

**CHALLENGES OF SECULARIZATION
IN CONTEMPORARY FRANCE**

*Thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
for award of the degree of*

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

MUKHTYAR SINGH



Centre for European Studies

School of International Studies

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

New Delhi 110067

India

2016



Dated:

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled "Challenges of Secularization in Contemporary France" submitted by me for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.

Mukhtyar Singh

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Prof. Bhaswati Sarkar

(Chairperson, CES)
Prof. Bhaswati Sarkar
Chairperson
Centre for European Studies
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067, India

Dr. Sheetal Sharma

(Supervisor)

Assistant Professor
Centre for European Studies
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am thankful to my supervisor Dr. Sheetal Sharma. Without her guidance this research could not have been possible. Her suggestions and comments proved to be of immense value during the completion of this research. I am also very thankful to Prof. Bhaswati Sarkar, Chairperson, Centre for European Studies, and also to late Prof. S.K. Jha, Prof. R.K. Jain, Prof. Ummu Salma Bava, Prof. Gulshan Sachadeva, and Dr. S.N. Prasad for their guidance.

I would also like to express my thanks to Mr. Ravindra Kumar, Mr. Dharmendra Kumar, Kamlesh Kumar who helped me in accessing sources pertaining to French society and helped me to understand the sources that were in French. I would like to thank my French Friends- Vaneesa Aswin Kumar, Jean Dretz, Lou Touns who inspired and encouraged me for research work on French society and helped me a lot to private data about French society.

I would also like to thank the library staff of JNU and that of Rembrandt Room library staff of the Centre for European Studies. The staff helped me a lot in making the books and articles available.

Among my seniors, I would in particular like to thank Pawan Mathur who offered great help during my research. I would also like to thank my friends, Pramod Kumar, Dr. Vinod Arya, Dr. Anil Kumar, Ramratan, Poorva Kartik, Nilima, Mythri. P.U. for their help and cooperation.

In spite of having the advantage of guidance, cooperation and instructions from the able persons, I am responsible for my errors or omissions in this research work.

Mukhtyar Singh

CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction	1-17
1.1 Background	
1.2 Review of Literature	
1.2 .1 Religion in France	
1.2 .2 Religion and Secularism	
1.2 .3 Religion and Europe	
1.3 Definition, Rationale, and Scope of the Study	
1.4 Research Questions	
1.5 Hypothesis	
1.6 Research Methodology	
1.7 Tentative Chapters	
Chapter 2: Religion and Secularization in France	18-68
2.1 Background	
2.2 Religion: A General Inquiry	
2.3 Is Religion a Universal Phenomenon?	
2.4 Criticism of Religion	
2.5 Religion as a Cultural System	
2.6 Secularization	
2.7 Critique of Secularization Theory	
2.8 Secularization in Europe	
2.9 State Secularism	
2.10 Secular, Secularity, Secularism and Secularization	
2.11 Secularization of France	
2.11.1 Reformation	
2.11.2 Age of Enlightenment	
2.11.3 French Revolution	
2.11.4 Third Republic	
2.11.5 Jules Ferry Laws	
2.11.6 1905 Laws	
Chapter 3: The Debate on Secularism in Contemporary France	69-125
3.1 Background	
3.2 A Brief History of <i>Laicite</i>	
3.3 <i>Laicite</i> : Secularism with Difference	
3.4 The Specifics of French Secularism	
3.5 Difference between Secularism and <i>Laicite</i>	
3.6 Established Secularization in France	
3.7 French Secularism: A Negative Notion?	
3.8 Secularism in France: Legislative and Constitutional	
3.9 French Secularism and Religious Freedom	
3.10 Changing the Religious Pattern	
3.11 Religion in France: A Sociological Approach	
3.12 Disputes on Headscarves	
3.13 Legal opinion of the <i>Conseil d'Etat</i>	

- 3.14 The Bayrou Circular, Debate over the Islamic Headscarves and its Ban
- 3.15 Arguments in favor of Headscarves (Veil)
- 3.16 Arguments against Headscarves (Veil)
- 3.17 Status of Religion in Europe

Chapter 4: Challenges in Managing Multicultural Reality in France 126-179

- 4.1 Background
- 4.2 History of Immigration in France
- 4.3 From Assimilation to Integration in France
- 4.4 Muslim population and Cultural Integration
- 4.5 Discrimination faced by Muslims in France
 - 4.5.1 Racial-Ethnic Discrimination
 - 4.5.2 Economic Discrimination
 - 4.5.3 Social-Political Discrimination
- 4.6 Integration Debate and French Model of Integration
- 4.7 The Rise of Reactionary Right Wing
- 4.8 Charlie Hebdo and November 2015 Terror Attacks
- 4.9 Islamic Fundamentalism and Muslim Integration in French Society
- 4.10 Regulation of religion by the French Government
- 4.11 What is French Identity?
 - 4.11.1 Ethno-Symbolism and Belonging to a Community
 - 4.11.2 National Identity and Ethnicity
 - 4.11.3 Sense of Belonging and Constitutional Patriotism
 - 4.11.4 French Nationalism and Universalism
- 4.12 Multiculturalism in France and Its Crisis

Chapter 5: Conclusion 180--189

References 190-201

Appendices 202-212

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The last two decades in France have been marked by a rise in the question of secularism and religion. Though this phenomenon is widely seen in Europe also, but the scale of this debate is at its peak in France. This debate is not only confined to academics, but is visible in French policy discourse, whether at the institutional level or at the administrative level. The research proposes to study the current notions and debates on secularism that are taking place in contemporary French society.

Although secularism is a well established universal principle constructed by history and a legal principle based on various tests, yet it is a fluid and a flexible notion, the content of which can be variously interpreted and modified. Secularism is usually described as more tolerant towards religious pluralism, assigning the state a passive role in religious affairs. However secularism in France has its own distinct features. Thus, it is imperative to first study the long history of its development.

In France, concept of secularism has been interpreted in two ways – secularism as separation; and secularism as neutrality. While Secularism as separation is a wholly judicial process, secularism as neutrality is more philosophical in nature.

By the end of 16th Century, the Catholics dominated the social, economic, political and cultural spheres in France. The entire system was built around Catholic beliefs. In opposition to the Catholics, a new school of Christianity was developed, and it came to be known as Protestant. This school had faith in religion and god but accepted the possibility of amendment in old beliefs, values and norms of Christianity.

The Protestants in France demanded equal rights and thus, a conflict between Protestants and Catholics became inevitable. This conflict is known as the French Wars of Religion that lasted from 1562 to 1598. After the war, the Protestants were granted equal rights and freedom. However, the Catholics continued their hegemony on the whole system and dominated the Church, State, and the economy. The Church

was the owner of all lands. The entire taxes of the country went to the Church. In other words, the king controlled the state, the Pope controlled the Church, and feudal lords controlled the economy. There was a strong relation among the three.

In the 18th Century, there was a revolt against this system. Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Voltaire prepared the grounds for this revolt through their writings. This finally culminated in the French Revolution in 1789. As a result of the French Revolution, the power of the Church diminished. The right to freedom of conscience was established in 1789. The provision of freedom of worship was further established in 1791. In spite of these measures, in the 19th century, there was an ensuing struggle between the Catholics and the Republicans, the latter being strong advocates of secularism.

From the 19th century, efforts were increased to make France a more secular state. In the 1880s, the French government made a provision for providing secular education in schools. In 1905, French government passed a resolution for separation of state and church. The Constitution of 1946 had a provision of free and secular education. The 1958 French Constitution declared France as Secular Republic.

The debate on French secularism now no longer took place between Catholics and Republicans. The Catholic Church accepted the principle of Secularism.

As a consequence of the debates in secularism in the 1990s and early 2000s, the French government appointed the Stasi Commission in 2003 to prepare a report on secularism. The report stated that secularism cannot be reduced to the neutrality of state. It gave the following four principles of secularism

1. Independence of the political authorities and of the different spiritual or religious persuasions' (this signifies an absence of political intervention in religious matters and an absence of religious sway over political authority);
2. Guarantee of freedom of conscience and worship, which represents the 'positive content' of secularism;
3. Duty on the part of religions and their congregations to adapt, and conduct themselves in moderate fashion, so as to make coexistence possible, in exchange for the guarantees and protections afforded them by the state;

4. The need to live together and construct a common future.

According to Barbier (2005: 4), the first principle of the Stasi Report is true form of secularism. He remarks, "... only the first truly forms part of secularism, even though it refers exclusively to the political authorities and discreetly evacuates state neutrality. The other three principles point towards a new conception of secularism, which is significantly modified and considerably enlarged. The stress falls especially on freedom of conscience and religion, spiritual diversity, and coexistence. As a result, secularism is now nothing but a means in the service of those ends, which are obviously essential".

In present times, France witnessed a strong polarization between Republicans and Islamists about concept of secularism. The Stasi Report prohibited the use of religious symbols in the public sphere and as such the wearing of headscarf by Muslim women became a contentious issue. The majority of French people conceived of headscarves as a sign of rejection of French identity for the sake of Muslim identity.

Amidst the changing French notions of secularism, " a new socio- religious configuration is emerging in which the religious, far from appearing in the form of a tradition resisting modernity, appears instead in the hyper-modern form of tradition that prevents ultra modernity from dissolving into a self destructive critique ... (secularisation) on longer functions as an alternative system to religion, but rather as a regulating principle for the pluralism of both the religious and non religious convictions existing in a civil society"(Williame 2004: 375).

From the above discussion, we can say that French secularism manifests the following distinct characteristics: 1) A decline in power of religious authorities over the society as well as the followers 2) Re-emergence of ethnic concern in public life 3) Development of wider religious pluralism, which in turn encourages both a redefinition of the relationship between the state and religion and a rediscovery of religion as a social phenomenon 4) Increasing debates about religion and its teaching in educational institutions.

1.2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1.2.1 Religion in France

France is a secular country that believes in the principles of *Laicite*. There is a vast literature that describes how this belief has shaped the French society. Some of the major works dealing with this theme are examined below.

In the article “*Secularism and French Religious Liberty: A Sociological and Historical View*”, Jean Bauberot (2003) discusses the concept on secularism. According to the writer, secularism in France is the product of long historical developments. He writes that secular word at this juncture in French history is a debatable issue. The writer discusses the different perceptions of secularization in the original sense of the word, Max Weber’s analysis, sociological theories of the late twentieth century, current view of secularization. He also discussed how the secularism of France is different from that of Britain and America. The author is of the opinion, contrary to the dominant view; the process of descularization in France is actually “established secularization”.

In the article “*Is Laicite the Civil Religion of France*”, the author Blandine Chelini-Pont (2010) writes that civil religion in France has two ideas. Firstly, *Laicite* is a common education through secular learning. Secondly, *Laicite* means the complete privatization of religious practices .According to author civil religion is a national myth. He also discussed the secularism and republic of France both.

Maurice Barbier (2005) in his article, “*Towards a Definition of French Secularism*” discusses the debates about secularism in France of the last 15 years. He writes that secularism in France, once again is in review. Secularism is a dynamic and flexible concept that runs with accord to time and circumstances. Secularism is outcome of long historical and legal developments that was adopted by various laws. The author also discusses that secularism is a negative notion that prohibits religion into public sphere.

The article “*Cultural Turn in the Sociology of France*” written by Jean-Paul Willaime tells that France is running in the cultural turn of the sociology of religion. For this he has cited six changes at which bases he talks about cultural turn. These changes are 1) increase in reading material devoted to religion 2) Efforts of public authorities 3)

Growth in study of religion 4) Intervention of French government in religious matters 5) Creation of a commission in 2003 by then President Jacques Chirac and 6) Public Perception of religion as a negative factor. France has experienced the changes in the concept of secularism that he has termed 'secularization of *laicite*'.

Gulce Tarhan (2011) in *Roots of Secularism in France and Turkey* examines the emergence of *laicite* as a unique state policy towards religion in France and Turkey, and how it has caused great social polarization. The author is of the view the debate on headscarves in France is closely related to national identity. French secularism is built on the assumption that visibility of religious symbols means a rejection of national identity.

French Secularism in the Light of the History of the Politics of Assimilation by Yolande Jenson (2009) historically examines how the Protestant and Jews have been assimilated in French society. He analyses the problems of assimilation using the theoretical framework of Hannah Arendt and Zygmunt Bauman.

In a chapter titled 'To be laic or not be laic: A French dilemma' in the book *Faith and Secularism* edited by Valérie Amiraux (2004) et al., Valeria Amiraux examines what are the problems of French society with Islam. The author says that Laic content may be held responsible for the unequal treatment of Muslims.

Patrick Weil (2009) in the article *Why the French Laicite is Liberal* defends the French *Laicite* and says that it is not hostile to religion, but rather very liberal in nature as there is freedom of religious conscience in France.

The article *Laicite and challenges of Republicanism* by Jean Bauberot (2009) examines the relationship between headscarf ban and *Laicite*, and examines the impact of the dispute on French Republicanism. The article highlights the present day challenges before French secularism

Gordner (2008) in the article *challenging the French Exception: Islam and Laicite* writes about the Muslim immigration in France from Maghreb region and then states the challenges faced by France in the light of this immigration. The author emphasizes the dialectic relationship between Islam and church.

Melanie Adrian (2006) in *La'icit' Unveiled: A Case Study in Human Rights, Religion, and Culture in France* examines the arguments given for the Stasi Commission for imposing the headscarf ban. The author talks about religious freedom in the context of headscarf ban. The author mentions that la'icit' has two meanings – first, protection of liberty and conscience, and second neutrality of state.

Abilmouna (2011) in the article *Reconciling the hijab with laicite France* traces the roots of wearing headscarves in Islamic scriptures. The work then states that headscarf is not mentioned in Islamic scriptures and was a result of later customs. The article also mentions the views of diverse experts on the custom of hijab.

French Muslims and the Hijab: An analysis of Identity and the Islamic Veil in France by Croucher (2008) talks about the history of Islamic Veil. Based upon the first hand interview of French Muslim women, the work mentions their perception of the custom of veil.

Beneath the Veil: Muslim Girls and Islamic Headscarves in Secular France by Nicky Jones (2009) describes the major developments relating to the headscarf ban from the period 1989-2009. He describes the impact of the 1994 Bayrou circular and the 2003 Stasi report on the headscarf debate. The work mentions both for and against argument relating to the veil issue

A 2012 policy paper written by Patrick Simon and published by Transatlantic Council of Migration titled *French National Identity and Integration: Who Belongs to the National Community* compares the French national identity with French cultural identity, and discusses the consistencies as well as variations between the two variables.

Amelie Baras (2008) in the article *Using Rights to Reinvent Secularism in France and Turkey* argues that since the various religious groups are framing their demands through a rights based discourse for legitimization and re-appropriating elements of a global secular framework to challenge boundary of French secularism. The article examines different meanings of the term secularism.

1.2.2 Religion and Secularization

Before dealing with the religious issues in France, it is vital to first conceptualize the term religion and secularization. Some of the major conceptual works on these two subjects are described in this section.

Religion, Modernity, and Postmodernity edited by Paul Heelas (1988) constructs religion in terms of 'modernity' and post modernity. Steve Bruce in the chapter titled *Cathedral to Cults: The Evolving Forms of Religious Life* identifies the prevailing ethos of religious belief and behaviour in the modern society. Zygmunt Bauman in his chapter *Postmodern Religion* writes that "religion belongs to the family of curious... The arrival of postmodern serenity does not mean that the desperate attempts to define religion are likely to grind to a halt" (55). For the undertaken research, the chapter by Richard. H. Roberts titled, *The Construals of Europe: Religion, Theology, and the Problematics of Modernity* is very useful. His chapter is basically theological in nature. He examines the historical emergence of the soul or cultural identities of Europe. He envisages this by examining the interactions of premodernity (Christendom, tradition, and the *ancient Regime*), modernity (the dialectic of Enlightenment, communism, instrumental reason, and European integration), and postmodernity (inaugurated by the progressive triumph of the market, fluidity of identities, the collapse of Communism, and the 'end of history')

The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion edited by John.R. Hinnells (2005) offers various theoretical perspectives on the concept of religion. The chapter titled *Theories of Religion* by Robert A Sagan examines the various theoretical perspectives on religion, and their development in historical context, along with their critical assessments. Paul Heelas in the chapter *Postmodernism* examines the meaning of the term of Postmodern religion and identifies the four basic characteristics of the term, namely 1) Refusal to regard positivistic standard of knowledge 2) Combining symbols from different meanings 3) Celebration of spontaneity and fragmentation and 4) Willingness to abandon search for dominant myths and narratives.

Postmodernism, Reason, and Religion by Ernest Gellner (2003) as the title itself suggests, examines the interrelation among the three variables of postmodernism, reason (or rationality) and religion. Gellner argues that Europe is experiencing a return of genuine religious tradition.. Gellner further posits that a new form of

relativism has emerged that has given up the traditional concept of “a unique truth”. To analyse religion in the postmodern age, Gellner makes use of three contesting variables, firstly that of religious fundamentalism, secondly relativism exemplified by the recent trends of postmodernism, and thirdly Enlightenment rationalism, or what he also refers to as rationalist fundamentalism.

The Great Transformation: The Great Transformation: the Political and Economic Origins of Our Time by Karl Polanyi (2001) discusses the different aspects of society from the 18th Century. Polanyi examines how the new concepts of secularism, liberalism, and communism developed. He shows how and why the market economy developed and in some sections examines the role of religion in bringing about such a transformation and is of the opinion that the economic and social aspects of a religion cannot be ignored. According to Polanyi, “Religion co-operated in inducing the individual to comply with rules of behaviour which, eventually, ensured his functioning in the economic system”.

Religion and the Rise of Capitalism by R.H.Tawney (2004) examines the role of religion in the shaping of modern European economic institutions. Tawney argues that there is an interface between religion and the social/economical environment because 'it seems a little artificial to talk as though capitalist enterprise could not appear till religious changes had produced a capitalist spirit. It would equally be true, and equally one-sided, to say that the religious changes were purely the result of economic movements.' (p.312) This book also shows the real impact of Calvinism on the whole society. Tawney's primary concern is to demonstrate the church's strong history of economic thinking, and explain why this is so weak in the modern era. Tawney's book focuses on answering three pertinent questions; firstly how did the church interact with, or respond to, the economic sphere of life, Secondly, how did change in religious thought (especially the Reformation) affect economic developments in Europe, thirdly, how did economic change affect religious thought.

Religion and the Myths of Secularization and Separation by Bader (2011) argues that the concept of religion should not be biased towards western Christian religion. It should try to show that we need a concept of practical and scientific purposes. According to the writer, the term Secularization is counterproductive and should be

avoided and the moral and political philosophers should be interested in a brief course in the critical sociology of religion.

Religion, Secularization, and Politics: A Postmodern Conspectus by Jeff Haynes (1997) discusses the debate of the resurgence of religion *vis a vis* secularization in Europe. According to the author, the concept of postmodernism is best suited to explain the political religion in contemporary world.

A paper titled *Introduction to the Study of Religion* by Charles. B. Jones (2007) is valuable for the research as it provides a comprehensive outline of the concept of religion as propounded by eminent thinkers like Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, Sigmund Freud etc, and discusses how the theoretical definition of religion changed over time.

James Dow (2007) in the article *A Scientific Definition of Religion* examines the concept of religion from the prism of scientific enquiry. The work describes the evolution of the concept of religion. According to the author, there is a difference between religion and religious behaviour. While former is a theory, later is attitude.

The Pragmatics of Defining Religions in a multi-cultural world by Victoria Harrison (2006) examines the incompleteness within various definitions of religion. The work regards religion as a contested issue, which can never have a completely acceptable definition for all. The author abandons the pursuit for a definition of religion and calls for an alternative approach.

1.2.3 Religion in Europe

The research posits that a study of French secularism can not be done without studying the various aspects in Europe. In order to understand French secularism, it is necessary to understand the history of religion and secularization in Europe. This section studies such works.

Religion and democracy in contemporary Europe edited by Gabriel Motzkin and Yoschi Fischer (2008) offers a conceptual, historical, and empirical analysis of religion and democracy in contemporary Europe. The chapter by Shumel Naoh Eisenstadt addresses the theme of returning of religion to the public domain and the salient changes in the religious structures. Motzkin traces the source of secularization,

and he views its origin in Pauline Christianity, Jose Casanova examines the varying meanings of religion in its relation to democracy. The links between new religious communities, Islamic immigration, and local and global identities are examined by Jocelyne Cesari. Siddi Bakir and Konrad Pedziwiatr empirically examine the formation of European identity among Europe's young generation. Overall, the book is useful for studying the role of religion and its many aspects in contemporary Europe.

Religion in West European Politics edited by Suzanne Berger (1982) is a collection of changing relations between religion and politics in contemporary Europe societies. According to Berger (1982:1), not only the origins of new relationships between religion and politics in Western European societies be sought out in the general features of modern society, but they should be analysed within the framework of the national and religious specificities of European historical experience. The edited book comprises case studies on Spain, France, Britain, and Italy. The contributors focus mainly on the divergence between the Protestants and the Catholics. Annick Percheron examines the French Catholicism, and its relation to various social values. Eusobio Mujal-Leon examines the how religion continues to be the decisive variable in accounting for the moderate and conservative electoral choice of the voters, taking the case study of Spain.

Colin Crouch in a chapter titled "Social Change" in Colin Hay and Anand Menon (eds.) (2007) *European Politics* argues that established religions of all kinds are in decline throughout Europe. The only major exception to this trend is noticeable among ethnic minority population. According to Crouch (2007: 234), "Religion often plays the cultural identity role for ethnic minorities ... Following the more recent waves of immigration, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, the distinctive forms of Christianity ... and some others have provided valuable identities among immigrant groups and their descendants becoming important constituents of cultural pluralism". The merit of Crouch's work lies in the fact that he not only focuses on the dominant Christian community in Europe, but also studies religious trends among the minorities and immigrants.

Global Civil Religion: A European Perspective by Grace Davie (2001) examines the notion of a global civil religion from a European perspective. He first looks at the

concept of civil society in the European context and examines the role of the Church in the evolution and shaping up of the European civil society. Further, he demonstrates both the capacities and limitations of major European religious traditions to operate on a European level as opposed to parochial national levels.

How Secular in Europe by Loek Halaman and Veerle Draulans (2006) investigate the degree to which European people are secular, focusing not only on religious practices, but also on beliefs. The authors argue that trajectories of religious change occur all over Europe, but at variance among groups. Further, they formulate hypotheses regarding the differences in the degree to which individuals and societies are secularized. Relying on empirical methodology, they use the data from the recent European Values Study surveys and empirically test these hypotheses concerning patterns of variation in religious beliefs and practices.

Religion in Modern Europe-A Modern Mutates by Davie Grace (2000) argues that despite some declining trends in religion, churches remain the significant players within society. Davies then formulates the concept of vicarious religion. Davie (2000: 59) herself defines vicarious religion as “the willingness of the population to delegate the religious sphere to the professional ministries of the state churches” and, moreover, Europeans are grateful that “churches perform, vicariously, a number of tasks on behalf of the population as a whole.” At specific times, churches – or church leaders or church members – are “asked to articulate the sacred” on behalf of individuals, families or society as a whole. Whilst ordinary European citizens may not practice religion on a daily basis, they recognize its worth, and are “more than half aware that they might need to draw on [it] at crucial times in their individual or collective lives”.

In an article, *European Politics Gets Its Old-Time Religion*, Timothy A. Byrnes (2008) comments that in medieval times, religion had an all pervading influence among European societies. The author then goes on to show how there has been a revival of religion. Byrnes remarks that the expansion in EU, along with growth in Europe’s domestic Islamic populations, is not only introducing religious diversity in European context as it also reformulates what and who- gets to count as ‘European’. The author is also of the opinion that as migration and integration continues to expand; an increasingly diverse Europe is likely to see religion mixing with politics.

Religion and Euroscepticism: Cleavages; Religious Parties and Churches in EU Member States by Michael Minkenberg (2009) argues that European integration is a new cultural and value based concept. Europeanness is the driving force behind the integration, and religion is also working as a factor in the European Integration. The author argues that in both domains of Christian parties and churches, Euro scepticism is a marginal phenomenon.

Vrees et. al. (2009) in *Introduction: Religion and the European Union* first remark that the formation of European Union is the most important development in Europe as it deepens and widens Europeanness. They argue that religion is a major factor in fostering European integration. The authors also throw light on the Protestant-Catholic conflict and shows how Christian democratic parties, favouring Catholics, have acquired dominance.

Sergio Carrera and Joanna Parkin (2010) in *The Place of Religion in European Union Law and Policy: Competing Approaches and Actors Inside the European Commission* comment that relationship between religion and Europeanization remains contested and it is also in a state of constant evolution. In the 21st century, religion and religious issues have been a major factor for enlargement of European Union and the project of European integration. The writers give an overview of how religion and religious diversity are being framed and addressed in EU law in policy by undertaking a critical analysis if the ways in which EU law and policy, engage and understand religion at the policy level of the European Commission.

Religion in Europe in 21st Century: The Factors to Take into Account by Grace Davie (2006) is an article that is highly pertinent to the undertaken research. According to Davie, there are six main factors that have shaped the religion in modern Europe. The factors discussed are Cultural Heritage, how the European Church has shaped European culture, an observable change in the church going constituencies of Europe, arrival of new religious groups in Europe, the reactions of Europe's secular elites to the increasing salience of religion in both public and private life, and finally a grown realization that the patterns of religious life in modern Europe should be considered an exceptional case in global terms.

Spirituality and Popular Religion in Europe by Hubert Knoblauch (2008) gives tentative arguments on religion in Europe. The work is divided into two sections. In

the first section, the author talks about religious movements in Europe and also discusses popular religion. In the section the author shows how in modern age, the popular culture can be identified as a major locus of what can be called modern religion.

The Changing Civil Religion of Secular Europe by Marco Ventura (2011) argues that European civil religion is dominated by two basic questions. The first question is why Christians are fighting and killing each other in the name of God for centuries. The second question relates to the theme that as a cultural and social process how secularization led Europe to adopt secularism.

Religion in the New Europe is an edited work by Krzysztof Michalski (2006) that discusses the role of Christianity in the definition of European identity. Leger, Martin, and Berger explain a clash between a secular identity and a long standing Judeo-Christian heritage. The book in its latter sections shows concern over integrating Islam into a vision of Europe. Bhikhu Parikh poses a question to ponder upon whether if Islam is a danger to the multicultural democracies and a view of traditional Islam blend successful with a secular and Judeo-Christian outlook. Oliver Roy raises the complexities behind Turkey's quest for membership in the Union.

Jose Casanova (2004) in his article *Religion, European Secular Identities, and European integration* discusses that in Western European countries, religion is in rapid changing process. One of the major problems is how Islamic problem should be solved with European secularism? Secularism and European Christianity cultural identities are complex and intertwined. The author gives examples of Turkey and Poland. According to the author, Europe can solve the problem of immigration by taking a cue from American model.

The chapter by Jose Casanova (2008) titled *Public Religions Revisited* in the edited work 'Religion: Beyond the Concept' mentions about the varying interpretations of the concept of secularization, and also talks about its relationship with modernity. The author examines whether religion is declining, reviving, and undergoing a transformation in Europe.

Owen Chadwick (1975) in the book *The Secularization of the European Mind in the 19th Century* examines the origins of secularization in Europe, tracing its roots in the

developments alongside Capitalism and Scientific Revolution. The author contends that growth of secularism has taken place gradually. According to the author, Europeans did not abandon morality, but gave up religious phenomenon. The morality however was derived from religion only.

Literature examined above showed various aspects of religion as a concept and how the phenomenon has been impacting French society. The present study intends to examine the nature of secularism in contemporary France. The following sections give the detail of rationale, scope of the study, research questions, and hypothesis.

1.3 DEFINITION, RATIONALE, AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The research studies the notion of secularism and how it evolved in France over history. The research proposes to examine how this concept has undergone a change over time and also examine its application in both political as well as social spheres.

Crucially, the notion of secularism has broad backing across the political spectrum in France from the centre right to the centre left, whenever there are debates about the role of religion in French society. The division of church and state is widely asserted as of the fundamental principles of French republicanism and a principle to be defended.

Since, France is a multicultural society, the policy of French secularism has impacted diverse groups and ethnicities. The proposed research, while examining the conflict between the dominant religion and the various ethnicities in France, would also examine the obstacles that are hampering social integration in France. The research also attempts to discuss the secularism in a multiethnic France, and whether or not it fits in the modern perspective.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What were the changes in religion that were brought about in France as an impact of Modernity?
2. How did the notion of secularism in France evolve after French Revolution?
3. What are the defining features of secularism in contemporary France?
4. Has religion in 21st century France shown a tendency towards revival or that of decline?
5. What are the challenges that France is facing in dealing with the problem of assimilation and integration of culturally diverse groups?
6. What are the challenges for French secularism in view of multiculturalism prevailing in the country?
7. What are the main debates regarding the notion of secularism in contemporary France?

1.5 HYPOTHESIS

1. The processes of modernization such as urbanization, industrialization, and individualization have led to a decline in the social significance of religious institutions, beliefs and practices.

2. As a consequence of secularization, people in contemporary secular French society favor minimal influence of religion in public life as religious tendencies are seen as forces impeding the national integration.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This ongoing research has made use of both primary and secondary sources. Various reports and legislations in France that deal with religious matters have been studied. The research has analysed the pronouncements of French political leaders to understand how different political parties in France interpret the meaning of French secularism. Other primary sources studied will be the official documents and reports of European Commission dealing with religion and secularization, the data from

European Value System Surveys, Eurobarometre surveys, and Eurostat data on issues pertaining to secularism and role of religion.

Apart from general data on the European level, the study has also referred to primary sources that deal exclusively with France. The International Religious Freedom Report, published from the United States has a comprehensive section on France. Similarly eurel.info is a website that covers the social and legal aspects of religion in every European country. From these websites, data on France has been used.

The main secondary sources used are books and articles dealing with firstly with the concept of religion and secularisation as one of their themes, and secondly those dealing with society and religion in France in particular. Secondary literature pertaining to religion in France has been studied the impact of French religious policies on the religious minorities.

1.7 CHAPTERS

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter offers a description of the undertaken research project along with a survey of literary sources. The chapter then enumerates the rationale and scope of study, research questions and the hypothesis.

Chapter 2: Religion and Secularization in France

This chapter examines the concept of secularization. It will also examine in detail the evolution of the concept and the major characteristics. The conceptual differences between secularism and secularization will be established. Then, theoretically establishing a relationship between religion and culture, the chapter studies the institution of religion during the Reformation and Enlightenment period and the process of secularization in France. The chapter then examines in some detail the impact of French Revolution on religion and how the notion of secularism has evolved in France.

Chapter 3: The Debate on Secularism in Contemporary France

The chapter begins by discussing secularism in contemporary France and analyzes the patterns of changes that can be seen in the institute of religion. Subsequently, it also examines how the resurgence is leading to clash and conflict among different cultural groups. It, in particular focuses on the debates of secularism in present day French society.

Chapter 4: Challenges in Managing Multicultural Reality in France

The chapter studies the problems which French society is facing currently and discusses the various cultural groups and their assimilation in French society. It also discusses about the nature of challenges what France is facing in managing cultural diversity

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This chapter presents the main findings of the study in the light of the data collected and also elucidate the nature of secularism in contemporary France.

Chapter 2

RELIGION AND SECULARIZATION IN FRANCE

2.1 Background

To understand the concept of secularization, it is also necessary to look into religion as both are inter-connected. The concept of secularization grows up to an extent of challenging the religion in society. From the development of science, the impact of religion should have been lesser, but at present time we find the reverse. After 1990s, the violence has been increasing in the name of religion. In the whole world, violence in the name of religion is on rise. The contemporary world faces a lot of conflicts in the name of religion – terrorist activists, suicide attacks, ‘war on terror’, genocide between two religious groups and so on (Nye 2008: 1).

