognition of tolerance of other religions could not mean freedom of propaganda of any religion, incitement to religious hatred and violation of security. On that occasion at the Council there was a serious discussion between Cardinal Augustin Bea and Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani. Ottaviani was opposed to the secular nature of the state and actively defended the traditional Catholic position that consisted in the fact that in a country where Catholics were a religious majority, one should recognize Catholicism as the state religion and restrain the religious activities of non-Catholic faiths. If in the state the Catholics are in the minority, the religious pluralism should be accepted as the lesser evil. However, in the final document declaration "*Dignitatis Humanae*" adopted on December 07, 1965, the religious freedom was defined as the natural right of every man, rooted in the very nature of the individual. This right shall be recognized in the public order in such a way as to become a civil right (clause 2).

It should be noted that a religious official document the Catechism of the Catholic church does not contain provisions that affect the attitude of church to the secular state. The document only fixes the attitude of a Christian to the civil power and its instructions: "Refusal of obedience to civil authorities when their demands are contrary to conscience, finds its justification in the distinction between serving God and serving the political community. "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God that are God's". "We ought to render more obedience to God rather than men (Act 5:29)".

However, the church's attitude toward the secular state was reflected in full in the speeches and works of the Roman pontiffs who by virtue of the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope in the matters of faith and morals were of rather great importance. Pope Pius 12th had established the principle of distinction of the functions between the State and the church to be "one of the principles of Catholic doctrine". Also in his famous speech he first coined the term of "healthy secularism" (*sanalaicita*).

His doctrine was fully confirmed and quoted by Pope Paul VI. John Paul II pointed out that Christianity set "a healthy secularism of civil society from the very beginning, favored the establishment of the fundamental differences between the secular and the spiritual order".

Nevertheless, the most authoritative source in this respect is the doctrine of Pope Benedict 16th who had repeatedly spoken about the Catholic concept of relationship with the state.

The concept of "healthy secularism" implies the following: the church has a positive attitude to the secular state and not to everyone but only to the state which does not reject "public religion".

In the form of religious communities and believers. That is on the one hand it recognizes the organized religious organizations as unite dparts of the society on the other hand, it allows the faithful "to contribute to the construction of the social structure of society".

At the same time, today, thanks to Benedict 26th the term "positive or positive secularity" (positivalaicità) is more preferable in the Catholic church. For the first time, this new term emerged first on October 15, 2005 in a letter to President of the Senate Marcello Pera where the Pope revealing the term pointed out that "this secularism guarantees to every citizen the right to live with own religious beliefs in true freedom, even in the public sphere".

Then this term emerged on April 15, 2008 in the interview with reporters during a flight to the United States. Giorgio Felliciani notes that "The mention of the term after nearly 3 years break is probably to be concerned with the thing that was said by French President Sarkozy on December 20, 2007, on the occasion of the adoption of honorary title of the reader of canons of Lateran Basilica by St. John in Rome: "I wish there were a positive secularism which would guarantee freedom of thought, freedom to believe and not to believe at the same time, I believe that religion is an advantage but not a threat".

In his speeches, Benedict 26 has frequently mentioned that "Church in Italy and in every country as well as in various international organizations, does not intend to claim for itself any privileges but only to behave opportunity to fulfill its mission, respecting the secular nature of the state".

These words are almost completely the quotation of the last words of paragraph 76 of the pastoral constitution "On the church in the modern world" "Gaudium et spes": "«...» Church itself uses transitory things, as required by its own mission. But it does not place their hopes on the privileges granted by the civil power moreover, it will refuse to implement some legally obtained rights if it is obvious that their use may cast doubt on the sincerity of its testimony and if the new conditions of life require different".

In the first years after Vatican Council II (here in after the Council) it was thought that state ment would confirm the thesis that concerning civil society, the church would give preference to "base relations" having abandoned "the relationship at the highest political level". In other words it was expected that the Council "would negate" the system of concordats, however, the forecast did not prove to be correct in the next decade numerous agreements between the Holy See and the State have been concluded (Tedeschi, 1987).

