Secularism: Freedom of Religion or Freedom from Religion?

Siti Norhanani Binti Musni- Faculty of Law, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia.
Sharifatul Nadiah Binti Sulim- Faculty of Law, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia.
Muhamad Helmi Md. Said * - Faculty of Law, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia.
Fatima Abdel Rahim Ali- Al-Mustaqbal University College, Iraq.

Abstract

Secularism is a political ideology that disintegrates religion from state governance. While secularism may work for countries where the majority professed religion that has no specific legal system viz. Christianity, it begins to exhibit its ineptness in countries that either have a multicultural identity or adopt a systematic religion like Islam as its official religion. To unravel this, secularism acquiesced to embody two divisions of secularism entailing freedom of religion and freedom from religion. The objective of the writing is to resolve the conflicts of the secularism ideology in multicultural state. The methodology adopted in the research is doctrinal legal research which employed qualitative research. For multicultural counterparts, the absolute disintegration of religion raises difficulties, hence, they opt for the secular concept of freedom of religion. However, from the Islamic perspective, secularism contrasts with Islamic teachings as it is conclusive in every aspect of human life. It has its own foundations and laws that shall be followed at all times. Additionally, the impacts of secularism on the social, educational, and moral aspects have made its germaneness be put in question. Thus, there must be a law to regulate the abovementioned matter in order to ensure the community live with peace and harmony.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, Politics, Islam, Malaysia.

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* E-mail : mhelmisaid@ukm.edu.my

1. Introduction

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, secularism is a belief that religion should not be engaged in a country's regular social and political activities. The separation of religion and state by non-interference of religious groups in affairs of state and vice versa is the basis of secularism, as was illuminated by National Secular Society in the official website. According to Holyoake, 'secularism' originated from conflicts between the Church and the State in the eighteenth century in the European region (Holyoake,1986: 41). During that time, the conflicts persisted throughout decades as the Church kept using religious arguments to justify their wrongful actions. To illustrate, a demonstration of a clash of interests can be seen when the Pope, who was appointed as the State's Emperor, had named his son as his successor. As a result, there was an urgency to disintegrate the state affairs from the church interference, which later marked the beginning of the society moral's decline (Anthony,1987:170). In the Medieval Era, the church was even considered to have a greater power than the State, such as, persecution of the 'heretics' made by Sir Thomas for the purpose of the preservation of religion's sanctity and its cohesion to the society (Holyoake, 1986:41). This had led to a Reformation Era whereby society and philosophers yearned about finding the truths in the concept of religion, which concomitantly gives the monarch an opportunity to promote religious freedom and establish independence from all internal forces, be it spiritual or others (Madan,1994:89). In addition, in the sixteenth century, scholars such as Locke, Hobbes and Plato solely depend on empirical knowledge and values as a basis to build a picture of the entire world as they were influenced by the development of science and investigation, which literally involves logical justifications for every aspect of actions taken by the State. Due to this, the importance of religion was declining, and secularism started to be accepted among society with the main aim which is to liberate them from the tyranny of religion that misuse it for personal benefits (Kamath, 1989).

Many publications by Western philosophers in the eighteenth century were influenced by the Enlightenment movement, that contended religious doctrines to be the main interference to the development and advancements of humans. Additionally, developments in the socio-political domain had further strengthen the philosophers' contention pertaining to the banning of religious propagation in public spaces. The modern nation-state progress

developing from time to time in order to expunge the political dominance of the European Churches. As a result, Europe completely detached any involvements of the religious authority from being a part of the legislative process. The role of religion in public affairs was reduced, but it did not just stop there, philosophers in the nineteenth century even advocated for the exclusion of religion from the private sphere (Abdul Rahim,2010:159).

