



Daily Article (Bharath's Reading list) - Answers and Explanations 09.11.2023

Article link : [Link](#) (Secularism in Iran)

1. The author cites all the following reasons why secularism is not Western imperialism in disguise, except:

- A. The anti-imperialist argument ignores Indigenous voices, and the systematic failure of theocratic governance to guarantee the civil liberties of a religiously diverse citizenry
- B. The anti-imperialist argument oversimplifies and essentialises the Other, presenting a 'East v West' dichotomy without clearly defining what each of these mean
- C. The anti-imperialist argument postulates a fantasy of homogeneity, obscuring the wide range of political factions within Iran
- D. The anti-imperialist argument spuriously claims that imperialism causes individual or cultural harm because it is expressive of objectionable cultural chauvinism

Explanation : D

The author presents all arguments except D. Note the lines, 'The first claim may be justified on a number of grounds: perhaps, for example, imperialism is intrinsically wrong because it is a form of oppression, and necessarily undermines the value of national self-determination and causes individual or cultural harm, or perhaps because it is expressive of objectionable cultural chauvinism. We can grant this claim's truth for our current purposes...'

2. The objections to a secular Iran, according to the author, cannot be attributed to:

- A. Secularism emerging from and developed within an exclusively European context
- B. Dissatisfaction with the rapid state-enforced modernisation instituted by the preceding Pahlavi dynasty
- C. Modern secularism being installed from the top down in the Muslim world, first by the colonial powers and then the postcolonial state
- D. The belief that secularism is fundamentally antireligious in nature and therefore anti-Islamic

Explanation: A

All options except A are true, based on the article. Option A is incorrect: 'There are many examples of secularism outside of 'Western' societies prior to colonisation – eg, in the philosophical milieu and political structures of India and in numerous Chinese dynasties – and secularism also has its own history within Islamic contexts. Thus, claiming that secularism is exclusively suited to Europe or 'the West' is false, and cannot rescue the argument.'

3. Which of the following is the author least likely to agree with?

- A. Secularism might be neutral based upon one particular type of power structure but not necessarily those prevalent elsewhere
- B. Secularism can itself become oppressive if it operates under the assumption that it must be accepted without critical analysis
- C. There is no historical association between secularism and imperialism and so the claim that a secular Iran fosters the cause of imperialism is unfounded
- D. The Islamic Republic is just as committed to the fantasy of 'East v West' dichotomy as any European orientalist.

Explanation: C

Note the line, 'It must be granted, then, that there is at least some historical association between secularism and imperialism, even if it is not a causal association.'