A Study and Review of the Components of "Modern Spirituality" in Iran

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Abstract

The predominant pain of modern man is the distance from spirituality and the negligence of his origin. The material advances of life in the age of modernity have preoccupied him as if he had neglected his innate desire;" God-seeking", while man's restless spirit and his thirst for spirituality will never be completely relieved by relying on worldly manifestations. As a result of modern human life and thought, the theory of spirituality has been proposed in the context of modernism and emphasis on the characteristics of modernity. The idea of "modern spirituality" is in fact an attempt to respond to the genuine need and emptiness of human existence in the present age, which seeks to provide a meaningful, moral and ethical approach at an all-encompassing and transcendental level by linking the Eastern heritage of the religious and Western traditions of rationality. The present article intends to examine this theory with a detailed plan based on the views of Professor Mostafa Malekian. To this end, while explaining what spirituality is, it explains the origins and historical context of modern spirituality and the causes and factors of the emergence of this emerging phenomenon. Finally, the most important features and components of modern spirituality are reviewed.

Keywords: spirituality, rationality, worldliness, de-sanctification, denial of metaphysics, modernity.

1- The Problem

One of the new topics in the field of religious research and religious modernity is the issue of "spirituality", which contemporary thinkers and philosophers have called

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"modernist spirituality" and the project "Rationality".. (Clarke, ٢٠٠٦: ٨). This theory is based on two assumptions: first, "all of us are more or less modern" whether modernity as a variable concept including intensity, or weakness, or as a description of human beings and an attribute for human societies. .

The second assumption is that "we are all more or less religious," and in this assumptions, religiosity is variable and includes different levels. The fundamental question that the project of modern spirituality is designed to answer can be based on the two assumptions: "Do we, who are both modern and religious, have consistent lives?"

  However, since the successful solution of the research problem precedes the accurate diagnosis of the problem, and on the other hand, this issue, despite its simplistic appearance, is very vague and complex, so before entering the main point, its scope should be clarified. "Modern spirituality" is composed of different issues; the first question is what is meant by spirituality - in modern terms? What is the definition of spirituality? And basically is there any agreement on what spirituality is? This issue can be formulated in different ways according to the definition of the theorists and those in charge of the theory of religion, its end and function.

The second question - which can be divided into several basic questions - what is the context for the emergence of modern spirituality? And what is the purpose of suggesting this kind of spirituality? Why, along with the traditional understanding of religion, such concept as "spirituality" is presented today? Why do some thinkers think they have to give modern man a new way and a new approach called spirituality? And basically, what factor or factors caused the tendency towards spirituality to have a logical defense? And finally, what guarantee is there that the human lost object, which can lead him to the real and not temporary salvation, is this kind of spirituality?

 The last question is to ask about the characteristics of modern spirituality, and what are the characteristics and components of this kind of spirituality? Answering these questions by emphasizing the views of scholars discussing spirituality and criticizing and examining the components of modern spirituality based on Master Malekian's views, is the aim of the present article which in addition to solving some theoretical issues in this field, it will have practical application and impact on the outside world. .

2- The definition of "spirituality"

The most important and difficult stage of a research is to define its subject. Although spirituality is not a substantive concept and does not have a genus, a differentia, and a logical definition or description (true definition), relatively good contractual definitions have been offered by spiritual scholars, a fact which facilitates the process of research and problem solving.

Regarding the literal meaning of "spirituality" in Dehkhoda's dictionary, it is stated: "Spirituality means being spiritual, related and attributed to a specific, real, true, original, inherent, absolute, and immaterial , in contrary to physical, outward and superficial meaning" (Dehkhoda, ۱۳۴۵, ۴۴: ۷۶۳). Some contemporary thinkers consider spirituality as the core of religion and the main, absolute, necessary and central gem of the faith and the abstract of all religions (Malekian, ۲۰۰۶: ۲۷۷), others consider spirituality as "the most obscure word in our time" (Nasr , ۲۰۰۶: ۲۴۵: ۱۳۸۵) another scholar considers the definition of spirituality even more difficult than the definition of science and believes that this term has been used very vaguely in the past few decades (Nasr, ۱۳۷۸: ۷۶). In this approach, spirituality is defined as the inner and intrinsic dimension of traditional religions - Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam - which deals with the affairs of the soul. These things can be experienced directly and are beyond mental rationality, but they are not irrational (Nasr, 2001: Article 5).

Other theologians consider spirituality to be an aspect of individual and collective life that expresses the conscious relationship that the individual has with the transcendent (Christine W., ۱۶۵: ۱۳۷۸). Therefore, the assumption of this concept is to believe The existence of the "transcendent" and the possibility of the connection of the human soul with it.

Some Muslim thinkers have also considered spirituality as a something beyond animality (Motahhari, ۱۳۸۳: ۴۸) and one of the fundamental differences between man and animal (۲۳۱: ۱۳۷۱) or as the human values (۲۴۴: ۱۳۶۳) or sacred and transcendent tendencies (۱۳۷۵: C ۳: ۴۹۰) and attraction and inclination to general truths, including, transcendental and supernatural (۱۳۷۷: J ۲: ۲۴).

In short, spirituality in the traditional sense and based on revelation is an aspect of the individual and collective life of human beings that is quite familiar and internal, according to which the conscious or subconscious man establishes a special connection with the origin of existence. In this view, spiritualism is considered an innate thing that is inherent in all human beings, whether modern or traditional , although people may be unaware of it at some point in their lives due to certain factors.

Also, spirituality in the view of contemporary theologians is the description and condition of man. In this approach, the spiritual man is a human being who has a good and noble life; This means that, firstly, moral desires such as honesty, humility, justice, benevolence, love and compassion have been Institutionalize in him, and secondly, psychological desires such as peace, happiness, hope and inner satisfaction are realized in him and thirdly, he considers meaning and value for his life. (Malekian, ۲۷۷: ۱۳۸۹).