Now, the term secularism is seen as a political concept that reflects the religious neutrality of government institutions (David,1994:168-170). Secularism has been used as a governmental mechanism that demonstrates no favoritism or intolerance toward any religious group (Mahmood,2006: 326). Secular polity has assumed the presence of a certain society that is built on a multi-religious and multi-racial composition was the basis that secularism is needed because there is no religious diversity with which the state might maintain positive or negative neutrality (Ahmad,2009:75). Some secularists like A.R Blacksheld and Dr Nehaluddin Ahmad opined that that secularism and religion have a mutually exclusive connection rather than an oppositional one as it does not oppose religion per se but it rather opposes the utilization of religious institutions and beliefs in the administration of justice, politics, and education (Schaeffer,1983:53). This is because, they believed that secularism will not interfere with religious practices so long as those practices are confined to a purely private sphere. Hence, secularism is not anti-religious to them (Ahmad,2009:81). In addition to that, according to H.V. Kamath, one of the drafters of the Indian Constitution expressed, "When I say that a state should not identify itself with any particular religion, I do not mean to say that a state should be anti-religious or irreligious. We have certainly declared India to be a secular State. But to my mind, a secular state is neither a God-less state nor an irreligious state," (Kamath,1989). However, ironically, Dr. Nehaluddin Ahmad in his article, 'Secularism and Islamic Jurisprudence', did explicate that secularism asserts freedom from superstitious belief when it comes to a decision-making process (Ahmad,2009:82). This statement, in the authors' opinion, implied that religion is superstitious and thus, should be waived from being taken into consideration while making a government policy. Hence, for some, secularism is not freedom from religion, but freedom of religion which a state must be neutral on matters of belief, without having prejudice or restraining a person in practicing their belief and religion (Rajput,2022: 7706).

2.Jurists Opinion on Secularism
The seventeenth century witnessed the emergence of a fresh formulation of sociology attempted by notorious philosophers like Thomas Hobbes and John Locke that the discussion of theological aspects on the issues of politics and state policy should be eradicated as much as possible since they viewed Church and its priests to be the biggest stumbling block that hinders the progress of civilization. The secularism ideology began to strengthen its position more in the Western world when scientists like Newton and Galileo presented their research findings that the sun is the center of the universe, contrary to the long-accepted Christian theory of cosmology (Abdul Rahim, 2010:158). This then inspired Friedrich Nietzsche, a German philosopher in the nineteenth century, to write up on the notion that 'God is Dead' that remains to echo today in European countries (Al-Attas,1993:2-3; Bagheri and et al,2021). Nietzsche also asserted that religion has no significance in modern society except as an abstract idea of art.

One of the criticisms made against the idea of religion was put forward by Karl Max, whereby he carved his thoughts that religion is derived from the hopes of human beings upon the material world that may be utilized by authority as a tool to maintain public obedience to laws and regulations. On this basis, he concurred with the idea of secularism to abolish religion in legal implementations and other matters concerning the governance of a nation so as to obliterate illusionary hopes and happiness assured by religion (Hamilton,1995:82). An akin view was also suggested by Sigmund Freud, a neurologist, and philosopher, that religious ideas are rooted in the need for impotent human beings to protect themselves from any bad tragedy of nature and fate. Thus, to him, religion is like a mirage in desserts, an illusion that deceives helpless persons considering the fact that it cannot be established through scientific pretexts (Kung,1990:34).

John Rawls, an American philosopher in the twentieth century, made the secularism influence thicken in the Western world when he elucidated in his work, 'Political Liberalism', that religion shall solely be relegated to the purely private sphere, so as to deter the 'social disorder' that had been long caused by religions by dictating national policies based upon religious doctrine and internal emotions. He further added that those who reject secularism are irrational and foolish to persist in the grip of self-deception rather than trying to develop epistemologically-based arguments and logical reasoning. To him, religion is an emotionally laden and arbitrary creature

that constrains the applicability of its justifications to only a few believing individuals as compared to the major unbelieving community (Rawls,1997: 779). This view, however, has been criticized by some, since it opposes the heart of secularism as contended by secularists, to be a neutral institution that seeks to help a nation to climb the ladder of modernity progressively.

For instance, Christine L Niles in his article, 'Epistemological Nonsense – The Secular /Religious Distinction', pointed out that secularists are adamant to adhere to their own dogmatic and narrow worldview similar to what they alleged religious people did. This is because, the concept of faith held by the believers in God is the same concept applied by the secularists when they chose what they believe to be true. The secularists have faith in human rationalism by specifically choosing science as the ultimate truth and implicitly rejecting the truth of all non-secular worldviews even if they do not know whether they are in fact true or otherwise. Practically speaking, albeit some religious truth is unable to be proven on paper, the truth is experienced by humans. Plus, it is also worth noting that science is never based on certainty, but rather on probabilities that are estimated to occur by using scientists' hypotheses. To claim that upholding neutrality is the secularism foundation is inconsistent with the attitude presented by the secularists as they should not be biased towards one way of thinking and should have taken into consideration human experience in religious practices to accommodate the believers in policies discussion as they are also part of the society. Simply put, the secularists intend to pick their own preference as they believe that their view is the most accurate view to the exclusion of others (Niles,2012:569-576).