Religion could return as an argumentative issue in the public sphere of whole world and also in European society. Recently, there has been a noticeable change in attitude and attention towards religion throughout Europe. Major conferences on religion are being planned intermittently and almost regularly in Europe. Many dialogues or lectures are being organized on ‘religion and violence’, ‘religion and immigration’ or ‘interreligious dialogue’ (Casnova 2008b: 3).

Since the Enlightenment period, the European society was witnessing the decline of religion or decline of practice of religion or keeping religion a private affair. But again religion is becoming hot issue of debate. But it would not be right to attribute this new debate to the rise of Islamic Fundamentalism and the threats and the challenges it poses to the West. Internal European transformation also contributes to this debate (Casnova 2008a: 67). So, this era needs re-opening and clarifying of religion. In this clarification we will not confine to any particular religion, but we will give the core sense of religion.

2.2 Religion: A General Inquiry

We see different uses of the term, religion. Sometimes concept of a particular religion may often be used as universal concept of religion. When any person dislikes his own

religion, he says religion is bad thing. For him, his own specific religion and religion as a broad term is not different thing. He uses the two concepts synonymously. In this sense, the universal experience of religion is shaped by features of a particular religion. Many writers use the term 'religion' for a specific religion. Morton Klass writes, "when I mention religion I mean the Christian; and not only the Christian religion, but the Protestant religion; and not only the Protestant religion, but the Church of England" (Klass 1997: 17). Klass has confined the term universal religion to a particular religion.

Religious studies refer to the study of religion from a secular perspective and have a relatively brief history dating back to the 16th century. In 16th and 17th centuries, Reformation and Enlightenment period opened new ways of thinking about religion, secularization and a growing awareness of religious diversity. Religious studies have a fundamentally non-religious approach as it grew out of a critical attitude towards religion. This does not have a method of study on its own; it is free to draw upon any disciplinary approach that sheds light on the subject (Jones 2007: 5).

The meaning of word 'religion' has been changed from time to time. In the 16th century, in Euro-centric perception, it indicated the institutional life of the Christian Church. Other faith practices were considered either idolatry or paganism. During 18th-19th centuries, religion came to refer to personal attitudes. As knowledge of other religions increased from the late 18th century onwards, the word 'religion' came to include other non-Christian religions too (ibid: 5).

Religion and religious things are viewed from many perspectives. Bernard Fontenelle analysed myths and rituals of classical culture as a way of studying religion by imaginatively reconstructing the thought patterns of primitive humans. He assumed that primitive people were not idiots but were attempting to increase their knowledge by seeking explanations for displays of power in nature. As humanity progressed, primitive people gradually moved from these explanations and discovered truer principles of science (ibid: 10).

Giambattista Vico is of the opinion that we could study religion like any other social form. Religion is social phenomenon and is primarily about institutions and practices, not ideas. He proposed a theory of human nature in which customs of marriage, burial

of the dead, and belief in a divine providence are considered the conditions of being human (ibid: 10).

In *Natural History of Religion*, David Hume attempted to explain the origin and nature of religion as a purely human phenomenon, with no reference to supernatural things or events. He said that religion springs from two sources: first, the human confrontation with the frightening power of nature, which creates the need to seek a means to control; second, the tendency to anthropomorphize which leads people to address natural powers as if they were human (ibid: 14).

Thus, religion has come to fulfil some basic needs of humans; but, it has another side, which is not less dangerous. Human history is full of conflicts and wars on the name of religion. In the history of humanity, the most number of wars have been fought on the name religion, but these religions have very big and antagonistic differences. In spite of this, if we observe the religions in the world, they have some common criteria. On this basis, these are termed as religion in spite of great differences. Religion is a general attitude, which has many common aspects:

- It impacts the whole life of a person fully, not partially.
- It reduces the feeling of insecurity of the life.
- It assures emancipation from miseries.

The members of religious community have inalienable and non-rational faith in religion, on which they do not doubt. Every religion manages certain rituals and prays so that followers could express their faith and reverence. For these purposes, every religion has the following characteristics:

- Major texts.
- Foundational ideas, beliefs and worldviews.
- Particular histories and leaders (Nye 2008: 10).

Sense of having a distinct identity has recognized some as the main religions in the world – Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism, Shintoism and others. These religions spread in the whole world. Besides these, there exist a lot of other ‘religions’ too in the broader form. Some religions are indigenous

that exist in certain locations. Most tribal religions, we can say, are indigenous religions.

There are strong arguments that African traditional religion is a 'religion' in the same sense of Islam or Christianity, with a basic set of ideas. However, counter opinions also exist against this and there are many who argue that the differences between, for example, religions among Yoruba people in Nigeria and Zulu or Shona people in South Africa are too difficult to put them together as a single 'religion'. So to understand religion, we should understand the practices and rituals in the society, not just the name, because those practices and rituals are termed as religion for convenience (ibid: 12).

Some cultural groups do not have religion as separate entity. Their life style and customs are all specific and unique. They have specific language, culture, dance, songs, etc. In such societies, their religions are termed just on the name of tribes. There are many such cultural groups in the world as in Australia, Africa and Latin America. They have religious traditions which are unique to their area. Although mainstream religions have spread to most countries, there are still alongside these, much smaller-scale and culturally local religions. To describe these, we have named them according to the cultural group as Navajo religion among Native American people, Yoruba religion in Nigeria, Arrernte religion among Native Australia (ibid: 13).

In these societies also, religion regulates and controls the whole life. All beliefs, rituals, practices, functions are adopted by following the religion. The name of tribes, their language and their name of religion are often same. Here, the problem is that these religions should have used the term 'religion' or not. Defining religion implies many questions to answer. For instance, should we include all 'religions' in its definition or not? Should we make definition of religion on the basis of existing religious groups? Or, should we determine which social systems are religious on the basis of a set definition?

Many writers argue that religion is classification of cultures and traditions. And it has been decided on the convenience of activities. It would be convenient to think about religion as distinct entity because each one of them is different from each other. Actually the term 'religion' is Western word and concept. Perhaps, religion might be

useful as a starting point to understand 'religion' in general. It points out to us the obvious difference between groups on a worldwide scale, and enables us to look into the cultural issues underlying these differences and into the political conditions. The diversity of beliefs and practices can be so extreme that even two forms of the 'same' tradition might seem to have anything important in common. Nevertheless, both can be recognized as bearing a family resemblance to one another. John Hick, a prominent scholar of religious studies, advises us to abandon the search for a definition of religion and instead recognize that religions have family resemblances that allow to identify them falling under the concept 'religion' (Harrison 2006: 13).

The attempt to describe religion as a separate and independent sphere of human activity did not appear until the nineteenth century. Schliermacher's *On Religion* was one of the first books to regard it as an isolable subject. Prior to that, a religious tradition was identified with the cultural tradition that provided the fundamental means of individual and social identification. Traditionally, religion referred to the basic guiding images and principles of an individual and a culture. Religion was identical with life style (cited in *ibid*: 18).

Timothy Fitzgerald argues that 'religion' implies no clear meaning so that people failed to find any genuine religious phenomena to identify. He thinks that religious phenomena are the result of our imposing an artificial conceptual division between the 'religious' and the 'secular' onto a world that does not exhibit any such distinction. Thus, he claims, the concept 'religion' should be withdrawn from circulation (*ibid*: 14).

We can say that religion is a very broad term. It impacts the life very deeply. Religion guides the life and society completely. It is very common to talk of a number of different religions in the world. For instance, Islam claims that the solution of problems related to life and society exists in the Islamic religious texts. These rules and regulations are forcefully applied to a person so as to guide him. These religious rules and regulations can be called as laws. Similarly, in Hindu society also, caste system is applied as religious rules or as law. In many societies, the words 'law' and 'religion' are almost synonymous.

The word 'religion' itself is not universally translatable, or what it describes. Actually, religion includes the activities in a range of different cultures that look like

the 'religious'. Jonathan Z. Smith cites a list of fifty different attempts to define this concept. Smith says that, it is 'not that religion cannot be defined', but rather 'it can be defined, with greater or lesser success, more than fifty ways' (Smith 1998: 281). The term 'religion' means many different things and so there are many different ways in which we can say something is 'religion'. But from this, it is not clear what is actually being meant by the term. A person might think that its meaning is straightforward and simple, that religion is a 'thing' that is the same for everybody but such a statement may be understood quite differently by someone else (Nye 2011: 17-18).

The scholars themselves are responsible for the sense in which the term 'religion' is used. Smith writes, "Religion is solely the creation of the scholar's duty. It is created for the scholar's analytic purposes by his (or her) imaginative acts of comparison and generalization. Religion has no independent existence apart from the academy" (Nye 2011: 18). Actually, they think they refer to what is happening outside. This word is used in many ways in everyday life. Following this approach, we don't have to single out any particular definition of religion. It is not necessary to say that religion has any particular definition. It is not necessary to say that religion has any particular essence (or basis), nor that it plays any particular role in social, cultural or psychological life. There is no activity, no way of thinking or talking, and no particular type of place or text which is intrinsically religious.

In Western concept, religion is god or absolute power based concept. Friedrich Schleiermacher, philosopher of late eighteenth century, defined religion as 'sense and taste for infinite'. It consists primarily feelings, beliefs and actions secondary.¹ Famous theologian Paul Tillich defines religion as 'ultimate concern'. According to him, religion is direction or movement towards ultimate or unconditional (Mackenzie 1965). But definition on the basis of 'infinte' or 'ultimate' is insufficient to capture the diversity of religious thought and experience. Edward Burnett Taylor defined religion as the 'belief in spiritual beings' (Dow 2007: 4). As he has argued, narrowing the definition of religion to mean the belief in a supreme deity, excludes many people from the category of religion, because they do not believe in deity or god. He also argued that 'the belief in spiritual beings exists in all known societies'.

¹ <http://www.theopedia.com/friedrich-schleiermacher#Theology>.

William James has defined religion as ‘the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine’(Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy 2016). He takes the meaning of divine as something like god or any other thing to which one is committed. But on the other hand, the definition of religion is given by the sociologists and anthropologists from another point of view. *Émile Durkheim*, the sociologist in his book ‘*The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*’, has defined religion as a ‘collective representation that makes things sacred’ (Dow 2007: 5). Religion is a world view that creates the sacred. The power to do this resides in the collective itself, society. So society creates religion.

An increasing number of scholars have expressed that the way we use the concept today is particularly a modern construct that is not understood in many cultures outside the West. Therefore, it is clear that to define the ‘religion’ is very difficult and complicated question. Defining this is very hard, because religion is perennially changing and has less similarities and more difference. Some scholars and thinkers tried to define putting all diversity of all religions. In the book ‘*Psychological Study of Religion*’ James H. Leuba gave more than 50 definitions of religion. John Hick said that instead of defining religion, we should prepare a list of characteristics of religion (Harrison 2006: 13). Sociologists, anthropologists, theologians and philosophers have the different opinions on the definition of religion. According to Oxford English Dictionary, “A religion is an organized collection of beliefs, cultural systems, and worldviews that relate humanity to an order of existence.” From the sociological point of view, the definition of religion can be as it has narratives, symbols, and sacred histories that aim to explain the meaning of life, the origin of life, or the Universe. From their beliefs about the cosmos and human nature, people may derive morality, ethics, religious laws or a preferred lifestyle.

Etymologically, religion is derived from words, ‘re’ and ‘ligare’; ‘re’ means ‘again’ and ‘ligare’ means ‘reconnect’. The meaning of religion is thus to reconnect soul to God. This interpretation is done by famous theologian Saint Augustine. Famous philologist Max Muller took the meaning of religion in this sense. He said it is originally used as reverence of god. Modern scholars such as Tom Harpur and Joseph Campbell take the meaning of ‘religare’ as bond or connect society. But here is another problem. Religion is an English language word and it has a particular history

within the English speaking world. The word 'religion' does not easily translate into other languages. In many cultures, there is no obvious word that can be translated as religion. Gary Cooper points out, for Native American groups, that no tribe has a word for 'religion' as a separate existence. When we talk in English of Navajo 'religion', we can translate any particular word, since European-Americans have imposed a great deal onto Native Americans through a history of conquest (Nye 2011: 17).

Hindus talk about *dharma* as a religion, but *dharma* gives a different connotation. Dharma encompasses other concepts too within its range of meaning. Dharma also describes the order of the world, the way things are, in a sense that is religious or social. In Buddhism, 'dhamm' word is used for religion. In Hebrew and Islam, there is no precise equivalent word for religion because both do not differentiate among religious, racial or ethnic practices. But a word 'halaka' is used for law in Judaism that guides religious practices, beliefs and rituals. In Islam, 'din' word is used for religion.

Some scholars argued that not all types of religion are necessarily separated by mutually exclusive philosophies. Moreover, the utility of ascribing a practice to a certain philosophy, or even calling a given practice religious, rather than cultural, political, or social in nature, has limitations. Graham Harvey (2000: 6-7) divides religions into the following three broad categories:

1. World religions, which refers to international faiths;
2. Indigenous religions, which refers to culture-specific or nation-specific or area-specific religious groups; and
3. New religious movements, which refers to contemporary developed faiths.

Despite all these religious faiths, all sections of society are not necessarily found religious.

2.3 Is Religion a Universal Phenomenon?

Many people in the contemporary world claim that they are affiliated to some religion. Then, is it correct to assume that religion is universal? There are many

people who openly refute religion, and who describe themselves as humanists, Marxists or atheists. The presence of such people indicates that religion is not something that is innate to humanity, but is much more a matter of choice and socialization (Nye 2008: 15).

In 19th century, famous sociologist August Comte said that there are three phases of thinking in the history of humanity – supernatural, metaphysical, and positivistic. He said that positivistic religion is supreme phase. In this phase all metaphysical beliefs are annihilated. He termed a religion as positivistic religion which is based on humanity (Bourdeau 2015). He said that it should be a ‘world religion’. In 20th century, John Dewey, T. H. Huxley and Erich Fromm analysed the religion on the basis of psychology. These thinkers proposed a new concept of religion from the view of human psychology. They said that tradition religion had two aspects – outer and inner. Outer is based on myths and rituals. Inner aspects can be said as religiosity. This religiosity is the most important aspect of religion. They said that, for religion, this outer aspect should be removed from religion but inner aspect should be saved that is religiosity. They made a new religion and termed it ‘naturalistic religion’.

Against the argument of this ‘naturalistic religion’, the logic being given is that religion is universal and shared by all humans. In the new changing world, old traditions are swept off and the religions are taking new shapes. It can be argued that secular ideologies such as Marxism have developed to fulfil the roles and functions, previously filled by religion. Nationalism has provided a new set of ‘gods’ in many countries. Others have looked elsewhere, to the general national and state cultural, or ‘civil religion’, which seeks to create a sense of religion that, binds together those from different religious backgrounds (Bellah: 1967). The concept of civil religion was propounded by Robert Bellah in 1967. It is also suggested that new cultural manifestations have emerged to fill this gap, particularly sports – football or cricket – or the power of film and cinema. In many countries in the European continent, football is like religion. In South Asia, cricket is like religion.

There are some people who claim that our modern age has its secular religions, its political saints, and its profane temples. They are right in a manner of speaking, but to call, for example, Nazism or communism ‘religion’ is to obscure a very significant difference between them and traditional religion. It is also observed that Nazism was a

throwback to a lost tribalism and that every day communalism becomes more 'secularized' and hence less and less a 'religion'. But to describe sport or cinema as a religion does stretch too far the idea of what religion is. It might seem to be trivializing the concept of religion to include things such as football or other sports. These are very far from 'conventional religion'. In this way, they could be called quasi-religious for post-modern and secularized world.

In one sense, we can argue that 'religion' is fictional entity, a construction generated by a powerful desire to impose firm conceptual distinctions on a world that does not in itself exhibit them. In another sense, religion does not seem merely to be a fictional entity; because the result of projecting 'religion' onto the world may well be that our world has come genuinely to exhibit. The desire to separate 'religious' from 'secular' realm may have led to the emergence of two distinct realms – a sphere of identifiable religious practices and institutions, and a sphere of secular practice and institutions that explicitly exclude the religion (Harrison 2006: 18).

2.4 Criticism of Religion

As religion became more a personal matter in Western culture, religious attitudes were increasingly seen as irrelevant for the needs of the European world. During the [Middle Age](#) and continuing into the Renaissance, potential critics of religion were persecuted and largely forced to remain silent. There were notable critics like [Giordano Bruno](#), who was burned at the stake for disagreeing with religious authority. Then, in the Enlightenment period during the 17th and 18th centuries, thinkers such as David Hume and Voltaire criticized religion. For Hume, religion was a result of human weakness. Human invented religion to hide his/her shortcomings and to find a source of support for activities which he/she is incapable of. Voltaire in his criticism does not reject the existence of God directly, but he launched a scathing attack on the concept of religion as propounded by the Catholic Church.

Ludwig Feuerbach propounded materialism and said that the God did not create humans, but humans created the God. He made the way for Karl Marx. Marx said religion is opium, though it is often solace of the suffering people. The theory of evolution by Charles Darwin led to increased scepticism about religion. Sigmund

Freud criticized religion. Freud developed the idea of humanity being the prisoner of its own inner demons, by arguing that religion could be accounted for psychoanalytically. He believed that religion was a human creation, from the result of the need for a father figure (Cherry 2016). Freud wrote several books about the psychogenesis of religion. Bertrand Russell wrote the book *Why I Am Not a Christian*, which influenced several later authors. Russell thought that religious questions did not really belong to the discipline of philosophy, and argued that modern science overcomes religion and replaces it as a method for humanity's self-improvement. He says:

“In this world we can now begin a little to understand things, and a little to master them by help of science, which has forced its way step by step against the Christian religion ...” “Science can help us to get over this craven fear in which mankind has lived for so many generations. Science can teach us, and I think our own hearts can teach us, no longer to look around for imaginary supports, no longer to invent allies in the sky, but rather to look to our own efforts here below to make this world a better place to live in, instead of the sort of place that the churches in all these centuries have made it” (Russell 2009: 557).

Thus, we see that critics consider religion to be out-dated, harmful to the individual. A major criticism of many religions is that they require beliefs that are irrational, unscientific, or unreasonable. As religious beliefs and traditions lack scientific or rational foundations, they will be vanishing from society in this modern and scientific era. This process is called as secularization.

2.5 Religion as a Cultural System

If we want to understand religion, culture is also an important factor. Religion and culture are inter-connected and their studies cannot be separated. Cultural studies encompass all aspects of the life such as work, play, films, literature, sport, festivals, music, and dance. In this regard religion is no different thing from culture; it is an aspect of cultural life. It is important that, like the term religion, the term culture does not refer to an entity in itself. Culture is found in material products such as books, clothes, buildings but most importantly culture is what people do. Raymond Williams pointed out that there are three ways in which the category of culture can be used:

- Culture as an ideal,

- Culture in a documentary sense, and
- Culture in a social sense (cited in Nye 2008: 24).

In the social sense or as a way of life, the study of culture is concerned with all aspects of what people do, such as language, food, dance, music, etc. Raymond Williams talks about this idea of culture as a ‘structure of feeling’. Pierre Bourdieu has given this as ‘habitus’. American anthropologist Clifford Geertz named this term ‘religion as a cultural system’ (ibid: 44).

The most influential work to relate religion in social context was done by French sociologist Emile Durkheim. Durkheim argued that religious phenomena emerge in any society,

“When a separation is made between the sphere of the profane – the realm of everyday utilitarian activities – and the sphere of the sacred – the area that pertains to the numerous, the transcendental, the extraordinary. An object is intrinsically neither sacred nor profane. It becomes the one or the other depending on whether men choose to consider the utilitarian value of the object or certain intrinsic attributes that have nothing to do with its instrumental value” (Cited in Pickering 2001:44).

Clifford Geertz has suggested that study of religion needs to be related to the ways in which people are bound together. The study of culture then becomes more important to understand. Culture is summed up in the phrase ‘historically transmitted patterns of meaning’, which each person experiences as something outside of themselves, and it is given to them by their community/society. It is usually in the process of growing up – through education and general childhood rearing – that a person comes to have a culture” (Nye 2008: 46).

Edward Taylor gave a theory about the idea of culture. His theory was very different from that of Clifford Geertz. Taylor says that “culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man (human) as a member of society” (ibid: 46). Each different group has its own culture.

The cultural concept – a concept of difference – has been the main concern of the discipline of anthropology since the beginning of the twentieth century. About the people of non-western cultures, the anthropologists argue that these cultures should be

learnt and understood in their own terms. Clifford Geertz argues that religion should be analysed as cultural system. He took the concept 'culture' to denote a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conception expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitude towards life (cited in Harrison 2006: 8).

Geertz offers a definition that aspires to identify religions as a sub-class of cultures. According to him, "a religion is 1) a system of symbols which acts to 2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by 3) formulating conceptions of a great order of existence and 4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that 5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic" (cited in *ibid*: 8). Therefore, religion relies on symbols which are understood with a particular meaning. We live in this world where we get a web of symbols. These symbols are both religious and non-religious. Geertz sees it as a culture. It is also important that some symbols are more powerful than others (Nye 2008: 47).

Religion involves the symbols, rituals, practices and a conceptual framework of belief and knowledge. These together constitute a 'cultural system' that powerfully affects the ways in which people see and live in their particular worlds (*ibid*: 47-48). This definition gives a useful perspective from which study could be done about religions. Nevertheless it is not unproblematic. Religions are more varied and intricate than this theory allows. Actually, theories come with their own unique biases. This is the reason, theories of religion would seem to have shed little light on what – if anything – all religions have in common (Harrison 2006: 9).

In all cultural contexts in whole world, religion is integral to other aspects of cultural activity. Religion is nearly always both a set of ideas and beliefs that people can engage with, and also the framework for their lived experiences and daily practices. So study of religion and culture is about understanding how religion may be an important element of how people across the world may manifest their differences (*ibid*: 9). In the beginning of 20th century many scholars looked at religion as purely a matter of believing in some spiritual entity; they tried to explain religion as a part of the process by which individuals either thought through ideas in a semi-rational way,

or tried to come to terms with the emotional and psychic legacy of their childhood. Famous thinker Sigmund Freud proposed that religion is a misguided and unhealthy outcome of the problems inherent in a young boy working through, on an individual basis, his relationship with his father (Cherry 2016). But he ignored the cultural assumptions in putting forward this theory. He made the assumption that religion is derived from the body's psychological process of making up a heavenly father figure called god to compensate for relations with his own father. After religion and culture, the chapter now discusses the concept of secularization and secularism.

2.6 Secularization

The concept of secularization is the creation and product of Enlightenment period. Before Enlightenment period, in Europe the words secularization and secularism had no existence. The enlightenment period produced the revolution in thinking. This revolution created such circumstances in which this concept of secularization has emerged. In this period, the modernity and secularization went hand in hand. The secularization is the process by which the impact of religion on society becomes lesser. Religion becomes less powerful as a social institution with the progress of modernity. As a result of secularization the role of religion becomes very restricted. [In this process the activities of society are not under the control of religion.](#) The power of religious authorities weakens. Social values and institutions become non-religious.

Berger summarises the notion in the following words, “By secularization we mean the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols... as there is a secularization of society and culture, so is there a secularization of consciousness. Put simply this means that the modern West has produced an increasing number of individuals who look upon the world and their own lives without the benefits of religious interpretations” (Berger 1967: 105). He adds more, “The process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols” (Berger 1967: 107).

The term secularization (and also secularism) has been used as an ideological concept laden with values sometimes positive and sometimes negative. In anti-clerical and progressive sense, it has come to stand for the liberation of modern man from

religious tutelage. It is also connected to de-Christianization. When we speak of culture and symbols, we imply that secularization is more than a socio-structural process. It affects totality of cultural life. Here, it is also important that “the process of secularization has a subjective side as well. As there is secularization of society and culture, so there is a secularization of consciousness. This means that the modern West has produced many individuals who look upon the world and their own lives without the benefits of religious interpretations” (Berger 1967).

What are the socio-cultural processes and groups that serve as vehicle of secularization? Viewed from European perspective, main vehicle of secularization is economic process, that is, the dynamics of industrial capitalism. But it also includes some other important factors as development of science and technology, and modernity, democracy and humanism. All these factors collectively produced a new society, ensuing secularization. According to Cox, modernity produced the urban life and critical thinking which collapsed the traditional religion; these became two main hallmarks of secularization. Urbanization made a massive change in the society. It made a situation in which science and technology could be developed (Cox and Swyngedouw 2000).

The secular society does not give importance to the other-worldliness or supernatural things. It centralizes the human. Humans become free from the bondage of religion and supernatural miracles. This is the man turning his attention from the world beyond and toward this world (Cox 1965). Dutch theologian C.A. Van Peursen described secularization as the deliverance of man “first from religious and then from metaphysical control over his reasons and his language” (cited in Cox 1965: 2). It is losing the world from religious and quasi-religious understanding of itself, “the dispelling of all closed world-views, the breaking of all supernatural myths and sacred symbols” (Cox 1965: 2). According to Cox, “secularization is field of human exploration and endeavour from which gods have fled. The world has become man’s task and man’s responsibility. Contemporary man has become cosmopolitan. The world has become his city and his city has reached out to include the world. The name for the process by which this came is secularization (Cox 1965).

When a society undergoes the process of secularization or it becomes secularized, Harvey Cox writes that “It does not believe in religion but does not have serious

interest in persecuting religion. Simply secularization bypasses the religion, ignores the other-world and concentrates on the attention in this world. It relativizes religious world-views and thus renders them innocuous. Religion becomes a private affair. It has been accepted as the peculiar prerogative and point of view of a particular person or group. The gods of religion cannot play any role in the public life” (Cox 1965: 2).

This meaning of secularism is also associated with French Revolution of 1789. Westphalia Treaty (1648) ended; European wars of religion ended; secularization denoted the transfer of property of church onto the control of political authorities. At the time of French Revolution (1789), the property of church was seized by political authorities. Secularization captures “a long-term societal change, but it has consequences for religion itself. In Western countries, where it has been most pronounced, it has made the connection to their Christian heritage more tenuous. Yet secularization is important beyond the formerly Christian West, given that many of the forces that first sustained it there affect other societies as well” (Lechner 2003: 1). Contemporary proponents of this theory say that modernity tends secularization and this in turn tends to erode religion’s plausibility, intensity, and authority. But religion could be survived in private life.

According to Olivier Tschannen (1991), there are many levels of secularization but in general terms it occurs on three levels which are:

- 1) Macro – social differentiation;
- 2) Meso – the decline of significance of religion in organizations; and
- 3) Individual – a reduction in levels of religious practice, belief, faith at the individual levels.”

It is topic of debate how the three levels of secularization are linked together or if any process can occur without any other. Many Sociologists and historians have classified secularization. It is also debatable whether this classification itself is tenable or not. It depends on the writer that on which type he/she is explaining this concept. In an article ‘Secularization: A Bibliographic Essay’ Kevin M. Schultz divided secularization in three classes:

1. Classical Theories of Secularization: Under this, the writer puts the views of original sense of word secularization and views of August Comte, Marx, Sigmund Freud, Max Weber, Durkheim, etc.
2. Institutional Secularization: Secularization's first widely accepted meaning was essentially the process of separation of church and state. More specifically, it meant the confiscation of some of the Catholic Church's property after the Reformation. In nineteenth century, several institutions like the state and the university were "secularized," meaning by which they were no longer controlled by formal religious bodies. This kind of secularization was usually a direct result of the rise in authority of scientific reason.
3. Secularization as Individual Disbelief: From the late nineteenth century to the present, the word 'secularization' has gained mostly the meaning of signifying a decline in religious practices within modern societies. There is considerable evidence of those who proclaimed a rise of disbelief in the modern world (Schultz 2006)

Secularization is both a theory and historical process. From 17th century to present, for long time, secularization has been a dominant discourse in religious change. However, there is no single theory of secularization. We can cite the classical theories of famous thinkers such as August Comte, Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, and Emile Durkheim. They predicted that in modern time the importance of religion would be declined. Auguste Comte announced that, as a result of modernization and industrialization, human society was outgrowing the 'theological stage' of social evolution and a new age was dawning in which the science of sociology would replace religion as the basis for moral judgments. Even though religion was bound to fail as a mode of knowing the world, it still had a function to play in human society. Religion provided rituals and means of association that helped hold societies together. To fulfil this need, Comte set out a new religion named 'Positivist Religion'. Traditional religion could exist no longer because its doctrinal basis had lost plausibility with the advance of science. The positivist religion would affirm the truth that human beings are the real masters of their own destinies and induce them to work together for the common good.

Durkheim asserts that increasing social differentiation as a result of the expanding social division would lead to the separation of the sacred and secular realms. Secular

practices and institutions would dominate and religious beliefs would be eroded. The new institutions and system like nation-state and education are based on social differentiation. Gordon Lynch says:

“Durkheim said that modern society was one in which traditional forms of religion were in terminal decline. He described it as an age in which the influence of the old gods of traditional religion was being replaced by new, more scientific ways of understanding the world. An ardent secularist, he was committed to the construction of the secular state of the French Third Republic and saw the emerging discipline of sociology as a more objective way of understanding the powerful realities of social life which traditional religious language had previously sought to articulate through symbol and myth” (Lynch 2012).

Max Weber is of the view that the economic development and progress are embedded in Protestantism ethic because it rejected many superstitions. Now Protestantism ethic will replace Catholic ethic. Protestantism ethic is based on everyday life and worldliness. He named this as ‘*disenchantment*’ of the world i.e. rejection of magic means of achieving salvation (Weber 1992). He saw the process of “secularization as the culmination of the process of rationalization and as the ultimate *disenchantment* of the world by modern science” (Kosmin 2007: 6). He observes its cultural shift in society following the emergence of rationality and development of science as substitute for superstition. Secularisation is unidirectional process whereby society move from sacred condition to successively non-religious states, the sacred becomes social and political marginal (Haynes 1997: 713).

In this sense, secular refers to a worldview, a system of beliefs, or a modality of sense-making that is determinedly non-religious. Barry A. Kosmin expresses this view in the following manner:

“A disenchanted universe is a purely physical and material one. It gives no support to either moral ideals – which are the result of evolutionary processes – or to religious beliefs – which are the perversely lingering products of more naïve ages, eventually to be swept away by the triumph of a properly scientific outlook. Disenchantment refers to an emptying out of magic, mystery, hints of transcendence, or a faith in realities, entities, or forces unseen but intuited and believed to be essential to human welfare and flourishing” (Kosmin 2007: 7).

The secularization theory is considered the master theory of sociological inquiry, “where secularization was ranked with bureaucratization, rationalization, and urbanization as the key historical revolutions transforming medieval agrarian societies

into modern nations” (Norris and Inglehart 2004: 7). Bryan Wilson (1966) has “described secularization as a long term process occurring in human society and pointed out that the process implicit in the concept of secularization concedes at once the idea of an earlier condition of life that was not secular, or that was at least much less secular than that of our own times.”

Peter Berger offers two theories of secularization – micro and macro. In micro version theory, he argues that

“Changes in religious consciousness are due not only to science and the Enlightenment but also to the expanding social and cultural pluralism that is a central feature of liberalizing societies. This confrontation with pluralism was posited to damage the plausibility of religious dogma. When religious adherents encounter credible others with rival and fully incompatible claims to ultimate truth, their own certitudes begin to suffer. In liberal societies, multiple religious and secular groups jostle for influence on the basis of philosophical and ethical claims, undercutting each of their claims to predominance, and ultimately leading to the privatization of religion in civil society” (Berger 1967: 105).

There is a macro version of the theory of secularization. Ronald Inglehart and Wayne Baker (2000) have argued that “the world is changing in ways that erode traditional values. Economic development almost inevitably brings the decline of religion, parochialism and cultural differences.” Mostly research tells that there is a negative relationship between development and religiosity with some exceptions. Where economic, political and social conditions have improved, religion loses its impact. In rich countries a systematic erosion of religious practices and beliefs has occurred. In contrast, religiosity persists more strongly in poor countries.

