

DIFFERENT SHADES OF SECULARISM: STRATEGIES IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

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ABSTRACT

It is the responsibility of a secular state to maintain a neutral stance towards the beliefs of its citizens and to guarantee that every person is able to exercise their right to religious liberty in their personal life. In practice, however, the nature and character of secularism shift depending on the setting in which it is practiced. Due to the fact that India is a largely Hindu nation that is profoundly religious, it has its own unique flavor of secularism. There is problematic proof of hostile to strict aims and the noticeable quality of Hinduism in the Constitution of India. From one viewpoint, the Constitution of India ensures individual flexibilities and announces the state to be mainstream. In view of this vulnerability, there is space for the advancement of Hindutva to be performed dishonestly. As populism and elite patriotism seem to rule the political front locally in India and various different countries across the world, it becomes unrealistic, in the event that certainly feasible, for secularism to assume control over religion as the predominant worldview of life in India. This is on the grounds that India is as of now encountering a time of political insecurity. Besides the fact that this situation represents a danger to minority gatherings, as well

as to frail and moderate segments inside the Hindu people group, however it likewise has expansive ramifications for the locale and the world all in all. This is on the grounds that India has a long history of partisan viciousness. Considering this foundation data, the motivation behind this article is to lead an overview on the treatment of Muslims in India, who comprise the biggest minority in the nation and the third biggest populace of Muslims in a nation analyzed.

Keyword: *Shades of secularism, Islamic revivalism, Religious, Muslims in the world.*

1. INTRODUCTION

People, cultures, dialects, and faiths from all over the world come together in India, which is known as the land of dizzying diversity. Sensuality and asceticism, carelessness and efficiency, kindness and aggression are all simultaneously present in India, which is a reflection of the country's immense diversity. To put it succinctly, India is like a kaleidoscope; the moment you touch it, a new mix of hues and shapes suddenly appears. In comparison to the American society, which is sometimes referred to as a "melting pot," India, on the other hand, is not a "melting pot" but rather a "mosaic." Every imaginable religion and way of life may be found in India, which is a country that is home to all of them. The concept of "unity in diversity" has been a guiding theme for India. Democratization, federalism, tolerance, and the secular nature of the state are the foundations upon which this unity is built. Recognizing India's many different cultures and ethnicities is essential to the country's development as a federal democracy. The Indian culture, tradition, and political system are built on the foundation of tolerance and acceptance of all religions and varied ways of life.

Indifference towards religious beliefs is the essence of secularism. The concept of secularism is essential to the functioning of a pluralist nation like India. In India, there are many different religions. The absence of secularism is incompatible with the democratic functioning of a multi-religious community. Pluralism in democratic institutions is in dire need of this. When it comes to philosophy, secularism refers to the view that one's own life may be lived and the universe can be comprehended most effectively without much or any reference to a god or gods or other conceptions that are considered to be supernatural. It is necessary to adhere to secularism in order to construct a civic society that is thriving. It is the responsibility of the political parties to

contribute to the development of a new political culture that is founded on humanity and respect for human values. It is clear that casteism and communalism have permeated every aspect of our political culture in the modern era. The importance of religion in Indian society cannot be overstated. People's blood has been contaminated with religious beliefs.

It is a reflection of the deep relationship that exists between religion, politics, and society that the concept of secularism has been the topic of lengthy inquiry and debate in countries where Muslims make up the majority of the population. In this research study, we investigate the numerous expressions of secularism that can be found throughout the Muslim world. We also present an analysis of the multifaceted tactics that different states have utilized in order to manage the interaction between religion and governance. In order to shed light on the dynamic interplay between state and religion, as well as the implications for governance, identity, and pluralism, the purpose of this study is to elucidate the nuanced nuances of secularism within Muslim societies. This will be accomplished by exploring historical contexts, political ideologies, and contemporary developments. The purpose of this study is to provide insights into the many approaches to secularism, which range from rigid separation to various forms of accommodation, and their consequences for state-society interactions, democratic processes, and the pursuit of socio-political stability. These insights will be offered through a comparative perspective.