Besides that, according to Mavelli (2012), secularists marginalize opinions that do not meet the subjective truth molded by themselves. Associating religion frequently with inequalities that emerged in the Enlightenment period, the secularists simply overlooked the positive global contributions of religion in today's world due to prevailing the assumption that religion is irrational and intolerant to preserve the public interest. Secularism also prevents humans from emphasizing their actual identity which influences their political and social decisions on top of the fact that it glorifies labor as the top quality of being a human. This attempt to privatize and minimize the standard of living that does not conform to secular ideology is a daylight ontological injustice. Diversity is not cherished and religious rights in the public sphere are suppressed since the approach favored by the secularists is

to reform religions that will fit modern standards of human rights (Wilson, 2017:1087).

Similarly, Professor Rex Ahdar, in his academic paper, 'Is Secularism Neutral?', argued that secularism is an incoherent political philosophy that is grounded by the beliefs of modern liberalists that have no substantial values. It disguises itself as an institution that prioritizes equality of both religious and secular worldviews while at the same time perceiving those who rely on religious grounds as ludicrous, and that religion is a relic of a bygone era that must be vanquished and quarantined from the public sphere. Secularists also advocate that religion is potentially dangerous and that funding for faith-based entities is divisive. As such, it is a hostile belief that alienated the believing individuals and ostracized the traditional culture, in particular, religious festivals, symbols, and rituals from the community as a whole (Ahdar,2013:415-418). On the same footing, several academicians also agreed that secularists had failed to demonstrate good ethics and caused more damage in the context of epistemological, existential, and fitra of human beings.

This is because, the concept of morality brought by influential jurists like Emmanuel Kant and David Hume annihilate religion as one of the ethical foundations. The reason being such was because, to them, the concept of ethics must be developed autonomously by every single person, without having to be dependent on what necessarily has been taught by their religions. Nonetheless, it was reported that the Western world that integrates secularism is now facing a moral crisis that had led to its economic downfall and environmental problems (Harris,2021:146-148). Professor Stanley Eugene Fish, who is a legal scholar and literary theorist, also criticizes secularism in his writing, Liberal and Secularism: One and the Same, illuminating that without religion, state governments would be nihilistic, anarchistic, and inherently unstable since it is hard to survive on a purely thin minimalist consensus of what is good and what is bad (Fish,2007). There must be some operative worldview to be referred to, tacit yet fundamental ontological, moral, and ethical premises to be acted upon, and if it is not religion, it must be beliefs on certain ideologies that shape one's way of thinking. That is why the claim made by secularists that secularism is able to stand on its own should fail, according to Professor Modood Tariq in his article, Establishment, Multiculturalism and British Citizenship. This line of reasoning might also be the reason why some secularists like George

Holyoake and T.H. Huxley equated secularism with atheism and agnosticism (Ahdar,2013:421).

3.Concept of Multiculturalism and Secularism

Multiculturalism and secularism are two different concepts that are strenuous to co-exist. This is because, when it comes to diversity, accommodations must be made for religious practices, and such requests more frequently include a reference to the significance of such customs from a religious perspective. For example, the standards of animal welfare for halal or kosher butchering and the approval for the construction of mosques in Europe, need permissions from the state administration as they need to follow certain policies to make it legal. The perspective of secularism that the state must be free from religion would make that group of people, particularly, the Muslim minority in European countries, to be difficult. The concept of separation, or how politics and religion should function independently without any influence of the other, has played a significant role in liberal political philosophy throughout history that is still prevalent among many modern liberals (Audi,2000; Idris and et al,2021). This raised the issue of liberalists' insensitivity that bothers religious groups from practicing their religious beliefs as liberalists want to engrave the idea of separating religion and daily life for every individual. However, there is also an opinion that secularism is more on freedom of religion rather than freedom from religion, in which the state should actively accommodate, engage with, and even recognize religion, according to political viewpoints (Laegard,2008). Politics invariably has an impact on people's possibilities to live in line with their religious views since religion is so significant to many people .