In an article “Rethinking Secularization: A Global Comparative Perspective”, the writer *José Casanova* (2007) distinguishes the following three different connotations of secularization:

a) Secularization as the “decline of religious beliefs and practices” in modern times, and this is “the most recent and widespread usage of the term in contemporary debates on secularization.” Religion will decline from the society; society would be modern. In this sense, secularism is another term for atheism. This meaning has emerged in 19th century through classical thinkers.

b) Secularization as “the privatization of religion, often understood both as a general modern historical trend and as a normative condition.” It does not mean that religion needs disappearing from the society. It may continue as a private affair. But it should not have claim in social or public life.

c) Secularization as “the differentiation of the secular spheres (state, economy, science), usually understood as emancipation from religious institutions and norms. This is the core component of the classic theories of secularization, which is related to the original etymological-historical and sociological perspective (Casnova 2007, Bader 2011: 11).

Bryan Wilson says that “a society is secularized when there is:

1. A decrease in the portion of wealth devoted to the ‘supernatural’.
2. An increased independence of social behaviours from religion.
3. An increasing justification of institutions functioning with little or no tie to religion” (cited in Bauberot 2003: 453).

In present context, Bryan Wilson said, religion cannot be said to have lost its social role and it has become a personal issue. He writes on the “role of religion in a secular society that today society consists of furnishing men in the interstices of a social system deprived of soul, where men are half-consenting prisoners” (cited in Bauberot 2003: 454). But for a common man, present vision of secularization has made a religion destined to disappear, may be sooner or later, because the society is proceeding towards modernity.

The concept of secularization emerged since around 400 years ago in Europe. The greatest religious conflict of the sixteenth century contributed to the decline of religion and the rise of secularism in the West. The Catholic Church had dominated all and every sector of society. There was no pluralism in the society. Many religious groups emerged within Christianity. They did not reject God and Bible but they challenged the Pope and catholic doctrines. The religious wars in Europe lasted roughly from 1540 to 1700. Although, these had political causes besides religious issues, religious persecution was practised in virtually every country until after 1700. In the 17th and 18th centuries, religion did not appear as a destructive force, and it had a deep psychological effect (Hitchcock 1982).

James Hitchcock in *The Secularization of the West* (1982) refers to a modern Christianity at the end of 17th century:

“From the period just before 1700 we can date a familiar type of modern Christianity. It stresses ethical teachings, denigrates the importance of basic doctrines, relegates belief to people’s private lives and is embarrassed by open displays of religious fervour. The familiar modern social convention appeared whereby it is considered bad manners to discuss religion, in part because it is likely to be divisive. Religious toleration came to mean not only allowing others to practise their faith but never implying that their faith might be incomplete” (ibid).

England was the first where this was “clearly manifest after about 1690. England had two revolutions in the 17th century, one of them accompanied by a civil war. Religion played a major role in this first one that took place between 1642 and 1660, accompanied by a civil war. But the fragmentation of Christianity and the religious wars which accompanied it would probably not have produced the secularization in the West. There were other forces at work, the long term effects of which were only dimly recognized at the time. The most important of these was the growth of scientific thinking and rationalism. In 1543, the Polish astronomer Nicholas Copernicus challenged the ancient catholic belief that the earth is the centre of the universe. He claimed that the sun is the centre and earth revolves around the sun. The Church condemned this theory but it was widely known in the academic circles. The Italian scientist Galileo Galilei was also condemned by the Catholic Church for teaching the Copernican theory (ibid).

But, it would be a mistake to take that scientific revolution led directly to secularization. The leading scientists (Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, etc.) were devout. Almost all scientists in this era were believers. Newton thought that laws of physics which he formulated made the existence of God more certain rather than less so, since only a Supreme Intelligence could have created such a marvellously ordered and rational universe. If the 17th century still treated Christianity with respect, the 18th century opened a formal attack on it. The philosophers of that era were apostles of the Enlightenment. They were vehemently against superstition and ignorance. In their mental world there was no room for other-worldly or supernatural things. Whatever could not be discovered or proven rationally was false. For them, there was no God who created the world. So there was thus no need for formal religion. They said that religion is based on irrational or illogical things. The intellectuals of the 18th century

held to a morality quite similar to Judeo-Christian morality, but they derived it solely from reason and recognized no religious authority in moral matters. Some of them believed in the possibility of an afterlife but many did not (ibid).

Reformation and Enlightenment “advocated complete religious toleration. Later, many people espoused religious toleration as a way avoiding destructive civil wars. In the 18th century, the intellectuals began to advocate religious toleration as a matter of principle. Their motives were somewhat mixed. In part they urged religious toleration out of respect for individual conscience. In part it was out of the conviction that all religious beliefs were equally false and thus all should be equally tolerated” (ibid).

Up to 18th century the secularization continued to be developed, in more and more radical way. The French Revolution and Science too continued moving in the directions where religion was being damaged. In the 19th century industrial technology came to its own, and it developed its own cult. The *avant garde* held that in time the practical application of science, through the invention of the right kinds of machines, would solve all human problems. Technology gave to some people such an immense sense of self-confidence that dependence on God came to be meaningless. The 19th century also gave birth to three new revolutionary systems of thought, those identified with Karl Marx, Charles Darwin and Sigmund Freud. What all three shared, different though they were in many respects, was a basic materialism. Human existence was described, respectively, by economic necessities, biological evolution, and sexual urges (ibid).

Enlightenment humanism had always prided itself on its morality. It took pride from Christianity, but without sanction of religion. But the new humanism of the 19th century embodied urge to negate and destroy the God. The proponents of secularization had a major impact on the manner in which societies now began to perceive religion. These secularization theorists led to the creation of a scientific temper and rational outlook. Now, everything was judged in reason and this was a fundamental change from the ancient and medieval societies which did not question religion. When secularization occurred, the society got some changes in itself such as differentiation, rationalization, worldliness, autonomization, privatization, pluralisation, and decline in religious practice. Differentiation is central concept of secularization theory without exception. According to Parsons, differentiation plays a

central role. It is clearly regarded as an evolutionary universal. We can distinguish three types of differentiation – (1) vertical differentiation (stratification), (2) horizontal differentiation (between different social functions), and (3) differentiation between culture and social structure. While Christianity is a religious system, the people who believe in Christianity have a social system. Robert Bellah agrees with this scheme. Evolution itself is a process of differentiation (Tschannen 1991: 404).

Second core concept of secularization theory is rationalization. The most extensive treatment of rationalization is done by Bryan Wilson. According to Wilson, rationality refers mainly to a form of abstract and institutionalization. This is clearly more a corollary of the development of technology than of the development of reason. In this form, rationality is completely antithetical to all that religion represents in society. Here, the relations are depersonalized, technologically mediated, and scientifically determined. For example, social control no longer relies on the internalization of moral obligations through religion, but on technical procedure that is independent of religion. Peter Berger said that “modern industrial society has produced a centrally located sector that is something like a liberated territory with respect to religion” (ibid: 405-406).

Worldliness is described by Peter Berger mainly in terms of the diminution of the realm of the sacred. He argues that “Protestantism may be described in terms of an immense shrinkage in the scope of the sacred in reality. The radical transcendence of god confronts a universe of radical immanence, of ‘closedness’ of the sacred.” This is one main factor of secularization. This vision about the world is separated into two realms – the sacred and the profane.

Another important factor is autonomization. This factor is subordinated to differentiation. According to Peter Berger, secularization is defined as a process of autonomization. He writes, “It is the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols.” Bryan Wilson also defines secularization in the terms of autonomization. Autonomization means that society simply no longer needs religion to function. The different spheres of the life become autonomous and enter into completion with religion. He writes more , “This loss of the presidency which religion once exercised over practically all

of man's doing is itself again explicitly presented as a result of differentiation" (ibid: 407).

When a society becomes secularized, that is also pluralized. Peter Berger has provided the most detailed analysis of the process of pluralisation. According to Peter Berger, as a result of pluralisation, the religious institutions become marketing agencies and the religious traditions become consumer commodities. This situation has several important consequences, which can appear contradictory. On the one hand, religious institutions tend to resemble each other. They all apply the same principles of bureaucratic efficiency. These all are worldly things. On the other hand, this convergence also threatens the appeal of the denominations, because their very similitude makes their existence.

Decline in religious practice is a very marginal exemplar in the paradigm. According to Bryan Wilson, "the decline in organized religious participation indicates a way in which the churches are losing direct influence over the ideas and activities of men." But, later he came to the view that secularization is a question of personal commitment or a matter of collective patterns than a question of position within social structure. Luckmann agrees with this view. He says that decline in practice cannot really be used as an index of secularization, precisely because it refers only to a highly institutionalized form of religion which ignores invisible form of religion.

But secularization does not imply the total demise of religion. Religion is not eliminated by the process of secularization, and only the crudest of secularist interpretations could ever have reached the conclusion that it would be. Religion has not disappeared from secular society but has become invisible. Thus secularization describes the world the West has lost. In that world, faith in the supernatural was pervasive and important, indeed taken for granted. A Christian version of that faith commanded unique authority, shaping collective understanding of the world. Its influence extended to art and architecture, music, and literature. Worldviews that denied the validity of Christian doctrine, let alone the existence of the supernatural, were taboo. Religious elites maintained clear standards of transcendent belief and applied them to all spheres of cultural activity (Lechner 2003: 1).

In this world citizenship requires no religious attachment, and society sets no rules for religious conformity. Secular events shape the rhythm of public life; publicly

significant religious occasions tend to lose their transcendent content. Political authority derives its legitimacy from legal procedures and public support. State institutions execute policy with scant consideration of religious purposes. In modern media, education, or business, religious institutions exercise greatly diminished influence (ibid: 2). Secularization theories explain the process as a conjunction of cultural conditions, structural changes, and specific historical events. The Christian tradition provided an impetus toward secularization by making a secular world conceivable. The Judaic conception of a single high God stripped the natural world of magical elements. The Christian church added to this incipient separation of sacred and secular by setting itself up as a distinct corporate body that was not identified with a people or community. Protestant reformers further shrank the scope of the sacred in the world by treating God as removed from ordinary life... Protestant thought legitimated the autonomy of the secular world (ibid: 2).

Christianity also contributed to secularization by breaking up as a single tradition in Europe. The aftermath of the Reformation undermined throughout Europe the broad authority of a universal church, the unquestioned truth of a single faith, and the possibility of maintaining one sacred order. Christian conscience began to make Europe secular by allowing many religions or no religion in a state. In many societies particular social struggles also contribute to secularization. The nature of such struggles depends mainly on the frame, the overall structure of the religious system, with which a society enters periods of modernizing change. For example, as in the case of France, countries that long retained a religious monopoly are likely to experience more violent opposition between defenders of tradition and advocates of secular change, with religion becoming more marginalized where the latter are successful. A starker case is that of the Russian revolution, in which a deliberately secularizing elite intended to secularize the new Soviet society by extinguishing its once-organic religious tradition (ibid: 3).

Secularization can take on a life of its own. Once society is broadly defined as a secular enterprise, religious culture becomes pluralized and rationalization takes hold – the process feeds on itself. In many instances, secularization receives increasing institutional support, for example in the form of legal provisions separating church and state, as well as cultural support, for instance in the form of liberal theological currents. The secular principle of religious freedom, construed as a fundamental

human right, legitimates pluralism” (ibid: 3-4). In sum, secularization theories account for the process by arguing that it occurred in societies where the religious culture fostered separation of the world from the transcendent, religious tradition fragmented in a manner that undermined its former authority, social institutions underwent rationalization that reduced the social role of organized religion, contingent conflicts further undermined its authority (ibid: 3).

American Exception

American experience is different from the European one. It is question; do the American people fit any secularization theory? Many American scholars would reply that whereas secularization may be useful to describe the Western European course of societal change, it does not apply to the United States. Far from creating a secular republic, the separation of church and state in the late eighteenth century created opportunities for proselytizing churches to Christianize America” (ibid: 5). In the 20th century, USA has more churches than before. Throughout 20th century Americans continued to go church and they professed faith in god. They show publicly faith to religiosity.

Religion has been a main issue of political activity in the US. Many new religious movements and beliefs emerged in 20th century in USA. Many social reform movements such as Temperance, Civil Right Movements, etc. were inspired by religion. Religion redefines some public issues. In public life, references to God and religious tradition are common and legitimate; the United States remains a nation under God (ibid: 5). Reinhold Neibuhr, famous theologian of USA, said that Americans are “at once most religious and most secular. This is paradox of American society but it exists” (Kosmin 2003: 9). “In his book *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, Will Herberg talks about the paradox of ‘pervasive secularism and mounting religiosity’ a mind-set involving thinking and living within a broad framework of reality that is far from one’s professed religious beliefs. This apparent paradox still exists today because it is part of the American cultural tradition” (ibid: 6).

The contemporary United States, by contrast, exhibits both high modernity and substantial religiosity among the populace and so shows that secularization has not

been sweeping, thorough and total. This situation is just what many soft secularist thinkers of the Enlightenment, such as John Locke, Adam Smith, and Thomas Jefferson, both desired and predicted (ibid: 8). The situation is different in USA, where the churches occupy a more central symbolic position, but it may be argued that they have succeeded in keeping this position only by becoming highly secularized themselves. So European and American cases represent two variations on the same underlying theme of global secularization (Berger 1967). The proponents of secularization theory insist again and again that America has undergone secularization. But in some respects, America is not fully secularized country. The American religious pluralism and competition constitutes the form of secularization. Christianization and secularization go hand in hand (Lechner 2003: 5).

Islamic Exception

Does the experience of Islamic countries show that secularization is a Western European notion? Though differences exist, many think that Islam is their identity. In these countries Islam is not a private choice. The whole structure of society is built upon the principles of Islam. It determines the shape of family and community life. No religious place could be 'separated from political realm'. Even when the rulers do not appeal directly for religion, religion holds strong grip on society. In many places Islamic movements (that were based on Islamic laws) reasserted again and Islamic laws re-imposed. Iranian Revolution was based on Islamic laws; it reversed secularization and re-imposed Islamic Republic. In Islamic world, only Turkey is secular country but it was made by force. In the "Islamic context, however, secularization is also a political issue, a target of criticism, a model to be feared. Secularization has a reflexive quality. Islam is therefore not an exception by virtue of not being secular; rather, it provides a counterpoint by showing that becoming secular is more contentious than conventional accounts have recognized (Lechner 2003: 6).

In this context, the concept of 'clash of civilizations' has been proposed by Samuel Huntington in the 1990s. "The view that Islam teaches hatred for the West, particularly for its democratic traditions, is sometimes heard in the conservative media today. But this is not true. The data indicates that Muslim population are generally as supportive of democratic ideals and political methods as people in the West. If there is

any clash of civilizations with the West, it lies in Muslims' attitudes toward gender equality and sexual liberation, of which they strongly disapprove" (Daly 2004: 136).

2.7 Critique of Secularization Theory

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, a controversy raged about the question of secularization. Jeffery Hadden contended that this theory is, "a hodgepodge of loosely employed ideas rather than a systematic theory" (cited in Tschannen 1991: 1). Secularization is debated as essential consequence of modern age, or some instances of secularization are taken as exceptions. In recent years, secularization theory is "under attack based primarily on two frames of reference: the growing influence of Islamic fundamentalism and the continuing vitality of religion in the United States" (Daly 2004: 134).

The central point of secularization came from the Enlightenment period. When the secularization theory was propounded, the protagonists of this theory thought that religion would be vanishing from the society gradually. They thought that religion is traditional phenomena which would be withered away by modernization process. But after 1990s we are observing that this is not happening, but instead this provoked strong counter secular movements in the whole world. In 1960s, some thinkers such as Shiner, Greeley and Martin predicted that this theory is problematic. They criticized the secularization theory but at that time it was ignored. The main point of the critic of this theory is that secularization is defined as decline of religion from the social sphere. But in 1990s it proved right that religion is not going away. Not only religion persisted in social sphere as well as at individual level, but also this theory "implies that past was more religious, which is not easy to prove." Peter Berger, who was himself protagonist of this theory, said that this theory was essentially mistaken. Rodeny Stark and Andrew Greeley said same thing, The central claim of the critique is that, is secularization is defined as the decline of religious beliefs and practices in modern societies, the theory of secularization is bunk (Schultz 2006). It is correct that in this modern time, society found some secularizing effect, but it also produced the powerful movements of counter secularization.

Norris and Inglehart (2004) “agree with critics such as Peter Berger and Rodney Stark that classical secularization theory was too general and empirically weak. Nevertheless, substantial new data show that the theory is essentially correct, if still in need of further conceptual refinement. They argue that the varied decline and persistence of religion in the world today is most strongly correlated with differing levels of ‘existential secularity’. Essentially, religion persists where people bear high levels of risks due to inequality, poverty, and inadequate social provision by the state. Conversely, more equal, less impoverished societies, especially those with comprehensive welfare provisions, have become increasingly secular by every relevant measure” (Daly 2004: 134). The authors complex regression analyses show these correlations to be very robust across more than seventy countries – agrarian, industrial, and post-industrial” (ibid: 134).

David Martin was “the first contemporary sociologist to reject the secularization thesis outright, even proposing that the concept of secularization be eliminated from social scientific discourse on the grounds that it had served only ideological and polemical, rather than theoretical, functions and because there was no evidence in favor of any general or consistent shift from a religious period in human affairs to a secular period” (cited in Stark1990: 254). Talal Asad has same view about the emergence of religion. He says that “the contemporary salience of religious movements around the globe, and the torrent of commentary on them by scholars and journalists, have made it plain that religion is by no means disappearing in the modern world” (Asad 2003: 145).

Interestingly, secularization theory has also been falsified by the results of adaptation strategies by religious institutions. Some thinkers (as Christian Smith) say that secularization is intentionally political project than a socio-cultural development. “Many studies identify the central role played by church-state institutions in causing variation in secularization across societies. Political mobilization on the basis of religion is often triggered by the efforts of political elites to reduce the public role of religion (institutional secularization) or extend governmental authority to domains previously organized by religious institutions. Can the theory of secularization as a particular theory of European historical developments be dissociated from general theories of global modernization? Can there be a non-western, non-secular modernity or are the self-definitions of modernity inevitably tautological in so far as secular

differentiation is precisely what defines a society as modern” (Casanova 2006: 10)? Secular should not be thought of as the space in which real human life gradually emancipates itself from the controlling power of ‘religion’ and thus achieves the latter’s relocation (Asad 2003: 191).

Secularization theory had undergone a numerous critic and revisions in last 20 years. This theory has uncontested to explain the process of functional differentiation of the various institutions in modern society in European perspective. But this is important to know what this theory of modernization and secularization is dissociated or included from other. In European context, the secularization, religion and secular are “inextricably bound together and mutually condition each other. The historical process of secularization effects a remarkable ideological inversion... For at one time ‘the secular’ was a part of a theological discourse [*saeculum*],” while later “the religious is constituted by secular political and scientific discourses, so that ‘religion’ itself as a historical category and as a universal globalized concept emerges as a construction of Western secular modernity (Asad 1993: 192).

Europe is passing in mixture of religion, modernity and secularization. This present mode of secularization is unique and full of religious discourse. In this respect “vulgar vision of secularization” is coined by some thinkers. This is the present stage of secularization. Peter Berger considers it “unfaithful to the mental processes that underlay the theories of secularisation.” For Peter Berger, religions are getting furious in 20th and 21st centuries. It is in fact admissible that certain forms of society affected the society. On the contrary, a revival has appeared of ‘conservative’ movements that show that counter-secularisation is at least as significant as secularization. He concludes, “This interaction of the forces of secularization and counter-secularisation is one of the most important subjects for the sociology of contemporary religion” (cited in Bauberot 2003: 454).

2.8 Secularization in Europe

In the criticism of secularization theory, it was said that world is becoming more religious than before. But some are exceptions. And Western Europe is one of them. Western Europe seems to hold the traditional theory of secularization. Traditional

theory of secularization says that increasing modernity would lead to decline in religion, both on societal level and individual level. Modernization is the key indicator of secularization. Western Europe experienced a rapid decline in religion after Second World War. Now there is massively secular Euro culture. There are the similar developments in Eastern Europe so that these countries could be integrated in Europe at all levels. “Over the last 60 years, religion in Europe has seen a strong decline. On average throughout the Europe, only half of its people believe in God and 25.4% directly say that they have no religion.” Philosopher Ruediger Safranski calls this ‘cold religion’ (<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2009/novemberweb-only/145-11.0.html>). There is much variation from country to country. The table below gives an indicator of the measure of how religious people in various European countries are:

Table No.1

Country	% Religious
Estonia	16
Sweden	17
Denmark	19
UK	27
France	30
Belarus	34
Russia	34
Albania	39
Latvia	39
Luxembourg	39
Hungary	39
Germany	40
Switzerland	41
Lithuania	42

Source: <http://www.humanreligions.info/secularisation.html>

Despite the low rate of belief in God, many Europeans still claim to belong to theistic religions. 49.5% of the population of Europe say they are Catholic Christian, 15.7% say they're Muslim, 12.7% say they're Protestant Christian, 8.6% say they're Orthodox Christian and 0.4% say they are Jewish. These numbers mean that at least 30% of Europeans are putting down a religion despite not believing in the very basic first principle of the religion they put down” (<http://www.humanreligions.info/secularisation.html>). But it does not mean that religious discourse is vanishing from Europe. It is true that people do not go to church on regular basis but there is increased religious discourse. Data indicates strong survivals of religion, despite the widespread alienation from the organized churches. This shift in the institutional location of religion, rather than secularization, would be a more accurate description of the European situation (Berger 1967: 126).

Process of secularization, rationalization, differentiation, and modernization, post-modernization –they have all changed the role of religion and churches in Europe (Halman and Draulans 2006: 283). These processes occur throughout Europe but not at similar speed in all European countries. Data shows that some countries are more secular, some are less.

2.9 State Secularism

State Secularism is a political form of secularism that arose in modern age like secularism in Europe and America. When the norms and values of secularism are applied in the state or governmental level, that state can be said as a secular state. This concept also commences from French Revolution. In French Revolution the property of Catholic Church was seized by state, and a notion was developed that the area of state and religion should be separated. So it requires separation of the religious from political institutions. French Revolution produced the modern nation-state that prohibits discrimination on the basis of birth. Therefore, the emergence of secularism is closely connected with the emergence of modern state.

Charles Taylor (2010) identifies two reasons by which secularism legitimizes itself in modern time – (a) It makes an attempt to seek the common point among conflicting religious communities; and (b) It defines a political ethnicity that is independent of

religious convictions. Although the notion of secularism emerged in Europe in opposition of excesses of Catholic Church, it is also applicable in non-European and non-Christian world. As the non-European countries were facing the religious conflict among different communities, they decided to adopt the policy of religious pluralism and tolerance. Today in modern world the homogenous state is not possible. So the policy of secularism not only prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion but also protects the rights of religious minorities. It confirms the social harmony in heterogeneous society. Modern state cannot survive without it. Sometimes it is called democratic state, as it protects the rights of all citizens.

In secular state, the politics has its own immanent principles and values. This does not imply that religious principles and values can have no role in politics and public life. It only implies that, in terms of constitution and law, religious institutions and government institutions are differentiated. Secularism is not simply an intellectual answer to a question about enduring social peace and tolerance. It is an enactment by which a political medium (representation citizenship) redefines and transcends particular and differentiated practice of the self that are articulated through class, gender and religion (Asad 2003: 190). So, state secularism can be said as what view state has towards religion. Secularism on state level and secularism on social level are not same. It may be possible that a state is secular but its society is not secular.

2.10 Secular, Secularity, Secularism and Secularization

Secular and its variants are many terms as secularization, secularity, and secularism. All these terms are consequences of relation between religion and society. Today these terms are more pervasive and influential in the society. These words have a range of meanings. “Secularity refers to the individuals and their faiths and beliefs whereas secularism refers to area of social and political institutions” (Kosmin 2007: 1). “The ‘secular’ is conceptually prior to political doctrine of ‘secularism’ that over time a variety of concepts, practices, and sensibilities have come together to form the ‘secular’.” This word is used as an adjective of secularization. This word is used in the meaning (a) worldly rather than spiritual, and (b) not pertaining to religion or religious things. In short it is concerned to the temporal dimension of social life.

We will now discuss some difference between secularity and secularism. Secularity refers individual personal beliefs and faiths. It is same with secular ideas and traditions. This is the name of mentality to think about world. This is a way of life. It is inclined to empirical analysis. Its manifestations can be measured and compared. While secularism refers the institutions and organizations that reflect the secular expressions in the public life of a country, by this definition, this is hardly measured. Forms of secularism can be varied in different countries because the expressions of the institutions and organizations of the countries are varied. In short it can be said that secularity is a way of thinking while secularism is a set of theories.

Whereas there are differences between secularization and secularism, both these terms are very important in daily life and central notion defining the character of modern society. We have earlier said that secularism denotes to material life and it aims on thinking on truth and reason. So secularism is a principle which is focused on material things and abstains from any form of the other-worldliness. Secularization is a process that focuses on non-religiosity. It stresses on the radical change in the society. It is a kind of protest of the rational minds resisting the zeal of religious institutions and protesting against the excesses and extravagances of religion and politics. Harvey Cox writes, “Secularization is man turning his attention away from worlds beyond and toward this world and this time” (1965: 3).

We discussed the concept of secularization as a theoretical basis and its related words. Now, let us discuss how the concept of secularization emerged in France.

2.11 Secularization of France

During *Ancien Regime* (old rule), Catholicism was the main religion of France. It was also recognized as the state religion. France was considered as the eldest daughter of Church. *Ancien Regime* was monarchic rule established by king of France from 15th century to 18th century. He had close linkage with Catholic Church. In whole Europe, this period was the Reformation and Enlightenment period when the modern thinkers, scientists and philosophers challenged the Catholic. Within Christianity, a new sect Protestant emerged. This name Protestant was for this because they protested the Catholic principles. The Catholic Church did not like this and it was in power. So this

period led to the path of a war between Catholics and Protestants. The Protestants were inspired by Martin Luther and John Calvin. John Calvin was a great theologian and Protestant Reformer. A new School 'Calvinism' is called by his name. He was a great scholar, polemic and apologetic. He wrote many commentaries on Bible and other books related to religion. His views spread throughout the world. These Protestants were called Huguenots in France. This name was given to this religious group by their opponents. They call themselves as Reformers. In France, they were in minority. In 1562, their population was two million while Catholics were sixteen million.

2.11.1 Reformation

In the beginning of Reformation, they faced persecution at both the society and state level. The King of France, Francis I (1515-1547) protected them. They had huge influence on society and used to show their faith openly. So Catholic Church had jealousy and hostility towards them. King Henry II (1547-1559) died in 1559 and his son Francis II became his successor. In his ruling period, many Huguenots were charged with heresy and punished by Catholic judges. First time, in 1561, an Edict of Saint German was formally recognized for them and its religious tolerance policy was limited. This whole scenario opened the conflict between the Catholics and Huguenots (Salmon 1975: 21-22; 335-337).

This conflict took the physical form during the Civil War (1562-1598), when the famous St. Bartholomew's day massacre took place. In the massacre thousands of Huguenots were killed by Catholics in Paris (Speight 2005: 1-2). Similar kinds of massacre took place in other cities. Exact number of people who were killed throughout the country is unknown. Thereafter, Henry IV (1589-1610) became the king of France. He was very farsighted king. Due to his kindness, the policy of secularism was promoted in the country. Before being the king of France, he was a Protestant. In 1593, he changed to Catholicism so that he could get support from Catholics. In 1598, he issued the Edict of Nantes. This Edict gave equality, rights and religious freedom to Huguenots. This Edict opened a path for secularism and tolerance in France. It offered the freedom of conscience to every individual. It gave some concessions to Protestants such as amnesty and reinstatement of civil rights. Its

aim was to promote civil unity in the country (Virtual Museum of Protestantism 2014A). With this, the Edict accepted Catholics as a state religion. This Edict could succeed in making peace and religious harmony in France for a time, but this Edict could neither satisfy the Huguenots nor the Catholics. It was to deal only with Catholics and Protestants; it did not mention Jews and Muslims. In 1610, King Henry IV was assassinated by a Catholic (Salmon 1975: 342).

After his death, the Huguenots became afraid about cancellation of Edict of Nantes, but it remained in existence. His son Louis XIII (1610-1643) became his successor. He imposed many prohibitions on Huguenots and made rules for their persecution. Huguenots opposed this vehemently as they could not tolerate this. They became fearful that any another massacre like St. Bartholomew's Day might happen with them. On being discriminated and their subsidies reduced, they started to flee from France. At his ruling time the famous La Rochelle incident happened. La Rochelle was the second largest city of France at that time. There was a war to siege this city in 1627-1628 (Elliott 1991: 99-100). This war was between French Forces of King and Huguenots. This war ended with the complete victory of Catholics and French King. In this war Britain openly supported Huguenots because Britain was Protestant majority country. In spite of this Huguenots were defeated. In 1629, the Edict of Alice (Peace of Alice) was signed between French king and Huguenots. It confirmed the basic principles of the Edict of Nantes, but provided Huguenots no political rights.

At this time, the famous Thirty Years War (1618-1648) took place in Europe. In the beginning this war was between Catholics and Protestants in fragmenting the Holy Roman Empire but it involved in the great powers of Europe. This war ended with Peace of Westphalia (1648). This war resulted in the rise of France as a Power, Decline of feudalism, and Protestant princes gaining rights of religious practices. Louis IV became king in 1643. He was grandson of Henry IV. The peace made by Edict of Alice could not last long. In 1685 he cancelled the previous Edicts and issued a new Edict named Edict of Fontainebleau. This edict ended the official policy of religious toleration for the Huguenots, and with this no Huguenot could hold public office or swear the oath necessary in any profession (Virtual Museum of Fontainebleau 2014B). It produced very damaging result in France. It declared Protestantism illegal in France. The King Louis IV ordered the destruction of Huguenot churches and schools. Due to these policies a large number of Protestant

left France. They took shelter in Britain, Sweden, Switzerland, Denmark, Protestant states of Holy Roman Empire.

The King of France asked not to give them shelter in the neighbour countries. Huguenots were very skilful, learned and business minded persons. They were welcomed in their guest countries. They established business in their new countries. Due to its discrimination policy, France suffered brain drain. Almost all Huguenots fled from France. The neighbouring countries instead inspired them to seek refuge and settle in their countries. The Duke of Prussia issued the Edict of Potsdam in 1685 which gave many concessions to discriminated Huguenots for immigration in Prussia. Out of 8-9 lakhs, only 1000-1500 remained in France; this figure was accepted himself by the King of France. Thereafter, Edict of Versailles was issued which is also called as the Edict of the Toleration. It was an official act which was issued in 1787 by the King Louis XVI (Michelinewalker 2014). It gave the rights to non-Catholics. Yet it did not include freedom of religion directly. Freedom of religion was adopted after two years in 1789 (French Revolution) in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen.

In 17th century, France fought many wars. Due to many wars such as Seven Years War (1756-1763) and American Revolutionary War (1775-1783), economic condition of France became very bad and produced the circumstances for French Revolution. When the King Louis XVI took the throne in 1775, he appointed many scholars and thinkers in his government. Among the reforms they proposed, was religious toleration, which led to a royal edict issued in November 1787 (Anderson 2007: 7-8). This edict granted to non-Catholics full eligibility for public offices and membership in royally sanctioned bodies. Enlightened Reformers celebrated this change, by which Louis XVI intended to restore traditional liberties to the small Huguenot minority, as a benefit to all of France. Catholics, especially higher-ranking clergy and court nobles, worried that toleration of religious minorities would lead to immorality and religious conflict, and they used their influence to oppose the policy.

2.11.2 Age of Enlightenment

In this period in the whole of Europe, the dominant religion was the Catholic. The main leader of the Catholic was Pope. Pope was representative of God on earth. There were a lot superstitions and rituals in society in the era of Catholic Church. In this era, the new cultural and intellectual forces emerged. They challenged the institution of Catholic Church that was deeply rooted in the society. The thinkers and scholars influenced the society by publishing works of thought. In this era the main scholars were Jean Jacques Rousseau, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Diderot, and Jean le Rond d'Alembert. They were in favour of society that should be based upon reason rather than faith and Catholic doctrine. They believed in scientific rationality based on experiments and observation (Bristow 2011: 4-5).