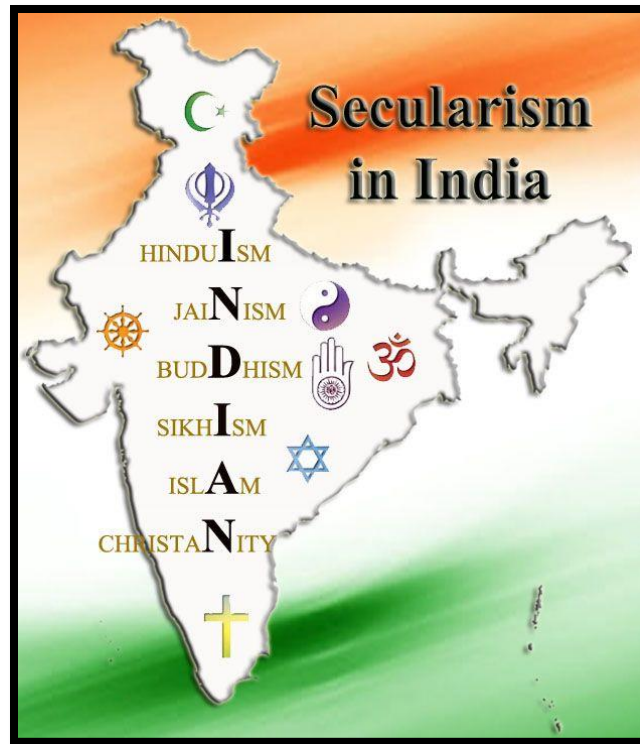


Figure 1: Secularism in India

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ahmed-Ghosh (2008) examines the challenges that Islamic and secular feminists encounter while attempting to navigate their own ideas within the context of the larger feminist discourse. In addition to highlighting the conflicts and difficulties that are inherent in the process of reconciling Islamic principles with feminist aspirations, the author also discusses the process of negotiating the space between secular and religious concepts. The analysis conducted by Ahmed-Ghosh offers unique insights into the complexity of identity and agency for women in Muslim communities. It also sheds light on the various techniques that feminists adopt in order to confront patriarchal institutions while also coping with cultural and religious conventions.

Cannell (2010) investigates the anthropology of secularism and provides a comprehensive view of the ways in which secular ideas impact social and political environments. Cannell sheds light on the varied character of secularism and the consequences it has for government, citizenship, and the construction of identities through the use of ethnographic research. Cannell's study contributes

to a more in-depth knowledge of the dynamics that exist between religion, state, and society in a variety of circumstances, including countries with a Muslim majority. This is accomplished by examining secularism as a cultural reality rather than solely a political dogma.

Ellis (2018) the focus of this article is on the junction between secular nationalism and citizenship in Muslim countries, with a particular emphasis on Arab Christians living in the Levant region. Ellis investigates the intricate relationship that exists between religious and national identities by means of empirical study and theoretical analysis. He draws attention to the ways in which secular nationalist ideologies cross with religious affinities in order to form citizenship rights and a sense of belonging. Ellis highlights the complexity of identity politics and nation-building in the Middle East by putting the experiences of religious minorities within societies that are overwhelmingly Muslim at the forefront of his work.

Haque (2010) provides an in-depth analysis of the concepts of tolerance, secularism, and multiculturalism, with a particular focus on the experiences of Muslims living in Western nations. Haque investigates the boundaries of multiculturalism in terms of its ability to accommodate religious and cultural diversity by conducting a detailed assessment of societal attitudes, political discourses, and policy frameworks. By drawing attention to the contradictions that exist between secular values and religious identities, Haque emphasizes the difficulties that arise when attempting to cultivate real tolerance and acceptance within pluralistic societies, particularly in the context of Islamophobia and securitization.

Modood (2016) takes a deep dive into the nexus of Muslims, religious equality, and secularism, providing a detailed examination of the relationships that exist between state neutrality, religious freedom, and citizenship rights. Drawing on both empirical research and theoretical insights, Modood investigates the complexity of secular administration in multicultural communities. He places an emphasis on the necessity of a robust framework that preserves both religious freedoms and secular values. Modood makes a contribution to the continuing discussions on diversity and secularism in a variety of democratic situations by conducting an in-depth analysis of the contradictions that exist between religious tolerance and secular governance.

Shahin (2018) this article switches the focus to modern Islamic movements in North Africa and provides a detailed examination of the political objectives, mobilisation techniques, and impact on governance systems of these groups. In order to provide light on the many ideological orientations and organisational processes that exist within the Islamic political landscape, Shahin conducts a comparative examination of movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafist groupings. Through an analysis of the sociopolitical circumstances that have played a role in the development and progression of Islamic movements in North Africa, Shahin provides useful insights into the intricate relationship that exists between religion, politics, and social transformation in the geographic area.