Elsewhere, spirituality is defined as one of the most prominent components of modernity, namely "rationality": "Spirituality means rationalized religion" (Malekian, ۲۰۰۵: ۲۷۳). But spirituality is defined by its function as: "Spirituality is a process whose product is the least possible suffer ... So spirituality is a process in which there are believing, emotional, sentimental, attitudinal, and visual elements." (Ibid: ۳۷۲).

It seems that in the latter definition, by reducing the meaning of spirituality to the level of vitality and peace of mind and relieving suffering, a kind of reduction has taken place and a facet of the issue has been created instead of the whole.

According to the above semantic approach, the only word that can be considered equivalent to this concept in English is the word spirituality, which has a special theological-metaphysical meaning and it cannot convey the same meaning understood from the Persian and Arabic Equivalences. Accordingly, spirituality is closely related to the religious and cultural characteristics of the tribes and is strongly dependent on the cultural values and perceptions of individuals towards the world and man. Given these factors, it is difficult to speak clearly and distinctly about spirituality and to provide a comprehensive and concise definition. However, in accordance with an academic article and in order to avoid longevity in expressing its definition, the prominent axes of modern spirituality from the perspective of Professor Malekian will be pointed out in the form of several negative statements:

2-1- Spirituality is not religion and religiosity: Since the meaning of religion and religiosity is not so clear and distinct, the understanding of their meanings helps us to realize the problem properly. The theorists of modern spirituality have spoken of religion in various positions, which are summarized as follows:

2 -۱-۱-Religion is a set of teachings and rules that according to its founder and his followers, is not the result of the human mind, but on the contrary has a divine origin, whether it is revelatory (like Islam) or mystical (such as Buddhism). In this sense, religion includes the major religions of Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, Shinto, Jainism, and Zoroastrianism (Malekian, ۲۰۰۱a: ۲۸۰).

2 -۱-۲-In the field of Islam, he believes in Islam (۱), Islam (۲) and Islam (۳). In this approach, Islam (۱) refers to the collection of sacred religious texts. Islam (۲) is a

collection of commentaries and explanations that were later written by Muslim scholars, and Islam (۳) is a collection of actions and behavior of Muslims throughout history.

2-۱-۳- Sometimes in this view, by religion, it is meant religious law, ie the rules and regulations that are responsible for the individual and social duties and rituals of Muslims. Of course, this does not mean the reduction of and making it as the Shari'a.

2 -۱-۴-In this understanding of religion, the "Absoluteness" is the main characteristic of religion, which is of great importance. That is, the idea that my religion is the embodiment of truth and that other religions are the embodiment of falsehood (Malekian, ۲۰۰۲: p. ۱). According To Mr. Malekian, many religious scholars, willingly or unwillingly, openly or covertly, claim this view.

He does not accept any of these meanings except the first meaning as a definition of spirituality; Rather, he happens to believe that spirituality does not have an absolute image and that spiritualists do not consider themselves to enjoy the absolute right. In addition, spirituality has nothing to do with Shari'a; This is because the spiritual people, according to modern spiritualists, perform their religious rites in different ways. Therefore, it seems that the only true connection between spirituality and religion is in the first meaning, which even in this field, spirituality is not the same as the teachings and beliefs of religions; Because these teachings are also different from one religion to another.

Separating spirituality from religion is closely related to the theorist's view of "revelation." He does not consider religion independent; Just as he considers the experimental sciences to be born and dependent on man, so he considers religion to be the fruit of man's existence. He considers revelation as the intuition of the prophets and believes that it has epistemological value only for the Prophet and for others when they either reach that level of intuition or understand by reasoning. It seems that this particular perception of revelation is the cause of considering religion as having a human origin and limiting the function of religion in spiritualizing and relieving human suffering (cf. Kaji, ۲۰۰۴: ۲۳۹).

2-2- Spirituality is not the same as rationalism and argumentative reasoning: The theorist has defined spirituality as a rationalized religion, but the element of rationality in modern spirituality has a special interpretation and reading. In the view of the claimants of this type of spirituality, rationality means full commitment and adherence to reasoning, but since the theory speaks of a combination of rationality and spirituality, it is self-evident that they are not the same thing (ibid.). : .(۲۴۷

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2 -٣-Spirituality is not text-oriented: According to the theorists of spirituality, one of the reasons why the spiritual people of the world are not bound to a particular religion and have no prejudice in a particular religion and in addition do not exaggerate their differences is that the spiritualists are not bond to a specific text .

2 -۴-Spirituality is not mysticism and morality: Although the supporters of modern spirituality in some occasions have considered spirituality as a mystical experience, it cannot be said with certainty that spirituality is mysticism in their opinion (Kaji, ۲۰۰۱: ۱۵۲). It is because mysticism, like spirituality, is one of the concepts that does not have clarity and distinction. Evidence of this claim is the numerous and varied meanings that have been presented by him about mysticism (cf. Malekian, ۲۰۰۱a: ۳۳۴).

3- The background and origin of the current of "modern spirituality"

The search for the background and origin of the theory is the key to success in solving the research problem. In exploring the historical context of the emergence of the current of modern spirituality, it is necessary to pay attention to the necessity of proposing the theory of spirituality. What is spirituality designed for? Why, along with the traditional understanding of religion, there is so much talk about spirituality? Or why do some thinkers think they have to come up with something new called spirituality? According to theorists, the necessity of the theory of spirituality should be sought in two ways:

1- The inability of traditional understanding of religion to heal human suffering
2- Advances in technology and the power of modern man to destroy social order and human life In explaining the first factor, it must be said that man - as the historical experience of mankind as well as the individual experience of each human being during their many years of life - has never been without pain and suffering. Man has been and continues to be in constant pain and suffering. On the other hand, there is a hierarchical system between these very diverse and varied pain and suffering. In such a way that all the lower and basic pains and sufferings are the causing elements for the pains on the surface. In fact, man&#٣٩;s expectation of religion has always been, first, to introduce the basic pains and sufferings, and secondly, to show the way to relieve these pains and sufferings (along with its other functions, and benefits). Religion has long had the potential and ability to do so. However, many people have embraced religion for other purposes and, of course, have never had such a deep expectation of religion. But if such an expectation arose in them, religion would be able to answer it. But why is religion capable of such a response?

