

ON SECULARISM

Editors

Sarbani Guha Ghosal & Ranjana Sarkar (Ghosh)

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
BIJOY KRISHNA GIRLS' COLLEGE
HOWRAH**

First Edition : June, 2019

© Editors

All rights reserved

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, by photostat, microfilm, xerography, or any other means or incorporated into any information retrieval system, electronic or mechanical, without the written permission of the copyright owner and publisher.

ISBN 978-81-940961-3-9

Published by : Arati Mitra for Avenel Press, Memari, Burdwan in association with Department of Political Science, Bijoy Krishna Girls' College, Howrah
Printed at Shanti Packers, Kolkata.

Email: avenel.india@gmail.com; info@avenelpress.com
visit www.avenelpress.com

Composed by : ADSONATA 9433452778, 9874522778

Cover design : Babul Dey

Secularism in the Light of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: An Enquiry

Siuli Mukherjee*

I

Etymologically, the word 'secularism' means the complete separation of State and the religious institutions. However, the concept of secularism as conceived in the western and non-western society is different from each other. In the West, Secularism was nurtured in the intellectual minds of the Greek and Roman philosophers like Epicureans, Denis Diderot, Voltaire, Thomas Paine and others. It was conceived in the sense that there would be no official religion of the state. On the other hand, in non-western countries like India, secularism assures that the state will not endorse any religion officially but will extend support to all religion equally. In this light, the aim of the article is to enquire Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's take on religion.

Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964), the first Prime Minister of independent India was virtually one of the makers of Modern India. Stalin called him "The Man of Peace". Even Chou-en-Lai called him as "A great gentleman". Rabindra Nath Tagore, too testified to his straight forwardness when he said: "He never sought shy of truth when it was dangerous nor made alliance with falsehood when it would be convenient. (Jayapalan, 2010, p266). Politically baptized by Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru was not a blind follower of the leader, but redefined the nationalist ideology as and when he deemed it fit. (Chakrabarty, 2009, p122). He was a great believer of pluralism and his liberalism was noteworthy in the reflection of his ideas of secularism and socialism. While Gandhiji's secularism was based on a commitment to the brotherhood of religious communities based on their respect for and pursuit of truth, Pandit J. Nehru's secularism was based on a commitment to scientific humanism tinged with a progressive view of historical change. Pandit Nehru has been

* Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, ShriShikshayatan College

CONTENTS

- 7 **Principal's Message**
- 9 **Editor's Take**
- 15 **Secular India / Indian Secularism**
—Sanjukta Roy
- 23 **The Secular Concept in India and the Interpretation of History**
—Pradyot Kumar Das
- 33 **The Conception of Secularism in The Indian Constitution Today—
A Theoretical Exploration**
—Shreyasi Ghosh
- 41 **The Politics of Secularism in India**
—Paromita Sarkar
- 50 **Secularism: A Historical Uunderstanding from Oriental and
Non-oriental Perspectives**
—Namrata Kothari
- 60 **Sociological Approaches to The Secularisation Thesis: An Insight
into the Episteme and Dynamics of Secularism**
—Anisha Roy & Shreya Bhattacharya
- 69 **The role of Kautilya's Arthaśāstra in building the Theoretical
Foundation of Secularism in India**
—Ashoktaru Panda

- 82 Tracing the Continuity of a Secularist Trend of the Imperial Mugh Culture at the Provincial Court of Murshidabad: Through Paintings and Illustrations
—Ankan Purkait
- 90 Secularism—in the View of Buddhist Philosophy
—Antara Singha
- 97 ধর্মনিরপেক্ষতার 'ধর্ম' এবং নৈতিকতার 'ধর্ম' (সংস্কৃত সাহিত্যের আলোকে)
—Jitendranath Das
- 103 Secularism in the Light of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: An Enquiry
—Siuli Mukherjee
- 112 বাংলার মুসলিম মানসে স্বতন্ত্র জাতীয়তাবোধের উন্মেষ ধর্মনিরপেক্ষ লোকায়ত রাষ্ট্রদর্শন
—Prashanta Mondal
- 125 মাণিক বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়ের সাম্প্রদায়িকতা বিরোধী ও ধর্মনিরপেক্ষ চিন্তা
—Mahua Bhattacharya
- 136 ধর্মনিরপেক্ষতা : দুই সমকালীন লেখকের কলমে
—Reni Pal
- 146 The 9/11 Massacre and its Aftermath
—Siddhartha Pratim Sinha
- 155 Debates on Cultural Secularity through Digital Medium: A case study of the Reception of Coke Studio, Pakistan
—Kingshuk Das
- 165 Popular Hindi Cinematic Texts as Discursive Sites of Hegemonic Contestation-of the Popular-Secular and its Oppositional Discourse
—Samarpita Ghosh Ray