

## ***SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS THE IDEOLOGICAL AND/OR METHODOLOGICAL COLD WAR***

### *What is secularism?*

Secularism keeps religious doctrine out of state affairs and treats all religions or non-religions equally.

Secularism insists that the religious freedom rights of a religion's individual members is not the same subject as the rights of the religion itself. The difference between the two is vast. It follows that if you let a religionist say that banning capital punishment is a sin or say that abortion is murder it does not follow that you must automatically let the religious system say it. The organisation is not above the law.

NOTE: It gets problematic if a religion claims that an image or statue is a person, a god, and has rights. Secularists have to treat blessed communion the same as ordinary wafers. Secularism cannot ban selling of idols on the basis that the idol is a God and if religion starts complaining about being offended that shows religion has a totalitarian side for there is no right not to be offended.

### *Why secularism?*

Religion's job is not to rule the state.

Religion and state need to be separate for state should be too busy with its own affairs instead of looking to handle religion.

Letting a religion dictate leaves other religions out.

Much religion needs to be kept out of state affairs for it is dishonest or violent.

Secularism more than just ignores any alleged divine viewpoint on what morality means or what it entails. It is about the principle not just action and the principle is, "Keep morality about the human viewpoint."

There are problems with defining if an entity is a religion for not everything claiming to be a religion is and also the definition is controversial.

No religion agrees with the other what belongs to religion. Catholicism for example says that Catholic means all - that all truth belongs to God and so if science finds something it is from God and though it is not religious doctrine it is still religious.

Secularism then will conflict with some religions more than others for the borders are unclear and differ.

### *More about why secularism?*

The vast majority of all wars have been fought by people who claimed a religious faith. Religion hates secularism though secularism, properly understood, is about addressing that situation. Calling secularism a religion is a cynical tactic to get the state to throw it out. Religion does that quite often not realising that if it succeeds it will get itself thrown out too.

Religion oddly enough condemns secularism that has religious traits as bad. If any form of secularism develops religious traits or is in the process of turning into a religion surely if it goes bad it shows a more authentic religion should be worse. If secularism and religion are an evil mix then religion has to go.

In a world that will suffer for all eternity for the wars caused by religion which always leave their mark, is secularism the answer?

Is it true that both secularism and religion have led to violence so that one is as bad as the other? Which one is trying at least? Secularism is trying even if it goes wrong. Sometimes all you can do is try. Even if it were true that secularism spills blood like religion does at least secularism is an attempt to deal with violence over ideology. Nobody can know that secularism is as bad. But we do know that religion with its tendency to worship morally suspect Gods or gods and its opposition to truth through putting forward doctrines that nobody can test or check is divisive and dangerous and its prevalence makes it hard to implement secularism for realistically, in any culture one religion ends up with more rights than the other.

Is a religion entitled by the state to claim to be the true faith and not to give any defense of that claim? No it is permitted to.

Secularism says you let religion do its own thing but permit people the freedom to refute it.

Secularism forbids blasphemy laws so for there is a right to freedom of speech and a right to satire. As the idea of God may be evil if it is true that God cannot permit evil there has to be a right to express that by mocking God. And as for sacrilege and desecration, they must not be given special attention. Treat damage done to religious objects or buildings the same as damage done to anything else.

Is there a war between secularism and religion - a cold war maybe?

*Only true tolerance ignores religious doctrines*

What is the difference if any between secularism and equal tolerance of religion?

Secularism is a better guarantor of freedom of religion than equal tolerance of religion. Equal tolerance of religion is intolerant towards those faiths which admit that one religion is not as good as another and all religions cannot be true. Equal tolerance implies intolerance towards religions that advocate intolerance.

True tolerance bases itself on the non-religious level. What else can we do? If we start bringing in religious presumptions there will be no end to confusion and the disagreement. Bringing in religious presumptions is intolerance. If they call us intolerant, and if they are right, then there is no such thing as tolerance.

It demands that they respect peoples' freedom to believe in religion or to not believe. It demands that the followers of each religion be at least tolerant of other faiths if they cannot accept them as valuable or as good as their own.

Tolerance means that you point out errors in people's thinking and even in their religions. Laxity is not tolerance. Laxity is being too lazy to care about the world around you. Not giving a toss what others do is not tolerance either.

What must govern our society? Religious rules? Secular rules? Fundamentalist rules?

The answer is secular rules.

Uphold your dignity by understanding what the secular state must be like and contribute to it's development.