The answer of spiritual designers is that historical religion offered a metaphysics that was reasonable for human beings to accept in the past. But over time, that metaphysics gradually came into question. Rationally, parts of the heavy and expensive metaphysics of religion are no longer acceptable to modern man.

 This led to this fact that the traditional understanding of religion no longer could give us an understanding of those basic pains and sufferings and to show us the way to cure them (see: Malekian, ۲۰۰۵: ۳۱۴). This is the first reason to discuss spirituality and the need to offer something other than a traditional understanding of religion. But the question is that, now that the modern man and his needs have changed, should we fundamentally create another spiritually, or is it possible to present the same spirituality with the same content but in a new way?

just like the divine prophets presented a single spirituality with different methods for different audiences; And even the theorist himself has stated somewhere that: "The founders of religions and sects, both in the Abrahamic and Eastern religions, all wanted the same spirituality from religion, so spirituality is the interior facet of all religions" (Malekian, ۲۰۰۱: ۲۶۳.)

   But the second factor that necessitates the design of spirituality for modern man is the power of modern man to destroy the social order. This factor can be considered as a negative effect of secular science; When science is devoid of morality and spirituality, it endangers human life and will bring suffering and misery to human beings instead of happiness plus joy and peace.

                                                                      Becaus
e science provides man with many destructive means, and domination over tools and technology without spirituality will be against humanity in the long run, and instead of progress, peace and satisfaction, it causes the fall and destruction of humanity. In other words, the more tools and technology a person uses and employs, the more important his or her actions become, and thus the more important the factor that prevents him or her from performing actions, becomes. In other words, "there must be a deterrent to telling the modern man that your potential is beyond your control."

You can do many things, but you are not allowed to do them ”(ibid .: ۳۱۵). The same gap between possibilities and permissions has made the need for spirituality felt more than ever before, and caused some scholars to seek to design and present spirituality, along with a traditional understanding of religion. For these thinkers, spirituality is what is needed today, and because it is necessary, it is desirable. The difference between spirituality and traditional understanding of religion is that traditional understanding

may have been necessary and desirable in the past, but it is not possible today, but spirituality is both necessary and desirable and possible (ibid .: ۳۱۵).

It seems that other factors can be considered as the origin of modern spirituality, which are briefly mentioned in three cases:

۱- Positive effects of spirituality - as the gem of religions - Studies of recent decades have shown that religion and spirituality have a very effective role in reducing crime and reducing pain and treatment of mental illness. Undoubtedly, "religiosity and spirituality is one of the most effective factors in human mental health and happiness and is very effective in reducing the effects of depression and stress" (Golshani, ۲۰۰۰: ۲۵)

2- The inability of modern science to answer basic human questions: Humanity depends on fundamental questions that must be constantly pondered, and its human dignity requires that it seek answers to them. New science about the knowledge of the world, nature, and man has made significant progress, but has not been able to answer important human questions in fundamental and philosophical fields, such as where did I come from? Why did I come? How did I come? Where am I? Where will I go? Philosophers of science, such as Karl Popper, have acknowledged this weakness of science, arguing that science has no claim to the ultimate questions about the mystery of revelation or human duty in this world (ibid .: ۳۷-۳۸).

3- Man's innate inclination towards the world of meaning is another factor in paying attention to spirituality.

In a sense, the origins of modern spirituality can be traced to the teachings of the Buddha, who, according to the designers of this type of spirituality, he was a spiritual man who denied the causes of pain and suffering which are caused by religions, so having a look at the roots and the principles of Buddhist spirituality will help us to better understand the basics of the theory.

Basically, the Buddha is a branch of Hinduism that branched out because of the three points that existed in Hinduism; Three points that he thinks cause pain and suffering:

A. The infallibility that Hinduism places on people (the issue of sanctity and infallibility)

B. Exclusivism in Hinduism

C- The system of shortcomings in Hinduism (Malekian, ۲۰۰۵, p. ۳۶۶).

But in another sense - according to theorists - the emergence of spirituality can be estimated in the second half of the nineteenth century; (۱) At this time, three factors

came together, making the tendency toward spirituality a logical defense. Accordingly, since this tendency was logically defended at that time, it can be considered to have originated in the second half of the nineteenth century. These three factors are summarized as follows:

1-Increasing information about other religions; Which resulted from theological research in the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century.

2- The emergence of unpleasant outcomes and controversies of religions among the people in the early nineteenth century

3- Criticism and rejection of dogmatism of religions; As from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, it became clear that metaphysics was not provable by any of the religions, and that all metaphysics were somewhat unreasonable or equally justifiable (ibid .: ۳۶۷-۳۶۸).

Thus, this conscious movement towards spirituality originated in Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century. Arthur Schopenhauer (۱۸۶۰-۱۷۸۸) played a very important role in this. He was a spiritualist philosopher with a special interest and devotion to the Buddha, and was actually a Buddhist himself. according to the advocates of spirituality, the Buddha is a spiritual man, and one of the most obvious examples of this kind of spiritualism (ibid .: ۳۶۸).