In Europe, multiculturalism is associated with diversity due to frequent immigration, which is increasingly interpreted in the context of religion rather than culture (Laegard,2008; Hak and et al,2017). Recently, multiculturalism in Europe is predominantly used as a label for conversations regarding Muslims, who are minorities in European countries (Lægaard,2017:157). Different from Malaysia, multiculturalism is based on a variety of cultures, beliefs, and religions (Kuah and et al,2020). Additionally, the approach towards religion in European countries was rigid, as can be seen in 2010, when France introduced a complete ban on full-face coverings clothing such as burqa and niqab and those who wore them in

public places would be fined €150. This was made in accordance with French rules on lacité (secularism), which favors the secularism concept of freedom from religion, which basically prohibits the overt wearing of religious symbols inside public buildings like schools and colleges, including the Muslim headscarf. The wearing of any explicit religious symbols while executing official duties is also prohibited for public servants including teachers, firemen, and police officers. Furthermore, in 2004, the administration of President Jacques Chirac outlawed any religious signs in public schools. Here, albeit France's application of the freedom from religion concept is recognized under the umbrella of secularism, however, the authors are of the opinion that this is a blatant restriction of the religious rights of society, especially towards Muslim women that are obliged by their religion to cover themselves (Qur'an Nur:31).

This produces the question of whether secularism is truly applied according to its foundation that emphasizes the non-intervention of the state in religious practices and vice versa. Therefore, which basis of secularism would be relied upon by the government, is it freedom from religion that resulted in difficulties for one to practice his religion, or freedom of religion that everyone could practice their religion without any interference from the state? Another question that would be imposed is the basis of non-discrimination promoted by secularism. Having policies that prohibit a person to practice their religion such as wearing explicit symbols on their body, would make them discriminated which was against the idea of secularism of no discrimination, just because he has belief and religion compared to those who are atheists. The potential tension between secularism and multiculturalism comes when we combine this development with the notion of recognition: a form of acknowledgment of religious minorities and behaviors that could conflict with the separation demanded by secularism seems to be necessary for multiculturalism (Kymlicka,2015: 17-35).

Other than that, another perspective in understanding secularism is moderate secularism that introduced by Modood. Moderate secularism consists of the "gradualist interpretation" which is inspired as a response to the issue of separation by secularism which appears to be a barrier to integration and equality of society (Modood,2007; Jamaluddin and et.al,2021). This is because, there is a consistency between the multicultural accommodation of religious minorities with the requirement of secularism; separation of state

affairs and religion, especially in the removal of religious practice in the daily life of a person. Due to that, Modood solved the issue by having a down-scaling requirement of separation which is, the separation must be adjusted to be compatible with a multicultural society. Thus, according to him, secularism is still allowed to be practiced but subject to the need for multicultural equality to practice belief and religion. Nevertheless, the issue with secularism is that it only serves as a title for particular policies and offers no explanation of what secularism actually is when it comes to issues involving state affairs and religion or how the government should treat religious minorities. It also did not provide answer on why religion and state should be separated and how it still relevant and applicable for modern days now.

4. The Applicability of Secularism and Freedom of Religion
4-1. India
The preamble of the Indian Constitution declares that India is a secular state. Indian Constitution neither establishes any official state religion nor grants any single faith that may be patronaged upon. Although in the case of S. R. Bommai v. Union of India [1994] 2 SCR 644, the Supreme Court affirmed that secularism is a fundamental aspect of the Constitution, making it a part of the Constitution of India that cannot be changed by any legislation, India still allows their citizens to practice their religion such as under Article 25 of the Indian Constitution, which stated that all person has an equal right to freely profess, practice and propagate religion. The management of religious institutions such as establishing and maintaining religious institutions was further provided under Articles 25-30 of the Indian Constitution (Sharma, 2020:4-7). Nevertheless, the secularism policy is still applicable despite the freedom of religion given to its citizen because any state government pursuing anti-secular politics is liable under Article 356 of the Indian Constitution which allows the Union government of India to take direct control of the state machinery to maintain their secularism policy (Kesharwani,2018:4).

4-2. United States
The United States, on the other hand, has been using an extreme secularism policy. As an illustration, the separation between the church and the State in the area of public education can be seen in Abington v Schempp (1963) 374 US 203, where the Supreme Court held that Bible reading exercises in

public schools were unconstitutional. Any religion management and funding were also prohibited as was illuminated in the case of Engel v Vitale (1962) 8 L.Ed. 2d 601. in which the State-sponsored prayer room in public school was held to be a violation of the Establishment of the First Amendment in a constitutional clause that forbade the State from acknowledging any religion. The Court ruled that the respondent's choice to use its educational system to assist recitation of the official prayer violated the Establishment Clause, by making a reference to the opinion regarding this matter that was written by Hugo L. Black (Kuru,2009:96). Next, in McCollum v Board of Education (1948) 333 U.S. 203, it was held that releasing students for a short time to enable them to pray was unconstitutional. When it came to providing religious instruction to pupils whose parents approved it, the Champaign Board of Education in Illinois permitted religious instructors to enter public schools during regular school hours. The exercises were opposed by Vashti McCollum, a taxpayer whose son enrolled the schools (Kuru,2009:92).