Rousseau was the great political thinker. He rejected the divine theory of state and propounded the theory of liberty and equality. His book 'Social Contract' became very popular among people. This was a political treatise, which gave a profound influence on French political and educational thought (Sabine 1973: 533). Voltaire used to say his feelings by satires. His satires gave a great impression. He raised a voice to demolish the Catholic Church due to its intolerance, hypocrisy and superstitions. But he did not claim that he was atheist. His satires used to open the bitter reality of French aristocracy and clergy. He wrote in his style that Nobles and Priests were afraid of him. His books were banned. He was exiled for his satires by the French ruler. In spite of this, he was very popular among the people (Third Estate). Montesquieu introduced 'the idea of a separation of powers in a government'. He went to Britain and he appreciated the British ruling system (ibid: 509). This concept of Montesquieu was adopted by authors of United States Constitution. The philosophy of the French Enlightenment played an important part in undermining the legitimacy of the Old Regime and shaping the French Revolution.

The new ideas and discoveries were publicized throughout Europe by book publishers in Paris. Between 1720 and 1780, the number of books about science and art published in Paris doubled, while the number of books about religion dropped to just one-tenth of the total. Scholars argued that all mankind had certain natural rights such as life, liberty, and ownership of property, and that government should exist to guarantee these rights. In later part of the 18th century, some radical scholars

advocated the right of self-government. These ideas became the base of decentralization of power which led to French Revolution (Anderson 2007: 5). Besides religious work, Church held the monopoly on state education, as well as being a major source of charity. It maintained registers of births, marriages and deaths and ran the hospital system such as it was under the old regime (ibid: 143).

In this period, religion was the most important aspect of life for everyone. From the most devout clergy to the most Enlightened Philosophers, and from the poorest peasants to the wealthiest aristocrats, life revolved around the religion (Brown 2003: 159). Parish priests provided moral guidance and also performed important civic functions. Parish priests were often the only literate common people in rural areas; so, they provided peasants their only source of news from the world beyond the village (ibid: 160). The Catholic Church was by far the largest single landowner and employer in old regime. Roughly 10 percent of the cultivated land belonged directly to the church; plots were awarded to higher-ranking clergy as benefits from which they drew seigniorial dues from the peasants. The church also collected the tithe – 10 percent of anything grown – on nearly all the land in the kingdom. France's subjects and clergy were under compulsory allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church (ibid: 159).

Such form of religion was accepted and was recognized by the Church. The priests were corrupt and demeaned persons. The non-Catholics were not considered as human beings. The Huguenots did not have rights under law. This disparity were increasing continuously, producing a staunch feeling of tension. On the other hand, this was spreading consciousness for revolution. The most terrific problem of French society was privilege. On the basis of tradition, clergy and nobility had privilege. The Church was the tool by which the people used to get emancipation. A Catholic was true only if the person followed the Church. Catholic believed that human was born in sin and on the blessings of God he could get emancipation. This bliss could only be provided to those persons who would go in the shelter of Church. Townspeople had a more direct relationship to the church. Most artisan guilds and professional corporations had their own chapels, patron saints and prayer groups known as confraternities. In both cities and towns, ordinary people viewed the priesthood or a monastery or convent as a chance for a fulfilling career (ibid: 160).

Men of reason viewed the Church as the principal agency that enslaved the human mind. Many scholars preferred a form of Deism, accepting God but rejecting the Christian theology. Nothing was attacked with more intensity than the Church, with all its political power and wealth and its suppression of the exercise of reason (Anderson 2007: 6). A rationalist religious philosophy known as Deism flourished in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Deists held that a certain kind of religious knowledge or natural religion is either inherent in each person or accessible through the exercise of reason, but they denied the validity of religious claims based on revelation or on the specific teachings of any church. Deists advocated rationalism and criticized the supernatural or non-rational elements in the Judeo-Christian tradition (Anderson 2007: 152).

The *Encyclopedia*, in which numerous philosophers collaborated, was edited by the rationalist Denis Diderot in Paris between 1751 and 1772. It was a powerful propaganda weapon against ecclesiastical authority, superstition, conservatism and the semi-feudal social structures of the time. It was suppressed by the authorities. In 1787, an Edict of toleration was issued that recognized non-Catholics. But despite this Edict, the Catholic Church remained official religion and it retained its right as sole practitioner of religion in the public sphere until after the Revolution (Gordner 2008: 74). There was always a price to pay for enlightened ideas considered irreverent and blasphemous to church and crown. Voltaire was exiled for his satires. Language of Enlightenment period entered the vocabulary; the words such as secularism, republic, nation, and democracy spread throughout the France. More so, when the constitution of USA was written, it was based on separation of powers, a concept propounded by Montesquieu. The US constitution makers were very influenced by French writers and thinkers. They accepted that French philosophy became their source of inspiration.

2.11.3 French Revolution

French revolution has its own importance in French history. It had its impact not only in France but also in whole Europe and the world. This revolution profoundly changed the modern history. It produced a wave of global conflicts. Historians regard this as one of the most important events in the human history. The causes of this revolution were rooted in the social and economic situation of that time. Following

the seven years' war and American Revolutionary War, French government was deeply in debt and attempted to restore its financial status. At this time French society was divided into three estates – the clergy (First Estate), the nobility (Second Estate), and the rest of people (Third Estate). The top two tiers of society, the First and the Second Estates, dominated the Third and monopolized education, high posts in church and government, and the upper echelons of the military. Within these privileged classes, there was a wide difference. Some were wealthy nobles who used to live in king's court. While others were often poor and they were living in the countryside. Similarly, the Bishops enjoyed courtly life, owned land, and lived well off peasant labour and royal subsidies. On the other hand, the village priests were often as poor as hid flock, living in a village church. The upper crust of the third Estate comprised of skill men and professional families that today we refer to as the upper middle class, and below them in social status were the artisans and craftsmen (Anderson 2007: 2).

The king was supreme crown. He had the absolute power and divine rights to rule over his subjects. He accepted the institutions of local customs, and laws. The King Louis XVI was an ignorant and incapable person. He had no leadership quality. He had no capacity to take decision. On the other hand, the public was ready for revolt. The country was in financial crisis, but from the side of King no sufficient efforts were done to come out from this crisis while these could be done. On 14th July the insurgent people occupied the Bastille fortress that was the symbol of Royal tyranny. In French history this incident is considered as a shift from ancient monarchic aristocratic to modern democratic state. 'Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen' was adopted by the National Assembly in 1789. In the month of August, the clergy and the nobles themselves renounced their privileges. After some days, the National Assembly passed a law for abolishing feudal and manorial prerogatives. Parallel legislation prohibited the sale of public offices and of exemptions from taxation and abolished the right of the Roman Catholic Church to levy tithes. Then the National assembly drafted the constitution (ibid: 11-12).

Revolutionary leaders who came to power in 1789, placed religion on their agenda to better promote morality. To achieve this goal, they took actions such as confiscating church lands and auctioning them off to generate revenue for the national treasury. They hoped this transfer of land would generate support for the revolution among the peasantry by putting more land into their hands. In return, the clergy were to be paid

an increased salary by the government in return for swearing a loyalty oath to French Republic rather than the Pope or the King (Brown 2003: 161).

The French concept of secularism, or *laïcité*, was born out of the Revolution of 1789. The 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen states in Article 10 that No one may be disturbed on account of his opinions, even religious ones, as long as the manifestation of such opinions does not interfere with the established Law and Order. Article 11 affirms that “Free communication of ideas and opinions is one of the most precious human rights”. Revolution shifted the power from Catholic Church to state. Legislation enacted in 1790 abolished the Church’s authority to levy a tax on crops, cancelled special privileges for the clergy, and confiscated Church property. The Assembly essentially addressed the financial crisis in part by having the nation take over the property of the Church. Civil constitution of the clergy was adopted in 1790. It put Catholic Church under state control. The principles of the French secular republic date back to the Revolution and the Declaration of the Rights of Man. The French Republic granted free and equal rights to all and gave the sovereignty to the nation (New World Encyclopaedia 2015).

During the French Revolution, a step was taken up for the rights of the Jews. During the Revolution, in 1791, Jews were emancipated – they received full civic rights as individuals, but none as a group. This formula provided the blueprint for the assimilation of all ethnic groups in France for the next two centuries. During the revolutionary war, Jacobins got divided into two groups – Montagnards and Girondins. The Jacobins wanted France as a Democratic secular Republic. Montagnards called themselves the patriots of France. Most of its members came from middle class, its leader was Robespierre. Montagnards governed France into this period. They insisted that the king is undermining the revolution so he should be executed. The king was executed in 21 January 1793. In September 1793 the open violence and mass execution started. In 1794 Robespierre lost his own support. In July 1794 Robespierre was executed. The ruling came into the hands of Girondins Group (Anderson 2007: 16-19).

In May 1793, the Commune terminated all clerical salaries, closed churches in Paris, and forced 400 priests to resign. Sunday and Christian feast days were abolished by the new revolutionary calendar. In spite of the efforts to destroy the Catholic faith in

France, there remained a deep and widespread substratum in the provinces that would never abandon its cherished beliefs (ibid: 150-151). Robespierre had “proposed a new state religion, the Cult of Supreme Being, based around the worship of a Deist-style creator” (ibid: 153). Following the Thermidorian Reaction the National Convention restored the freedom of religion. Revolution tried to destroy the power of Catholic Church but it could not. French Revolution has very significant role in the history of France. It impacted the whole Europe as well as the World. It recognized the secular, human values. Values such as secularism, religious freedom, and religious tolerance strengthened the other people’s movements that were going on in Europe (Hitchcock 1982).

The French Revolution accomplished many of the goals of the Enlightenment, sweeping away by violence all the social institutions to which the intellectuals objected as church. If they approved of many of the goals of the Revolution, they did not approve its methods. They believed in reason, but the revolution brought also violent passion and hatred (ibid). If the Revolution was in one sense the fulfilment of the Enlightenment, it was in another sense its repudiation. It destroyed the religious authority by violence, not rationally and logically. Discrediting all religious authorities ushered in a period of near anarchy. During the so-called Reign of Terror, thousands were guillotined; many of them were probably innocent (ibid).

Similar ideas and practices spread to other parts of Europe where the Revolution became, in time, a permanent feature of European life. Since the Revolution, there have been few instances of physical persecution directed against believers in the West, unlike what happened in France. However, in many European countries, as in France and Spain, the revolutionaries could harass the church and destroyed its influence. Legacy of the revolution was both positive and negative. The administrative, judicial and financial reforms of the early 1790s created systems which were uniform, rational, efficient and long-lasting. There was also the promise of democratic government and of respect for individual liberties. Tragically, the pressure of popular discontent, foreign and civil wars, and the political dynamics of the revolution itself, led to the Jacobin dictatorship and terror (Fortescue 2005: 155).

Thereafter, in the year 1799, Napoleon Bonaparte became the king of France. He restored the status of Catholic Church. Napoleon signed a concordat with Catholic

officials in 1801, restoring the Church's privileged position. Napoleon also extended state recognition to Judaism and the Lutheran and Reformed Churches. These groups received official state recognition and support until 1905. After Napoleon, the rule came into the hands of Bourbon dynasty. Bourbon was the constitutional monarchy and so it had some limits on power. It saw the re-establishment of Catholic power. It saw that Catholic power should have a vital role in society. The importance of clergy grew up and the rule was 'of the priests, for the priests and by the priests'. Due to these reasons, the people revolted against the regime. In 1830, Louis Philippe took the power. He was declared the King of 'French people', not of France. The divine theory of state was given up forever. The impact of Nobles and Clergy became less. The impact of middle class increased. In 1848 Louis Philippe was abdicated and Napoleon III became the President of French Republic, but he was forced to leave the power in 1870, after which the era of Third republic commenced (Encyclopædia Britannica 2016).

The return of the Bourbons in 1814 brought back many rich nobles and landowners who supported the Church, seeing it as a bastion of conservatism and monarchism. However, the monasteries with their vast landholdings and political power were gone; much of the land had been sold to urban entrepreneurs who lacked historic connections to the land and the peasants. Legacy of French Revolution (1789-1799) and Napoleonic rule dominated the political culture until 1848. The revolution had shattered forever the mystique of monarchy in France. The Roman Catholic Church had lost most of its wealth, power and influence, and anti-clericalism had become a significant political force. The nobility and aristocracy had survived rather better, but they remained a tiny minority, diluted and divided by Napoleonic creations (Fortescue 2005: 155).

Male suffrage was given in 1848 for national parliamentary, local government and presidential elections. This completely transformed the political landscape in France. Now political success depends on mass population and its support. The majority of the French electorate in 1848 opposed political violence and wars, and believed in the inviolability of private property. In the history of France, while following the Marxist ideology, the proletariat class occupied Paris city. The 1871 Paris Commune had proclaimed state secularism on 3rd April 1871, but it had been cancelled following its defeat (Ward 2009).

2.11.4 Third Republic

In the general election of 1877, the Republicans got victory. Various draft laws requesting the suppression of the Concordat of 1801 were deposed. Beginning in 1879, the French state began a gradual secularization starting with the removal of priests from the administrative committees of hospitals and boards of charity, and in 1880 the substitution of lay women for nuns in hospitals. In 1886, another law insured secularization of the teaching staff of the National Education. Other moves towards secularism included the introduction of divorce and compulsory civil marriages, and legalizing work on Sundays, making seminarians subject to conscription, and secularizing schools and hospitals. The law ordaining public prayers at the beginning of each Parliamentary Session and of the assizes has been abolished. In 1902, the government closed all parochial schools and rejected the authorization of all religious institutes.

Throughout the Third French Regime (1870-1940), there has been conflict over the status of Catholic Church. The French clergy and bishops were closely associated with the monarchists and many of them were from noble families. Republicans were based in the anticlerical middle class who saw the Church's alliance with the monarchists as a political threat to republicanism, and a threat to the modern spirit of progress. The Republicans detested the church for its political and class affiliations; for them, the Church represented outmoded traditions, superstition and monarchism. The Republicans were strengthened by Protestant and Jewish support. Numerous laws were passed to weaken the Catholic Church. In this era we get a conflict between Catholics and Protestants. Marc Bloc refers this as 'the conflict of two Frances'. France had to return once again to its official Catholic identity, which had been suppressed by the Revolution. Catholicism, if not in reality then at least nominally, represented the vast majority of France. Faced with the militant Catholicism as the religion of the nation, a broad movement proposed an alternative understanding of national identity founded on revolutionary and republican values (Rigoulot 2009: 46).

Protestants fought for their recognition within the Catholic dominated society. They contributed to its own progressive political assimilation, losing its specific place on the left of the political spectrum. Traditionally, the Protestant placed itself on the Left

in political scenario. The concept of 'Left ideology' covered a fluid range of democratic, republican, secular groups throughout the period of 1870-1940. There were many types of left – Blanquist socialism, the left of Jaures, the *Front populaire*. Yet core ideology of Left remained characterized by resistance to oppression, concern for minorities and the values of social democracy (ibid: 46).

The Protestants, the holder of a specific political as well as ethical morality, has often been presented as the result of the secularization of society. Jean Baurberot said that Protestants played a significant role in the secularization of state – following the 1905 law of separation of church and state. It was the primary factor in their assimilation. This law ended subsidies for churches. Protestantism played a socially cohesive role by applying in everyday social life the principle of unity in diversity. Protestantism was one of freedom from intellectual constraints, which called into question the hidden assumptions of society. The history of Protestants during the Third Republic falls into three phases. During the first, the Protestants fought for their own survival as a religious minority. The second phase was one of secularizing policies and solidarity with persecuted minorities – in particular Dreyfus Affair (a political scandal that from its beginning in 1894 divided France until it was finally resolved in 1906) – which gave rise to a strong anti-Protestantism. Third phase was after World War I. In this period, the Protestants lost their specificity as a politically left-wing religious minority (ibid: 46-47).

Many thinkers say that there was a close affinity between Protestantism and Republicanism in the early years of the Third Republic. Some say that this relation was close since the French Revolution of 1789. Some others say that idea of Republican education in schools was a means to combat the Catholic superstition (Rigoulot 2009: 47). At this time, Right Wing was allied with Catholicism. Rightists were called as Royalists. On the other hand, Left supported total emancipation and the representation of Protestants, and so they both had a natural alliance. Protestants were in favour of new liberal society based on rationalism and anti-clericalism. They were against feudalism and Catholic hegemony. Even those Catholics who supported the republican cause were not considered 'real' republicans if they did not leave the Catholic identity. Catholic morality was removed from public schools and Protestants ensured their religious instruction through the local churches by means of Sunday Schools (ibid: 47).

The involvement of Protestants in the new republican institutions had unforeseen consequences and wide impact. Presence of Protestants within the government was high in the early years of the Third Republic. In the area of education they gathered around Jules Ferry who created the secular education system that would provide a civic morality rather than religious morality. The Republican policies at the end of 19th century were hostile to traditionalist Catholics who resisted secularization. Anti-clericalism became a central political issue, because the survival of nascent Republicanism required the destruction of any association between the church and political power (ibid: 48).

But, at the end of the 19th century, some anti-Protestant discourse developed. First, the Catholics sought to preserve the catholic symbolism that surrounded the idea of the nation. Second, they wanted catholic cultural imprint in France. Third, this was promoted by Protestants themselves of evangelical tradition (ibid: 48). The Republicans were united in their intention to carry out program of democratic liberties and to *laicize* (secularise) the state and the schools. From the end of Empire to around 1885, there was a big wave of anti-clericalism, which was followed for next fifteen years by a period of calm. They received the assent of all those who repudiated clericalism, including those moderates who believed in universal suffrage. Catholics continued to vote republicans so long as the Republic did not attack religion. The governing republicans displayed in practice certain moderation. Ferry wished to Jaures, to establish humanity without a God and without a King. Ferry wrote to his wife, the elected representative of a people that make wayside altars, that is fond of the Republic but is just as fond of its processions (Mayeur and Reberieux 1973: 84).

This Reformed religion was without dogma and mystery. This was accessible to reason. This period was called as “Protestant positivism” by E.G. Leonard. The liberal Protestantism was one of the components of the secular, republican idea, while the Catholicism seemed doomed to the decadence affecting the Latin peoples. Democratic structure of the Reformed churches developed the civic sense, and practice of free enquiry developed the sense of responsibility. This explains the affinity between the French Protestants and Republic (ibid: 108). Therefore Anti-clericalism was first and foremost a political reaction against the political and social influence of the Church. It could disseminate its own ideology, one hostile to all religion. Militant anti-clericalism affected various different circles: workers, craftsmen, peasants – all

Catholics. This gave rise to various organizations (ibid: 108-109). A society known as the Free Thought was founded in 1883. Recruitment to the Free Thought societies was more democratic than recruitment to freemasonry. It had tens of thousands of members. For some years it played the role as an 'alternative church' (ibid: 109). The Protestantism within a republican political framework analysed the issue of nationalism. It also attested the assimilation within the national community. They participated in large scale in the government during the early period of the Third Republic. Gradually, the Protestants were integrated to the nation (Rigoulot 2009: 47).

2.11.5 Jules Ferry Laws

Jules Ferry Laws was the set of French laws which established the free education. This education was free and secular for all boys and girls. These laws taught morality but no religion. Jules was a lawyer and held office of Minister of Public Instruction in 1880s. This law is credited for creating the modern Republic school. The church schools, governed by the religious officials, were replaced by the state schools. This law is regarded a part of anti-clerical campaign in France (O'Brien 2005a: xi).

During the French Revolution 1789, the idea of free and secular basic primary education for every citizen was suggested by some prominent leaders such as Talleyrand and Condorcet. In 1833 a law was passed to open the schools for all boys. In 1850, a law named 'the Falloux Laws' was passed which provided universal primary schooling in France and expanded opportunities for secondary schooling. In 1870s and 1880s, all Republicans were united to make France a secular Republic, in the backdrop of intense feelings of anti-clericalism. When Leo XIII became Pope in 1878, he tried to calm down Church-State conflict relations. In 1884, he told French bishops not to act in a hostile manner to the State. In 1892, he issued an encyclical advice to French Catholics to rally around the Republic and to defend the Church by participating in Republican politics (Mayeur and Reberioux 1973:154).

In this period an important incident in news was 'Dreyfus Affair', a political scandal that divided France from its beginning in 1894 until it was finally resolved in 1906. He was a French army officer of Jew descent. He was arrested and accused of selling secrets to the Germans. The false accusations and the public debates

surrounding his trial drew attention to deep-seated anti-Semitism in France, which had persisted long after the Jews were granted equal civil liberties in 1791. In 1906, after 12 years and massive public protests, Dreyfus was exonerated and restored to his military post. The Affair from 1894 to 1906 divided France deeply and lastingly into two opposing camps: the pro-Army, mostly the Catholics on one side, and the anticlerical, pro-republicans on the other. It embittered French politics and encouraged radicalization (ibid: 182-187).

2.11.6 1905 Laws

The 1905 law put an end to the funding of religious groups by the state. At the same time, it declared that all religious buildings were property of the state and local governments. The government had put such buildings at the disposal of religious organizations at no expense, provided that they continue to use the buildings for worship purposes. Although the 1905 law initially was a painful and traumatic event for the Church in France, it succeeded in regulating how to live and enshrining secularism and relegating religion to a purely private sphere of life (ibid: 255-260).

After 1920, the French Government began making serious strides towards reconciliation with the Catholic Church, by recognizing the hierarchy of the Catholic Church and the social impact of religion, when it initially refused to do so in 1905. One of the reasons the Church was able to come to terms with the 1905 law, despite its denunciation by Pope Pius X, was that the 1905 Act was, since 1907, more than once supplemented by other laws and regulations, and interpreted by the courts. In 1921, the Church and French State began a series of negotiations for “pacification of law” in respect to both civil and canon law to create a harmonious day-to-day working relationship. The Church recognized a belief in a non-confessional state, that the Church should not be involved in politics and that there should be a fair separation of powers.

Thereafter, in the year 1946, the Constitution was drafted under which the Preamble guarantees, among other things, the provision of free, public and secular education at all levels. Further, the Constitution of 1958 sets forth the secular principle: “France shall be an indivisible, secular, democratic and social Republic”. It shall insure the

equality of all citizens before the law, without distinction of origin, race or religion. It shall respect all beliefs. The preamble of the constitution recalls the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* from 1789 French Revolution. Thus, it can be said that France, as a nation, has undergone revolutionary changes over the time and through the left-wing Protestantism it saw the dusk of the catholic supremacy and lately it saw the dawn of the secularism through its Constitution.

Now, that we have gone through the history of religion in France, we are in a position to study the contemporary issues including those pertaining to religion and the ongoing conflict in France. This is the focus of the next chapter.

Overall, religion is a concept which has been in existence from a long time in the history of humanity. In the present time, it has a powerful hold on society. On the contrary, it has been the major issue of discourse. In the history of France, there are three prominent forces which have expressed their opinion on the existence of religion. The first type of forces rejected the religion, the second do not want religion as a powerful concept, and the third forces wanted religion as a private affair. From 1789 revolution to present time, the French society has always fought in this direction. As a result, in France the evolution of secularism was an outcome of confrontation between complex contrasting and contradictory forces one that favoured religion and the other who opposed it. (Holscher 2008: 56). This religious conflict led to secularization.

The concept of secularization was evolved during the French Revolution. Later on it slowly and steadily strengthened in the France. Gradually the concept of secularization spread in other parts of the Western world. In this gradual transition, two incidents, which later formed essential elements of the secularisation, viz., Jules Ferry Laws (1881) and *laicite* (1905). The whole western world accepted and adopted these two elements. This shows its significance. France is the only western European country which is officially 'secular'- that defines itself and its democracy in accordance with the principles of *laicite*. (Casnova 2008a: 67).

Overall, the idea of secularization is not inherently opposed to any particular religion. This notion played a significant role in the nation-building of France. The notion of faith is a private matter and should, therefore be proscribed from public life-notably

from the state and from education system – is widespread in Europe, not only in France. (Davie 2006: 287)

Chapter 3

THE DEBATE ON SECULARISM IN CONTEMPORARY FRANCE

3.1 Background

France is a multi-religious and multi-cultural country. Since last 30 years, she is facing the problems pertaining to religion, secularism and culture. Historically France has been a Catholic country but after the 1789 French Revolution it changed to a secular-*laic* country. This revolution changed the perception about religion in the people as well as it changed the social impact of religion on society. But this revolution could not demolish the impact and status of religion. Again under the regime of Napoleon, the Catholic got reinstated the status of state religion. Actually, though the Catholic religion again got the same position back, a big chunk of people was not happy with this status. They did not oppose openly but used to hate either Catholic or the Pope. So, this conflict between the republican and conservative continued within for more than 100 years. In the 20th century France became a full secular (*laic*) country and this debate became over. But now France is facing another problem.

France has a substantial population of Muslims who constitute around 8% of the total population. They are different, both religiously as well as culturally. Their view about religion, both, of immigrant Muslims² and of native French³ is totally different.

² Islam is the second-most widely professed religion in France. France has the largest number of Muslims in Western Europe. The majority of Muslims in France belong to the Sunni denomination. The vast majority of French Muslims are of immigrant origin, while an estimated 1 lakh are converts to Islam of indigenous ethnic French background. The French overseas region of Mayotte has a majority Muslim population. Approximately 8%, or 5.5 million people, are Muslims in France, with most of them descendants of “immigrants” that began arriving after World War II and continuing since.

³ France was originally inhabited by a people known to the Romans as the Gauls. Around the 3rd century, Germanic tribes migrated to and mixed with the Gallic people, forming the Franks. It is from these same Franks that the modern French people are descended. Throughout the last 1500 to 1800 years, there have been many wars in which the Franks mixed with the Gauls, established their kingdoms, and built their culture. In another episode, a French Criminal Court has ruled that there is no such a concept as a “Native” Frenchman and therefore their culture, heritage, and history are exempt from protection under the law.

Although native French are Catholic by birth but most of them do not call themselves as Catholic. They say themselves as non-religious or atheist. France is modern, developed and powerful country since a long period. In 18th and 19th century, it was a big colonial power. Around 150 years, it ruled over Maghreb countries⁴ from where a lot of population immigrated to France. So, this clash between immigrant Muslims and native French is also part of a big clash.

This chapter delves into the debate of religion and secularism of different groups in France. In the last thirty years, there had been many debates, laws and committees on the issue of secularism in France. These are discussed in this chapter. The many cultural issues as hijab⁵ and burqa⁶ have come for hot debate, are also looked into. Hijab and burqa are cultural as well as religious issues. So, for the discussion on these issues, we have to take up the policy of secularism in France. French policy of secularism is called *laicite*. This is a French word and something different from secularism.

If we want to investigate *laicite* in present time, we have to go to the past. We should go into historical narrative of France and its motto – liberty, equality and fraternity that emerged in French Revolution of 1789. Historical narratives of France entail the components of individual identity derived from cultural traditions and values even from outside France. Though of integrated origin, the *laicite* became the basic principle of French republic. The French people think that this concept is working like religion in France. Its importance and significance can be understood from what Blandine Chelini-Point (2010: 765) termed it as civil religion in France. Civil religion works like a nation faith and *laicite* is like a national faith for the French people. This concept (*laicite*) determines where we draw the boundaries between private and public sphere, i.e. religion and politics, and how we conceive of their overlaps.

⁴ In Arabic, the Maghreb means “where and when the sun sets.” The region, which includes Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia, is part of both Africa and the Arab world, and it enjoys a special relationship with Europe, thanks to geographical proximity, colonial history, and economic ties. The traditional definition as the region including the Atlas Mountains and the coastal plains of *Morocco*, *Algeria*, *Tunisia*, and *Libya*, was later superseded, especially following the 1989 formation of the Arab Maghreb Union, by the inclusion of *Mauritania* and of the disputed territory of *Western Sahara* (mostly controlled by Morocco). Maghreb area is also referred to as belonging to Moors.

⁵ Hijab is a head covering (head scarf) worn in public by some Muslim women, or the religious code which governs the wearing of the hijab.

⁶ Burqa is an enveloping outer garment worn by women in some Islamic traditions to cover their bodies when in public.

3.2 A Brief History of *Laicite*

The French secularism is the outcome of last 500 years whatever happened in Europe. But here we are not going back from 1789 Revolution. This Revolution did the milestone change in the history of France. This Revolution gave birth to important ideals such as *laicism*, nationalism, liberty, equality, and fraternity that spread to the rest of the world. *Laicite* is the legacy of the struggle by which the French Republic got the political independence from the Catholic Church that started during the French Revolution (Jansen 2009: 594). But it was ultimately decided in 1905 when republican law institutionalized the separation of Church and State.

If we go in detail to the history of *laicite*, on December 1789, the Assembly decreed that 'non-Catholic' had right to vote (to the Assembly). All 'non-Catholic' were officially declared that they had the right to get a civil and military employment. But the name of Protestant minorities was written in September 1791 when the new constitution was adopted. Natural and civil rights of freedom were given to Protestants and these were extended to Jews. The French Revolution prepared the base of secularism not only for France but also for the whole and other democratic world. The French Revolution weakened the Catholic but it did not demolish them. But at first time it definitely became that the public got courage to the question about Catholic supremacy and too, that this supremacy could be demolished. In the next century, the 19th century, this conflict continued between the Catholic and the Republic. When Napoleon came in power in 1799, he again renewed the status of Catholic; it means Catholic religion became state religion again. But, in 1870, the Third French Republic was established. This was the victory of Protestants. In Third Republic, they got equal rights at both procedural and substantial levels. In 1881, the primary education was declared as secular. It was free of charge and compulsory through the Jules Ferry laws (O'Brien 2005: xi). The state withdrew the funding to religious institutions and activities.

The Law of 1905 was the milestone in the history of French secularism. It separated the sphere of the state and the church. Religion became merely a private issue. The law of 1905 was prepared by Aristide Briand. He served many times as prime Minister of France and later he was awarded Nobel Peace prize. This law consists of

principles; conferment of goods and pensions; buildings for religion and forth, regulation of religion. From time to time many reforms were brought in this law. This law has a central theme that church and state should be strictly separated. This law separated the involvement of any religion from governmental affairs. According to this concept, the government must refrain from taking positions on religious ground. This concept postulates the existence of a secular ethics, grounded in science and philosophy that would act not only as a civil religion and social bond but also as a means of educating the free and tolerant citizens required by the new democratic order (Jennings 2000: 578).

Some important provisions of the 1905 law are described below:

Article 1 states that the “Republic ensures freedom of conscience. It guarantees the free exercise of religion subject to the sole restrictions enacted hereafter in the interest of public order.” According to Article 2, “French Republic does not recognize any religion. All expenses concerning the practice of religion shall be abolished from the budgets of the state. The Republic does neither recognise, nor pay nor subsidize any religion. Expenses related to the services of the chaplaincy and intended to ensure the free exercise of religion in public establishments such as schools and hospitals may be included in these budgets.” Article 11 stated that “all existing religious buildings were the property of the state”. According to Article 13, the buildings serving for the exercise of public worship are left to the free disposition of the public religious establishments (Concordatwatch 2008).

Article 25 provides that “meetings for the celebration of religion taking place in premises belonging to a cultural association put at its disposal are public.” Article 26 forbids holding “political meetings in premises habitually serving for the exercise of religion.” Article 28 forbids erecting “any religious sign or symbol on public buildings or in any public place except on buildings used as places of worship” (ibid). So, the 1905 law guarantees the freedom of every individual to have a religion or not to have, to change religion, or to have a different religion from everyone else. Thus *laicite* is specific kind of secularism (Jansen 2009: 594). It gives the total freedom to every individual related to religious matters. Further, the law, particularly the Constitutional provisions, also accepted the policy of *laicite*. In 1946, the Fourth Republic guaranteed the freedom of religion. The French Republic was declared

“indivisible, secular, *laïque*, democratic and social Republic”. It was also consigned by the Constitution of Fifth Republic, which ensured equality before law of all citizens with no distinction made on the basis of origin, race or religion. The law of 1958 is considered as the core of difference to blind liberalism which accords to each individual a uniform set of rights regardless of her culture, identity or beliefs (Gordner 2008: 74).