In fact, there is no contradiction. This fact is well supported by the traditional Christian doctrine, according to which church can impose its hopes only on "the power of the revived Lord" (Andrey, 1998a, b). But the doctrine of the church does not deny the fact of possible receiving on legal grounds the rights from the civil power and free using them. It only warns that it will self-abandon them, if it interferes with the mission of church or no longer complies with its needs due to changing historical circumstances.

However, the statements of Pope Benedict 26 can not be treated as a waiver of the Concordat as this kind of agreement is to determine the status of the Church in a particular country. For that very reason, especially at present, they cannot be considered as synonymous with the privileged regime (privilegiario). It is important to remind that many of the provisions of the agreement in 1984 between the Italian Republic and the Holy See were further reflected in the agreements concluded between the Italian Republic and the other religious denominations. In any case, Benedict 26 believes, "relationship at the highest level" to be not only lawful and appropriate but absolutely needed: "healthy dialogue between civil and religious organizations"-the foundation of "all round development of the human personality and harmony of the society".

Thus, Pope Benedict 26 poses no new principles of freedom of religion and the relationship between church and state. He simply suggests a novel approach to the traditional Christian doctrine, actualizing it in accordance with the specific needs of the time. He claims on the one hand, the idea of a secular state based on the difference of powers between the state and confessions (dualistic conception) but on the other hand, proposes the concept of "healthy" or rather "positive" secular state, that leaves room for the church's contribution to the creation of human society. The similar approach is shared by the current Pope Francis.

**Secular character of the state and its reflection in the documents of religious associations in Italy and Russia; comparative and legal aspect:** Besides the Catholic church in the territory of Italy, the protestant denominations are the second largest number of believers. For the most part, they express support for the secular character of the state but in documents of a number of churches a positive attitude has been formed with regard to exceptions.

On November 1-4, 2012, in the decision of 27 Assembly of the Federation of Evangelical Churches of Italy "Evangelical presence in the public space" was confirmed that the participants in the assembly strived for

renewing their commitment to the secular character of the state but at the same time in Italy from time to time there were questions that forced us to reflect on the state policy in this sphere: “we think about the discussion on the law on artificial insemination and the final wording of the law, approved by Parliament; <...>; about the attempts of intervention of leaders of the Catholic church in the matter of finding the crucifix in public places and about the teaching of the Catholic religious doctrine at the state’s expense. We recognize and affirm “the supreme principle of secularism” that underlies our constitution and therefore, the necessary independence of the political decisions in relation to confessions but we also reaffirm the importance of public space in which all religious communities can express their opinions promote proposals and be participants of social and cultural life of the country”.

Moreover, the individual denominations being members of the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy have developed their own documents on these issues. Thus, the ideas of solidarity of secular state is contained in the final document of the Synod of the Waldensian Evangelical Church in Italy from 2010, dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the unification of Italy. In particular, in the section “Church and State”, the following provisions are reflected. “Being convinced of the active role of many protestants in the process of Risorgimento having hope that the themes of freedom and unity of Risorgimento will push Italian citizens to the commitment to the renewed cultural and political ideas of the secular state <...> we are urging the parliamentarians to take a number of measures to ensure freedom of conscience in particular, to ratify the agreement with the religious confessions, considered by the Council of Ministers and to elaborate the organic law on the protection of religious freedom”.

But not all religious organizations have similar documents. The Lutheran Evangelical Church in Italy being a member of the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy for example, did not adopt the final approach independently but the issues of relationship between the state and church were not deleted from the agenda. In particular the main subject of discussion at the meeting of the Synod in 2006, was the theme of the church’s presence in the public space. Presentations were made by a Lutheran pastor Jurg Kleemann, the president of the Federation of Evangelical churches in Italy (from 2000 to 2006) Gianni Long, a Waldensian theologian Professor Paul Rich (Paolo Ricca) and a number of other religious figures. But specific position Synod had not drawn up. Final Resolution (item 29 only strengthened the necessity of further discussing this topic in the coming years.