3. DIFFERENT SHADES OF SECULARISM

In spite of the fact that it comes at the expense of our traditional Hindu identity, we are taught to take pride in our secular belief system. The decision between constitutional secularism and cultural nationalism is one that many people find difficult to understand. Let's move through the various hues of secularism that exist in India.

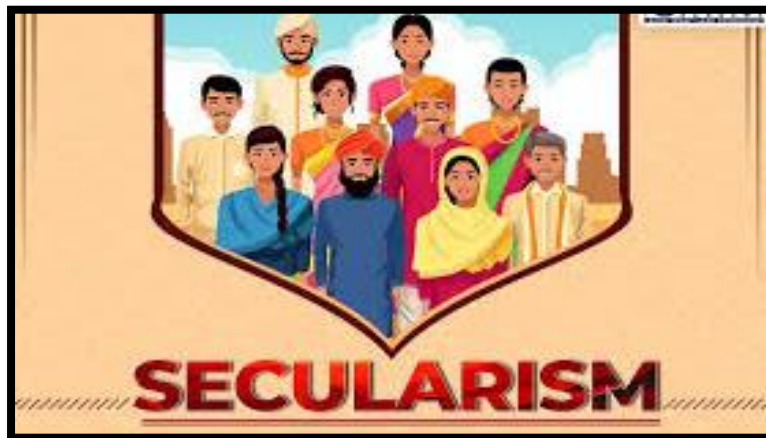


Figure 2: Shades of Secularism

3.1. Not to Slam and Krishna, yes to Mohammad and Jesus

In India, which is the main country in the reality where Hindus have a country, the birthday celebrations of extraordinary children of the dirt, Shri Smash and Shri Krishna, are not compulsory

occasions for the focal government. On the other hand, the birthday of the prophet Mohammed, who was born in Saudi Arabia, as well as the birth and fructification day of Jesus, who was born in Bethlehem, are mandatory holidays for the entire country.

This appears to be consistent with the secular idea that Mohammad and Jesus are real historical figures, whereas Ram and Krishna are fictional characters from comic books. As opposed to four Muslim holidays, there are only two holidays that are obligatory for Hindus out of a total of fourteen.

3.2. Right to confiscate Hindu sanctuaries' property

As per the Constitution of India, the public authority has the position to hold onto control of Hindu sanctuaries and trusts, as well as to name its candidates to the controlling body of these foundations and even to deal with the funds accessible to them. The public authority doesn't have the position to allow this authorization to places of worship or mosques the same. Regardless of whether they get government help, which is cash that comes from citizens, the public authority isn't permitted to obstruct the working of any minority organizations, including mosques, madrasas, and other such foundations. Furthermore, the minority organizations are not expected to agree with the rules of the Right to Instruction Act. This could be deciphered as a more carefree rendition of the foe property regulations that are set up in Pakistan and Bangladesh. These regulations give the state-run administrations of those nations the power to hold onto the possessions of Hindus by marking them as adversary property.

3.3. Secular India follows Sharia laws

Everyone is aware that India does not have a civil code that is used consistently. Therefore, in accordance with Sharia law, Indian Muslim men are permitted to have up to four wives at the same time, and they are able to divorce their wives by uttering the word "Talaq" three times. In order to petition for divorce, both Christians and Hindus are required to follow the appropriate judicial procedures. The campaigners for women's rights who encourage for girls to frequent pubs and organise "slut-walks" to celebrate their rights do not say anything about this issue. The Shah Bano

case is a striking illustration of how secularism is a constitutionally prescribed prescription that is supposed to be administered exclusively to Hindus and not to other minority groups.

3.4. Celebrating the signs of slavery

Allah-Abad is the name of Prayag Raj, which is considered to be one of the holiest pilgrimages for Hindus. All three of these holy sites—Kashi, Ayodhya, and Mathura—have been desecrated, and all three of them have not yet been completely rebuilt. Signboards on Aurangzeb Road in Delhi serve as a testament to the institution of slavery in India, which is a topic that is vigorously celebrated by the Indian secularist movement. On the occasion of Aurangzeb's 300th anniversary, which occurred in 2007, more than one lakh Indian Muslims paid their respects to his grave. At that time, Aurangzeb is officially recognised as the perpetrator of the largest Hindu genocide in history. In order to punish Guru Teg Bahadur for his reluctance to convert to Islam, Aurangzeb had even successfully had him executed in his court.