There are many important events that determined the form of *laïcité* in France in the 20th century. The law of 1958 and creation of the fifth Republic were placed within the context of Algerian war for independence (1954-1962), the crisis of Algiers (1958) and its subsequent independence (1962). In this era of Algerian independence, other French colonies demanded the right to self-determination. The laws enacted in the 1880s and 1905, and the rights enshrined in the first two articles of the 1946 and 1958 constitutions make up the juridical nature of *laïcité*. In the first half of the 20th century, the juridical foundations for *laïcité* were constructed. The Catholic Church opposed these juridical provisions because the French Republic sought the emancipation of the public sphere from the Catholic Church (ibid: 74).

In the first half of the 20th century, the long and old ideological conflict between Catholics and Protestants was over. The Catholics almost gave up their religious practices, and lost interest in religion. They adopted modernity and secularization. The Protestants got same rights and so they also gave up the historical conflict with the Catholics. France became a fully secular Republic. But in the second half France faced another problem. In the 1950s and 1960s this problem was related to flow of mass immigration, and after 1980s this problem changed into the problem of secularism and ‘Islamic fundamentalism’.

3.3 *Laïcité* : Secularism with Difference

Laïcité is the legacy of the struggle by the French Republic to gain political independence from the Catholic Church. This struggle has already begun during the Revolution, but it was only definitively decided in 1905 when the republican law institutionalized the separation of Church and the State. The Republicans prepared this concept of *laïcité*. This notion was prepared in 1870s when the Third French

Republic was established. This concept was inculcated in the minds through civil education. This civil education was institutionalized in 1880s by the effort of Jules Ferry (Jansen 2009: 594).

Laicite is fully French concept and unique in itself. But this concept is not aimed against any religion generally. This concept recognises the right of everyone to practise his or her own beliefs, including the wearing of religious signs. Supporters of this concept argue that *laicite* does not necessarily imply any hostility of the government with respect to religion. It protects both – the government from any possible interference from religious organizations, and to protect the religious organizations from political controversies. Critics of this concept argue that it is disguised form of anti-religion. Supporters defends that the state does not prohibit the religion, it only separate from one another.

In original form, the concept of *laicite* neither supports nor opposes any religion. So, this notion is explicitly concerned with religious freedom. In French Revolution (1789), the revolutionaries tried to demolish the religion. But *laicite* is different from the notion about religion that emerged in French Revolution of 1789. It is certain that it gets some heritage from the French Revolution. So, it would try to replace particular religious attachments with universal citizenship altogether. *Laicite* requires the fundamental separation of sphere of the Church and State and the explicit transfer of a proper domain to both. It only opposes religion in so far as it is identified as a producer of law, not in as far as it is a source of morality, belief, and meaningful experiences. At the time, the law was meant as a moderation of the *laicite de combat*, which brought citizenship and religious belonging into conflict (ibid: 594). Therefore, *laicite* is a liberal concept; it says that it is not necessary that religion is recognized but the freedom of conscience is guaranteed.

It is noticeable that French constitutional articles specifically do not use the term ‘*laicite*’ and so they do not define it explicitly. They involve a variety of principles that have been associated with the idea of separation between the sphere of religion and state. They emphasize the freedom of conscience and state neutrality in religious matters. *Lacite* is more than that and it is also considered a crucial part of French culture and identity (Altglas 2010: 495).After a radical and long history, France produced the notion of *laicite*. This notion is seen as a part of French ‘exception’ and

became a part of consensual notion of national identity. This notion is more associated to republican values rather than democracy (Bauberot 2009: 191-192).

Mostly European countries practise the policy of secularism. They have sufficient space for religious pluralism and encourage the practice of religious freedom. France is also one of them. We know that in spite of the 1905 law and the separation of the Church and the State, French government gives financial help to religious schools and religious associations. The grant of financial help by French government is not consistent with French *laicite*. To give financial help to some religious schools is an old policy of French government. This not only implies its accommodation within the public sphere, but also, more strongly, its centralization and at least partial control by the state (Asad 2006b: 494). In this sense, in practice, *laicite* could be considered a ‘moderate’ secularism, intent on institutional compromises and pluralistic institutional integration (Maddood 2005). It means in moderate secularism, religion and state are mixed at some level.

Tariq Modood has explained this model of French secularism. *Laicite* that is popular in French culture. He calls it the ideological concept of secularism. ‘Ideological secularism’ is contrasted to ‘moderate secularism’. ‘Ideological secularism’ stresses the neutrality of state and separation of state and religion, while ‘moderate secularism’ sometimes mixes up religion and power of state (Jansen 2009: 595). There are two other aspects of ideological secularism that are connected with it. In judicial form, *laicite* belonged to ‘separation of state and religion’, and freedom of religious conscience. It does not talk of conflict between religious beliefs and state. When we get a competition between state and a particular community, it means that a particular community is taken as the other. At the level of political culture, a competition between citizenship as universal membership of the nation-state and the community of (enlightened) reason as opposed to all kinds of particularism still determines some of the expectations with regard to other persons, in particular, persons with a different ethno-religious background (ibid: 595).

Second aspect is that “the underlying motive of civic unity in *laicite* goes together with a public fascination for the French citizens’ *signs* of belonging to groups ‘other’ than the French nation. In the tradition of assimilationism, these signs of belonging, such as the use of a different language or wearing of religious dress, have always been

problematic” (ibid: 595). *Laicite* was “predicated upon French secularism and later inculcated in the ideals of French citizenship through civic education. Yet while the expectations that constitute a secular subjectivity conducive to *laicite* remain grounded in the church/state dialectic, *laicite* as a French national political doctrine has and continues to be conceived in large part to the dialectic between France and Islam. Therefore, to join the French community today, French Muslims require either to forget the formative experiences drawn from their past or to tacitly acquiesce to the connotations loaded in the current understanding of Islam” (Gordner 2008: 75).

The politico-religious force of Islam has led to a shift from ‘militant *laicite*’ to a ‘management *laicite*’ that presides over civil society to ensure that contemporary interpretations of ‘neutrality’ in the public space are maintained in line with the French national ethos (ibid: 75) . Secular authorities were suspicious of religion because it was relegated to the private sphere. Since 1945, we get in France – militant *laicite* and management *laicite*. Militant *laicite* was associated with anti-clerical and has a negative form of neutrality towards religion. It is free from religious authorities in order to promote reason and democracy (Willaime 2004: 375). ‘Management *laicite* is an indication of this shift in dialectics,’ from Catholicism to Islam. The French state tries to rid the public sphere of what are seen as flamboyant influences that militate against both the state’s efforts to control religious symbols within civil society, and to cultivate a common identity among ideal French citizens. Jean-Paul William calls this the ‘secularization of *laicite*’ in which *laicite* no longer functions as an alternative system to religion, but rather as a regulating principle for the pluralism of both religious and non-religious convictions existing in civil society. To combat encroaching religious pluralism and ensuing ‘secularization of *laicite*’, French republic is forced to suppress the undesired religious expression and at this time it is also expressed in the policy of French state (Gordner 2008: 75). He said that religion has many dogmas. Therefore it needs to be secularized by removing its dogmas (Kuru 2008: 6-7).

Cecile Laborde (2003: 170) says that *laicite* consists of “three strands – state neutrality, individual autonomy and civic loyalty.” According to Laborde, “all three strands are rooted in France’s historical juridical developments. State neutrality and individual autonomy are taken to be consistent with British-American liberal thought. Civic loyalty is a tendentious feature of *laicite* in which one cannot be *laique* in

France unless one accepts an important part of our national-Republican heritage.” Laborde writes further, “*laicite* calls not so much for a neutral state respectful of religious difference, nor for a perfectionist state committed to the promotion of individual autonomy, but rather, for a communitarian state fostering a civic sense of loyalty to a particular historical community ... historically, (civic loyalty) underlaid the republican ambition to substitute for traditional Catholic-inspired sociality, a new civic bond, which would unite citizens in common love of the secular republic... At the time when separation of sphere of the Church and State was achieved, the majority of Catholic population of France was also dissenting against the supremacy of the Catholic Church over the public domain.” Yet the social values and beliefs were heavily constructed by the way of French Catholicism. But it is certain that French Catholicism adopted the secular values. So, both, the French Catholicism and secularity can be called as French Catholicism secularity. The civil loyalty adopted these secular and democratic values. Even, the state neutrality was called forth by the way of this Catholic secularity (Laborde 2003: 170). Oliver Roy (2007: 66) suggests and says that

“secularization occurred under a particular social context that leads the way to *laicite*. Whereas French *laicite* was instituted by choices, secularization in contrast arose from cultural processes that were not decreed, which poses the problem of relation between explicit religion (dogma and prescriptions) and the internalization of a religious vision of the world in the form of culture.”

He says further that “there can be no *laicite* unless secularization has come first...” So secularization demands secularization *par excellence* (Roy 2007: 66).

Liberal democracy makes civil society and it becomes “a defining feature of public culture. Many liberal democracies form a national identity without denying representative portions of their societies a voice in civil society to participate in the formation of public culture. A politico-cultural system of this type is known as multiculturalism (Gordner 2008: 77). In France, multiculturalism was compromised for “identification with the features of ideal Frenchness. Therefore, despite France’s ethnic and religious diversity, multiculturalism is forgone and monoculturalism is being adopted that stands as the grail of French exceptionalism” (ibid: 77). Laborde’s justification is not the French exception but rather the untenable posture of a nation willing to integrate immigrants yet unwilling to acknowledge and include their respective historical narratives. Some critics question whether the French are not

attempting to enshrine this secular principle into a notion of exceptionalism, rather than accepting to negotiating a place for Islam as the second religion of France. So, for the French state, to recognize Islam as the second state religion is sheer violation of state neutrality (Amara 2006: 20).

Hurd (2008: 58) writes that French colonial representations of Algerian Muslims as nonsecular, uncivilized, and disorderly contributed to the establishment of French civilization as modern, democratic, and *laic*... up to the present being a French supporter of *laicism* has generally meant not being Muslim, at least not openly and publicly. Talal Asad (2003: 166) also tells that “unlike Europe’s indigenous Christian populations, Muslim immigrants cannot claim certain ‘Europeaness’. They are confined to a non-European status.” He writes further, “It is because the historical moments have not influenced Muslim immigrant experience, they are not whose home is Europe.”

Since European identity, citizenship and practices cannot be de-essentialised, the process of secularization that France requires as a prerequisite to *laicite* is absent in the kind of secular or secularity. The view of Talal Asad is similar to Hurd. He says that European identity is defined in purposive opposition to Islam. Asad (2003: 175) writes, “The idea of European identity ... concerns exclusions and the desire excluded recognize what is included in the name one has chosen for oneself. The discourse of European identity is a symptom of anxieties about non-Europeaness”.

3.4 The Specifics of French Secularism

Secularism is a global phenomenon and every country reacts differently, the reason being its own history and current situation and France is not an exception to it. French secularism (*laicite*) is peculiar or unique in its own traits. The French reacts differently of French secularism and term it as ‘French exception’. This is developed in a particular historical perspective and is different from that of other countries. We have to examine the peculiar role of French secularism. The historical development of *laicite* has produced some particular traits. French revolution was against the Catholic supremacy and monarchical despotism. The Catholics did not like the Revolution but half-heartedly supported the Revolution, although it was only symbolic.

The unprivileged groups (Third Estate) wanted to change the regime so they attacked the hegemony of the Catholic clergy. They not only challenged the clergy but also the legitimacy of its central mechanism of power (Tarhan 2011: 3). During the Revolution, the revolutionaries did not promote religious tolerance, but led to rejection and exclusion of obstinate priests (ibid: 5). In other countries like USA and Britain, religion has contributed to the way of secularization. They made the way so that secularization could be developed. But in France, we see a paradox between religion and secularization. While religion stresses on metaphysical things, secularization is a process by which metaphysical things are removed from the society (Bauberout 2003: 459). This paradox is called religious secularization. But this religious secularization did not happen in France. In France a strong conflict happened between clergy and anti-clergy forces. Clergy claimed that religion should be dominant over political authorities. This claim was fought against by anti-clergy forces along with people in France.

There were many persons and groups who were challenging the Catholic supremacy. These forces constituted anti-clericalism, which had several faces. And there were many forms, from most radical to the most moderate. There were two main anti-clerical forces – these are religious anti-clericalism and anti-religious anti-clericalism faces. Religious anti-clericalism was dominant until the 1850s. They did not oppose religion. They only opposed the Catholic supremacy and they were not in favour of excessive politicization of religion. They had demanded that politics should be separate from religion, but did not challenge the religion. The French Revolution was inspired by various writers, thinkers such as Rousseau, Voltaire: they did not oppose religion. Voltaire did not oppose theism or religion; he opposed superstition and rituals on the name of religion.

After 1850s, the Catholic powers made alliance with political powers and here French politics took a radical shift. These powers went towards anti-clericalism. All religious authorities were under question. This movement said that all political institutions should be free from religion. This was termed as free religiosity. Victor Hugo was the leader of this free religiosity. Second type of this face was anti-religious face. They were inspired by thinkers such as Auguste Comte, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, Sigmund Freud, and Charles Darwin. This face was “rooted in scientific ideology. They perceived religion as an old and outdated explanation of the world.” They

considered religion as a backward ideology and irrelevant to modern democracy. They also blamed religion as an instrument for exploitation for working class.

In this revolution, 'Rights of Man' was proclaimed. These rights were contrary to Catholic ideology. Catholics do not talk about rights of man. According to catholic doctrine, man is by birth a sinner. He has only duties. Catholicism was a lens through which religion was viewed. The goal of French revolution was to regenerate the human being and his rights. So this Revolution was viewed as quasi-religious revolution. This ideological form of French revolution was termed as a secular religion by Jean Bauberot (2003: 460).

This secular religion had impressed both the academics and policy makers. This was unique at that time. Actually these academic institutions were created in whole western world during 19th century, but intensity of secularization remained very much in them. The schools and colleges not only gave education to the students but these were centres of freedom of thought and expression. French schools were the perfect institutions to teach their reason and to exercise freedom of thought. Reason became a central thing, and acted as a lens through which French people started to observe all happenings. During the Revolution, reason and only reason was that which controlled the minds of people.

The founding of secularism was the result of political victory of the anti-clerical movement. Anti-clerical movement and establishment of the Third Republic were tied together for several reasons. At the time of French Revolution this anti-clerical movement was mostly anti-religious, but after time this became moderate and began to believe and right to practise the religion. In the end, this anticlerical movement produced the pacifist secularism. But the anti-Catholic events however displeased many republicans. In the Third Republic, progressive and secular sections were with Republicans. These progressive and secular can be termed as disillusionment. This disillusionment was due in the part to the establishment of secularism and to the loss by the anti-clerical movement. Nevertheless, the combative and utopian aspects of anti-clericalism did not disappear. This situation changed during the last two decades of the twentieth century. Two reactions are possible because of this: what has happened and what is happening in these two centuries; Peter Berger called these the movements of counter-secularization (ibid: 461-62).

In 1905, French government passed the law on separation of Church and State. It became the constitutional provision in 1946 and again in 1958. As Jean Bauberot points out, “*laicite* is best understood as a political and legal pact rather than a universally transcendent principle. This principle, far from being established by social consensus, was a product of a legal and political process that was shaped by conflict between clericals and Republicans” (cited in Tarhan 2011: 8). The Catholics strongly opposed the law of 1905 until the beginning of the First World War. From that time onwards, *laicite* was recognized by a great majority as a unifying principle securing national unity and solidarity by dismissing religious sectarian movements. The principle of *laicite* began to represent tolerance, neutrality and equality. In the beginning this principle was seen as hostility, antagonism and discrimination. But in the first half of 20th century, it was seen as the way to unify citizens. Thus *laicite* in France has emerged and evolved through the confrontation between two groups – Clericals and Republicans. Starting from 20th century, *laicite* ceased to be a subject of confrontation between these groups. The Catholic Church accepted the principle of *laicite* (ibid: 9).

3.5 Difference between Secularism and *Laicite*

It is mostly understood that secularism and *laicite* are synonymous, but in fact they are not. The notion of secularism is based on the separation of the sphere between the State and Church. In other words, religion is separated from the institution of the state. It protects the political sphere from the determining influence of a religion. French *laicite* envisions the Republic as protecting people from religion. French *laicite* is a notion associated with France’s ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity; or assimilation. Thus, the state attempts to preserve religious neutrality by curtailing religious freedom in the public sphere in the interest of general public. On this basis, the state is allowed to justifiably to control the religious expression in governmental institutions, including public schools and the public sphere in general (Abilmouna 2011: 128).

They refer to two different possibilities of how to organize state policies towards religion. These concepts are, in limited sense, similar to each other because they both include two elements – separation between state and religion; and freedom of

religious practices. It is the visible appearance of religion that demarcates the difference between them. Secularism is usually described as more tolerant towards public visibility of religion. A secular state plays a passive role and allows religious symbols in the public domain. In *laicism* the state plays a more active role by excluding religious symbols from the public domain and thus confines religion to the private domain (Tarhan 2011: 1).

Secularism is used as a lack of religious impact in the society. When the different sectors work different work in the society, it means society is secularised. Secularism is also used for religious tolerance and pluralism. This believes in freedom of thought and freedom of religion. These all characteristics are got in the *laicite*. But *laicite* particularly emphasised on ‘the separation of the sphere of the state and religion’.

Secularism is the worldwide concept which is applied in almost all modern countries while *laicite* is a unique feature of French political culture. We know that after 1789 revolution, France adopted a way of separating the sphere of state and religion. In present time, this policy is accepted as the foundation of the French Republic (ibid: 1). French secularism has a long history but the current regime is based on the 1905 French law on the separation of the Church and the State.

Secularism recognizes and respects the diversity and multiculturalism of the country. On the other hand, *laicite* does not believe in diversity and multiculturalism. It believes in unity and mono-culturalism. *Laicite* believes in assimilation. Assimilation under the principle of *laicite* would require a unified Republican identity to take precedence over and above other aspects of an individual’s personal, whether religious, ethnic or linguistic. Religious freedom and expression are acceptable *per se*, but should not enter in public sphere (Abilmouna 2011: 125). *Laicite* is a unique feature that is defined for French social and political culture. It is accepted as foundation of the French Republic. It ensures national unity by unifying citizens as rational, enlightened members of a collective unit. The basis of the ban on religious symbols in France’ public schools as well as the public ban of the burqa have been articulated in terms of the principle of *laicite*. So in present time, this policy has produced the fractions, resulting in the polarization of the French society into two – native French and immigrant Muslims (Tarhan 2011: 1).

If we compare French secularism with some other countries, the secularism in United States and other European societies is something different from that of France. In USA and most of the European countries religious symbols are allowed in public sphere while these are prohibited in France. They allow practising all religions and they follow the principle of secularism as neutrality. USA and most of the European countries believe in religious freedom and they do not have policy of the separation between state and religion as in France. In USA, the dominant ideology towards religion is 'passive secularism' which allows public visibility of religion. Mostly the European countries follow this kind of secularism, that is also termed as 'secularism as neutrality'. These countries produce a relaxed relationship between the state and the religion. The dominant ideology in France towards religion, in contrast, is 'assertive secularism' which aims to confine religion to the private domain and to exclude it from the public sphere (Kuru 2007: 571-572). It controls religious practice and religious symbols through the power of state; this kind of secularism is also termed as 'assertive secularism' or 'secularism as separation'. These both types of countries are secular but they differ from each other on the basis of the acceptance of public expression of religion. So secularism of France is unique in itself. But, the concept of secularism in France cannot be said to be correct or incorrect and it must be placed in context. It is based on its own history and current situation (ibid: 572).

3.6 Established Secularization in France

In the last 30 years, the discussion on religion has been found continuously increasing. The people are studying all religions. Religion is being taught as a subject through textbooks in schools and the scholars are doing research on this topic more than before. Media such as TV channels, newspapers, etc. has taken up this debate on religion in a way. Not only among people in general, but also between the groups- particularly native French and immigrant Muslim, can we see the conflict of religion very often. In short, the importance of religion is increasing. So some writers and thinkers began to say that France is going to be de-secularised (Peter Berger 1967). Ban on religious symbols shows that secularism is forced in France at government level. But it should be clear that the people are studying religion, and this does not prove that they are religious devotees. But their purpose is that by studying religion

they could evaluate religion. Every religion has many irrational and illogical things, and so they could give up these irrational and illogical thoughts. The state wants that people should give up religion themselves, not by force of law. This should be done by socialization.

Although, the state is putting full effort by giving secular education, and the native French do not practise religious beliefs. Most of them project themselves as non-religious. They do not want to belong to any religious identity. So, this task of making secular is mainly for immigrant Muslims. But atheism or secularism cannot be imposed; if it will be imposed, it cannot be sustained. But from some time the French State is doing this. This can be called 'secularism from above'.

Some thinkers, critical of the theory of secularization, argue that society today is in the face of counter-secularization. But these critics cannot invalidate the theories of secularization. These criticisms do not claim that decreasing social influence of religion leads to its disappearance. These criticisms only indicate that the decreasing social influence of religion has led to a transformation of religious phenomena. Peter Berger talks about the pluralisation of religious forms and considers it corresponding to secularization. Modern society is based on pluralism. He compared the religious scene of secular society to a market of meanings, a market of definitions, and a market of sensibilities where the line between religious ideas and non-religious ideas is not clear. Therefore, the French religious policy appears as a strategy of response to secularization (Bauberot 2003: 455).

From 1960s and 1970s, French society witnessed many religious movements as Scientology, Church of God, etc. These religious movements are presently in a better position than before. They have more importance than the Church. They are playing a social role in the secular society. The success of new religious movements rests on their ability to build bridges and reaching out to the modern world, and populations destabilized by socio-economic changes. This ability has been derived particularly from the fact that these movements provide 'truths to believe' that are simple and clear, tied to precise norms, capable of structuring the individual and giving him a strong identity. About these new religious movements, it can be said that they implicate lesser analyses of secularization than they do to the manner in which these analyses were transformed into strategies of ecclesiastical adaption (ibid: 455).

In this more secular society, every individual has varying and different religious needs. Individual does not imitate of societal values; every individual has its own identity and he/she can have views different from the social views. The success of 'counter-secularisation' movements can probably be explained by the worldwide advances of secularization and the resistance produced by these advances. (ibid: 455).

Secularization debate is about public and private realm. Some issues are of such type that it is hardly distinguishable as private or public issue. They play a crucial role and these questions are high-stake questions. The philosophy of Max Weber indicates that a dual extension plays an integral part in the problem, the extension of capitalism's mechanical base and the extension of capitalism's instrumental rationality. The society is changed to commercialization. Commercialization is reaching the domains that appeared out of reach fifty years ago. Commercialization has reached the domains of sexuality and intimate relations. It has also reached into all elements of birth, life and even death with growth of bio-technology. It means the sphere of commercialization extends to this present secular society (ibid: 456).

If we consider the established secularization on the concept of Bryan Wilson, he said that defining secular society is where social behaviour is independent from religion. It gives two conclusions. The first conclusion is that the philosophers of the enlightenment are the ones who appreciated this increased independence of social behaviours from the religion. These philosophers encouraged independent social behaviours and they had two hopes. First hope was that changes in the condition of life will move in the direction of progress. The second hope was that increased independence is good because this idea of progress is good for all society. It will satisfy the needs of humanity and the advancement of well-being. It will lessen the violence in the society and will lead the harmonious coexistence. This idea of progress is adopted by both capitalism and communism, although they are ideologically opposite (ibid: 455).

Second conclusion is that these secular notions so recently re-illusioned, find themselves currently again in the process. The era from 17th century to 1950s was era of disillusionment. And from 1990s, era is re-illusioned (ibid: 456). So we can say that the Fall of Berlin Wall (1989) reversed this whole debate. It was the end of a historical period. It was seen as marker of an end to the age of enlightenment and the

ideas of global process. Francis Fukuyama (1993) saw in this event “the end of the history”. He tells this event as the victory of liberal values in the whole world. Many religious and ethnic identities raised their head for their dignity and even existence. The clash was produced between the Western and other. Samuel Huntington (1997) termed this as ‘clash of civilizations’. Religious debate increased. Muslim identity came on the level as sharper. They felt that they became secondary in this New World Order. They went for ‘religious fundamentalism’.

This entire scenario is expressed by Jean Bauberot who proposes to term this situation ‘established secularisation’. The combination of the dual historical transformation, described above as that of disillusionment, re-illusionment and globalisation, does not signify the end of secularization. Instead, this combination signals a transformation of secularization. Changing from a process to a movement, secularization is becoming a hegemonic reality that has destroyed secular illusions, whether they are ideological, political, technical or moral (Bauberot 2003: 456).

3.7 French Secularism: A Negative Notion?

French secularism is product of long history. So, French secularism is not any static concept but is a fluid and flexible notion. Although it is well defined and established notion by 1905 Law, but in spite of this, it has emerged markedly transformed from the debate over it in the 30 years. This debate is not only interesting topic in academic disciplines such as history, political science, sociology, philosophy, and law, but also in the public sphere and government policy (Barbier 2005: 1). In this current situation, it is of urgent need to clarify this notion.

The French word ‘*laicite*’ means separation between church and state. It means religion will be a private affair and state would be a public affair. These areas are exclusive and would not interfere in each other. In this sense, we can say that *laicite* is a negative concept. It is not that this concept was used first time in 1905 law. Before 1905 law, in 1886 law this word was used. In 1946 Constitution used this concept. But they used its adjective word – *laique*. They use word *laique* in different senses. But there is a similarity in these three senses. They all exclude religion from the public places. In this sense, French secularism in fact has a negative intent. It

regulates and limits the religion up to private affair, whereas its positive aspects also are usually emphasized (ibid: 5-6).

Secular character of the French Republic was asserted by the 1958 Constitution. Now it is well defined and is clarified by many parliamentary debates. These debates reveal at least two different conceptions of secularism (ibid: 6). First, it is defined by the separation of church and state and it was affected by the law of 1905. Second, it stands for state neutrality towards religions. It has respect for religious tolerance. A middle path could be sought between them. There is no substantial difference between these two conceptions of secularism. The law 1905 does not clearly refer to secularism. It refers to separation. Such separation boils down to two precise components which are negative – absence of recognition of worship and the absence of their funding in the form of salaries. It ends the regime of recognized forms of worship. But several articles in the law of 1905 indicate that state unconsciously interferes in the religious sphere and improperly limits freedom of worship (ibid: 7)).

The French Republic gives some special privileges to some specific organizations. Every year, the French government gives some special fund to the church in some Departments as Alsace-Moselle, etc. This is violation of principle of *laicite*. Article 1 of law 1905 asserts freedom of conscience and freedom of worship. But this provision was not new in French laws. These were already in existence. Freedom of conscience was already recognized by the 1789 declaration (article 10) and freedom of worship by the 1791 constitution. These two provisions already existed in French secularism. It means French secularism shows that these two provisions can survive without secularism. In strict sense these are not part of the notion of secularism. And secularism cannot be defined by them. In rigorous form, we should reduce secularism to its negative aspect because French law leads it as a purely negative notion. French constitution also has secularism as a negative notion. French constitution involves the exclusion of religion from the public sphere of the state (ibid: 7-8).

It is important to distinguish ‘freedom of thought’ from ‘freedom of conscience’. Freedom of conscience with freedom of religion and freedom of belief gives guarantee of diversity of belief in the society. Freedom of thought ensures the right to independently re-examine the beliefs that were provided by family, society and other

social groups. By freedom of thought a person can freely choose his/her own beliefs, adapt them, reject them or can turn to something else (ibid: 461).

Different authors have interpreted freedom of thought differently and made this as full of confusion. So we have to define this notion rigorously so that we can escape its subjective interpretations. We have considered French secularism as a negative notion because it hinders us in doing something and it tells about limitation. This whole law of secularism should be and is based on French law, mainly the Constitution of 1958 and some other relevant laws such as 1882 and 1886 laws that are based on secular character of schools and 1905 law that is based on the separation of the Church and the State (ibid: 461).

3.8 Secularism in France: Legislative and Constitutional

According to legal texts, there are two different types of notions of secularism that existed in France – legislative secularism and constitutional secularism. Legislative secularism was established by the 1905 law and it is called secularism as separation i.e. the sphere of religion and state would be separate. This is legally defined. On the other hand, constitutional secularism is established by the constitution 1946 and 1958. In France, constitution possesses a superior juridical value to that of laws and so constitutional secularism takes precedence over legislative secularism. The 1946 and 1958 Constitutions provide the practice of all faiths. Constitutional secularism is based on religious neutrality. By contrast, in the USA, there is only one type of secularism that is clearly asserted in the constitution. It lays down a separation between state and religion. State requires no special religious declaration for public office. It allows demonstration of independence of religion. But it cannot interfere in the religious matters (ibid: 8-9).

In France, the concept of legislative secularism is clear but the concept of constitutional secularism is not clear. The concept of constitutional secularism requires clarification. At this point French constitution should do clear and this problem was not solved during the 1905 law of separation. To solve this problem, constitutional secularism has been regarded same as legislative secularism. But this type of view is debatable and constitutional secularism cannot be identical with

legislative secularism. This debate is prompted in some particular departments (states) in France as Alsace-Moselle and contemporary issues like headscarves and burqas. Some departments like Alsace-Moselle retain the regime of recognized forms of worship with public funding. The law of separation in 1905 is not applied to them. So secularism in these departments is not considered as opposition to the recognition of forms of worship or their public funding and so it is different from legislative secularism (ibid: 9).

This funding is provided to recognize form of worship in these Departments every year. Is this funding consistent to the constitutional provisions, is a question. But this issue has never been raised and never been questioned in the *Conseil Constitutionnel* (Constitutional Council). From this we can come to the conclusion that no one regards that this funding is not contrary to the constitutional provisions. So this case tells that the recognition of forms of worship and public funding are not contrary to constitutional secularism and it confirms that constitutional secularism is different from legislative secularism. Consequently, it would not be contrary to constitutional secularism to grant public funding to construct the religious buildings (ibid: 9).

We can come to the conclusion that constitutional secularism is defined by state neutrality in religious matters. It is not based on the separation of the State and the Church as the legislative secularism is based on. This conclusion is well founded legally. It can be confirmed by the formula according to which France ‘respects all faiths’ and it is in accordance with state neutrality. But this notion of state neutrality must be clarified because it can have two different meanings. At first, it does not allow religion on the ‘public sphere of the state’. We can speak of its neutrality-as-exclusion and it has a negative character of secularism. Second, neutrality also refers to the state’s impartiality towards religions. It treats, as in the case of Alsace-Moselle, its neutrality as impartiality. It implies equality between religions (ibid: 10).

In the case of Alsace-Moselle, the government is giving money to church and breaking the law of *laicite*. According to *laicite*, the sphere of church and state would be separate, and state cannot provide money to church. In this matter the policy of constitutional secularism is being followed. Constitutional secularism has precedence over legislative secularism. But in the matter of headscarves the policy of *laicite* is

being followed. Therefore, headscarves are banned in public schools, following the policy of *laïcité*.