The Executive Committee of the Union of Christian Churches of Adventists of the Seventh Day, reflecting on the relationship between church and society, in the resulting document adopted on June 14-17, 2009, quotes point 7 of the Decision of the Constitutional Court of Italy No. 203 of 1989. So, “The Executive Committee recommends that the members of the church should serve in such a way as to spread the ideas of healthy secularity, emphasizing that this does not mean indifference or hostility of the state towards religions, but guarantees freedom for everybody”. And furthermore, “we keep at working with all public and private organizations that promote dialogue between the various civil, social and religious realities at the sametime, avoiding any form of influence on public opinion or syncretism”.

The Union of Evangelical Christians Baptists in Italy has no formal instrument that would assert the principles of relations between the state and confessions. However, the official site contains information about the fundamentals of the teaching and principles of the Union of Evangelical Christians Baptists. The researcher of the study is Honorary Pastor Domenico Tomasetto. The priest also distinguishes the principle of “separation of church and state” from the four major doctrinal propositions. He writes: “This proposition is another of those principles which were always approved by the Baptists and today it has been assumed as the basis of any secular state <...>. The Baptists believe that the state and the church are the two realities that are clearly divided, each should have its own responsibility and that none should prevail over another (the doctrine of “free church”). On the matters of common interest, the church and the state must arrive at a balanced solution that takes into account their subjects of reference and powers but without any interference with each other.

It is difficult to reveal the attitude of Italian Muslims to the principle of secularity considering the specific situation of Muslim organizations in Italy. As of today there is no single Islamic organization representing the interests of all Muslims in Italy but there are several associations. The most numerous are:

- The Islamic Cultural Center of Italy (Centro Culturale Islamico d’ Italia (CCII) unites the Muslims by birth
- The Union of Islamic Communities and Organizations in Italy (abbreviated as UCO II) unites uncompromising followers of Islam who are concerned about not losing their own identity through relationship with Western culture
- The Islamic Religious Community (CO.RE.IS) consists mostly of Italian Muslim citizens of moderate views who want to integrate into the Italian society

- The Muslim Assembly of Italy (AMI) consists exclusively of Italian citizens of moderate Sunni persuasion
- Between 1992 and 1996 all these organizations, inspired by the success of the representatives of the other religions were making attempts to conclude the agreements with the Italian government but none of the attempts was crowned with success due to the lack of a clear hierarchical structure and institutional leadership among the Muslim communities

In 2000, there was an attempt to establish the Islamic Council of Italy but because of the differences between the above organizations it could not work and now it exists only nominally. In 2005, the Minister of the Internal Affairs Giuseppe Pisanu appointed "Council for Italian Islam" an advisory body consisting of 16 members belonging to various professional, ethnic, national and religious Islamic groups. It was assumed that the Council would serve as a basis for future integration but could have reached no tangible results so far.

The last major religious organizations in Italy are the Union of Jewish communities, the Italian Buddhist Union and the Union of Hindus of Italy. They also have no special document that reflects the attitude of confession to the principle of secular state.

In the Russian Federation in early 2000s, many religious organizations formulated official positions on many issues of public life, including relations with the state.

The Orthodox church had different forms of relations with the state for centuries but historically, the most successful was the experience of relationship which was called the symphony of church and state in the works of Byzantine figures. "The gist of it is the reciprocal collaboration, mutual support and mutual responsibility, without encroaching by one party on the exclusive competence of the other". But the concept was possible only in the clerical state (which the Byzantium Empire was although there the symphony did not exist in the pure form where Orthodoxy was the state religion). Currently, the Russian Orthodox Church exists in a secular state and therefore the principles of attitude to the state have somewhat changed.