3.5. Erase the history, get Macaulaized

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3.6. Temples - to hell with them:

In its annual report for the years 1924 and 1925, the Archaeological Survey of India issued a comprehensive list of Hindu temples that had been destroyed during the time of Islamic control. Subsequent to carrying out groundwork, Sita Smash Goel, Arun Shourie, and others have made a

book in which they give a locale wise rundown of Islamic landmarks that were developed by obliterating Hindu sanctuaries. The book is 64 pages in length. Around 2,000 and more sanctuaries are remembered for this rundown, which can be found in the book named "Hindu sanctuaries - what has been going on with them." In the majority of instances, the year that the constructions were built is also included. As a result of the migration of Hindus in the early 1990s, hundreds of temples, both great and little, have been desecrated. This has occurred even in Kashmir. When it comes to larger secular polities, however, the same thing is not a problem. Hindus have gotten weak as a result of this, which has lasted uninterrupted over all of time and space.

3.7. Violating the sanctity of Ram and Geeta

These items, including the Slam Mandir, the Smash Setu, and the Bhagwad Geeta, have been brought under the steady gaze of the courts of India. Of the multitude of nations on the planet, India is the only one wherein the confidence of 100 crore individuals is openly criticized. In a country with a larger part Muslim populace, the Quran or the prophet, or in a country with a greater part Christian populace, the Book of scriptures or the Christ, might be brought under the steady gaze of a courtroom. It would be foolish to look for analogies between the two. An affidavit was submitted to the Supreme Court of India by the central government of India, raising the possibility that Ram was never a real person. In the same country, Christian missionaries freely teach against the bogus and "characterless" gods that Hindus worship, and Islamic missionaries like Zakir Naik do the same thing. Nonetheless, the name of "disdain monger" has been credited to the Hindu traditional by mainstream illuminating presences in the media and different spots.

3.8. Not if you're a Hindu

Despite what appears to be a constitutional prohibition against such activities, there are a great number of governments programmes that are managed solely for the purpose of providing advantages to minority groups at the expense of the money contributed by taxpayers. An undeniable representation of this is the Paschim Banga government's act of giving a month to month payment to each of the Imams who serve in every one of the mosques in the state. It is not the case that the same applies to Hindu pujaris. One further illustration is the Haj subsidy, which had been in operation ever since the country's independence, despite the fact that no other nation,

not even Pakistan, provides it. The Supreme Court finally ordered that it be discontinued altogether.

3.9. The piety of pseudo-secularism

Sadhvi Pragya and Master Aseemanand have been exposed to uncouth treatment, however the basic freedoms activists who are known for their help for Jihadi psychological oppressors and who have been running justiceforafzalguru.org for quite a long time have not stood in opposition to this treatment. Another gem of the muddied waters of Indian secularism is their fondness for people who were uprooted as a result of the violence in Gujarat, their enthusiasm for crores of Bangladeshi infiltrators, and their horrible silence and repulsion towards lakhs of Kashmiri Hindu refugees and Pakistani Hindu refugees.

3.10. The rise of secular fanaticism

The Indian government has removed the Saraswati Vandana tradition from government occasions due to increasing extremism in secular realms. The Saffron flags were removed from the 1990s television series Chanakya, and the 'Satyam Shivam Sundaram' broadcast on Door Darshan was erased before its return. Even lighting a lamp has been deemed incompatible with Islamic principles. Legal action was brought against a Hindu for cracking a coconut for inauguration, and a petition was submitted to the High Court of Chennai to restrict employees from celebrating holidays in their workplaces. As secular fanaticism becomes more ferocious, it is crucial to take responsibility for our ignorance and ensure that future generations will not face the consequences of our ignorance.

4. APPROACHES TO SECULARISM IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

Presently, the reason for this article is to research how secularism has been seen up until this point in the Muslim world, as well as to decide if the previously mentioned grouping of secularism can be portrayed according to the Muslim world. Thinking about this, finding three distinct ways to deal with secularism in the Muslim world is conceivable. The initial two of these techniques are pretty much worried about the two viewpoints on secularism that were referenced before. A methodology that is revolutionary or fanatic, instead of a methodology that is moderate or liberal.

Then again, the other one could be depicted as an Islamic Pentecostal way to deal with secularism, which, contingent upon the conditions, could be viewed as one or the other extremist or even liberal.