The practise, according to the court, breached the notions of separation of religion and state. In the court's judgement, Justice Hugo L. Black claimed that the practise went against the standards set in the case Everson v. Board of Education (1947) 330 U.S. 1, which upheld the requirement for a 'high and impregnable' wall of separation between religion and state. Black claimed that the First Amendment was founded "upon the premise that both religion and government can best work to achieve their lofty aims if each is left free from the other within its respective sphere" rather than showing "hostility to religion". From these cases, it can be seen that American courts have taken the extreme form of secularism by trying to remove religion from the education system. Hence, it can be concluded that the United States opt the secularism concept of freedom from religion rather than freedom of religion since they disintegrate religion in any state affairs, or to be specific, public activities, from any religious aspects and epractising the religion was deemed to be against the constitution although it was consented by the community besides the fact that it does not give any harm to the society.

4-3. Malaysia
After Merdeka, Malaysia was viewed as an example of an Asian country where religion and secularism could coexist and where many races, faiths, and regions could be blended harmoniously (Faruqi,2021). Although there are arguments whether Malaysia is a secular country or not, we refer to its

history to address this issue, before a discussion on secularism in Malaysia could take place. It can be retrieved in the Reid Commission papers that this country was meant to be a secular country and the intention of making Islam the official religion of the Federation was primarily for ceremonial purposes (Faruqi,2008; Mohd Zin and et al.,2015). This evidence can be seen in the White Paper, which contained the 1957 constitutional proposals that stated "There has been included in the proposed Federal Constitution a declaration that Islam is the religion of the Federation. This will in no way affect the present position of the Federation as a secular State" (Hashim,1962; Nasrul and et al,2019). Furthermore, Article 3(4) of the Constitution stated that nothing in this Article shall derogate from any other provision of the Constitution, which basically means that no law can be extinguished as a result of the adoption of Islam as the religion of the Federation .

The usage of Islamic laws is only applicable to Muslims and only Syariah courts have the jurisdiction to adjudicate cases regarding Islamic law (Ong and Zuhair,2021). This shows that there is a separation of religion and state in Malaysia which is amounting to secularism. Nonetheless, this approach is deemed to be a systematic separation of religion and state matters as Syariah courts have their own jurisdiction, and the prohibition of jurisdictional interference from the civil court is clearly stated in Article 121A of the Federal Constitution. Therefore, Malaysia is not a full-fledged secular State as it adopts Islam as the religion of the federation and uses secularism concept of freedom of religion rather than freedom from religion (Faruqi, 2008; Said and et al,2019). Having a multicultural society in Malaysia allows the secular approach of freedom of religion to address everyone's needs without discriminating against religious identity. The path to a multicultural secular practice of acknowledging the "equal value" of individuals continues in such circumstances (Said and et al,2022).

5.Islamic Perspective on Secularism

The severance of religion from all branches of human life might be tolerable for other faiths like Christianity, Hinduism, Taoism, and Polytheism, but Islam is clearly an exception. For Muslims, Islam a comprehensive manual of life that provides structured rules in one's daily life that are concomitantly inseparable from spiritual engagement. This is due to the fact that Muslims believe that he is a vicegerent that had been given the trust to rule his own self and those who are under his responsibility according to

God's will and His Pleasure and that they are answerable for all of his actions before God in the Hereafter (Al-Attas,1993:66). Thus, unlike what was believed by secularists, a man of Islam, is not simply another animal species that eats, drinks, and sleeps, but rather, it is a creation consisting of both physical body and spiritual soul that subjugated himself at all time to the Ultimate Authority, Allah. Be it in a big scale pursuits like professional business conducts (Mishkat al-Masabih, Kitab al-Buyu', no 2801), and war mannerisms (Al-Qur'an and Al-Hajj,22:39-40), Islam also teaches its believers things that are perceived as trivial by some, for instance, ways to eat (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Kitab al-At'imah, no 5393), what to recite before and after sleeping (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Kitab at-Tauhid, no 7394), the proper etiquette prior to wearing sandals (Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Libas wa al-Zinah, no 2097a), ethics in classes (Al-Qur'an and Al-Mujadila,58:11) and more others that the authors are unable to write down due to constraint of word limits.