Article 3 of Section 3, being titled "Church and State", of the Basics of Social Conception of the Russian Orthodox church sets the essential, on tological distinction between Church and State and determines their different competencies and objectives of the activity "the objective of the church is the eternal salvation of persons, the objective of the state consists in their earthly well being". One observes the principle of mutual non interference in each other's affairs.

However, one indicates further that it is impossible to understand the principle of state secularity as implying a radical exclusion of religion from all spheres of life of the people, the removal of religious communities from their participating in decision making of socially significant problems, denying them the right to evaluate the actions of the authorities". Such approach was confirmed by Patriarch Kirill at the Bishops' Meeting on February 2, 2015 he said that "... the wrong are those who are trying by all means to contrast the church, society and the state, treating the principle of secularism as justification of supposedly antagonistic conflict or radical separation". The document lists sixteen areas of co-operation of the state and the church in the present historical period.

An important provision is the fact that the impossibility of making the church functions of the state, "resistance to sin by force, use of temporal authority<...>. Interestingly, the Basic Social Concept of the opportunity to consolidate the church" to "approach the government with a request or a call to exercise power in particular cases, yet the decision rests with the state". However, it is not clear what is the criterion to refer to the state as a form of protection.

Also, the "Basics of Social Concept of the ROC" clearly delineates the areas in which the state does not interfere. In particular, "the state should not interfere in the life of the church, in its management, doctrine, liturgical life, religious practices and so on, as well as in the work of canonical church institutions, except for those parties that are supposed to act as legal entities, inevitably entering into certain relations with the state, its legislation and governmental authorities".

In addition, in the Russian Orthodox church as Pchelintsev A.V. notes, there is no complete approval of the principle of equality of religious associations before the law being enshrined in the Constitution of the Russian Federation. The grounds of the social conception emphasize that the church considers it to be right to expect the record of the number of followers of confessions in the state-confessional relations, "their place in the formation of the historical, cultural and spiritual image of the people, their civic stand".

It should be noted that other policy documents of major religious associations of the Russian Federation have been developed taking into account the content and structure of the document of the Russian Orthodox Church. They even have practically similar name with only minor differences (for example, the word "conception" is replaced by "program").

Positive attitude to the principle of secularity of the state is reflected in the Basic Provisions of social program of the Russian Muslims, adopted by the Council of

Muftis of Russia in 2001. "The undoubted advantage of the document K. Kanevsky writes is the recognition of the institute of personality's rights and freedoms, the constitutional principle of secular nature of the state, not just the formal recognition but acknowledgment of all their basic requirements" (Kanevsky, 2003). Especially in the social program, the sphere of education and military duty performing are highlighted.

For example, Section 4 of the Science, culture and education emphasizes that the preservation of the secular character of education "must ensure equal treatment of all religions with respect to public school and not admit the whole education system to be built on the religious basis of some religious doctrine". Also, Paragraph 8.3 of Section 8 "Muslims in the Russian State" formulates Ummah's expectation that "the leadership of the armed forces" and the other law enforcement agencies "will take into account the secular character of the very state and multinational and multi-confessional character of its citizens in military activities as well as in holding various events of educational and patriotic character".

Moreover, in accordance with the approach of the Muslim theologians, one notes the best way to organize the relations between people and between the nations a social agreement ("the peace of agreement"), in the role of which the state and its laws act that are needed for ensuring and protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens. The social agreement can take various forms: the participation of religious organizations in the discussion of upcoming government decisions affecting the interests of the faithful, cooperation of a confession with the state on social issues. But the state should not abuse the pretext of their power and violate the rights and freedoms of citizens.

The most significant protestant denominations of the Russian Federation, composing the Advisory Council of the Heads of Protestant churches of Russia in 2003, formulated the policy document titled "Social position of Russian Protestant churches". Also the largest Protestant organization independently elaborated their own similar documents.

