

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Understanding Secularism

Q1. The Indian State both keeps away from religion as well as intervenes in religion. This idea can be quite confusing. Discuss this once again in class using examples from the chapter as well as those that you might have come up with.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
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## Understanding Secularism

Q1. The Indian State both keeps away from religion as well as intervenes in religion. This idea can be quite confusing. Discuss this once again in class using examples from the chapter as well as those that you might have come up with.

Ans. In Indian secularism, though the State is not strictly separate from religion, it does maintain a principled distance vis-à-vis religion. This means that any interference in religion by the State has to be based on the ideals laid out in the Constitution.

For example:

i. Where members of the same religion ('upper-caste' Hindus) dominate other members (some 'lower castes') within it. In order to prevent this religion-based exclusion and discrimination of 'lower castes', the Indian Constitution banned untouchability. In this instance, the State is intervening in religion in order to end a social practice that it believes discriminates and excludes, and that violates the Fundamental Rights of 'lower castes' who are citizens of this country.

ii. Similarly, to ensure that laws relating to equal inheritance rights are respected, the State may have to intervene in the religion-based 'personal laws' of communities.

iii. The intervention of the State can also be in the form of support. The Indian Constitution grants the right to religious communities to set up their own schools and colleges. It also gives them financial aid on a non-preferential basis.