In the first article of French constitution it is written that ‘French is a *laïque* republic.’ The *Conseil Constitutionnel* interpreted this article. Its provisions are to “prohibit anyone from taking advantage of their religious beliefs to exempt themselves from the common rules governing the relations between public authorities and private individuals”. This does not have the full characteristics of secularism. But this is the first official interpretation given by the *Conseil Constitutionnel*. In this interpretation, secularism can be distinguished under four points:

1. Secularism is like a prohibition. It imposes some restriction on religious freedom. It means it confirms the negative character of secularism because any restriction is a negation.
2. This prohibition is addressed to private individuals and more precisely concerns their relations with ‘public authorities’ – a very broad phrase that encompasses the state, territorial authorities, public administration, and public services;
3. This prohibition concerns the religious beliefs of individuals, not in order to restrict them, but in order to exclude their intervention in, or impact on, the relations between private individuals and public authorities;
4. Finally, this prohibition aims to oblige individuals to respect common rules in these relations that they cannot exempt themselves from, for religious reasons, – which comes down to asserting the primacy of these rules over personal beliefs (ibid: 11).

Actually this notion of secularism does not have full characteristics of it and so it is not sufficient. This notion of secularism is restricted only to relation between concerned individual and religious freedom. It should be concerned to the whole society and its institutions.

Since the constitution is superior to other laws, it should give precedence to ‘secularism-as-neutrality’ over ‘secularism-as-separation’. And ‘secularism-as-neutrality’ can be substitute for the ‘secularism-as-separation’. But we know the two sorts of neutrality. ‘Neutrality-as-exclusion’ is consistent with ‘secularism-as-separation’ and it is defined as the non-recognition and non-subvention of forms of

worship. It also refers to the exclusion of religion from the public place. And also neutrality-as-impartiality excludes religion from the state but it does not exclude religion from the society. It cannot be impartial if it has a religious character. But it does not prevent state from involving relations with religions – for example, in some Departments, French state recognizes religion and it gives funds to them. Therefore, constitutional secularism, in both senses, that is, ‘secularism-as-exclusion’ and ‘secularism-as-impartiality’, encompasses legislative secularism. But there is a point to replace legislative secularism by constitutional secularism, because the latter includes the former. However, constitutional secularism is different from the legislative secularism and goes beyond it. It allows the state to have equal relations (ibid: 12-13).

While these two forms of secularism – secularism-as-neutrality and secularism-as-separation are distinct and coexist, they have something in common as both exclude religion from the state. This shows the negative character of secularism. It is based on the negation of religion in the state and religion is excluded from the public space. Therefore it is a negative notion (ibid: 13).

3.9 French Secularism and Religious Freedom

According to the French legal texts, the French secularism is the exclusion of religion from the public sphere. But it does not have in it an essence of form. In fact, it is not possible that religion is totally repudiated and can exist outside the state. In civil society, which is under the area of state, religion can exist. When we say secularism is negation of religion, it is applied only in the state and therefore this allows it outside the state and hence there is existence of religious freedom. French legal texts affirm secularism (*laïcité*); simultaneously they affirm religious freedom and describe it outside the public sphere. The law of 1882 excludes religious instruction from state education but it reserves a day in a week for religious instructions. The law of 1905 commences from affirming freedom of conscience and freedom of worship. The 1958 constitution affirms a secular republic and it respects all beliefs. It means that the 1958 constitution assumes religion as a zone of freedom. In 1989, the *Conseil d'Etat*

(the Council of State)⁷ claimed in the interpretation that according to constitution, the principle of secularism necessarily implies respect for all beliefs (ibid: 14-15).

French legal texts recognize religious freedom and it is as important as they exclude religion from the public sphere. It means that the state cannot interfere in the religious matters and hence religious matters are excluded from the public sphere. This is based on the assumption of the separation between state (public sphere) and religion (private sphere). This is why religious freedom is both individual and collective at same time. It is individual reason which allows freedom of conscience and it is collective reason which allows freedom of religious communities. It means that religious communities can organize themselves. The religious organizations are opposed to religious freedom. The Catholic Church refused to make religious organizations, the reason being that it thinks that they undermine religious freedom(ibid :15).

For a long time French legal texts affirm the freedom of conscience and freedom of worship. It means that religious freedom is explicitly imbibed in the constitution.” Many international treaties are signed by France which consisted of religious freedom either directly or indirectly. So, these international conventions bind France same as does the ‘1950 European Convention on Human Rights (article 9)’ and ‘the 1966 United Nations International Protocol on Civil and Political Rights (article 18)’. These conventions do not contain the notion of secularism but they have religious freedom. Broadly, they have freedom of thought and expression, freedom of conscience and religion and, also freedom to change the religion or faith. In 1981, UN General Assembly passed a resolution in which it indicated the right of religious freedom (ibid: 16).

Although religious freedom is not essential part of secularism (*laicite*), but it cannot be separated from it. This concept is called as ‘secularism-as-freedom’. Adopting ‘secularism-as-freedom’ may be risky, because it may lead to secularism with religious freedom and reducing the former to the latter. It may be forgotten that its nature is unconsciously or consciously spoiling its content. This assimilation becomes rather common, among religious leaders, political leaders and even some experts on secularism. Religious freedom may take precedence over secularism and may even

⁷ In France, the Council of State (French: Conseil d'État) is a body of the French national government that acts both as legal adviser of the executive branch and as the supreme court for administrative justice.

end up as the former. As Islamists demand, if wearing religious signs is possible in state schools, secularism may be reduced to religious freedom. In 1989, some *Conseil d'Etat* members as Mme Martine Laroque followed this opinion. This text has contradictory things. According to this text, on the one hand, in state schools secularism dictates neutrality of teachers and curricula; whereas on the other hand, it dictates 'respect of beliefs' and 'freedom of conscience'. But it also adds right to express and manifest their religious beliefs within educational institutions. It follows from this in educational institutions the wearing by pupils of symbols by which they aim to express their adherence to a religion is not in itself incompatible with the principle of secularism, in so far as it constitutes the exercise of the freedom to express and manifest religious beliefs (ibid: 17).

3.10 Changing the Religious Pattern

France is passing through a transition period, which Jean Paul Willaime (2004: 373) remarks as a 'cultural turn in the sociology of religion'. He talks about six recent changes in French society:

1. The increase in the number of books, journals and newspapers, and radio/TV programs devoted to religion.
2. A lot of efforts are made in the schools to combat the misunderstandings about religion.
3. A remarkable growth in the study of religion on the part of both students and scholars. There has been a significant increase in the number of students preparing doctorates in religious studies.
4. The interventions of the French Government in religious matters, concerned with both new religious movements and growing presence of Muslims.
5. The report of Commission, that all religious dresses and symbols should be prohibited in the school system.
6. Public debate about religion. Many people believe that the religious factor is a negative influence. David Miller's observation is that 80% of the organized terror and violence throughout the world is enacted in the name of religion (ibid: 374).

There is a shift in the French society. Until the Second World War, the French approach to religion was marked by two factors – the Catholics and the secularism. The whole social and political conflict surrounded a new place and the role of religion in society – above all relationship between the Catholic Church and the French state. Secular authorities were suspicious of religion because it was relegated to the private sphere (ibid: 375).

French society has moved from secularizing modernity to secularized ultra-modernity. The evolution of the society from a modernist society to an ultra-modern society characterizes the present situation. Ultra-modernity is still modernity but radicalized modernity (ibid: 375). Some developments have contributed to the more open attitude towards religious neutrality and a more global approach to religion. These developments are:

1. The effective loss of power by religious authorities, both over society and individual.
2. The self-criticism of modernity itself.
3. The re-emergence of ethical concerns in public life, and the discovery of the symbolic dimensions of social bonds.
4. The development of a wider and more visible religious pluralism, which in turn encourages both a redefinition of the relationship between the state and religion in France and a rediscovery of religion as a social phenomenon.
5. The teachers and academicians feel that students do not know about religion. This has initiated a debate about the teachings and importance of religion in the schools and colleges.
6. The French society feels that question of religion has not been solved. Changes in traditional religions and present religious landscape in France requires changes in *laicite*. The concept of *laicite* should be adapted in evolution itself.
7. The French society feels that the Catholic Church is no longer threat to the *laicite*.

This whole evolution is termed as a pact for a new *laicite* by Jean Baubérot. By this pact, *laicite* defines itself more as a framework regulating the pluralism of worldviews than as a counter-system imposing its control on religion. This progress can be described as the secularisation of *laicite*. *Micheline Milot* stresses on the importance

of interacting this concept to the content from which it has emerged in France in order to avoid its ideological overtures. She describes *laicite* as the political direction as well as legal translation of the place of religion in civil society and public institutions (ibid: 377).

Some scholars distinguish these challenges which have an effect on the understanding of *laicite*. The first reflects the growing multiculturalism of French society, which poses some question as to how one can manage the collective life. The second challenge reflects and relates to the expansion of moral relativism. The third challenge relates to a growing awareness of alternative models of church-state relationships in Europe. They talk about 'a highly sensitive body of opinion'. They react along politico-philosophical line. The fourth challenge is about the impossibility of state neutrality towards religious groups (ibid: 377).

In view of these challenges, the main features of the French system can be illustrated. Firstly, church-state competition began after the French Revolution and lasted till the 19th and 20th centuries. As a result, the place of religion in France not only became a central issue, but also generated profound and enduring cleaves. Secondly, the strongly ideologies character of the problem needs to be understood. The philosophical conceptions and political criticism of religion are very much important in France. Thirdly, where on one hand, there is a strong affirmation of the state's supremacy and its exclusive control over civil society; on the other hand, there is a centralizing and homogenizing state. Fourthly and finally, a strong resistance towards the public expression of religious affiliations has led to the privatization of religion in France (ibid: 378).

Francois Dubet had an observation on debate about *laicite*. The people speak on religious tone; they speak easily about principles than practicalities. French society is discovering or rediscovering its cultural minorities. The different sects and cults are growing in France. This has reactivated the tendency of public authorities to harass religious non-conformity and to restrain the right of individuals to choose their lifestyle and education. But a state has power to protect the religious liberty of individuals. Daniele Hervieu-Leger writes, "An individual must be able, if they wish to live in poverty, chastity and obedience, to give himself or herself to a spiritual master or to withdraw from the world for the greater glory of God, without risking an

accusation of mental sickness or social inadequacy” (ibid: 378). The anti-sectarian tendencies have the effect of placing in religious representations that fall outside the recognized religions – Catholicism, Protestantism and Judaism.

Many new religious sects are growing in French society. These religious sects are under pressure of globalization and individualization. France is unable to accept full forms of all religious sects who refuse to confine themselves to the private sphere. Underneath this debate of secularism, every sect has chosen to live differently in the name of a religious ideal and educate their children accordingly. France has the largest Muslim population in Europe as well as the largest Jewish population. Many religious conflicts prompted up between Muslim and Jewish students in the schools and renewed outbreaks of anti-Semitism. In this respect, some opinions are reinforced by acts of violence committed in the name of Islam as refusal by husbands or parents to allow their wives or daughters to be delivered by male physicians. So in this backdrop anti-Islamic sentiments are encouraged in France. These sentiments helped in the re-emergence of both anti-clericalism and *laicite*.

Prohibition Bill, against wearing of all conspicuous religious signs in the schools, was passed in 2004. These religious signs include veil, larges crosses, kippahs, headscarves, etc. Actually this law was made particularly regarding veil, but French government was fully aware that it was impossible to apply the law only to symbols of Islam. The Commission recommended the inclusion of the religious holidays of Yom Kippur (Jewish holiday) and L'Aïd-el-Kébir (festival of a Muslim sect) in the school calendar (Sala Pala and Simon 2005: 12). French society has tendency to manage religion by limiting it rather than by recognizing it. In this situation headscarves started to work as a catalyst. Some feminists believe and criticize that veil is an attack on the equality of the sexes in the name of religion. So, situation is very complex. Some persons say that young girl wear the headscarves because of family pressure or because of extremist Muslim organization. Others say that to wear headscarf is an affirmation of liberty and to demonstrate their personal autonomy (Willaime2004: 379-380).

It should also be remembered that some political interests are present in this debate. Some organizations and persons claim that reassertion of *laicite* is of a national value. The Front National is extreme right party and its leader Jean Marie Le Pen claims the

monopoly in defence of French identity. In 2001 French government opposed the reference to religious heritage in the preamble to Charter of Fundamental Rights in the Constitution of European Union. These reactions reveal that French people and French government are vigilant towards the place of religion in the public life. In France more militant form of *laicite* is growing. But this does not contradict. Religious actors accept *laicite* as the overarching framework. In turn French *laicite* is obliged to accept and to integrate the religion in the public life (ibid: 380-381).

3.11 Religion in France: A Sociological approach

Access to citizenship implies freedom from religious attachments and it has often been linked to a resistance to foreign scholarship in French sociological thought. A good example can be found in the reluctance of French social scientists (Hervieu-Leger and Willaime) to accept the work of Max Weber. There was a thought in France that an opposition existed between modernity and religion. It means a conflict should be between Catholicism and Republican France. Max Weber resisted this conception of opposition. We get a similar resistance on the work of de Tocqueville who emphasized the relation between liberty and religion in North America. Historians and sociologists depend on empirical data. On the other hand, the philosophers defend an imaginary concept of *laicite* that has never been existing. On the meaning of real *laicite*, some legal experts have offered precious insights because they have both religious liberty and governmental regulations. For example, a sociologist Jacqueline Costa Lascoux admits that France has gone beyond a *laicite* of separation and strict neutrality to a *laicite* that recognizes the liberty of religious expression (ibid: 383).

Some sociologists think quite different from this. They are thinking of religion in a new way. One such prominent thinker is Alain Touraine. His theory is based on action. He escapes from both structural-functionalist and Marxist approaches. Sociologists are aware that religion has been and is a source of collective and individual identity. This relation contradicts modernity. Modernity has led to the disintegration of collective identity but it has succeeded in this. It has not been able to digest everything. Something has not been assimilated; for example, emotions and passions, the dimensions of social bonds, traditions and customs. An important

question emerges from this – Have religious traditions assimilated modernity just as modernity has assimilated them (ibid: 383)?

Present society has rational and secular values. Ethical renewal and religious revival give meaning to human suffering and enable the individual to forge direct emotional relationship with other. A Sociologist wrote that emotional forms of religion and ethnicity are, therefore, fuelled by modernity itself and are able to compensate for the abstraction and meritocracy of modern society. In this respect, religious and ethnic areas are related and both these are in process of transformation. This is characteristic of ultra-modernity. By observing these changes, we can discover that religion overflows from traditional domain. That domain was enclosed of worship and individual convictions. At the same time, political disenchantment and the calling into question of all forms of knowledge encourage a return to symbolic expressions and spiritual experiences. Michel Wieviorka writes that instead of dissolving in the face of modern secularization, religion...becomes a more and more important element in individual and collective experience, and sometimes of political engagement, and at the heart of modernity... not only at the margins or in opposition to it (cited in Willaime 2004: 384). Renewal of religion is harmony with modernity, especially in respect to the private and individualistic character of their beliefs and fluidity of their organizational forms (Hervieu-Leiger 1990: 515).

On the evolution of religious and political belief, Marcel Gauchet writes, “Religious belief is ceasing to be political. It is emptying itself of timeless implications about the nature of human living. This detachment from its origin offers new possibilities for the future. At the same time, political belief is ceasing to be religious. It is freeing itself from the restrictions which a sacred model continues secretly to exert on all possible representations of society” (cited in Willaime 2004: 384).

3.12 Disputes on Headscarves

After Second World War, Muslim population from former French African colonies immigrated at a considerable scale in France. These former African colonies became independent after Second World War. These countries were poor and had large-scale unemployment. On the other hand, France was very rich in comparison to African

countries. Since this population was from former French colonies, so they felt comfortable to come and live in France. But when they came and resided, this immigration gave rise to conflict. The recent debate over the ban on headscarves and face-veil exemplifies this situation. It divided the French society into two camps – supporters and opponents of ban. After 1980s France had a strong polarization between the supporters and opponents of such a ban. The Republicans are supporting the ban and Islamist groups are opposing the ban.

An incident happened which brought this issue into hot debate. This debate of headscarves started since 1989. On 18 September 1989, three female Muslim students who wore headscarves were expelled from Gabriel Havez Middle School in Creil. Three Muslim girls, Fatima and her sister Leila and her friend Samira wore Islamic headscarves in school. When they were asked to remove the headscarves, they refused. The School Principal and teachers interpreted their refusal as an attack on *laïcité*. These girls were suspended from schools. School Principal Ernest Chenieres had attempted for compromise between and the school and the students but he did not become successful. This event gained national importance and became a highly debated issue in the media. This situation attracted widespread media attention and over the following weeks there was debate in national newspapers such as *Le Monde*, *La Croix* and *Le Figaro* over the principle of secularism and girls' rights to education and freedom of religion (Jones 2009: 49-50).

On 9 October, following departmental intervention, meetings with parents and some cultural organizations, these three girls returned to schools. The negotiations appeared to have identified a satisfactory compromise - the girls could wear their headscarves within school grounds, but in classrooms they would lower the scarves to their shoulders. Creil School Principal Ernest Chenieres warned of the consequences if the scale of problem were to increase. After ten days, these three girls again 'breached' the agreement by once again refusing to lower their headscarves in class. The girls were once again suspended from their classes and taken to the school library for isolation (ibid: 50).

On 22 October 1989, a protest march was organized in Paris by several Muslim groups to show support to these girls. This march was attended by hundreds of women and was spearheaded by a procession of women wearing the all-covering

chador. One week later, moderate Muslim women's organization (Maghrebine *au Feminism*) also organised a march. In contrast to the previous demonstration, this protest was initially banned by the local authorities. It was finally allowed to take place and consisted of Muslim women protesting against religious extremism and reaffirming their attachment to the values of secularism and to respect for individual freedoms (ibid: 51).

There was considerable confusion over whose responsibility it was to negotiate the various cases. The father of a school girl called for clarification of the legal principles, "If the State decides that the headscarf is prohibited at school. I will agree. It is the state. But the teachers cannot decide this" (ibid: 52) His appeal was supported by many Islamic organizations. To solve this issue, the Minister of Education Lionel Jospin appealed to the *Conseil d'Etat* (Higher Administrative Court in France). In November 1989, the Court gave the judgment that religious symbols in the schools are compatible with the principle of *laicism*. The court said, "The students have right to express and to manifest their religious beliefs inside the schools while respecting pluralism and the freedom of others" (ibid: 52). It also said that students could wear religious clothing and symbols unless they threatened the freedom of other students. But many people in France were not satisfied with the judgment of the Court. They wanted that court should review its decision. In December 1989, the Minister of Education Lionel Jospin issued a statement declaring that school administration had the responsibility of accepting or refusing the wearing of the scarf in classes on a case-by-case basis (ibid:53).

3.13 Legal opinion of the *Conseil d'Etat*

The *Conseil d'Etat* stated that wearing the headscarf was not by itself incompatible with the principle of *laicite*, in so far as it constitutes the exercise of freedom of expression and freedom of manifestation of religious beliefs. The students' freedom could be limited if the signs of religious affiliation, by their 'ostentatious or protesting' nature or the conditions in which they are borne, constituted an act of pressure, provocation, proselytism or propaganda, jeopardized the dignity or freedom of the student wearing the signs or of other students or staff, posed a health or safety

risk, disrupted teaching activities or disturbed order and the normal running of the school (ibid: 53).

The court also said in favour of caution by deciding that each matter was to “be negotiated by schools on a case-by-case basis. In this way, the court clearly indicated that its preference for each matter is to be resolved at a local level.” The legal opinion was responded in many ways. Dr Sebastian Poulter observed that the *Council d’Etat* achieved a balanced and sensible compromise in a tense and complex situation through the application of legal principles relating to human rights. Meanwhile, those three school girls were still isolated in their school library. On 2nd December 1989, sisters Leila and Fatima returned to school without their headscarves (ibid: 53). Third girl, Samira eventually returned to school without her headscarf on 26th January 1990. In September 1994, at the start of the school year, in another case, four Muslim schoolgirls, including Samira, arrived at their high school in Goussainville wearing ‘full Islamic dress’- black headscarves and long tunics. The School Principal had a long discussion with the girls. The Principal enforced the school’s internal regulations and the girls were expelled. Their expulsions precipitated further demonstrations (ibid: 54-55).

3.14 The Bayrou Circular, Debate over the Islamic Headscarves, and their Ban

In September 1994, Francois Bayrou, Minister of Education, caused a controversy in a magazine interview by telling that he intended to banish the wearing of headscarves in public schools. On 20th September, he issued a *circulaire*. It was written in *circulaire* that these signs are, in themselves, elements of proselytism, particularly when they accompany challenges to certain subjects, when they involve the safety of students or when they lead to disruptions to the collective life of the school(ibid: 55). The *Circulaire* urged school principal to redraft the internal regulations and to include a prohibition on these ostentatious signs. According to the *Circulaire*, “the wearing by the students of discreet signs, manifesting their personal commitment to beliefs, notably religious beliefs, is permitted in schools. But ostentatious signs, which constitute in themselves of proselytism or discrimination, are forbidden” (ibid: 55-56).

Although the *Circulaire* did not mention any particular religious signs, so it included the all religious signs as Islamic headscarves, Jewish sign yarmulke⁸, Christian large crosses, Sikh turbans etc. But it was clear that it referred specially to the Islamic headscarf. The circular represented a striking condemnation, labelling it ostentatious and divisive, and an element of proselytism in itself. In effect, Bayrou's circular afforded support for those schools that wished to ban the headscarf. A number of schools immediately incorporated the circular's suggested wording into their internal regulations and then applied them (ibid: 56). Between 1994 and 2003, around 100 female students were suspended or expelled from middle and high schools for wearing the scarf in class. In nearly half of these cases, their exclusions were annulled by the French courts.

Actually the majority of Muslims come from French colonies. The headscarf is conceived as a sign of rejection of French identity for the sake of Muslim community. It is argued that Muslims do not want to integrate with French values because of the religion. Erstwhile Interior Minister Gaston Defferre remarked:

When Poles, Italians, Spanish, and Portuguese live in France and decide to naturalize, it matters little whether they are Catholics, Protestants, Jews, or atheists... But the rules of Islam are not simply religious rules. They are rules of living that concern ... marriage, divorce, the care of children, the behavior of men, the behavior of women... These rules are contrary to all the rules of French law [...] What is more in France we don't have the same habits of living (cited in Tarhan 2011: 18).

Mostly, French people claim that Islamic values are incompatible with the principle of *laicite* and so there is problem for Muslim community in integrating with French values and norms. The headscarf is increasingly seen as the symbol of a foreign people – with a foreign region who have come to France, but who do not want to integrate themselves fully into French life or accept French values (Gunn 2004: 456). The French people do not like the visibility of religious symbols; so this dispute reached to the Government of French Union and President of France.

In 2003, President Jacques Chirac issued a decree forming a commission to investigate on the application of the principle of *laicite*. This commission was set up and the chairman was Bernard Stasi. The purpose of the Commission was to enquire

⁸ Yarmulke is a skullcap worn in public by Orthodox Jewish men or during prayer by other Jewish men.

about the application of *laicite* and to give suitable proposals (Tarhan 2011: 19). The Commission took interviews of the representatives from different groups such as political leaders, religious priests, school principals, human rights groups, etc (Sala Pala and Simon 2005:10). The data collected by the Commission were disconcerting. The report revealed that over the last two to three years in the schools where some Muslims girls were wearing the headscarf, and those who did not wear it, were subjected to the strong pressure to wear it. The Stasi commission received testimonies from the teachers and principals unable to manage the situation at school and from Muslim parents who sent their daughters to Catholic private schools where they were not under pressure to wear the headscarf. A national regulation seemed most appropriate to deal with this delicate matter. Finally on 15th March 2004 the Commission gave the report which is called as Stasi Report. In the Report, the Commission issued the thirty recommendations to strengthen *laicite*. Main recommendation was to ban clothing and symbols demonstrating a religious or political affiliation from public schools. Other recommendations were to teach religious studies and Arab language in the public schools (Ablimouna 2011: 126).

Due to these recommendations of Stasi Report, for the first time, the educational institutions have become battleground for conflicts about the secularism policy in France. According to French government, the nature of educational institutions is and should be consistent with the principle of *laicite*. The destruction of principle of *laicite* in educational institutions would be the collapse of the Republic and its values. According to Commission, “The existence of religious symbols within the schools is incompatible with the principle of *laicite*. The sole function of schools is not academic training but the creation of enlightened, rational and critical individuals (Tarhan 2011: 21). French society thinks that the religious symbol is a sign of dogmatism that contradicts the principle of *laicite*. School is a place from where a child takes those values which determine his/her whole life. The students come from different religious and ethnic backgrounds and here they learn how to become a good citizen. Here the students get “detached from their particular community and become equal member of the French Republic. Thus the visibility of religious symbols, which is a sign of a particular community, disturbs and destroys order and unity within the schools. The headscarf will disturb this unity by creating a division first between men and women and second believers and non-believers” (ibid: 21).

The Stasi report was submitted to the Parliament and it accepted the principle of *laïcité*. It suggested a general ban on all religious symbols – Islamic headscarves, Christian large crosses, Jewish yarmulke, Sikh turban - in the public schools and other public place. In the Report, the Commission gave the argument for “ban on the definition of *laïcité*, which has a double meaning and includes both the protection of liberty of conscience as well as the neutrality of state” (Adrian 2006: 103). This report is supported and accepted by mostly all members and all parties, from far-Left to the far-Right. This principle of *laïcité* gave a guarantee to the children for their education freely and without any religious coercion.

The government issued a White Paper and declared that French state stands for the individual and collective conscience. This affected the wearing of Islamic headscarves in schools, as well as turbans and other distinctive items of dress. It is a school where principles such as equal dignity of all human beings and equality of men and women should be expressed and where choosing the life of one’s own must be enabled. The mission of public schools is to receive every pupil, regardless of his or her religious or philosophical beliefs and this law (of *laïcité*) intends to contribute to that mission. It is the neutrality of the state and the protection of the freedom of conscience which together make up the principle of the *laïcité*.

This debate was discussed in the Parliament in detail. All political parties and leaders gave their views on Stasi Report and the principle of *laïcité*. Socialist MP, Daniel Vaillant, said in National Assembly, “Secularism should free the mind of individuals and integrate citizens. It is at the heart of our Republican hearth, fabricated at school.” Jacqueline Fraysse said, “Secularism implies an organization of society based on common values and on respect for individual differences. Secularism means the separation of the church and the state, respect for religious pluralism and freedom of conscience. Those progressive values, as inscribed in the law of 1905, made our nation” (Dimier 2008: 93). On French secularism, Right Wing members have similar opinion. Daniel Guarigue (UMP⁹) said, “there are several definitions of secularism: there is a strict, closed and militant definition, another more open conception which is based on dialogue. Marc le Fur (UMP) defined these competitions in short: the first one he called ‘the fundamental definition of secularism’ which considers that all

⁹ Union pour un mouvement populaire (UMP) – Union for a Popular Movement as of 2015 the former name of the main right-wing political party in France.

religious beliefs should be confined strictly to the private sphere. The second one insists on tolerance and respect for freedom of conscience in the public sphere as well. (Dimier 2008: 94).

Actually this debate arises because of lack of a single acceptable definition of the term, *laicite*, which is seen as one of the foundations of the French identity. The concept is praised for securing religious tolerance, freedom of religion, social cohesion and maintains the peace since the 1789 revolution (Tarhan 2011: 19). France sought freedom of religion and neutrality of state, and it created the peaceful environment for the different religious groups. In some instances, these two characteristics of *laicite* – freedom of religion and neutrality – may contradict each other such as in present time over the issue of religious symbols. It is sure that state has right to limit the freedom of religion in order to secure national unity and public order. There should be a separation of religion and state; but this cannot be expected from a modern state that it would work as neutral entity about this wall of separation. The state has the power of interference in religious affairs if required (ibid: 19- 20).

The principle of *laicite* assumes a strict division between public and private affairs. French society is multicultural and so these religious and ethnic differences might be visible within the private sphere. But in the public sphere, matter is different. Public sphere emerges where every individual takes part only as a citizen. So if religious and ethnic identity could be visible in public sphere, it means they have another identity than French identity. According to French *laicite*, “In public sphere this identity will produce threat to national identity. This will create competition between French citizenship and national unity based on religious and ethnic group affiliations. Thus, visibility of religious and ethnic identities in public sphere is regarded as a sign of threat to national unity” (Tarhan 2011: 20).

Yolanda Jansen (2009: 595) writes, “Citizenship implies the priority of belonging to the state over all other kinds of attachment to specific groups. This gives an extra dimension to *laicite*, which persists in its contemporary understandings where the concern is not so much the freedom of conscience and the disestablishment of religion, but rather a ‘communitarian concern for civic unity’, which tends to try to substitute democratic civil loyalty for religious and traditional allegiances. In this sense, *laicite* has much to do with the tradition of assimilation in the sense of

allegiance to be a nation. The principle of *laïcité* includes some expectations from Muslim community. In order to be a French citizen, they should accept the cultural norms of French society. The concept of citizenship of French society is not based on religious and ethnic identities, but based on cultural norms of French society. What is expected from people having different ethnic and religious backgrounds is to become a part of national unity, which is conceived as homogenous. Thus, the visibility of different practices and backgrounds within the public sphere is delegitimized and the idea of political equality is reduced to public sameness (Tarhan 2011: 20-21).

Since 2004, the controversies around the hijab in France have not subsided, but continued further within its political scene. The French government and natives did not satisfy to ban on hijab, they went to ban on burqa. In 2009, a member of Communist Party along with 57 legislators requested that the National Assembly establish a commission to inquire about the face-veil in order to protect the *laïcité* values of France. Report of the French Parliament Commission (Gerin Report) proposed a series of measures designed to ban Muslim women from wearing the burqa and niqab¹⁰ in public. On the basis of Report, on April 21, 2010, President Nicolas Sarkozy ordered his government to present a draft law making it illegal to wear either the burqa or the niqab in public. On July 13, 2010, the French National Assembly voted by 335 to 1 in favour of the legislation with 241 abstentions. On September 14, 2010, the French Senate voted by 246 to 1 with 100 abstentions (Abilmouna 2011: 127).

Ban on burqa was also contemplated as a sign of secularism. It was not limited only in schools. The ban on burqa expanded from schools to other places as roads, cinemas, malls, shops – all public places. The French government regarded burqa in society as a rejection of the French Republic and its values. Therefore, French Parliament passed the law with overwhelming majority to ban all face covering. On April 11, 2011 the France ban came into force (Hunter-Henin 2012: 614).

That the debate and ban is separate from the above-discussed debate on the hijab in public schools, in the new law does not pertain to Islamic headscarves but rather to their much rarer full-face versions among other full-face coverings (such as masks

¹⁰ A *niqab* (face-veil or face-covering) is a cloth that covers the face as a part of hijab. It is worn by some Muslim women in public areas.

and balaclavas¹¹), and in that the new law applies to all citizens in public spaces regardless of religion or claimed tradition and regardless of gender (ibid: 614). It is applicable to all public places. It has escaped no one's attention that the first law was primarily aimed at the Islamic. The French government claimed that French people want that in whole public life burqa should be banned (ibid: 615).

On the first law (in 2004), the government referred the constitutional principle of secularism but on second time (in 2010) the government did not need this. The government emphasized all necessity of living together and visual relation with other in order to enable communication. Some important provisions of this Act are stated here. Article 1 of the Act declares that no one shall, in any public space, wear clothing designed to conceal the face. This article, Section 3, also provides that failure to comply with the prohibition will result in a fine, set at 150 Euros, which can be given in conjunction with, or instead of, an order to attend a course on citizenship (Black 2010: 10). Section 4 punishes anyone who forces someone to cover her face by a year's imprisonment and a fine of 30000 Euros (Abilmouna 2011: 128). The French Constitutional Council¹² declared that the Act is not unconstitutional. But it requested to review this Act in the light of the Constitution.

Human rights activists and legal experts discussed this ban at length. Many authors and thinkers regard it as limitations on the freedom of the individual. The law was sufficiently discussed in the French Parliament. A case against France on this issue was filed before the European Court of Human Rights. A female French citizen went to the European Court and argued that the ban on burqa is against freedom of thought, conscience and religion. The French government asked the court to throw out the case, claiming that the law was not aimed at the burqa or veil but any covering of the face in a public place, and also applied to hoods and helmets when not worn on a motor vehicle (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/01/france-burqa-ban-upheld-human-rights-court>). European court of Human Rights (ECHR) too had upheld France's burqa ban, accepting French government's argument that it encouraged citizens to live together. This law of ban in 2010 was adopted and

¹¹ Balaclava is a close-fitting garment covering the whole head and neck except for parts of the face, typically made of wool.