According to Al-Attas (1993,18-19), different from secular values that are relative, open to changes, and continue to be revised in accordance with the evolutionary change in urban civilization, the values and morality that Islam taught are fixed throughout the ages as they had been completed and perfect for mankind (Al-Qur'an and Al-Ma'idah,5:3). An eminent Muslim writer, Hasrizal Abd Jamil, in one of his works, Erti Beragama yang Hilang, or in English means The Lost Essence of Being Religious, once explicated the relationship between Islam and modernity. According to him, whatever changes and trends people adopt or adapt along the timeline, Islam stays with its foundation. He further added that principles and interpretations in Islam are deductively and inductively dynamic but never depart from the core (Abd Jamil,2022:104). Muslims are thus unique in their identity. There can never be separation, division, or dichotomy between the harmoniously integrated parts of Islamic unity that comprise both elements of the physical body and spiritual soul without one being genuinely submissive and faithful to God.

The drawback of a secular system implementation on Islamic beliefs may be seen in the reports made by several researchers that had conducted a socio-science study in Turkey, whereby they found that secularism had negatively eradicated the aspects of culture, personality, and social behavior that had their roots in Islamic traditions (Ismail and Tekke,2016:67). A Muslim theologian, Said Nursi, whilst agreeing that secularism in its essence

advocates being unbiased in accordance with the concept of freedom of conscience and the non-interference from the government towards religious people, however, argued the irony of the secularism implementation in Turkey when there exist some rules and regulations that ban the wearing of the hijab by Muslim women and limits religious education. Secularism according to him, is far from the idea of justice and neutrality, when it is not considered a crime according to the secularism principle of 'freedom of thought and expression' for atheists making hostile comments against Islam, on the other hand, for Muslim scholars to write out criticisms against secularism and even reading their works are counted as crimes (Nursi,1999: 302).

Additionally, according to Syed Naquib Al-Attas, a Muslim philosopher, secularism also disenchants nature from religious overtones (Al-Attas,1993: 18). Nature is no longer regarded as a divine gift for human beings, but rather it merely exists by itself through natural cause and forces, without any assistance from others. The wondrous phenomenon of nature is considered self-explanatory by secularists, hence, merely stressing the scientific role that is purely rational and devoid of spiritual significance. It also dilutes the role of the intellectual faculties of human beings to ponder upon creation. In Islam, nature is created by Allah to serve the betterment of mankind and as a reminder for them to be grateful to their Creator (Al-Qur'an and Al-Jathiyah,45:13). Without amalgamating the awareness of these divine teachings in the studies of nature, it would inhibit materialism and greed in human beings to use natural gains solely to make profits without taking into consideration if the undertakings may pollute and destroy the sustainability of the earth. Plus, it promotes denial of things that could not be scientifically proven and are undetectable by the senses (Ashimi,2022:50). This is clearly in contrast with several Islamic pillars of faith that entail belief in metaphysics entities such as God, angels, jinn, devils, heavens, and hells.

Being a Muslim means that one is collectively obliged to observe how he acts in private settings where only Allah knows what he is doing (Habl min Allah), how one treats other human beings (Habl min al-Nas) as well as the nature surrounding him (Habl min al-'Alam) (Tajab,2017:251). All three relationships are governed by Islamic laws and ethics. Therefore, like water and oil that may not blend together, the foundation of secularism that eliminates religion from the equation of life aspects is unquestionably incompatible with Islam, in light of the fact that it will dismantle these core

components of a Muslim relationship. As a matter of fact, the main motivation of Muslims in shouldering all of their responsibilities and doing good even with those who do badly against them is their allegiance and loyalty to Allah, and His Messenger (Riyad al-Salihin, Kitab al-Libas, no 795). While it is true that Muslims ought to obey the existing King or Rulers during their time, this obedience is only finite so long as the authority did not command them to do something which is contrary to Allah's laws. Ergo, to accede to secularism that denies religion as the essence of every governance is equal to the refusal in acknowledging Islamic guidance as a manual of life altogether (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Jihad, no 2955).