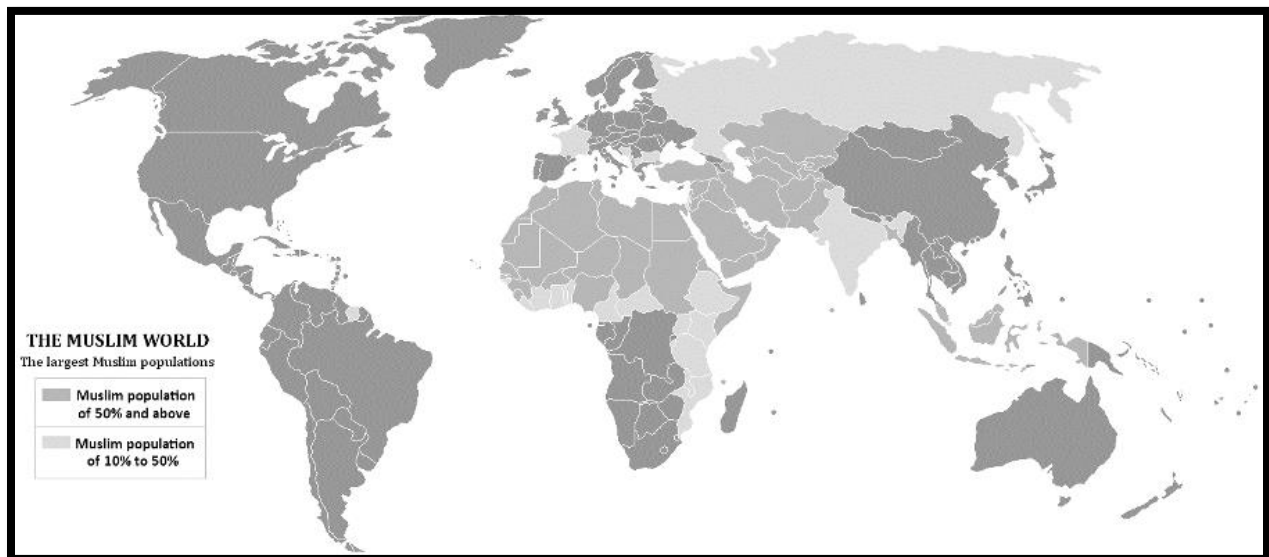


Figure 3: The Muslim World

4.1. Revolutionary or radical way to deal with secularism

The extreme methodology posits that the state and religion are fundamentally interconnected, with religion being a significant obstacle to progress in modern societies. This approach emerged in Muslim society after World War I, influenced by the socio-political changes in Turkey. Kemal Ataturk, the founder and first leader of the Republic of Turkey, implemented the "Six Bolts of Kemalism" to address this issue.

Kemalist secularism aimed to separate religion from all aspects of public life, including government, law, education, and society. He abolished Islamic law, introduced civil and criminal law, and prohibited strict schooling and practices in public life. The regime also encouraged the use of Turkish language for communication and the call for Salat (Azaan).

The early republic's changes also emphasized the role of Islam in the organization and legislative issues of the country. The Caliphate was removed, and the education system was integrated under

the supervision of a Service of Instruction. A Directorate of Strict Issues was established to regulate the practice of Standard Islam.

Ataturk adopted a conservative form of laicism, which suggests that the state actively discourages religion. This approach contrasts with Anglo-American liberal secularism, which emphasizes the state's dominance over religious institutions. Ataturk effectively implemented laicism as one of the essential standards of the state in the protected revision passed in 1928. This included eliminating strict images from the public area and placing religion under the state's control. In summary, the extreme methodology aimed to reduce the impact of Islam on Turkish society through various measures, such as the introduction of secularism, the shift from the Muslim lunar calendar to the Gregorian one, and the shift from the Muslim lunar calendar to the Gregorian one.

4.2. Moderate or liberal way to deal with secularism

Secularism is a concept that promotes the freedom of belief and worship, without any restrictions on any religion. It is associated with contemporary concepts of democracy, pluralism, and diversity. This perspective is supported by politicians, intellectuals, and some Zulema, who believe in the Medina Covenant and the first written constitution.

In today's complex society, it is challenging to apply Islamic regulations in various aspects of society and state, such as financial exchange, banking, and global business. However, every individual, regardless of their religion, has equal privileges to practice their religion without compulsion. The Holy Qur'an, according to a scholar of Islam from the United States, provides a strong foundation for a pluralistic, just, and inclusive society.

Fethullah Gulen, a prominent Islamic savant, argued that religion should not impede common life and that organizations should not mediate in strict life. He argued that everyone should be able to freely practice their faith in their social environment, as coercion is in direct opposition to the spirit of the religion. Gulen also emphasized the importance of conversation and tolerance in societal functioning.