4- A Study and Critique of the Characteristics and Components of Modern Spirituality:

Before entering into the discussion, it is necessary to mention that the components of spirituality in the intellectual system of those in charge of this theory arise from the fundamental conflicts between modernity and traditional understanding of religion. But since the hallmark of modernity is rationality and on the other hand, spirituality is nothing but "rationalized religion" (Malekian, ۲۰۰۵: ۲۷۳), so the components and characteristics of spirituality can be considered in accordance with the characteristics of modernity, the most important of which are as follows:

4-1 Regular rationality and reasoning (Avoiding devotion)
The first and most important feature of the theory of spirituality is the emphasis on rationality and complete adherence to reasoning, which is also the greatest inevitable component of modernity. Undoubtedly, rationality is one of the most important

foundations of the kind of spirituality, which is supposed to replace the traditional understanding of religion in the contemporary world. This feature is incompatible with the devotion of traditional understanding of religion; Because modern man is not pious and text-oriented because of his reasoning. Devotion means accepting ideas without reason. The form of reasoning used by the pious and devoted man is as follows: A is B, because x has said that A is B ”(ibid .: ۲۷۴), Reasoning rationality is incompatible with this form of reasoning.

Thus, "the first thing to do in the realization of spirituality is to remove the cause of devotion from religion, as far as possible.... in reasoning, we have to deal with autonomy and in devotion, we deal with heteronomy (ibid: .(۲۷۵

In the view of modern spirituality, rationality - like spirituality - is the description of man; That is, it is a man who is either rational or irrational. Therefore, in this approach, not only is rationality inconsistent with spirituality, but essentially nothing but 'comprehensive and profound rationality'; is necessary to be spiritual, and contrary to the opinion of many throughout history, humankind does not have to be either rational and give up spirituality or be spiritual and eradicate rationality (Malekian, ۲۰۱۰: ۲۷۸). But what is meant by 'all-encompassing and profound rationality'; - which necessarily leads to spirituality - is kind of rationality which 'does not at first consider man to be a machine of thought, and to fully consider and account for the emotional aspect as well as the voluntary aspect of man. Secondly, he should not deny a fact just because he cannot explain it ...; Third, it does not break the link between reality and value ”(ibid .: ۲۷۸).

The proposer of this understanding of the connection between rationality and spirituality emphasizes it to the extent that it considers the rationality which is incompatible with spirituality to be flawed; Just as he considers the spirituality incompatible with rationality to be perfect. But the meaning of reason in this approach is a set of sciences and knowledge that has been obtained from the normal ways of acquiring knowledge, that is, through feeling and experience, including the sense of appearance and interior, thinking and reasoning, historical and methodical narration (see: Malekian, ۲۰۰۱a: ۲۵۲). It is clear that this definition relies on common sense and is mostly intended to examine the relationship between human knowledge and religion. In addition, in modern spirituality, various interpretations and readings of rationality have been presented; For example, the definition of rationality is inferred from beliefs that are either self-evident or with a valid argument.

Or ideas that are compatible with all or at least the majority of other human beliefs. Another interpretation of rationality is the belief that is not the result of feelings and emotions or faith and worship or choices and preferences arbitrarily and unreasonably.

Definition of rationality as a belief that has been confirmed by sufficient research ...
But in spite of these different interpretations, in a general and comprehensive definition, rationality is considered as "complete obedience to reason" (Ibid: ۲۶۵). The noteworthy point here is the relativity of rationality in this modern spirituality.

The bearers and supporters of such spirituality, in a sense, believe in the relativity of rationality; This relativity arises from the distinction made between the truthfulness and the rationality of a proposition. Professor Malekian explains his interpretation of the relativity of rationality in the form of an example:
"Although, a proposition like p, if it was true, has always been true and will be, and if it is false, it has always been false. However, at the same time, it is possible the s's belief in this proposition at t ۱is a rational belief, but s's belief in the same proposition at t ۲or s /'s belief in the same proposition at t۱, or in the first instance at t۲, is irrational. (Ibid: ۲۷۴)
While he believes in the relativity of rationality, he does not accept the relativity of truth and falsehood, and of course, this distinction between truth and rationality can be the strength of this view. That is the rationality or irrationality of an opinion does not in any of the above meanings mean that it is essentially true or false.
Therefore, the discussion about the rationality and irrationality of beliefs is precisely the discussion about what aren't we allowed to have the belief in, according to epistemological view. (ibid .: ۲۶۹); Therefore, the discussion of truth and falsehood is outside the scope of the above interpretations. But the ambiguity here is whether his theory of truth has the power to save the theory of the relativity of rationality from self-contradiction?

That is, if a person's belief in proposition p is rational in t ۱time and irrational in t ۲time, is it true that belief in the same proposition "rationality is relative " is at one time rational and irrational at another? Has the theory of truth been presented in order to get rid of this problem, and if the answer is yes, how does this theory remove self-refutation from his perception of rationality? (See: Kaji, ۲۰۰۴: ۲۴۱-۲۴۳). As for the other claims of the project of spirituality, can it be said that it always and in all cases has the description of full adherence to reason (rationality) or can it be considered irrational at one time and irrational at another?
Furthermore, the rationality in the spirituality project is apparently the same as common sense, or contemporary rationality, which emphasizes the acceptance of the majority and

the acceptance of modern man; A framework that has gained maximum acceptance, and this contradicts the kind of rationality accepted by Islam and the Qur'an.

4-2- Suffer-removing (healing of human pain and suffering)

According to the designers of the Spirituality Project, modern man is trapped in solitary confinement, broken ties, stress, anxiety, depression, and emptiness, and meaninglessness. The important function and mission of modern spirituality is to solve these problems and remove these sufferings from the realm of human life. If we consider this concern as a common feature of emerging spiritualities, we will not go too far. As Osho - one of the most famous representatives of emerging spiritualities - seeks to make the short-lived and unstable connections that dominate depression and emptiness meaningful. According to him, "Love is really unstable and transient! When it goes, accept its departure, the real flower goes, blooms and withers, but the artificial flower always stays the same, let love live, and if it withers, go to another flower that is growing and living "(Osho, ٢٠٠٤: ٩۶). Paolo Coelho also says: "The lover goes and it is love that remains, no matter with whom, love itself is important and gives meaning to life" (Coelho, ٢٠٠١: ١٨١).