¹² It is highest constitutional authority in France and reviews the constitutionality of Acts passed by Parliament.

originated in a Presidential comment. On 22nd June 2009, before both Houses of Parliament in Versailles, President Nicolas Sarkozy declared in a historical speech that the burqa was not welcome in France. He said “The problem of the burqa is not a religious problem; it’s a problem of liberty and women’s dignity. It’s not a religious symbol, but a sign of subservience and debasement. Jack Straw had also publicly acknowledged his discomfort about burqa. The French Council of Ministers approved that face covering cannot be tolerated in any public place (CNN 2010).

The French rationalised that the law was necessary because the face-covering prevent clear identification of a person, which can be both a security risk and a social hindrance. The law does, however, allow for several exceptions such as motorcycle helmet, mask for health reasons, fencing skiing, carnivals and festivals. Because, the law does not refer to Islam or the face-covering worn by some Muslim women. The French Constitutional council said that the law did not impose disproportional punishments or prevent the free exercise of religion in the place of worship. Therefore, according to the French government, the law conforms to the French constitution (Powell 2012: 127)

Several Muslim groups claim that ban on burqa would infringe on their religious freedom. These groups had urged the French Parliament not to outlaw the burqa. But French government was not ready for this. French government asked people to separate the sphere between the faith and state. The erstwhile President Sarkozy urged believers of all faiths in France to practise their religion with humble discretion. The Government argued that this ban is not only for burqa and niqab but also for other religious symbols. It argued that the ban is for all face covering in public place. This law was discussed in the Parliament, both constitutionally and conventionally. The debate was focused mainly on four points: first, rejection of values of the French republic, second, contrary to the fundamental requirements of living together in French society, third, human dignity and the rejection of the equality of men and women, and fourth, a danger for public safety (Zoethout 2015: 4).

For first argument, the government proposed this bill because covering the face in public was regarded as a rejection of the values of the Republic. French Republic is based on values of liberty, equality and fraternity, that the foundation of human dignity and the equality of man and woman. Covering the face in public is inhumane

and violation of human dignity. So, ban on burqa is a defence of the French concept of *laicite* or French Republic. Second argument was that face covering is regarded as a contrary to the requirements of living together in French society. It hinders the necessary social relationship. The government argued that face covering prevents a person to take part in the society and so it should be prohibited. Some members opposed this bill. Government argued and gave reference of French thinker Montesquieu that an injustice to one person is a threat to all. One senator said that the face is not the assemblage of a nose, a forehead, eyes, etc. (ibid: 5-6).

Third argument was about human dignity and rejection of the equality of men and women. Government is sincere about this injustice. Government thinks that face covering is not a free choice but a result of social pressure. Fourth argument said that face covering was a danger for public safety. Government focused on the protection of the values of the French Republic and said it is not primarily aimed at religion. Many religious organizations stated that the ban on religious symbols in the public domain is a racist attack on Muslim community by the French government. Another logic given by Muslim community is that it is for elimination of the formation of Muslim identity in France, and by this law, adopting a solely French identity is being taught rather than encouraging Muslims to adapt to French culture (Croucher 208: 200).

In this issue around ban on religious symbols, there are two sides and they have the different claims opposing each other. The claims are cantered on the debate that the visibility of religious symbols creates a polarization of believers and non-believers. It is also considered as an oppression of the non-believers by the believers. It is also possible that a religious symbol might be a repressive tool over non-believers. Stasi Report says, “Republicans argue that headscarves imply inferiority of women by covering the female body and controlling female sexuality. Female students using headscarves are conceived of as victims of their traditional cultures. They wear headscarves not out of preference but because they were forced to do so by their families” (Tarhan 2011: 22). Certain individuals and associations consider the headscarf to be a symbol of belonging to the Muslim community. According to this line of reasoning, women who wear the veil display their religious and community affiliation, which harms the national unity and *laicite* of the French Republic. With this ban, the French Parliament intended to enhance the equal participation of citizens

in society and to protect the equality of the sexes. Thus, the ban of face veil would make women free from religious stigma. On the other hand, believers claim that a ban on face covering is violation of the freedom of religion. They claim that France is a secular country and so every person has right to freedom of religion.

Some voices in Islam in France have supported the ban on face covering and they have stated that the face-covering veil is actually not Islamic and is not encouraged by the Quran. They say that burqa does not have the religious ground. Burqa is just an option and voluntarily worn. If burqa would have been compulsory in Islam, there are many women in France as well as in other countries including Muslim countries who would have violated the Islamic provisions. However, it is not the truth. The women who do not wear burqa, it is not said, that they are violating the Islamic rules. Actually, dress is part of culture. They are right on this point. The religion is related to other-worldliness, but dress is not related to other-worldliness. If we say that dress is part religion, it means we are widening the real meaning of religion. We should see religion only in the meaning of religion. The person whatever he or she wears it is part of culture. Therefore, it should be said that it is part of Muslim cultural heritage. Fadela Amara, who had recently served as a Junior Minister in the French government and is a Muslim, had previously declared that the veil is the visible symbol of the subjugation of women, and therefore has no place in the mixed, secular spaces of France's state school system (George 2006).

Dalil Boubakeur, the Grand Mufti of the Paris Mosque, the largest and most influential one in France, testified to parliament during the bill preparation. He commented that the burqa was not prescribed in Islam, that in the French and contemporary context its spread was associated with radicalisation and that its wearing was inconsistent with France's concept of the secular state. The President of the French Council of the Muslim Faith favoured discouraging Muslim women from wearing the full veil but opposed the ban. He expressed the fear that ban would stigmatise Islam.

This movement to ban the full Islamic veil has also gained popularity across Europe. In recent times polls were done in Italy, Spain, Germany and Britain for this and widespread support was given to French policy. Belgium legislated to ban the covering of the face in public places. However, USA and British government resisted

a ban on burqa. British government said that ban on burqa is not consistent with British values. French ban embodies a secularist or French tradition. While American and British policy, we can say, that they are based on multiculturalism. It is significant to that the difference between secularism and multiculturalism is only in reference to French, and American as well as British. In common word, protecting common values is the key to both secularism and multiculturalism. The differences lay in the method used to protect these values. Usually, secular countries do not extend or relegate religious expression to the private sphere. Multiculturalists countries do not rely upon the public/private sphere divide so strictly. If we focus on 2010 ban, it is clear that this ban corresponds with a secularist or French exception tradition.

At present, the veil has been connected to Islamic women. But actually veil is a product of Judaism. Jewish women in ancient period were required to wear a veil on the heads at the time of praying. But men could pray without veil. Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, is shown in veil in all photos. At the time of Ancient Greek and Roman Empire the custom of wearing veil existed (Croucher 2009: 200). The veil did not come to Islam until 627 C.E., it came after the death of Prophet Mohammed. But at this time, in whole world, it has become the core symbol of Islam. Wearing the hijab or burqa identifies a woman as Muslim. In twentieth century, the Islamic veil has come under scrutiny. This has become more so, particularly in those countries (like France and Turkey) where secular values are over religious values. In these countries the veil has come under threat of attack. For example, Mustafa Ataturk, first President of Turkey, banned the veil in Turkey in 1925 (ibid: 200-201).

In France in January 2004, thousands of Muslims marched in protest against the proposed law on secularism in Paris, Marseille, Lille and other cities. The protests were also held in other countries. This law changed the judicial balance which the *Conseil d'Etat* had worked to achieve throughout 1990s. This law pushes back the rights which secularism and the Republic are supposed to protect (Jones 2009: 66-67).

In 1990s, the *Conseil d'Etat* tried to uphold and to make a balance between both secularism and the right to freedom of religious expression. The result was broad acceptance by the courts of the wearing of the headscarf in public schools. At the same time, the courts required the students to respect public order and their

responsibilities to attend and participate in school activities, and penalized if they breached these rules. In this way, the courts contributed to the negotiation of a working definition of secularism which encompassed both rights and duties. With this, the courts were adapting secularism to the specific challenges posed by the wearing of the headscarf in schools (ibid: 66-67). But under the law of 2004, all Muslim students wearing the headscarf in public schools were liable to be expelled, regardless of their disrupting public order and teaching activities (ibid: 67).

It is argued that these symbols led to a differentiation of students and went against the notion of neutrality and secularity which had been crucial guiding principles in the education of the young as well as the promotion of tolerance in France more generally. In addition, the hijab and other religious signs might be considered an act of proselytism, which is illegal in schools in France (Adrian 2006: 103-104). Although the ban included the Yarmulke and Cross, but it was clear that the driving reason for this uproar was the hijab. Yarmulke had been worn for decades in public schools without problems and the idea that students might wear such large crosses as to be offensive was not considered in any depth. There was no debate taking the non-Muslim religious symbols as Yarmulke or Crosses. Thus, this debate was fuelled specially by the hijab. This debate came because the native French thought that the Muslims, unlike the Jews in France, lived in enclaves and sub-cultures and did not seem to assimilate to the French way of life (ibid: 104).

The response to the ban among Muslim groups was mixed. Some believed that state was right in its approach, while some others felt that ban was an outrage and it served to single out the Muslim community unfairly. Mr. Boubakeur, Dean of the Paris Mosque, testified this feeling, Bayrou's *circulaire* was unjust to single the Muslims out among other monotheists regarding their religious symbols. Indeed, after many years of public debate, reactions from the Muslim communities are still mixed. A survey shows that 42% of Muslims supported the hijab and 53% did not. About whole of France, February 2004 survey shows that 69% of the population was for ban and 29% against it (ibid: 104).

Some critique came from abroad. But it is difficult to quantify the international responses, on the basis of their conclusions. Newspaper *International Herald Tribune* wrote that the debate has little to do with the usual reasons for schools dress codes and

everything to do with the French state's historical impulse to impose its republican value system on an increasingly diverse nation. This critique did not only come from abroad, but also from French newspaper *Le Monde*. It wrote about hijab that it is a national psycho drama and contends that a ban on the headscarf would leave secularism 'cold, closed and defensive' (ibid: 104).

About these religious issues, the French culture has a long history and it is done through *laicite*. But at present time, if French culture is inherently flexible to changing developments according to time, then why is it that the hijab is not accepted as a form of religious observance in French schools? Indeed the case of hijab in the French educational system is not a reflection of the stagnancy of culture because cultural norms and values are a product of human ingenuity, life, love and war, not an inventor of them. The debate over the hijab could easily have been argued for its inclusion even under the terms of *laicite*, by rendering it an exception in line with the other long standing exceptions (ibid: 110).

Some specific cultural norms are constantly shifting but nevertheless identifiable and are generous enough to allow new forms of articulation and identification. Perhaps one reason for the exclusion of Muslim norms of religious manifestation is that these forms do not seem to support the cultural values that the French hold dear. That is, it is not the hijab *per se* which threatens the secular state, but the values the French believe underlie the wearing of the hijab: female subjugation, disempowerment, and the return to 'fundamentalist' orientations' (ibid: 110). About debate of hijab controversy, on 2nd September 2004, *Globe and Mail* wrote: "officials contend the Muslim community is becoming increasingly militant and failing to integrate into French society. Actually, the Muslim threat is based on the perceived militancy and lack of integration. The Muslim threat is 'perceived militancy' than militancy. The hijab, it seems, is but symbolic of both of these social phenomena (ibid: 110).

Most immigrants born in Africa declare themselves Muslims, but over a quarter of their children refuse Muslim identity. Those immigrants who declare themselves Muslim, 50% continue with daily prayers and only 3% of children participate. 45% read the Quran and only 13% of children do this. These figures seem to suggest that the centrality of Islam is shifting for new generations of Muslims in France. M.M. Charrad makes a point clearly on cultural diversity within Islam that it provides a

general framework with a range of options for actions... groups and individuals negotiate practices and symbols while engaging in social action and ongoing struggles. They may use the symbols in various ways at different times in constructing strategies of action (ibid: 110).

Currently, hijab may carry a 'loaded political meaning' and signifying membership in a moral or Islamist community, be worn out of force or for protection in the public place. When culture is constantly shifting and under negotiation, and so are manifestation and expressions of religion, it is not absolute right. When they are not removing hijab, they are not adapting the French culture, and they are not refusing the Muslim identity, it is point to consider why they are not doing so (ibid: 111). One of the most intriguing aspects of the Headscarf affair is that the veil or hijab is conceived in such a multiplicity of ways that to emplace upon it, one signifying characteristic is to overlook the diversity in religiosity and culture within Muslim culture in France (Gordner 2008: 81). Muslim girls who opt to wear the hijab in public schools should not be forced to remove it because freedom of faith and its manifestation is a principle that is enshrined in the very understanding of what it means to be French (ibid: 111).

For legal scholars, *laicite* has a clear definition and 1905 law was built around three principles: freedom of conscience, separation of sphere of religion and state, and the equal respects of all faiths and beliefs. These all principles should be understood in the historical perspectives (Weil 2009: 2704). Freedom of conscience is protected by the French Constitution and also the international conventions mentioned earlier. Then the question is how ban on hijab is legitimized in France in spite of existence of legal provision (Adrian 2006: 106). Stasi Commission Report "outlines four situations, three of which give the right to curtail freedom of religion – 1. Any act which is form of pressure, provocation, proselytism or propaganda; 2. All acts which could endanger the dignity or the liberty of any student or member of the larger school community, especially if these acts compromise their health or security; 3. Any activity which disrupts the activity of teaching or teachers' educational role, or difficulties brought to bear on the establishment, and formal functioning of the educational process" (ibid: 106-107). In the name of public order the state's ban on the hijab comes under the limitation on the manifestation of religious freedom. It should be clear that state is not saying that it is derogating this right; it is only giving a restriction on the right to manifestation of religious symbols. The difference is one of

procedure and legitimacy. Whichever process we are applying to restrict the hijab, it should be legitimate (ibid: 107).

The problem in the French case is that the Report does not divulge which public order the hijab violates, but only vaguely refers to an increasing need for uniformity of decisions regarding the wearing of the hijab across France. In the last section, the Report gives some reasons to ban hijab. The reasons are based on over 100 public gatherings and 40 private interviews between July and December 2003. During these meetings, the members of Stasi Commission heard about physical and verbal attacks on young women donning the hijab. They listened to teachers and their stories of the family pressure on young women. They have listened to the feelings of female suppression and an associated sexism that accompanied the hijab. They were told of the isolation of female as they were increasingly being excused from certain classes (ibid: 107). From some reasons, the Commission decided that the wearing of the hijab is contrary to the norms of public order. It is also noticeable that the reasons underlying the decision to restrict the hijab in schools under the public order clauses do not deal with public order *per se*, in the sense that they disrupt the peaceful association of people. Unfortunately, the Report does not provide any definition of public order. The definition utilized is as a threshold, and thus it seems clear that France has not made a convincing enough case to warrant the limit of such an important series of rights as the right to religious freedom (ibid: 107).

Neutrality of the state means that all have equality before law and no one doubts the objectivity of the state. The state should not care if an individual is religious, a-religious, non-religious or atheist. Aristide Briand suggested that in what sense it could be understood what is happening in France since 25 years. It seems to most observers that the hijab affair has broken the law of *laicite* itself. The notion that France has a pure separation of state from its churches, synagogues and mosques, is deceiving. There is recognition both in the Report and more widely elsewhere that *laicite* was conceived to be flexible in its application. The context for its development shifted dramatically from a time when the Catholic Church was a threat to Republican ideals to a time when heightened immigration and thus a more diverse society demand a re-evaluation of the concept. Although the report alludes to this flexibility, it does not mention the exceptions that have been allowed by the State (ibid: 107-108).

But some exceptions are in France. *Institu Musulman*, a Muslim organization, was founded in 1920s, and for this founding, the French government passes the law. This organization was founded in Algeria to recognize the many Africans who had fought on the side of France during World War I . Using the line of credit, but built with subscriptions from donors, the Muslim community began to construct the mosque in Paris. A second exception to official government policy of *laicite* was driven by the great demographic changes in 1960s and 1970s. During this time, entire suburbs and regions were populated by immigrants arriving from Northern Africa and other parts. It was recognized that there is value to preserving the cultural norms of these communities generally and the religious traditions more specially. For this reason, the Secretary of State of Immigrants Workers sent a circular in 1976, which allowed funds to be given (ibid: 108).

Different Islamic religious preachers have reacted variously on face covering ban. Al-Azhar University is in Cairo, Egypt. It is considered as the most important Islamic institution in the Sunni world. Its Mufti gives Al-Azhar's fatwa as a guide for the action of millions of Muslims around the world. About the developments of France, Sheikh Mohammed Sayed Tantawi, a chief Mufti in France issued what are considered to be strong Fatwas advocating a moderate response to the developments, although the fatwas were not without controversy. About hijab, he said that 'while it is a Muslim woman's duty to wear the hijab, it is her duty to abide by the laws of her residing country. When the duties are contradictory, whether religious or otherwise, one should follow the lesser of the two evils. In this case, according to Sheikh Tantawi, the lesser evil is that it is better to de-veil oneself than to break the laws of France (Abilmouna 2011: 128). He declared that niqab was a tradition in Islam, rather than a form of worship. So, women are not obliged to wear this. He added that every country had a right to ban the face-veil and the French headscarf controversy was an intra-France issue that did not concern him or other Muslims outside of the country.

Contrary to this, other Mufti, Yusuf bin Abdullah al-Ahmad of Saudi Arabia issued a fatwa that the niqab was in fact obligatory in Islam. Citing two hadiths¹³ in support of his claim, he held that the donning of the niqab by women in Islam in front of strange

¹³ Hadith is a collection of traditions containing sayings of the prophet Muhammad which, with accounts of his daily practice (the Sunna), constitute the major source of guidance for Muslims apart from the Koran, or any of the sayings from the Hadith.

men is allowed, but the disagreement among scholars is that the niqab is in fact, obligatory. For this girl, she should wear the niqab and more importantly, adhere to what her father raised her to do. Sheikh al-Azhar's comment includes a denial of the clear and original texts and is a violation of the rights that religion has permitted for women (ibid: 129).

Sheikh Ahmad Kutty is a senior lecturer at the Islamic Institute of Toronto. He takes a more conservative approach about this. He has the opinion that the Muslims in France should try their best to pressure public opinion to change the law that banned hijab in public schools...as it was a challenge to their identity. He thinks that the struggle by these Muslim women was compared to what the prophets of Allah faced in their own times, and therefore, they should continue the struggle by remaining steadfast to the principles and trusting that victory ultimately belongs to those who are truly conscious of Allah. He said that Muslims are required to practise Islam as they can in the given circumstances in which they are living. Muslims are only required to continue to hold firmly to the teachings that they can adhere to and not those that they are unable to adhere to because of circumstances beyond their control. Nevertheless, as the fatwa cited above, they should seek to change the ban of hijab through peaceful methods that are lawful in France (ibid: 130).

Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi says that, "Muslims in France should not follow what might be interpreted as a weakening of their religious identity (and their belonging to the umma¹⁴)" (ibid: 131). He added that Muslims have to raise their voice against the situation in France in order to tell the France that this law opposes their own will...and make sure they will be heard in the rest of Europe" (ibid: 131).

3.15 Arguments in Favour of Headscarves (Veil)

In recent years, there has been a trend among young Muslims that they are very sensitive about their independent identity. They adopt headscarf in order to express their desire, respect and their identity. French natives think that they wear headscarves because they are religious fundamentalists. On the contrary, according to them, the headscarf increasingly appears to be regarded as a sign of modesty, respectability and

¹⁴ The whole community of Muslims bound together by ties of religion.

other positive qualities. At the same time, wearing the headscarf allows these women to participate in public activities and the wider community and to overcome obstacles, such as unwanted attentions in public life, which are presented by both Muslims and non-Muslims. In this way, the headscarf can be a means of liberation for many Muslim women, since it removes public attention from their physical appearance and sexuality and guarantees them freedom of movement. So, headscarf can be described as a vehicle for liberty for many young Muslim girls. Some Muslim girls have found that wearing headscarf has reinforced their identity and given them a certain sense of pride, as well as rights and a status which French society has not offered them (Jones 2009: 60-61).

By wearing headscarf, they can also indicate their ability to appreciate their role as agents for change in a political world. Wearing a headscarf can also give Muslim women the freedom to speak from a position of authority and respect without fear that they will be accused of being 'Westernised' or of abandoning Muslim values. These women may be more able to criticize aspects of Muslim practice and they are already demonstrating their commitment to the traditions of their faith and culture. For these women, wearing the headscarf can be one way of identifying with a movement which is collectively asserting cultural authenticity in the face of a dominant cultural model seeking to extinguish Islamically inspired social modes. It also reflects their desire for a New Islam which is relevant to their lives and will grant them the freedom to study, work and enjoy social, legal and financial independence. They are claiming for themselves an Islam which liberates women and indicating their desire to escape their sub-identity as second-generation immigrants. Sadek Sellam writes, "the younger generation of Muslim kids is different from their parents...they want to live in France but as Muslims" (ibid: 61-62).

Veiling as a practice of colonial resistance opens up a consideration of the contemporary political context in which women choose to veil. The practice of veiling reflects practices of religious piety that are complex in their motivation, one aspect of this issue that cannot be captured by binary understandings of rational agency versus its opposite. Joan Wallach Scott argues that the practice of veiling is a 'modern' rather than a 'traditional' phenomenon (Bhandar 2009: 348). The refusal to accept the practice of veiling as one aspect of a distinctly modern phenomenon, which is not at

odds with a secular modernity but rather a part of it, is reflective of an anxiety that is of concern.

There is also some evidence of a growing marginalization of Muslim girls who do not choose to wear the headscarf. For some young women, wearing the headscarf can encourage a sense of difference which can be expressed as a statement of opposition, almost of moral superiority. As a result, these women may feel a degree of sanctimony and even moral superiority over Muslim women who do not wear the headscarf. Indeed, it is interesting to note that the traditional codes underlying the headscarf are largely subverted in France, in which a Muslim woman wearing headscarf can actually become more visible and therefore more likely to attract attention than a woman with no headscarf. A Muslim woman not wearing the headscarf means she is not veiled so that no one notices her (Jones 2009: 63)

3.16 Arguments against Headscarves (veil)

According to many Western feminists, headscarf is practice of sexual segregation and the division of space into male and female areas in many Muslim countries. It perpetuates Muslim women's silencing and oppression. As a result, the headscarf tends to be 'politically charged with connotations of the inferior other' implying and assuming a subordination and inferiority of the Muslim women (ibid: 64). The French people think that veil is contrary to modernity and republican values, including those of equality and secularism. It is relic of times past withheld from women the power to participate in the public sphere. It is the veil that is prohibitive of participation in the public life (Adrian 2009: 365-366)

It is assumed that religion is a private matter and women have freedom of choice in relation to whether or not to wear burqa or/and hijab. Yet, it is not an issue of women's individual choice; rather it is a public matter. It is imposed by the institutions of state such as religious leadership, the state regime, the family and the community. And these are often patriarchal. Actually, whether this is individual choice or imposed by society is one of the contentious issues in the affair. This is a question of free choice that is considered particularly in France. According to Dr Bronwyn Winter, the question of individual choice was instrumental in determining

the general public response, particularly in view of the absence of Muslim women's voices from much of the public debate during the affair (Jones 2009: 65).

Some people believe that the most effective way to ensure that Muslim girls were exercising or could exercise free choice, which was also the best way to improve their economic and social opportunities, was to ensure that they learn civic and secular values. According to Claude Allegre, a lecturer at University of Paris and former adviser to Education Minister Jospin, the best way to combat the sexual discrimination practised by 'certain religious' people was to admit the Muslim schoolgirls into secular public schools where they could learn, compare, understand and finally decide for themselves. It means that the girls should continue to attend the school, at least until they were old enough to remove their own headscarves. This would enhance the possibility of the Muslim women not wearing headscarves (ibid: 65). Actually women are taught in culture specific body norms and values. So hijab and veil became "a site of struggle" in France. Foucault asserts this discourse and social practice see the human body, making it a target for social control and power (Croucher 2009: 201).

The approach of *Conseil d'Etat* has been confirmed by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). On December 2008, the court decided two French 'headscarf cases' both arising from events which took place before this law of 2004. In both the cases, the court decided in favour of the French government and school authorities, confirming the expulsions of two Muslim schoolgirls for wearing the headscarf. The European Court of Human Rights found that the school's ban on wearing the headscarf during physical education and sports classes and the girls' subsequent expulsions constituted a restriction on the exercise of their right of freedom of religion. According to Article 9(2) of the European Convention, freedom to manifest one's religion may be subject to limitations that are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others (Jones 2009: 67-68).

The court accepted that the restriction had a sufficient legal basis in domestic law and so could be regarded as having been 'prescribed by law'. Furthermore, the restriction mainly pursued the legitimate aims of protecting the rights and freedoms of others and protecting public order. In the circumstances, the court considered that it was not

unreasonable to conclude that wearing the headscarf was incompatible with sports classes for reasons of health and safety (ibid: 69).

About Burqa ban, the European court of human rights (ECHR) have upheld French policy, accepting the argument that it encouraged citizens to live together (ibid: 69). The case was brought by an unnamed 24-year-old French citizen of Pakistani origin, who wears both the burqa, covering her entire head and body, and the niqab, leaving only her eyes uncovered. They argued it was inhumane and degrading, against the right of respect for family and private life, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of speech and discriminatory. The French government asked the court not to accept the case. The ECHR has already upheld France's ban on headscarves in educational establishments, and its regulation requiring the removal of scarves, veils and turbans for security checks" (CNN 2014).

[If we try to make a balanced conclusion in both arguments, in this debate perception plays very important role. Nancy Hirschmann has the view from feminist perspective. According to her, "Determining whether the veil oppresses women from a Western feminist perspective proves difficult because even when women choose to wear the veil, they may do so in a framework that men have established. The veil itself may not indicate freedom or lack of freedom for women. A French born Muslim convert woman Chrystelle Khedrouche believes that a woman should be able to dress as she likes. She adds, "I have made the choice not to be unveiled, so to force me to unveil – that is not freedom" \(Black 2010: 13\). This whole debate is not only related to dress, but this is more than dress. These facts and arguments point at the cultural and religious assertion in France and also Europe. So now we will deal the status of religion in Europe.](#)

3.17 Status of Religion in Europe

The hijab and burqa debate was not limited in France. This went in other European countries and also in other part of the world. The Netherlands and Belgium banned the hijab and burqa. Currently Bulgaria also banned the burqa. In some states of Germany, hijab is banned in public schools. The debate of hijab and burqa is not just related to dress but is related to the social impact of religion. Actually whole Europe is facing the problem of the 'Islamophobia'. They have a particular image taking to

Islam. From two decades, the terrorist attacks and threats by radical Islamist terrorists strengthened this image of Islam in the minds of European people.

Current incidents prove that discourse related to religion again come in the public space. The authority and 'secularism from above' held implied that the space religion occupied in the public domain was defined and regulated by this modern narrative. The very fact of separating religion from other domains, in particular from the domain of politics and culture, is a product of the coercive power of secularism. The production of religion by the very forces of secularist narrative does not imply that religion's mode of presence is enclosed by secularism (Yeegenoglu 2012: 99). Perhaps this is the reason that led many intellectuals to talk about the de-secularization (Peter Barger), or de-privatization (Jose Casanova) or 'return of the religions'(Martin Riesebrodt) or the 'resurgence of religion' (Pollack 2008: 1). It shows, in contemporary conditions, that religion retains its puissance even under modern conditions that is compatible with modernity.

The idea that the boundary of religion is being redrawn is linked to the transformation of the private/public sphere. Dissolution of the private/public distinction affects religious communication. Last two decades are witnessed an impressive de-differentiation of religious communication. This can be analysed as popular religion (Knoblauch 2008: 147)

A lot of debates are taking place in Europe on religious issues. Instances are "the ongoing controversies about the use of religious symbols, the unrest in some countries in relation to sects and new religious movements, the heated debate about a reference to religion in the Preamble to the European constitution, and the discussions surrounding the possible accession of Turkey in the EU. All these have produced a tension in Europe. So, religion re-appeared both dramatically and publicly in recent decades, when the religious activities in the historical church were going dead. In second chapter where Secularization was discussed, we found that religion is losing its social and political impact on society and its credit goes to modernity, and science and technology. The churches are standing up but a large part of people is not going there, they do not want to go. The Churches have only symbolic importance. But this does not mean that these institutions have entirely lost their significance as markers of

religious identity”. This religious status of European people is termed as ‘believing without belonging’ by Grace Davie.

Prof. Davie discusses about some factors related to the present situation. Firstly, the cultural heritage of Europe is indisputably Christian. Then what she calls the old model, “the easiest way to understand the notion of religion as a public utility, which is much easier for Europeans to grasp than it is for Americans because the former are very familiar with public utility. She also uses the term, ‘vicarious religion’ to describe this” (Davie 2006: 273). “But things are changing so on top of this public utility, the old model, the state church, the parish system; one sees an incipient market where some forms of religion do better than others, and this cuts right across the denominational mix. One can have success in the state church, and one can have success in the free churches. One can have churches or parishes that struggle more both inside and outside the state church. We would also need to take into account, new arrivals into Europe, people of many different faiths, but including Christians. European religion is being replenished by immigration from the global south, but we also have a more pluralist state of affairs than we used to, and we would have to take note of the presence of Islam as a catalyst of change in Europe. Then we would need to consider secular reaction to this changing situation, notably the very shrill in our voices of the New Atheism, but it is a more nuanced picture than that (ibid).

And increasingly, Europeans appreciate and realize that their situation is not a global prototype. It is simply not the case that what Europeans do today in terms of religion; the rest of the world will do tomorrow. As Europeans thought for quite a long time, but that is no longer the case, and some Europeans are humbled by this situation and ready to learn from the rest of the world. Other Europeans are somewhat disconcerted. And it is the collect of all those threads that makes the really fascinating and interesting picture that is religion in modern Europe today. France also is passing in ambiguous manner about religion. In European society, this ambiguity makes atheism and secularity simultaneously players in the competition of religions and counterparts to all religions. In terms politics, this ambiguity is to be seen in the double-mind relation of religion and state. The state does not decide the form of religion. European society is bound to accommodate the religions and faiths. On the other hand In European society, we find one religion determining the basic outlook of the leading

sector of citizens. It is this religion that establishes something like a general religious background for the political culture of the community (Holscher 2008: 56).

Religion has re-appeared both dramatically and publically in recent decades at the moment when the indices of religious activity in the historic Churches continue to fall (Davie 2006: 272). In European society, religion and political constitution do not have a simple linear relation indicating that they are uniquely and exclusively committed to one another. There is no unique and exclusive political interpretation of religion in terms of politics. This openness is important in maintaining devoutness to religion in times of rapid political change. Today religion may even help to demonstrate a certain continuity in a world of changing political system (Holscher 2008: 56-57).

In every country, its political system is determined by its own circumstances. Same happened in France. This French political system is determined by the factors, which some thinkers termed it 'civil religion'. In order to understand the complexities of religious impact on society, we can deal with the nobilities of religious life and with its emergent forms. No longer is it possible simply to place individuals into boxes of those who 'practise' and those who do not, given the great majority of French people lie somewhere between the two (Davie 2006: 284).

The field of politics, culture, and religion are now interconnected with each other more powerfully than secularism would have us believe. It is therefore important that we stop seeing the 'return of religions' as a pre-modern remnant or as a regressive force. The quest for identity that has fuelled ethnicity, nationalism and fundamentalism in recent debates is not merely reactive and such a quest is closely intertwined with religion.