4.3. Revivalist approach to secularism

Islamic revivalism refers to the reestablishment of the meaning of Islam or the improvement of another type of Islam. It involves efforts to revive local areas from within by incorporating the true standards of Islam. The Islamic public is striving to protect their way of life, values, and character amidst changes in global political demands and changes in Islamic nations due to westernization, hardships, unfamiliar controls, inner discomfort, and other factors. This phenomenon stands in opposition to both westernization and secularization. The roots of Islamic revivalism can be traced back to four significant scholarly developments in Islamic reasoning that emerged between the mid-18th century and the mid-19th century. These developments include Wahhabism, which emphasizes the power of God, the Quran and Sunnah, and the foundation of a Muslim state based on Shariah.

Shah Wali's approach focused on intercession and blend within the social world, while Fudi aimed to rectify home problems and commercial corruption within Muslim communities in West Africa during the 18th century. Sanusi aimed to establish a society characterized by tolerance and kindness, avoiding confrontations. The modern Islamic recovery developments began in the 1920s and 1930s with the establishment of the General Public of Muslim Siblings in Egypt by Hasan al-Banna and the Jama'at-I Islami in India by Mawlana Abul Ala Mawdudi. These developments aimed to achieve harmony, public fellowship, civil rights, and the evacuation of degenerate states.

The Jihadi School, also known as Jihad-Salafism, is a different ideological movement of Sunni Muslims. It emerged in the late 20th century as a result of the convergence of two distinct schools of thought within the Islamic worldview: the Muslim Fraternity in Egypt, established by Hasan al-Banna, and Salafism, a religious development within Sunni Islam that emphasizes the cleansing of the faith. Salafism believes itself to be the main real Muslims and considers individuals who engage in "significant worshipful admiration" outside the bounds of the Islamic faith.

Despite the influence of Wahhabism, the Jihadi movement in the Arabian Peninsula in the late 18th century was driven by Wahhabism, which led to the destruction of tombs and shrines, the enforcement of appropriate ceremonial procedures, and the purification of Islam. In the 20th century, several extremist Islamist groups emerged in the Bedouin Center East, particularly in

Egypt and Algeria. These groups were influenced by the Muslim Fellowship's activism and Salafism's enthusiasm. Al-Qaeda and the Islamic Territory of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) share a radical approach driven by Jihadi-Salafism, but their strategies may differ. ISIS is a political fanatic entertainer with political points, while al-Qaeda is more politically connected. The US has been accused of supporting these groups to boost its international and monetary interests. However, it is important to note that not all Islamic revivalism is extreme or violent. Many Islamic scholars, including al-Sanusi, in North Africa are not radicals, despite being inspired by Quran and Hadith teachings and committed to serving humanity through the propagation of Islam and reformative beliefs. Islamic revivalism does not necessarily indicate radicalism; it can also mean liberal depending on the circumstances. It is suggested that these groups are driven by misunderstandings of Islam rather than the genuine principles associated with Islam. The common misconception that Sufis are more tolerant than Salafis is unfounded. Research has shown that all Sufis are intolerant, while all Salafis are not aggressive. The fundamental principles of Islam align with ideals of humanity, tolerance, communal harmony, and peaceful coexistence. The Holy Quran contains numerous verses discussing religious liberty, tolerance, and peace, which can be highlighted in this context:

“In religion, there is no such thing as coercion. It is now abundantly obvious that error is distinct from genuine instruction. Whoever rejects false deities and accepts faith in God has gripped the Firmest Handhold, which will never release its hold on them. It is written in the Quran that God is "All-Hearing and All-Knowing."

In light of this, the principles of liberal secularism, which include pluralism, impartiality towards all individuals of different religious beliefs, religious freedom, and other similar principles, are ingrained in Islam. As a result, Islam is a liberal and secular religion in and of itself.

5. CONCLUSION

Secularism is a complex concept shaped by historical legacies, political ideologies, and societal dynamics, aiming to provide a harmonious and peaceful survival for the various religions and castes in Indian society. However, this approach faces challenges due to India's long history of communal incidents. To address this, a solid educational strategy is needed to redesign the

curriculum in schools and colleges, ensuring that all faiths are given the appropriate attention and not overemphasized. The sacrifices and struggles of all faith communities should be highlighted in history textbooks, while the significance of the various cultures and traditions associated with different religions should be discussed. As India's written constitution declares the country a secular state, it is the responsibility of every Indian citizen to support and believe in this declaration. Future politicians, scholars, and civil society actors must participate in debates that acknowledge the contextual complexities of secularism while maintaining ideals of equality, justice, and human rights to chart a path towards a more peaceful and pluralistic future.

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