Emerging spirituality, according to its theorists, is a process whose function is to satisfy human pain and suffering. This spirituality has been gained through historical experience, that is, throughout history it has been seen many times that people who have less suffering are those who have had certain beliefs, feelings, and emotions, They have had these expectations and were void of others. These experiences have come together bit by bit and now it is recommended to those who want relaxation as one way.

But this recommendation is so-called "Self-Referent"; That is, it is a piece of advice that one must try. In this sense, having a genuine life is, in a sense, the mother of spiritual life. Because genuine living means committing to oneself and acting on one's understanding. Having this genuine life has a very decisive effect in reducing the suffering of spiritual people (Malekian, ٢٠٠۵: ٣٧١).

But the point is, how can technology, which is the hallmark of modernity and the product of secularism, be assumed to reduce the severity of suffering? On the other hand, what is meant by self-command and commitment to the "self" in genuine life? Do they mean the self which is made and produced by modernity or the real self of man as a man? Besides, it is not the case that always acting according to one&#٣٩;s own

understanding is necessarily a continuation of the genuine life; Perhaps there are people who have chosen a path based on their understanding, but they have distanced themselves from the genuine life and have suffered a lot of pain and suffering. On the other hand, a genuine human being has to plan for his life, but because he is captivated by circumstances, the obstacles to exercising his will are so many that it is not clear that he will reach his genuine life and if he does not achieve this life, his hope, happiness, and peace which are the three elements of satisfaction, he will face a crisis of spirituality and spiritual problems.

Modern spirituality in this particular function and component seems to be influenced by Buddhist mysticism; For not only is the spiritual wisdom of the Buddha and his ontology based on instability (Anitya), suffering (Duhkha), and emptiness (Anatman) (Hockeniz, ۲۰۰۱: ۶۳), but also the ultimate mystical course in the sects of Buddhism. And reaching Nirvana, for which eight "ways of liberation" are introduced: "The right view, the right intention, the right words, the right actions, the right livelihood, the right effort, the right attention, and the right " (cf. Arya, ۲۰۰۰: ۷۱). Evidence of this claim is the statement of the designers of spirituality: "It seems that the ultimate goal of human beings is to escape from suffering ... all the psychological studies, both in the field of philosophy of self and experimental psychology and through laboratory tests, confirm that the ultimate goal of human beings is to escape suffering. He wants to save himself from suffering. The man tends to anything that brings him less suffering and escapes from anything that increases his pain. Of course, the person who clarified this point was the Buddha ... "(Malekian, ۲۰۰۵: ۳۶۳).

In this approach, we are actually seeking to reduce our own suffering; Even when we want to alleviate the suffering of others, we do so to reduce our own suffering! All the social institutions - such as the family, the economy, politics, education - and even the institution of religion that man has created throughout history, were created for this reason. That is, even, in religion, man has sought to reduce suffering (ibid .: ۳۶۳).

The culmination of this claim is that the true origin of religion, which is revelation, is also considered as a way to escape from suffering: basically, the founders of religions, in order to escape suffering, even though alteration of the meaning of suffering, which is also a kind of escape from pain, were drawn to a series of spiritual journeys and behaviors, the end of which was to reach a kind of religious experience. In other words, "in the realm of the founders of religion, religious experience is the result of escaping pain and suffering, and in the realm of believers, the source of faith is escape from suffering and its reduction" (ibid .: ۳۶۵).

In criticizing and analyzing this view, it should be said that the institution of religion, like other social institutions, may cause or increase human suffering after a while; As in the Middle Ages, the Christian religion not only did not alleviate the suffering of the religious man but also, both individually and socially, the violence and dogmatism of the supporters of the religion, led to the emergence of many sufferings. On the other hand, has the concern of the prophets and the founders of religion always been to reduce the suffering of themselves and their followers?

Looking at the history of religions for several thousand years, it can be seen that both the founders of religion and their followers, by presenting and accepting the new religion, had to endure a wave of hardships and sufferings, and consequently, a chain of pain and suffering was opened to them. Acceptance and attachment to phenomena that continually increase human suffering may not be compatible with the human natural love of self, and even, in the words of modern spiritualists, "this is attributing a kind of general madness to all men" (ibid .: ۳۶۴), but when the issue of divine duty and revelation is at stake, and the criterion of pleasure, knowledge, suffering, and comfort, is not the life of this world but the life of the hereafter and eternal happiness, perhaps the followers of religions may welcome the mortal and temporary worldly pains with full desire, passion, and a heart full of certainty and confidence and also seek their own spiritual evolution and spiritual construction in this harsh path. Therefore, these criticisms and the attribution of madness to the patient and steadfast followers in the path of truth will not be very justified.

Obviously, if human life is limited to the life of this world, many of humanity's deadly efforts, which are accompanied by great suffering, will not be more than a kind of madness. Human endeavor to escape suffering will assume a different meaning, assuming the continuation of life after death.

4-3 Being Secular (worldliness)

One of the characteristics of modern man is sentimentalism. His criterion for everything is pleasure and pain, and in a continuous sense, he seeks to gain pleasure and remove pain from himself. In general, in his life, man always faces some problems (in theoretical matters) and obstacles (in practical matters) and seeks to solve these problems and remove the obstacles, and when he achieves that, he feels pleasure and peace. That is why modern man seeks from every claim - even religious teachings - the solution of problems in order to achieve peace and pleasure in this way.

Accordingly, he wants to observe and test the effects and results of religious teachings in this world. Therefore, in his view, any claim must be testable and in this world, the

result must be revealed and disclosed so that he can finally confirm or deny the practical results of the religion. This is what modern man expects from religion and religious teachings, while - according to spiritualists - the traditional religion is Hereafter-oriented; From the point of view of institutional and historical religions, man's duty is only to follow religious orders, and he must seek the effects of his deeds in the Hereafter because the effects and consequences of human deeds will be known in the Hereafter. From this perspective, institutional and historical religion is based on a kind of metaphysics, and that is why traditional religious people - both in terms of beliefs and in terms of religious orders - are hoping for the reward of the hereafter. For the traditional man, the acquisition of happiness, hope and peace through worship is not important, but what is important to him is life after death and the reward of the Hereafter. Of course, this does not mean that traditional religious people will consider the effects and consequences of their religiosity and spirituality only in the afterlife, but will acquire a part of it in the worldly life. Research shows that there is far more peace and hope in traditional believers than in others. The percentage of suicides and the like is proof of this claim.