6.Effect of Secularism
6-1. Social
In order to ascertain the cumulative effect of secularism in the social context, the discussion on aspects of morality, economy, and public order is inevitably unavoidable. These are some of the pillars of society, even though arguably, the list above is inexhaustive considering the complexity of social sciences that will not be touched by the authors in this limited discourse. Politics, anthropology, epistemology, and psychology, to list a few. According to Syed Naquib Al-Attas in one of his masterpieces, 'Islam and Secularism', secularism deconsecrates the foundational values of a human being from being molded by religious influences and seeks to liberate one's intellectual from the existence of a Divine entity, which then encourages one to interpret and determine his own of morals by replacing religious authorities with scientific evidence (Al-Attas,1993:18-19).

This idea has further emancipated Westerners from religious truths to the extent that religion and those associated with it, will be ridiculed by the media, authorities, and even by any random person in the street, as someone is foolish and backdated (Bari,1997). Pursuant to this, moral standards have now become uncertain and muddled with one's own predilections. Heinous conduct may be justified if one feels it to be something that is consistent with their own standard of morality. One may act like a barbarian and is proud of it, despite the fact that his attitude had molested others' serenity and basic rights. Adultery, abortion, and incest are a few examples of immoral activities that have started to be legalized due to secularism's influence. As a result of dissociating religion from the national legal framework, family institutions are gradually diminished and destroyed, and

later, sow the seeds of mental health problems among youths and young adults that are deprived of family emotional support (Rahim,2010:164-165). This premise is evidenced by multiple studies conducted by academicians which show the negative impact resulting from secularism's influence in society. For instance, Dr. Branislav Šprocha in his research, 'Fertility and Religious Belief: Old and New Relationships in Slovakia' found that since secularization takes place in Europe, there is a dramatic increase in divorce rates and non-marital births, while cohabitation becomes a more popular option than traditional marriage (Šprocha and Tišliar,2019:64). Without religion, marital responsibilities may be avoided by secularists, and hence, modesty will fade from time to time and the habit of having free sex becomes prevalent in society. Besides that, a quantitative analysis was made by Associate Professor Dr. Jonathan R. Brauer in his paper, 'Does Religion Suppress, Socialize, Soothe or Support? Exploring Religiosity's Influence on Crime', and it had affirmed previous findings that religion is the most effective mechanism to inhibit crime (Brauer and et al,2013:769). This is because, it was deduced that religious individuals tend to be more concerned about social and personal repercussions of committing a crime that may later subject them to shame and embarrassment, than their secularist counterparts (Brauer and et al,2013:754).

Additionally, while Westerners claimed that secularism is a fulcrum that enables a nation to move progressively in the modern economic machinery (Calhoun,2012:339), this claim appears to be ostensible when empirical evidence indicates otherwise. A study that was conducted from 1988-2013 in the United States found a positive correlation between increased religious density and economic growth, and among the suggested factors that contribute to this outcome are positive attitudes rooted in employee's foundational ethics such as cooperation, honesty, and economization of expenses, as well as the mutual support given by local religious members of the society like finding jobs, providing food and groceries bank in public places and assisting in housing finance (Lozano,2017). Besides, it was also reported by research conducted in other countries like Turkey, India, Rome, Mexico, Singapore, and Poland that a higher propensity of belief in hell and heaven is associated with increased financial proliferation (Barro and McCleary,2003:771).

Therefore, from a social lens, it could be seen that the existence of religion does help in developing a civilized institution rather than opting for

secularism that not only has a negative indirect effecti uponeshaping one'sa attributes and morals but also gives no benefit in other material matters like boosting the economy or reducing crime rates

6-2. Education

Since God and religion are placed outside the realm of public education, secularism insinuates that knowledge is solely gained through the experimental and observational method, rational thinking, past experiences as well as scientific method. Scientism, as it is called, may be defined as a belief that those methods as expounded above, are the only accurate and credible way of acquiring knowledge (Woudenberg,2018:168-169). Divine knowledge and inner intuition are eliminated from the concept of truths, hence, producing brilliant intellectuals with little to no religious awareness, to the extent that it may exploit a person to be a materialistic and inhumane individual (Rahim,2010:169). An example of scientism philosophies may be traced in the notorious work on the Theory of Evolution written by Charles Darwin in the late nineteenth century, whereby he stipulated that all living beings on this earth descended and evolved from pre-existing creatures through the process of genetic mutations, without any interference from metaphysical power like God (Simpson,1966:5). Pursuant to that, there is a devoid principle of using knowledge as a means to contemplate one's existence and the actual purposes of why he is created, as commonly taught by religions.