A special section in the "Social position of the Protestant churches of Russia" deals with the attitude to the secular character of the state in which various goals and objectives of the church and the state are approved. A matter of the church is to preach the Gospel, a matter of the state is to establish order by the law and suppress evil. "Therefore, the church and the state should neither merge together, nor substitute for each other. Churches should not interfere in the affairs relating to the exclusive competence of the civil authorities or use their methods. Similarly, the state should not interfere in the internal life

of churches". At the same time, it stresses the necessity of cooperation between the church and the state for the good of the community in a whole number of spheres (basically the same spheres that are specified in the Russian Orthodox Church):

- Concern for spiritual and moral health of society
- Support of institution of family, motherhood and childhood
- Service of charity and works of mercy
- Promotion of tolerance, mutual understanding and Cooperation between people
- Peacemaking
- Education of love for mother country
- Socio-economic assistance, etc

"Fundamentals of social doctrine of the church of the Christians the Adventists of the seventh-day in Russia" in Section 4.3 "Interaction of Church and State" also expresses support to the principle of separation of church from the state. A special reference is made to the fact that separation "should really secure the liberty to church but not be fictitious as it occurred in the past". It is pointed out that the "separation of Church from the state does not mean its separation from society. Church is called to reveal Christ to the world". Besides, it has been designated thirteen areas of cooperation in which church and state interaction may be the most fruitful and the financial assistance from the state for implementation of charitable and educational programs may be approved "We support the model of a secular state: separation of church from the state and non-interference in each other's affairs" in this way the attitude to the secular state in the Basics of Social Conception of the Russian Union of the Evangelical Christians is expressed. Similarly as in "The Fundamentals of Social Doctrine of the Church of the Christians the Adventists of the seventh-day in Russia", there the spheres of cooperation of church and the state are specified. The areas in which the church can not interact with government agencies are singly specified:

- The political struggle, election agitation, campaigns in support of particular political parties, social and political leader
- Immediate participation in intelligence and any other activities requiring secrecy in accordance with state laws

The wordings almost literally quote the Basics of the Social Conception of the Russian Orthodox Church with minor variations including the features of doctrines of Evangelical Christians. However, the second provision

concerning the impossibility to support the prosecution of the civil war or aggressive external war is excluded. It is difficult to see what it is connected with either with forgetfulness or deliberate omission.

The Chapter "Church and the state" of "The Fundamentals of Faith of the Council of the churches of Evangelical Christians-Baptists" contains the following thesis " separation of church from the state and freedom of conscience respond to the principles of the Gospel". According to the fundamental document "Seven Principles of Faith of the Baptists", the seventh principle goes like this "Separation of Church from the state". It is further disclosed that "They belong to different worlds: Church to the heavenly, eternal; the state-to the earthly, temporal. <...> There is only one way of their well being when an indication of Christ is followed:"... render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and God's unto God "(Matthew 22:21)".

Some points of the concept completely cite the provisions of The Fundamentals of Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church. For example, Chapter 10 "Judaism and the State says that "Judaism should not assume the functions that belong to the state". And further, "At the same time, Judaism may appeal to the government with a request or a call to exercise power in particular cases, yet the issue rests with the state to decide". On this basis, it turns out that the Congress of Jewish Religious Organizations and Associations of Russia (CJROAR) the researcher of the concept agrees with the approach of the Russian Orthodox church also does not establish criteria for seeking for protection.

After listing the areas in which the synagogue and the state should cooperate in a given historical period, almost word for word, as well as in the Basic Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, the areas in which synagogue does not give assistance to the state are specified.

The Buddhist traditional Sangha of Russia as well as the Italian Buddhist Union do not have such policy document. But in general, one can note the positive attitude of the Buddhists to various forms of relations between the state and religious organizations, including to the constitutional principle of secularism. In 2009, at the meeting with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev Pandito Hambo Lama Damba Ayusheyev noted that "The Buddhists should help the country in which they live and not create the problems, perform faithful service, do not lay down the terms and not require anything in return from the leadership of the country". Nevertheless, the Buddhists actively cooperate with the state in the spheres of education and military service. Also, since the time of Elizabeth, all the heads of Russian Buddhists are

recognized as the incarnation of the deity White Tara (this was said to Dmitry Medvedev during his visit), which means support and aspiration for the development of the essentials of social life in Russia.