It is also necessary to mention that the existence of this feature in modern man does not require his denial of life after death, but he believes that every claim - including religious claims - must be examined in this world, and its theoretical and practical results must be proved. In other words, a modern man deals in cash - not in credit - and for this belief, the existence or the non-existence of life after death is alike. (Malekian, ۲۰۰۵: ۲۷۸).

Given that modern spirituality - as a new understanding of religion - according to its designers, must be compatible with the inevitable characteristics of modern man, so one of the basic components of this type of spirituality can be "secularism" or "cosmopolitanism". On the other hand, considering that one of the exact meanings of Secularism is cosmopolitanism or worldliness and "paying attention to the present" (Soroush, ۲۰۰۵: ۷۳), it can be claimed that the spirituality that modernists present is a kind of secular spirituality. As the designers of this theory themselves believe and admit that "being here-present is one of the meanings of secularism and it means that we should be able to test every solution that is offered to us, in this world. Let's say ... the meaning of being here-present is that if someone offers a way to solve a problem, the effects and results of that solution must be discovered in this world. This does not mean that modern man necessarily denies life after death and the hereafter. Modern man can also believe in the hereafter and life after death. What is important for him is that his lab situates in this world. He considers just this world as a laboratory. One of the meanings

of secularism is that every word you say must be tested here and I should be able to test it ”(Malekian, ۲۰۰۵: ۲۷۸). So in modern spirituality, there is a kind of secularism, and it seems that its only concern is here and now. In other words, what makes a spiritual person spiritual is its present-here nature. The spiritual man seeks to gain things here in this world by becoming spiritual; “He now seeks inner peace; Now he wants inner happiness; Now he seeks hope; Now he seeks inner satisfaction; And now he seeks to find meaning in life ”(Ibid: ۳۱۷-۳۱۶). In fact, the description of a spiritual person is:

وعدهٔ فردای زاهد را چرا باور کنم!   من که امروزم بهشت نقد حاصل می‌شود

In criticizing this idea, it should be said that the secularism and cosmopolitanism of modern spirituality is the result of the incomplete view of modernity on man. To confine man to the material world and to look for him in this material world, in fact, it tries to reduce man's dignity to the level of an object. The pain that modern man feels is not a physical one, but a pain that has been ignited inside him. Really, how can we talk about man's inner satisfaction and his spiritual and inner hope and peace, while his inner soul and psyche are not fundamentally worldly and are not of the material type? On the other hand, the divine religions and the scriptures never introduce their mission and function only as spiritualizing and relieving human suffering, and assuming that such a thing is conceivable, they certainly do not consider it here and now; The divine prophets and the true bearers of spirituality declare the main goal of their mission to be the happiness and guidance of man at the comfort of the other world, not the comfort and tranquility of the mortal world! It is also worth noting that the emergence of unrest and depression in humans is the product of dualistic and secularist thinking that emerged after the Renaissance. The separation of the world and the hereafter, matter and meaning, body and soul, and the objectification of man are all the result of this dualistic thinking. Therefore, the emphasis on secular spirituality and the search for the effects and results of religiosity and in the life of this world alone can be nothing but the product of dualistic thinking; A thought that itself has many shortcomings today. Now, with such a dead-end thinking, which is itself a cause of human distress and unrest, how can we bring peace and hope to human beings?

4-4 Distrust in history

Another characteristic of modern spirituality is distrust in history; The question that arises from this component is how much do we know about a religious event historically? Because according to modernism and from the point of view of modern

man, history is a probable science, not a definite one. Therefore, no definite opinion can be expressed about history. And this is while traditional religion is based on accepting several historical events and is therefore incompatible with the characteristic of uncertainty in history. In Christianity, for example, being a Christian is based on accepting events such as the Last Supper, the crucifixion of Jesus, and his resurrection. According to Christianity, a person who has not accepted the occurrence of these three events is not considered a Christian, while it is never possible to obtain definitive knowledge about the occurrence of these three events two thousand years ago! (Ibid: ۲۷۶)

Regarding this component, it is important to mention a few points: The first point is that distrust in history does not mean that modern man does not have a historical view; Rather, it is a characteristic of modern man to have a historical view of things. The second point is that distrust in history does not mean not learning from history; Rather, the meaning of distrust of history, as stated, is that modern man, especially from the age of skepticism and the time of David Hume onwards, has believed that one cannot talk definitively about the history and that this uncertainty applies to every period and it is historically true (ibid .: ۲۷۶). However, this feature of modernity - that is, the belief in uncertainty in history - is apparently incompatible with religion, and so there is no choice but to reduce the reliance of religion on historical events as much as possible. Spirituality is a religion that has the least reliance on historical events. In spirituality, historical events are not the pillar of religious thought and religious conduct (Ibid: ۲۷۸).

4-5- De-Sanctification of Individuals

Egalitarianism is another feature of modernity and, consequently, an important feature of modern spirituality. Modernity equates human beings epistemologically; This means that the value of any claim or statement depends solely on the argument on its own, regardless of its holder. In other words, no one in the position of issuing a verdict will be free from the need to present an argument due to the sacred element he has provided in any way. In this approach, only reasoned claims are accepted and claims do not gain value from their owners. But the traditional understanding of religion places a special value on the sanctity of individuals; In this intellectual-practical system, there are people who are different from others for some reason, and therefore their position is different from the position of others. In traditional religions, not only do the individuals become holy persons but sometimes they also reach the level of divinity. The fact, of course, is

that none of the founders of religions considered themselves holy, but the followers of traditional religions consider them as such (Ibid: ۲۸۳).