In spite of that, there is an attempt made by a modern religious group to reconcile the continuation of both religious and secular education instead of casting away religious teachings altogether from students, by separating the teachings of subjects concerning religion in a different system than the modern knowledge like sciences and math (Nasr,1981:13). This dual system produces students of two different divisions, either committed and well-versed in religion but ignorant of modern developments of knowledge, or liberalist intellectuals that ditch their own religious traditions (Rahim,2010: 171). This is a tragedy that should not be taken lightly by policymakers, considering the fact that this upcoming generation will then determine the country's affairs in the future. In the worst-case scenario, when religion is no longer an essential value in education, it will in a decade or more cease to be nothing other than grades to be proud of and certificates that only mirrors one's intellectual ability without actually reflecting one's quality in both attributes and knowledge.

Be that as it may, the authors are of the opinion that a mandatory policy for all students to attend teachings of both systems at a primary level or merging subjects of both divisions at a secondary level may eventually help in developing a holistic human being that has the ability to utilize the knowledge at its best usage for the benefit of both spiritual and material sides that naturally coexist inside a person. This practice may be seen in countries like Malaysia and Indonesia which make it compulsory for religious subjects to be taught in public schools (Isyraqi,2022:202). Since the implementation of this regime of education, Malaysia had produced great intellectual figures that are also religion-abiding persons like its esteemed current Prime Minister, Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Tan Sri Dato Seri Hj Syed Zainal Abidin a prominent businessman, Prof Datuk Dr. Harlina Halizah Siraj who is currently a Professor at the Faculty of Medicine of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and many others. Hence, while it is acknowledged that secularism integration into the education system may to a certain extent, manufacture extremists of both divisions, nonetheless, efforts done to harmonize and balance both religious and non-religious subjects as is executed by Malaysia deserves a big applause.

7.Conclusion

Adopting secularism in multiculturalist countries invokes discrimination. Despite the initial basis of secularism was to eradicate religious justifications for wrongful state activities, in this modern age however, secularism deemed to equate itself to liberalism. Hence, countries who has multicultural society find it difficult to practice their religion as part of their life, for instance, Muslim women need to cover themselves up outside their home but this is rather prohibited by secularism as it signifies explicitly religious indication in public. Plus, the question whether the secularism is applied accordingly to its foundation which mandates no intervention between state and religion and vice versa can be raised because the limitation and restriction upon religious practises imposed by certain governments makes it clear that there is in fact an intervention from the state, contradictory to the original idea of secularism .

For multiculturalist countries, the secular concept of freedom of religion is an idealistic approach as it fulfills the needs of society by minimizing intervention by the government from the activities of religious groups, on top of it safeguarding peace and harmony of society. However, the second

division of secularism which is the freedom from religion, that uses the approach of absolute removal of religion from any state activities, including private activities committed in public buildings seems to be unfriendly for multiculturalist society. On top of that, moral, social and education aspects that have been measurement sticks in civilization had proved secularism ineptness as it opens the room of uncertainties and became too reliant to the limited sphere human's logical thinking. Ergo, society needs religion to help men to find out the true purpose of their life, protecting their psychological well-being, promoting unselfishness, and compassionate for others, with which cannot be achieved through secularism.

8.Declaration of Interests
The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.
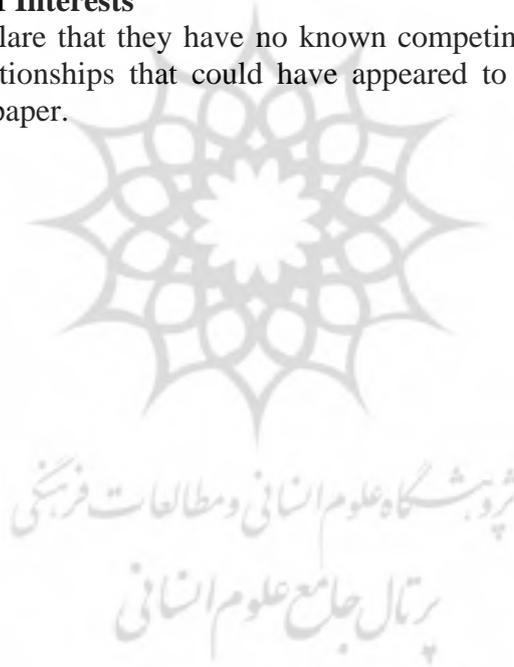
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