The Catholic church in Russia has the same doctrine about the attitude to the secular state as in Italy in view of the universal character of church and spread of the teachings of the Pope all over the countries where the Catholic church is present.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Thus, having analyzed the doctrinal documents, social concepts, statements of religious leaders of the most numerous Russian and Italian religious organizations, one can draw the following conclusions:

- The positive attitude of most confessions to the constitutional principle of secularism is characteristic in Russia. Similar opinions are also expressed by the confessions in Italy. Common to all religious organizations in the Russian Federation and Italy in recognizing the secular character of the state are the following features
- Non-interference in each other's affairs. The state does not interfere in the affairs of religious organizations and a religious association does not interfere in the affairs of the state. Sometimes, for example as in the Russian Orthodox Church, there are as where the government can not interfere are clearly detailed. For the most part, these are internal confessional issues
- It is emphasized the need and the importance of cooperation for the benefit of society in the whole number of spheres. That is in understanding of all confessions the secular state cannot mean the exclusion of religion from the public space and vice versa
- It establishes areas of collaboration. Here is in our opinion, a very successful term, used in the Catholic Church "secularity". And there are many such spheres for the Christian denominations and Judaism in Russia and the representatives of Islam distinguish only two basic ones
- Education and implementation of conscription but of course, not excluding the other areas as well

Catholic church is a recognition of the possibility to enjoy active support of the state to service. This position is conditioned by certain historical features of the development of relations between the two confessions and the state for centuries their religious doctrine in their countries was state.



To reflect the attitude of religious denominations to the secular nature of the state in the Russian Federation a uniform form of program documents is applied. First of all this is due to the fact that the programs of most religious organizations were adopted after elaboration and publication of the document by the Russian Orthodox church which naturally had an impact on their structure and the content and the name. In Italy, a unified approach failed. We can observe full diversity: the Constitutions and teachings of the Roman pontiffs in the Catholic Church, the final documents (resolutions) of synods, the decisions of the Assemblies in the Protestant churches, etc. It is interesting that not all religious organizations in Italy have developed their attitude to the principle of secularism, for example, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Italy, the Union of Jewish Communities, the Italian Buddhist Union.

It should be noted that the representatives of believers of the second in number in the Russian Federation and quite a large in Italy group (mainly relations with migration) the Muslims, managed to formulate their position on many issues in the Russian Federation and in Italy they could not. What is the reason for? The origins of the fact that the representatives of Islam in Russia could elaborate a uniform document are concealed in 18th century. In 1788, by decree of Empress Catherine 2 the first official Organization of Russian Muslims, Ufa Mohammedan Spiritual Assembly (since the year of 1796 Orenburg) with the hierarchy of clergy and centralization of government being uncharacteristic for the Sunni branch of the Muslim religion was established, almost as in the Orthodox denominations (Shkurov, 1996). The Modern Central Religious Board of Muslims of Russia is its successor. "Thus at the end of 18 century Khabutdinov A. Yu. notes a historic compromise between the Tatar elite and the Russian state was reached. The official status of Islam was recognized. The Muslims of the Inner Russia and Siberia received religious autonomy, albeit in a rather truncated condition. The main achievement was the structuring of all Russian Muslims, except the Crimean Muslims, into a single administrative unit-mille" (Khabutdinov, 2010). It was due the imperial politics of 18 and 19 centuries, the Muslims in 19 century were able to structurally organize and elaborate a program document that reflected the position of the representatives of Islam in Russia on many issues which the followers of Prophet Muhammad in Italy cannot make yet.

## CONCLUSION

Maintaining by religious organizations the principle of secularism enshrined in the Constitution of the Russian Federation and Italy means that they recognize, respect the foundations of the constitutional system and express support. It is important the state not to forget certain features of different religions and take into account the positions of all denominations in the development and strengthening of state-confessional relations.

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