4 .۶-The infirmity of mythical metaphysics

According to modern spiritualists, most institutionalized and historical religions are based on heavy and rigid metaphysics. That is, believers attain the perfection of faith when they believe in a vast set of doctrinal propositions, presented in the form of a philosophical-metaphysical system. Even in Buddhism, where there is the least amount of metaphysics, if you do not believe in reincarnation, karma and samsara, you are not righteous in Buddhism (ibid .: ۲۸۳). Although these metaphysical systems are not the product of revelation, and different historical religions differ in their reliance on such metaphysics, these classical metaphysics generally have two basic features: a. They are very comprehensive and extensive, and their claims are the breadth of the entire human world. For example, in the philosophical systems of Ibn Sina, Hegel, Spinoza and Whitehead, etc., everything is interpreted and meaningful, such as time, place, life before death and after death, inanimate objects, plants, etc.

B. They are not merely rational (argumentative), but mythological (containing mythology) and also rely on intuitive reason.

But the modern world is specialized, and everyone has only his own specialty and is only an expert in his own field, and his lack of comment on matters outside his specialty is not considered a reason for his illiteracy. Moreover, in the modern world, myths and intuitive reason are not defensible. Therefore, the metaphysics of religions is not acceptable to modern man. In other words, in modernity, there is a kind of distrust of these classical metaphysics. Accordingly, spirituality is a kind of religion whose metaphysical burden has been reduced to a minimum (ibid .: ۲۸۳-۲۸۰). Of course, it is important to note that the inability of modern man to understand such metaphysics or their lack of justification in the eyes of modern man, has nothing to do with their truth and falsity and does not require their falsity.

But the fundamental question is how to prove the opposition of the modern man with metaphysics ? For what reason is modern man incapable of understanding metaphysics? At what point in time has man been more able to understand metaphysics? Which man in what level of perception?

The separation of physics from metaphysics, like the separation of the world from the hereafter and the appearance from the inside and the body from the soul, is the result of secularist thinking. It has been said that the modern world is specialized and everyone has their own specialty and is only an expert in their field of expertise, which has been damaged for several decades. The emergence of interdisciplinary discussions and the use of new approaches to problem-solving that cannot be handled by a particular specialty suggests that modern man has turned away from extreme specialization. Extremist specialization led to the parable of the sciences and the separation of physics from metaphysics and the disconnection of earth and sky. Besides, the interest of great thinkers in the field of metaphysics after the Renaissance cannot be considered less than it was before.

5- Completion and a general critique of the theory

In the general evaluation and critique of the concept of spirituality, it should be said that just as modern man is not able to accept the traditional understanding of religion and has distanced himself from it, he will not be able to understand and practice modern spirituality on the same scale; It seems that the designers and supporters of spirituality themselves find it impossible to generalize and realize their claim in practice. It seems that modernity has changed the origin of human desire and always seeks worldly peace and comfort and seeks immediate and material pleasures. In the same way, it can be said that modern man is often unable to understand and accept spirituality; Whether religious spirituality or secular spirituality. If a project is to be defined according to the metamorphosed "self" of modern man in such a way that he is able to understand and receive it, it is better to call it by another name because it lacks common meaning. As long as the origin of such a person&#٣٩;s desire does not change, and he does not return to his natural moderation, neither the government of universal justice will be established nor the lost spirituality will return to him.

Another point to consider is that secular spirituality, although it is mentioned as the essence of religions, but its relation to the truth of divine religions must be more precisely known and specified; Because in this kind of spirituality, absolute thinking has no place. In other words, contrary to the claim of monotheistic religions and traditional spirituality - whose claim of legitimacy is one of their main components and characteristics - in secular spirituality, despite the fundamental differences between spiritualists such as Mother Teresa, Thomas, Merton, etc., but they never claim and never seek to prove their absolute legitimacy and the invalidity of others. The arguments that some of them offer to invalidate the absolute legitimacy of a particular religion are

as follows: First, the scholars of a particular religion disagree with each other. Second, many of the precepts and teachings that exist within a religion are also present in many other religions. Thirdly, in other religions and sects, human beings have emerged whose no one can deny their moral and spiritual greatness (cf. Malekian, ۲۰۰۱a A: ۲۸۰). Therefore, spiritualists cannot claim their absolute legitimacy.

In critique of this claim, it should be said that religious spirituality, which is based on deep knowledge and reasoned beliefs and related to logical laws and original ethics and in accordance with scientific and intellectual standards, certainly has its validity and position and is absolutely far from secular spiritualties presented by Buddhism, paganism, penis Worshipers, demon worshipers, etc., which are mainly based on free personal and psychological experiences and lack a theoretical basis and rational support. With this assumption, what hinders spiritualists from claiming their legitimacy in a reasoned manner and in accordance with rational criteria and standards, and to expose themselves for the challenge and examine to clarify whether they are right or wrong according to agreed and rational criteria? And to determine how much they enjoy of the truth, and on the other hand, the invalidity and illegitimacy of personal concise, and dubious spiritualities that have no or little benefit from epistemological and rational principles and are therefore not theoretically defensible, get revealed to the seekers of truth and spirituality.

But in completing the general discussion and critique of the theory of spirituality, it should be said that this theory also claims the separation of "faith" from "belief", which is also a fideist idea and arises from the separation of religion from reason and denial of the rationality of religion and people like Alan Watts in the book "Wisdom of restlessness" (۴), based his idea on it and considers faith and belief as contradictory and completely opposite to each other and claims that beliefs are cumbersome, but if we deprive faith and spirituality of theoretical and ideological content, then they are not annoying and are free; Because belief contains a kind narrating truth and propositions which refers to reality and claims to discover something, but belief is a kind of personal tendency and a sort of spiritual experience which can only be a personal and psychological event and has no cognitive content and therefore is so-called non-cognitive. In this case, it does not create any obligation or conflict with other faiths! Thus, in considering modern spirituality, it is recommended that faith or spirituality be defined simply as a kind of existential and psychological approach to its purely personal and existential meaning and a personal and subjective experience that, contrary to ideological faith, is not It has an epistemological basis and not legal individual and social requirements or so-called dogmatic behavioral requirements.