*The state must work by naturalistic assumptions*

There is no such thing as a person without a political stance. Even if you are passive and will not vote you are still making a political stance of some kind. Religion will either actively or passively interfere with politics. That is unavoidable. It is a reason why naturalistic and non-religious views need to be encouraged by the state. Too much religion weakens the separation needed between Church and state.

Suppose a Catholic gets a miraculous cure from an incurable disease. The Catholic decides to try and make some money out of it. The state has to decree that he never had the disease in the first place and decide that his doctor made the mistake of misdiagnosing him and tricked him. Thus if a complaint of fraud is made against him, the state must uphold it.

The state will have to act as if miracles don't happen - even if they do! The state needs a naturalistic (ie non-supernatural) methodology otherwise murderers who claim that aliens or demons who impersonated them committed the crimes will have to get off scot-free on the grounds of insufficient evidence. If a doctor diagnoses a person with cancer and that person is subsequently tested and there is no cancer what then? Even if the person experienced a miracle, the person should have the legal right to sue his or her doctor for unprofessionalism.

If the state said, "All miracles that do not promote the Roman Catholic faith are false or to be ignored" that would be a violation of the separation that is needed between Church and state. The Catholic Church says that if Mary appears it may be a miracle and must be investigated. But if some pagan God such as Mars appears they pay no attention to it and dismiss it as fraud outright without even checking. The state can't endorse such a biased and sectarian attitude so all it can do is dismiss all miracle claims. It is the only fair approach.

Back to the murderers, belief in miracles necessarily creates doubt in their guilt. Miracle claims are always based on acceptance of human testimony. They imply that we should believe a miracle on the strength of the testimony. The argument, "A criminal who believed in miracles would blame a miracle anyway", is ad hominem. That means opposition to the person rather than the argument they make and its therefore unfair. Even if the man or woman is a liar, they could be telling the truth. If we are honest, there is always at least a bit of vindictiveness when somebody gets punished. We enjoy it

When we see "bad" people getting what we may call their come-uppance. To punish a person when a miracle increases the possibility that they may be innocent enhances vindictiveness. It makes us at least want to be partly unfair. It might be fair to punish x for a crime, but in so far as you doubt x's guilt in so far you intend to be unfair. There is a touch of unfairness in our hearts even when we are fair.

Religion says miracles are not absurd. This is despite the fact that many honest and sane people speak of experiencing absurd miracles such as alien abductions and communications from other planets. Miracle beliefs are based on the evidence of reliable testimony but religion only accepts this evidence when it suits it. It only pretends to care about the evidence. Each religion only adopts miracles for belief when they suit its theology and its prejudices. Their belief is really self-deception. Its about prejudice and not truth or decency. The truth is that miracle claims attack and undermine the reality check we need to be able to function in this world. Some people have such faith in God that they would cause a nuclear holy war if they could. All who promote belief in miracles are contributing to this mind-set even if they don't like it. The state has no choice but to hold that all who get any benefits from miracle and apparition claims are charlatans. This is not dogmatism or prejudice. It is about being a state and concerned for the common good.

If a religion chooses to approach an issue with naturalistic glasses there is no problem with letting the state consult it. This does not undermine Church and state because the Church in cases like this is not speaking as a religion but as a group of thinkers.

### *Abortion*

The Bible says there is no fellowship in anything between Jesus and Satan. There is no common ground between the secularist and the religionist on abortion: the first thinks the early baby is not a person or has no right to life and the second thinks despite appearances it as a soul as much as a grown-up and thus has an equal right to life with any grown man or woman.

A secularist cannot be asked to ban early abortion on the basis that the baby has a soul. The soul idea is a hindrance if there is a right to abortion and creates a gulf between science and religion.

Faith must promote what is best for people on the human level. Keep all religious and spiritual assumptions and prejudices out of this. This way even if the faith is wrong, there is no harm done. Here is an example of how this works. A pregnant girl has a strong chance of dying if she has a baby. We can argue that the embryo she carries doesn't have a developed brain yet so she can have an abortion to stay alive. A religious person will say that the embryo has a soul like the rest of us and has the exact same right to life as we have. So they conclude that a termination would be murder. We don't say that it is wrong to terminate the pregnancy on religious or spiritual grounds. We consider the issue without bringing in unproven religious assumptions. If we err, let us err on the side of caution. Yet it is true spirituality to decide the issue on natural grounds! Religious assumptions are mere ideas and must not be put before people. To do that is inexcusable intolerance!

### THE LAST WORD

There is an inevitable war between the secular person and the religious one. It is a cold war. It is real though hard to put your finger on. When religion had the power it made secular blood run in rivers. We secularists are kinder despite our cold war.