But in the end, what is the reason that the existing religions - even Islam - do not have maximum acceptance today and modern man does not consider himself in need of it or their needs cannot be met by them? Undoubtedly, the core of Islam has not been made available to human beings, and the new generation is unfamiliar and alien to this living and dynamic truth. Modern man is witnessing a truth called "religion" that does not seem so alive and dynamic; It seems that this oppressed truth is caught in shackles today that cannot play its role well. Hopefully, the supporters of the religion, make more efforts and ijtihad, to make that truth more known and try harder to present it to humanity as it is.

6- Summary and conclusion

In this study, it was found that with the advent of modernity and the mechanization of man, the greatest effort was made to remove spirituality from human life, which led to severe psychological damage in secular societies. And since modern man, due to his special characteristics, has become different from traditional man and is no longer able to understand the traditional institutional and historical religion, therefore, the theory of "spirituality" in the context of modernism and in accordance with the components of modern man is designed and presented.

Modern spirituality, which is sometimes defined as one of the most prominent components of modernity, that is "rationality" (rationalized religion) and is sometimes functionally referred to as "the process by which the least suffering is possible", is not firstly based on religious beliefs and t monotheistic teachings, but are even organized and interpreted in order to negate the religious and Islamic teachings; Secondly, it has nothing to do with the practical rules of Islam (obligatory, forbidden, etc.) and is sometimes defined and explained in opposition to Islamic law and precepts; Thirdly, this spirituality - which is against the religious teachings and rules and serves secularism and negates the religious system of "right-duty" - is completely different from traditional Islamic spirituality; Because traditional-Islamic spirituality is not against but compatible with religious teachings and rules and cannot be harmonious with any beliefs - for example polytheistic and non-Islamic - and with any type of law and behavior - even secular ones.

It has also been found that in modern spirituality, with its components (such as rationality and the denial of devotion, fighting suffering, focusing on now and here, removing sanctity from the individuals, distrust of history, and denying metaphysics), truthfulness and absolute thinking has no place. That is, in contrast to religious and traditional spirituality - one of the main components and characteristics of which is the claim of legitimacy - in secular spirituality, despite the fundamental differences that exist between spiritualists, not only they never claim to enjoy absolute legitimacy and the absolute falsehood of others, but even some of them have tried to establish a reason for the invalidity of the absolute legitimacy of a particular religion.

According to this article, the human desire has changed due to modernity, therefore, more than ever, he seeks worldly peace and comfort, and tries to gain immediate and material pleasures. And basically, as long as the origin of human desire does not change and it does not return to its natural moderation, the lost spirituality of man will not return to him either.

In conclusion, it should be said that the idea of modern spirituality, if it is presented to the masses (general believers) and the young generation, not only it will not end up to "liberation" but will lead to their astonishment, confusion and rupture with their traditional and familiar ways, without providing an understandable framework for them. But in spite of this concern, if the audience of this theory is the scholars and owners of thought and researchers, perhaps the idea of modern spirituality can be considered a blessing for these few, profound and thoughtful people; What is more, this theory, despite its shortcomings and criticisms, is a valuable and honest move as an intellectual and scientific effort to respond to the spiritual concerns of contemporary man, and the honorable readers notice that our attempt in this article is only to analyze the components and tools of the theory and It is a scientific and fair critique and was never done with the intention of destroying or humiliating it. Hopefully, such theorizing can provide more room for reflection and thinking for the scholars, and of course, for this reason, it can be ape and blessed for thinkers and scientific circles.

7- .Endnotes:

1- To explain: in our time there is something that spawned from the mid-nineteenth century called New Religion, sometimes called New Religious Movements. This phenomenon can be considered as a history of spirituality and in this sense it can be said that spirituality is not something new, because it has a history of a century and a half. Of course, what is presented in Iranian society today as the project of modernist spirituality and rationality is not one of these new religious currents, but it has commonalities and

differential aspects with all of them, which need to be researched independently (to read more on this subject). See: Malekian, ۲۰۰۵, p. ۲۹۲, article on the spirituality of the essence of religions (1)

2- There is a lot of talk about the self-annulment of the relativity of rationality, the development and explanation of which is beyond the scope and purpose of this article. But suffice it to mention one example. The famous notorious philosopher Al-Sidir McIntyre is confronted with the question of whether his conception of tradition leads to the relativity of rationality. Given that McIntyre believes that every idea can be projected and justified in the heart of a tradition, he tries to separate himself from self-annulment of the relativity with the help of two comments. He first points out that the results of believing in the diversity of rationality are not a reason to question the justification of rationality and the consequences of a kind of rationality. And then he acknowledges that the relativity of rationality does not harm the concept and theory of truth. To read his discussion in this regard, see: Anderew Pyle, Key Philosophers in Conversation, Routledge, ۱۹۹۹, p. ۸(quoted by Kaji, ۱۳۸۳, p. ۲۵۷)

3- As a complement to the discussion of the components of modern spirituality, it is worth mentioning that the specific definition of spirituality (rationalized religion) has twelve characteristics. These twelve components fall into three general categories: "religious insight" "religious endeavor" and "religious orientation" the details of which can be found in the following article: Asghari, Hamid Ali, (۲۰۰۴) The way of liberation or liberation from the way, judgment In the dialectic of rationality and spirituality, Journal of Strategy, Vol. ۳۳, Autumn ۸۳, pp. ۲۹۶-۳۱۰

4- The original title of the book is: "The Wisdom of Insecurity"

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