If we observe through the lens of Orientalism, the prominence of religion in the contemporary world is evoked; it is almost automatically assumed that what is referred to the 'resurgence of Islam' or the 'fundamentalism'. This assumption is indeed an indicator of the force of the secularist thesis that represents the France in attaining modernity, which meant that all its sphere of social life could progressively distance them from religion, hence relegating Christianity to the private sphere of individually held beliefs. This can be said as the resurrection of religion is nothing but a residue of premodernity, and it is associated with Islam. This fantasized relation

with the other religion goes hand-in-hand with the displacement of the increasing prominence of religion in the French public space to other issues and concerns.

Overall, *laicite* is (has been) formed the basis of religious policy in France. It contributed a lot to the history of France to settle the religious and cultural conflicts. But this time situation is odd. *Laicite* played the progressive role for the French society, but at that time Muslims were not the part of the French society. At this time, France must reconcile the tensions between religious freedom in public sphere with French *laicite*. But to settle between the French natives and Muslim problems, this policy does not seem to be successful.

At the time of headscarves ban, the French government brought the law for all religious symbols, but it was obvious that it was made particularly for headscarves. Same happened with face-veil in 2010. This problem is a multi-faceted one. Actually, this problem has all these aspects – religious, cultural, ethnic, feminist, human rights, traditional, social, and political. In next chapter we will study the identity confrontation between the French natives and the immigrant Muslims.

Chapter 4

CHALLENGES IN MANAGING MULTICULTURAL REALITY IN FRANCE

4.1 Background

French society's diversity has multiple dimensions, from immigration to integration and assimilation. This chapter examines multiculturalism in contemporary France and its problems the French society is facing. The chapter starts by defining different cultural groups in France and their problems. Then, it discusses the French Republicanism and its compatibility with different cultural groups. It seeks to examine whether the problems of such groups are only cultural or can be attributed to some other phenomena. Finally, the chapter discusses the French model of integration and assimilation, and the present crisis in its multiculturalism vis-à-vis Islamic 'fundamentalism'. In France, immigration has a long history i.e. since 19th century. In the 1920s, France had the second largest community of immigrants after USA. It was 7% of the total population. In the early 2000s, around 23% of the population had immigrant background (Algan et al 2010: 1). In last two centuries, France got more immigrants than any other country in Europe (Dignan 1981 cited in Hargreaves 1994: 5).

The word immigrant is also used for second and third generation of immigrants. Second generation means those people who are in France but their parents came from foreign nation. Third generation means who along with their parents are born in France but their grandparents came from foreign nation. They are considered French immigrants even when such individuals are born and brought up in France (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4375910.stm>). Some authors such as Henri Astier use the term 'foreign descent' in place of French immigrants. It is so because now they are not immigrants, rather the reality is that their descent is foreign. But in this chapter, for discussion French society will be divided into 'French natives' and 'Muslim immigrants'.

The use of the word ‘immigration’ to encompass what are in many respects post-migratory processes is itself symptomatic of the difficulties experienced by the French in coming to terms – both literally and ontologically – with the settlement of people of immigrant origin. The French considers ‘immigration’ commonly as ‘race relations’ (Hargreaves 1994: 1).

French government wants to integrate the immigrants in the French society but using the majority culture. But the French Muslims want to save their culture. The question is how to confront or to minimize particular conflicts and not how to integrate those people who are already part of existing social structures.¹⁵ Besides this, there are a lot of stereotypes and prejudices prevailing in the society towards the Muslims. One stereotype is that they are migrants, they will never adopt French culture, and they will never be integrated into French culture. The chapter will discuss these stereotypes and prejudices. However, it is well known fact that different people from different cultures and traditions can live in the same society; it happens everywhere in the world. Their cultural diversity cannot prevent them from national unity. Great Britain and USA are the examples where societies are multicultural.

The chapter will discuss the economic conditions of Muslims. Their economic condition is to be improved. Muslims believe that due to unfair government policies they are in bad economic condition. They mostly live in Ghettos and slums. These places are out of colonies where French natives live. French natives also perceive that the place for the Muslims is restricted for them. They think that these immigrants are not contributing to French economy, but demeaning the French culture and living in France. So they think that their accurate place should be out of the French society. In all these perspectives, ideological conflict is going on in both communities. Sometimes, it goes hidden and invisible. Sometimes, it appears openly and widely. Sometimes this takes form of violence. In the last decade, violence erupted in the years 2005 and 2007; and in this decade, the January 2015 attack on Charlie Hebdo and November 2016 suicide attack are evidences for it.

¹⁵ https://www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-institutions-government/immigration_3252.jsp

4.2 History of Immigration in France

France has a long history of immigration, both from neighbouring countries as well as from many other parts of the world. The reasons for the immigration are different in both scope and circumstances, as it depends on the time and physical boundaries. Despite these differences, immigrants in France have shared the same experiences. The French state has been relatively successful in nationalizing many of its immigrants, but the degree to which each group has been assimilated into French society varies and much work remains to be done to ensure that none of them becomes marginalized in the future (Vladescu 2006: 1).

A historical overview would provide the socio-politico-economic background in which immigration and assimilation happened. In 300-500 AD, Roman Empire ruled on France. When the Roman Empire began to weaken, Franks emerged as a power and fought to control the land (ibid: 1). Around 800-900 AD, Viking invaders weakened the Franks, and split the country into many parts. Every reign had a different noble. The France was divided in many parts, in accordance to those nobles. Main nobles were Aquitaine, Burgundy, Flanders, and Normandy. These states were sovereign and independent countries. During the period of Capetian Rule,¹⁶ immigration had been occurring. At that time, French monarchy was busy to make allies in European countries and migration continued. Immigrants settled in France and they adopted Christianity for their assimilation.

Throughout 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, immigration was limited. In 18th century, France had the glorious days under Louis XIV. During his time, many French people migrated to colonies to establish settlements. This was reversed in the 1800s when natives of these colonies would arrive in France in search of better opportunities. During this time the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte occurred. In this period the modern French state was founded and immigration had played a vital role in this. Napoleon Bonaparte had the vision of a strong and unified France. He came in power in 1799. He travelled throughout the country and convinced the people about the vision of French Republic. He passed the laws to allow foreigners to become French citizens.

¹⁶ The Carolingian dynasty ceased to rule France upon the death of Louis V. After the death of Louis V, the son of Hugh the Great, Hugh Capet, was elected by the nobility as king of France. Hugh was crowned at Noyon on 3 July 987 with the full support from Holy Roman Emperor Otto III. The Capets ruled the Kingdom of France from 987 to 1328.

He himself was born in Corsica Island. So, he gave the foreigners the French citizenship if they want. This was unprecedented at that time.

After Napoleon Bonaparte's era, we get immigration in 1870-71. At this time famous Franco-Prussian war happened and in this war, France was defeated. The consequence of this incident was that it created anger of revolt among the working class. The number of French workers was limited. Therefore, French rulers invited the workers from other countries to come in France and to run the factories. At this time, the North African countries were French colonies. Thousands of workers came to France in this wave. The natives of French colonies, particularly from Maghreb descent immigrated to France for better life.

Even during the World War I, French government invited foreign workers to sustain the wartime economy in the French land. During war time, many workers from North African countries came to France. By the end of 19th century there were around 800 Muslims in Paris. Muslim workers started migrating and by 1914 there were 30000 North African workers in France (Malik 2004: 125). After war, the Government established quotas for the immigrants. The French Muslim soldiers, from North African French colonies, fought in World War I, where around 1,00,000 of them died. The French government recognized their sacrifice and erected the 'Paris mosque' in the middle of Paris city in 1926 (Maillard 2010: 6).

In the World War II, although France won, it was ravaged in the war, lost thousands of troops and civilians, and got subjected to immense destruction of infrastructure. France faced a responsibility to rebuild infrastructure and economy, after World War II. So the French government started a more active immigration policy to reconstruct the economy and to increase population growth. The National Office of Immigration was created. It was declared that the children of foreign workers would become French citizens, since they were born on French territory. They thought that they would be the future workforce of the French economy. They would keep ensuring the prosperity of the French state in the long run (Vladescu 2006: 3).

After the World War II, the possibility of war in Europe was over. The whole Europe was devastated in the war so they gave up the war and searched for mutual friendship. The whole Europe including France tried to recover the economy. The French government reopened the doors for immigration that was closed during the war. In

1950s, Algeria faced the civil war; and in this civil war the French government sent the troops in Algeria for peace. Then a number of Algerians sought asylum in France. They migrated to France in which around one million workers and hundreds of thousands of family members were there. It led to the growth of the immigrant communities all over France. This migration happened very rapidly. The share of Maghreb people of the foreign population was 2 percent in 1946, and this share reached to 39 percent in 1982 (Hargreaves 1994: 12).

The population was further increased in two other ways – by a rise in the number of asylum seekers and by inflows of illegal immigrants (ibid: 20). This wave of immigration lasted from 1956 to 1973. This immigration came mostly from South Asian countries that were former French colonies. In 1970s, the whole world suffered the oil crisis. French economy was unable to endure the immigrants. So the government enacted the law, namely the ‘No Immigration Law’, but the Muslim population in France continued to rise due to high birth rates and illegal immigration. The French government contributed a lot for the assimilation of Muslim immigrants. For this, the government aided the families.

In 1992, the Schengen Agreement allowed all EU citizens to travel and work in any of the EU countries, so this changed the concept of French borders for immigrants. The Schengen Agreement allowed all EU citizens to travel and find work across the Europe. East European countries are poor than the West European countries. So, people from East European countries came in France to find job. They were Christian and Latin language speaking people. So they easily got assimilated into the French society. But other groups from Maghreb countries and Southeast Asia found it difficult.

Thus, France has many waves in immigration. In the 1920s and 1930s, many Italians and Belgium came to France and got assimilated here. They were Catholics and spoke Latin language that helped in learning French. So, we can say that in the past, all groups got assimilated in French society; but in present time the Muslim community is facing problems in assimilation. It is widely claimed that people of North Africa are much harder to assimilate than Europeans with the French. Actually, the current problem of assimilating is both cultural-political and socio-economic in nature, while the previous problems were mainly related to socio-economic nature. Due to different

cultural background, Muslims are being treated as foreigner (Hargreaves 1994:26). This immigration from Maghreb countries is reintroducing religion and culture. The French feels some doubtful and this situation is producing religiously motivated conflicts (Byrnes 2006: 127) At the time of 1990 census, 5.9 million people living in France were born elsewhere. Out of them, 4.2 million who were abroad as foreign abroad. Almost one third of these – some 1.3 million – had acquired French nationality. At the same time, there were 0.74 million second generation foreigners in France who got French nationality on the reaching of age (Hargreaves 1994: 25).

In 1990s French government passed the French Immigration Act 1998. According to this Act, “The current French immigration policy promotes greater access to French citizenship and this citizenship policy came into force ... the main aim of the Act was to integrate foreign nationals by granting them citizenship when they reach adulthood.” So, it shows that if children are born to French parents, they would automatically be French citizens. But the children of immigrant French would have to wait till adulthood to become French citizens (Vladescu 2006: 5). The adoption of the 1998 French Immigration Act is also a reflection of kinds of attitude that have been developing not only throughout French society, but also in the political world (Vladescu 2006: 6).

The French government has attempted to assimilate all the immigrants. So there has been the emergence of a new debate – which will assimilate to whom? Who are real French? What is French identity? Have the immigrants adopted the Frenchness? The traditional sense of French nationality plays an important role which has been placed on immigrants by the French government. France has to face many challenges to determine the policies to assimilate the immigrants (ibid: 6).

4.3 From Assimilation to Integration in France

In the last two decades, the issue of multiculturalism in France has been a subject of debate. This debate is viewed as the conflict of two groups – French natives and the immigrant Muslims. In this debate many similar words are being used such as assimilation, insertion, integration, etc. Within French society these terms – assimilation, insertion and integration are being used for immigrant Muslims. These

words tell about switching the policies and behaviours towards something for which these words are being used. This issue has gradually evolved into one of social and cultural relations.

When any country faces the immigration, the policy of immigration passed into three phases – assimilation, insertion and integration. When these processes are implemented in any country, these may be applied simultaneously or respectively. When a country adopts them – it can apply one or two of them or even three. The same case is with France. To adopt immigrants we get French policy in the series – assimilation, insertion, integration. Earlier the French policy was based on assimilation, now it has turned towards integration but only in limited areas.

French model about immigration is traditionally based on assimilation. It is the prevailing idea in the French society that when the minorities would be assimilated into the French society, they would be emancipated. Their descendants will not be recognized as different from the mainstream society. Legally, under the French law, the status of minorities is not given separately. French law is based on the concept that all French are same. No one is different. Difference may be on private level but the state will not recognize them. The French law does not believe in (and does not recognize) the cultural diversity. The French law is based on the concept that France does not have any minority.

Dalil Brubaker writes that policy of assimilation of minorities can be found in the history of France as a nation-state. During the Third Republic (1871-1914), the Government tried to unify all cultural identities under a common French identity. This common French identity was based on French Republicanism. The civic idea of France as a universal nation of equal and free citizens, which developed during that period, could therefore explain the present dynamics of integration. Favell describes the question of assimilation more in terms referring to the theoretical foundations of French political unity and cohesiveness: around grand themes of republican values, citizenship and universal nature of French nationhood (Regout 2011: 22-23)

Geddes defines the French republic in nutshell as universalism, unitary, *laicite* and assimilation. Universalism lies as a characteristic of French republic since the French Revolution in 1789. French republic is also thought of in terms of unitary nature. *Laicite* was embedded in French Republic since French Revolution of 1789 and since

the 1905 law, where the policy of separation of sphere of the church and the state was placed legally. And the policy of assimilation has been adopted by France to solve the problems faced by minority. (ibid: 23)

The French Republican Model works among the different cultural integration models. Since French Revolution, French Republic has a long secular history. It gives the expression of religious and cultural identity in the public sphere. This claims for freedom and egalitarianism. Despite all these things, some blames are put on this notion . The main argument is that it fails to integrate the Muslim immigrant into the French culture. We know that in 2004, the headscarf was banned in public schools and in 2010 the face covering was banned in public place. By this law, the most affected are Muslim women. They wish to go the schools and public place with wearing hijab but the law does not give permission to them. They think that equality or religious freedom in France is only rhetoric, and does not exist in practical level. The main consequence of this refusal to acknowledge the national minorities has been an inability to know whether the reality of equality matched the rhetoric of perfect cultural integration (Algan et al 2010: 1).

French constitutional framework has enshrined democratic values based on equality between citizens by law. This concept of equality was adopted universally by law regardless of their cultural or racial differences with the same rights and same duties in the nation. According to French law, all citizens should be considered equal regardless of their cultural or racial difference. The French nation is an entity that is based on the rights of the land. In France, there is a common life; it is an ensemble of citizens to whom same legislative laws and judicial norms are applied. France is following her long history. French Republic does not recognize any minority so she does not give any positive discrimination on any social, ethnic or cultural background. In this sense, French law is neutral in relation to the different social or cultural identities of citizens (Fuga 2008: 2).

The process of insertion comes after assimilation in France. This concept in France has some particular specificity. This differs from the concept of assimilation, but with this it also provides some characteristics in relation to the concept of integration. Insertion is concerned with the efforts to allow immigrants and individuals coming from lower social groups. The immigrants join labour and some other jobs. These jobs

help to resolve their housing problems and to improve the quality of their social and economic condition. Immigrants are considered as different, but they are not considered as the integral part of local society. They are rather considered as outsiders or isolated from local, but inside society. They are taken as individuals or a member of minority groups who are located inside living in permanent state of cultural and social segregation based on their own collective identity of cultural difference. Thus, the insertion is a middle stage between assimilation and integration. It does not include necessarily their definitive social integration. It leaves open the possibility of entire process, further or reversible. It can encourage towards further or opposite direction, including the possibility of an eventual rejection of immigrants from the entire social frame (Fuga 2008: 2).

Insertion takes place in second phase. In the history of France, the process of insertion began in the 1970s. At this time, socio-economic situation started changing. The demand for low skilled labour ceased all at once. For the next few decades, the migrants and their children were to face rising unemployment, spatial segregation in low quality housing of the large cities' suburbs, and a crisis of the school system which was to effect young migrants disproportionately. On insertion in France, the Left wing and Right wing parties had contradictory views. The Left wing believed that immigrants should not be assimilated and had (have) right to be with their own identity. On the other hand, the Right wing observed it as a way to deny French citizenship, expressing the fact that those immigrants could not be assimilated and therefore had to be prepared to return home (Regout 2011: 24)).

The policy of integration is a long process that is much deeper. It includes the integration of the immigrants that should be considered as the part of social structure. Their ethnic and cultural practices are welcomed and recognized by the receiving country. They are considered as a constitutive part of the local society. In the framework of integration process, the minorities and individuals maintain their cultural differences. Their inclusion is a definitive deduction. This requires a common effort to observe the diversity in the context of the creation of a common cultural policy (Fuga 2008: 2). Former French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin affirmed that,

“Integration is not assimilation. It is not intended to reduce all differences. Integration is not insertion...it requires a mutual effort, an openness to

diversity, which is an enrichment and also an adhesion and a responsible will to guarantee and build a common democratic structure” (cited in *ibid*: 2).

After World War II, all European countries had immigration from outside. In 1970s and 1980s, many European countries particularly Britain and Dutch adopted the policy of integration to solve the problem of immigration. Then the French government too persuaded the policy of integration. On the other hand, a Right Wing party, Front National party, started claiming that the French natives had the right to be different from the non-European, and ultimately they had right to deport them. This party gained in election in 1983-84. Erstwhile President Giscard d’Estaing supported Front Nation Party on this issue. He argued that French nationality was not to be granted to those foreigners who cannot adopt French culture. So the issue of immigration became highly politicized. This debate raged on questions of belonging, on the cultural integrity of France, on the conception of nationhood and on the obligations by French citizenship (Regout 2011: 24-25)

Many organizations and political leaders, particularly Left parties started saying that Muslim immigrants have equal rights. Along with, in 2000s the Right Wing parties also felt that to solve the problems of immigration, some integration policy should be started. In 2003, the government announced a reform policy, aimed to improve the control over immigration. The government launched the *Contrats d’accueil et de l’integration* (CIA) programme. The CIA makes a contract between the French state and the Muslim immigrants. According to this, the state will give a help to the immigrants. In 2004, the Government proposed a draft law which would make the integration contract mandatory. In 2006, the ‘Law of Immigration and Integration’ was passed which opened the doors to highly skilled and educated immigrants (Regout 2011: 26-27). But in spite of all these rules and codes, Government could not prevent social exclusion and marginalization of Muslims. Which policy is better, it is now being discussed, even in the present time, by the French society and the French Government.

4.4 Muslim Population and Cultural Integration

The immigrant groups have conflict with French natives. But this conflict can be divided of two types – cultural and economic. The immigrant groups want to retain

the beliefs and values that had been retained by them till now. The extent, to which immigrant groups have assimilated economically into French society, does not necessitate that they are assimilated on cultural level too. Italians, Spanish, Portuguese and immigrants from Southeast Asia made a mark on the French economy; they do work in the firms or pursue their own services. They are assimilated both culturally and economically. Immigrants from North and Sub-Saharan Africa settled in France for jobs. Their first generation immigrants accepted the French way of life because they wanted better employment and higher standard of living in comparison to the place from where they came. But their second generation is now settled permanently in France and they feel difficulty to adopt French values and life style. In the first generation they did not have difficulty, but in present time they are facing more difficulty (Vladescu 2006: 11-12).

European immigrants have proper representation in both government jobs and private jobs. For them, getting job is easy. Southeast Asian immigrants have got a proper representation in private sector in comparison to Arab immigrants. Southeast Asian immigrants are a sizeable immigrant group and it has been assimilated in French society in economic terms. In cultural terms also, they are integrated in a larger way than Arab Muslims. It is also important fact that Southeast Asian immigrants are considered as foreigners in France based on both- their language and their religion. But they have more representation in jobs than the Arab Muslims. Arab Muslims have proper representation neither in government jobs nor in private jobs (ibid: 13).

Many Muslims feel that the French government should take responsibility to provide a decent standard of living because government invited them in France. Thus the question of Islam and Muslims residing in France has spilled into the grimy urban ghettos of immigration from former French colonies in North and sub-Saharan Africa – breeding ground of crime, despair and anger nourished by poverty and unemployment (ibid: 12). These immigrant groups have not been assimilated into the French economy till now. The employment studies show that the situation is not getting any more better. This is alarmingly high, yet it comes as no surprise when some French firms are doing whatever they can in an effort to avoid hiring immigrants, such as secretly asking employment agencies not to send them the requests submitted by Muslim workers (ibid: 12).

About 23% of French citizens are of foreign origin- this number is around 14 million. (Vladescu 2006: 10). There are around 5 million Muslims in the country, 35% of whom are of Algerian origin, 25% are of Moroccan origin and 10% of Tunisian origin (Poliscanova 2008: 2). These are called Maghrebis. The rest are Senegalese, Malians, Turks, Albanians, and Bosnians. French law prohibits population on religious, ethnic or cultural line; so this population data is only a guess. National census does not include questions related to the religion or ethnicity because this type of information is considered inappropriate for French Republic and its *laicite*.

We compare the immigration of people from Maghreb countries with immigration of people from other countries. Table 4.1 shows the composition of the immigration population according to the French Labour Survey, for the period 2005-2007. It differentiates the sample proportions of native French, first-generation immigrants, and second generation immigrants. First generation immigrants mostly come from the Maghreb (44.1%), Southern Europe (24.8%) and Africa (11.3%). These proportions are slightly modified for second generation immigrants, the share of people with origins from Southern Europe is higher (37.4%) while those with origins from Africa (5.0%) and the Maghreb (40.7%) is lower (Algan et al. 2010: 1).

Table No.2

Labor French Survey 2005-2007

Country of Origin	1st Generation	2nd Generation
Natives	90.2%	
Immigrants (9.8%)	6.5%	3.3%
Of which (%)		
Maghreb	44.1	40.7
Southern Europe	24.8	37.4
Africa	11.3	5.0
Northern Europe	6.6	3.7
Eastern Europe	5.9	7.5
Turkey-ME	4.1	3.6
Asia	3.2	2.2

Source: LFS (French Labour Survey) 2005-2007 cited in Algan, Yann, Camille Landais, and Claudia Senik (2010), *Cultural Integration in France*, <http://econ.sciences-po.fr/sites/default/files/file/yann%20alghan/France.pdf>; also in Algan, Y., Ch. Dustmann, A. Gritz, and A. Manning (2010), "The Economic Situation of First and Second-Generation Immigrants in France, Germany and the United Kingdom," *Economic Journal*, Royal Economic Society, vol. 120 (542).

The table 4.1 shows an evolution in the composition of the immigrant population from Southern Europe, particularly from Spain and Italy. This immigration was at peak during the Spanish Civil War. In the second half of nineteenth century, the immigrants came from Portugal. The second wave of immigration happened in the 1960s and 1970s. And this is still ongoing. Immigration from Maghreb countries is as old as the World War I. At this time immigration happened due to the replacement of the labour force in farms and arm industry. But the chunk part of immigration took place after World War II. This immigration took place mainly from Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco. Immigration from Algeria took place more after World War II until 1958 and during Algerian civil war. The immigration from Sub Saharan countries is more recent. These Sub Saharan countries are mainly Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Mali and Senegal. So we can say that France has a long tradition of immigration. Despite this, very few studies have been done on the cultural differences with immigrants from Maghreb and other African countries. Most studies have been done on the economic status of immigrants (ibid: 2).

4.5 Discrimination Faced by Muslims in France

In France, the Muslim community is in minority. They are racially, religiously, culturally and ethnically different from French natives. So, the Muslims face all types of discrimination in the society. It is not only at social level, but sometimes it is expressed at governmental level also.

SA started 'war on terror', but unofficially this was against Muslims. Thousands of Muslims were arrested for inquiry. French government handed over a number of suspected terrorists who were all Muslims. The French government did work in favour of USA as if USA government is working in France. The French press wrote, 'We all are Americans.' This caused a rift in French Muslims. Bombings in Madrid (March 2004) and London (July 2005) also served only to intensify this feeling of uncertainty with regards to Muslims (Vladescu 2006: 11).

The terrorist attacks of 9/11, Madrid, London are outer incidents but they have impacted upon French people. This reflects in foreign policy too. The foreign policy of France sometimes dissatisfies the Muslim people. There is much disagreement

between what the French government does in foreign policy and the Muslims think. This reflects in the example of Palestine. Many Muslims feel that the French government is not concerned to resolve the Palestine problem. Many Muslims observe this problem as Jews versus Muslims. In 2002, a group of North African descent persons in France attacked a young Jew who was a football player. These tendencies are new in French society. Actually anti-Semitism is not new in France, but since last 20 years the Muslims are suspects for Jews as well as French society. These incidents have given a new twist: the perpetrators are not belonged to any traditional extreme-right wing group. They are more often boys who come from North African immigrant families. They say that they are avenging the Palestinians' plight in the West Bank (ibid: 11). This is unexpected behaviour in French society. Actually, all Muslims have same views about Jews, but it is hard to recognize who is non-fundamentalist or who is fundamentalist. Unfortunately, the reputation of the majority of law-abiding Muslims is tarnished in the public eye and fears of fundamentalism operate in a vicious circle with Muslim accusations of discrimination on the basis of religion and ethnicity (ibid 2006: 11).

From time to time, the French government criticizes Israeli expansionist policies, but the public at large remains pro-Israel and expresses its anti-Arab feelings through different forms. All Muslims, irrespective of their ethno-religious origins, are simplistically categorized as Arabs and experience a pervasive anti-Arab bigotry. The British journalist Adam Lebot wrote on the general French attitude towards Muslims, "Islam is an obsession for France, an obsession and headline hungry reporters who feed off each other, creating a climate of intolerance and hysteria" (Malik 2004: 128). Despite being the second major religion in France, as observed by a French Muslims, Islam is still seen as a secondary religion. Ban on wearing of hijab and burqa and demands for halal meat conform ungrudgingly to age old dictates of French secularism (ibid: 129).

In recent times, many studies have been done on this religious conflict in Europe. It has showed that there is no special problem in France. Since last 30 years the whole Western world is facing this problem. There is ongoing tension between French natives (majority population) and Muslim immigrants (minority). In spite of all this, mostly Muslim immigrants do not think that French natives are hostile toward people of their faith but they think they face discrimination. About socio-economic

discrimination in France, in 2009, Open Society Institute did a survey. It was done for all over Europe (Adida 2007: 1). This survey shows that 10% of Muslim respondents accepted that they face the discrimination by the police. It also shows that a similar proportion of Muslims (29.2%) and non-Muslims (31.1%) have same trust in the government. The study shows a deteriorating picture of religious and racial discrimination. Mostly Muslims think that they face more racial discrimination than before. 68.7% of Muslim respondents and 55.9% of non-Muslim respondents claim with regard to religious prejudice. 90% of both Muslim and non-Muslim respondents agree that Muslims are victim of religious prejudice (ibid: 1).

Muslim immigrants in France currently came from the Maghreb countries, most of them are without work or in low paid jobs. They face difficulty in searching jobs due to their low skill and religious prejudice. Reflecting the changes in France's foreign population over the last two decades, a big number of Turks and Southeast Asian immigrants are also unemployed; though in comparison to the number of Maghreb immigrants, they still remain a small minority. On the other hand, European immigrants comprise of just a small part (19%) of the unemployed foreign population. It clearly shows that unemployment and economic status is directly related to ethnicity and religion (Vladsecu 2006: 13).

Many studies have identified racial discrimination in the life routine as in the housing market, in car sale negotiations, and in preapplication behaviour by lenders. Among other economic transactions, inferences can be made about racial discrimination. Because it is not feasible to randomize a tester as to whether he or she presents himself or herself as white or black, it is not possible to claim confidently that if tester 'A' who was black, had she been white he or she would have done better (Adida 2007: 2). There is prevailing racism in France in the economic status. Most of the immigrants are poor while French natives are richer than immigrants. This disparity is very large. This disparity can be found in job, employment and also in other areas. The unemployment rate for the people of French natives is nine percent, but fourteen percent for the Muslim immigrant. A data tells that while 27% of university graduates of Muslim immigrants are unemployed, for those of the French natives it is only 5% (Groves 2008: 110). According to Bryan Groves (2008: 109),

“Muslim immigrants are moved to the French societal framework, even if initially at the bottom, their contributions will impact French natives.

Likewise, they will enjoy the opportunity to experience upward mobility within France. Until France affects the Muslim community's transition from being secondary players outside the system to members of the system, they will be marginalized and their opportunities will be minimal. This situation presents French citizens with a dilemma between holdings onto traditional French culture in its entirety and enlarging its perspective to meet the challenges of a new era."

Muslims face a lot of discrimination in getting jobs. A Muslim businessman says, "If you are a Muslim, doors are closed for you." He says that when "you are not being given a job, you can bear. But when you are rejected two or three times, you go home with hatred. "They have difficulty not only in finding jobs but also for equal pay for the same job. If they find job, they are doubtful that they could be terminated from job. They are facing the unemployment and economic disparities. The majority of Muslim community is comprised of unskilled workers as they are engaged in the lowest paid menial jobs.¹⁷ In EU member states, European Union Accession Monitoring Program (EUMAP) has conducted a study on human rights, the rule of law, and political, social and economic status of minorities. Report points out widespread discrimination with Muslims in France. The report said that this unfair treatment towards Muslims is unlike immigrants from other countries such as Italy, Spain, and Portugal. It said that this condition of immigrant Muslims prevails even after the four generations. The Report shows that this unfair treatment is a result of education policies and practices that are insufficiently sensitive to their background and culture (Vladescu 2006: 9). The discrimination towards Muslims may be distinguished into three main strands: racial-ethnic, economic, and socio-political.

4.5.1 Racial-Ethnic Discrimination

For France, some scholars think that racial and ethnic minorities are the same (Hargreaves 1994: 29). These are generally defined by skin colour. Race is a biological phenomenon and ethnicity is a cultural one. Ethnicity is characterized by linguistic, religious or moral codes. So, in France, ethnic minorities are too characterized by moral, religious or linguistic codes different from those of the French natives. Cultural aspects of ethnicity may involve biological component but it is not a necessary element. Dalil Brubaker has argued that it is ethno-cultural rather than

¹⁷ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4399748.stm>

ethno-racial in intent (ibid: 29-30). This racial ethnic discrimination, he terms as racial discrimination here.

Most of the Muslim immigrants are visually recognizable as originating inside or outside the country. It is argued that they display some special somatic features, denoting them as Arab Muslims. Racist discrimination is more deeply embedded in French society. French society discriminates them on the basis of race-ethnicity in every field of life. Racism plays the crucial role when a candidate faces competition to get job. According to SOS Racisme “A French campaigning group, CVs with an African name gets far fewer positive answers than CVs with a typical French name. Even more shocking is the fact that French employers have elaborated special abbreviation system: ‘BBR (*Bleu Blanc Rouge* or Blue White Red (the colours of the French flag), meaning French/white) and NBBR (*Non Bleu Rouge* or Not Blue White Red, meaning not French/White) indicating race in employers’ databases’ (cited in Poliscanova 2008: 3). In principle, racial discrimination is legally banned in France. But a quick observation at the people working in any shop or office shows that this practice is prevailing.

Another major discrimination is towards immigrants that the French media is using the word second or third generation of immigrants for them. But if a person is born in France, he/she is not an immigrant. So the use of terms like second or third generation of immigrants – it should not be acceptable. But it is common trend to use such terms. Someone who was born in France, who lives and works for the country, cannot be labelled as different from French citizens. A person of Algerian origin residing in France says, “How am I supposed to feel French when people always describe me as a Frenchman of Algerian origin? I was born here. I am French. How many generations does it take to stop mentioning my origin” (ibid: 4)?

Racism is also widespread problem around housing. The majority of the Muslim immigrants live in the suburbs, which are characterized by the poor quality housing, bad infrastructure and high unemployment. The police and other government servants do not treat them in polite manner. These suburbs are mostly in the outskirts of big cities such as Paris, Lyon, etc. (ibid: 3). Racism is clearly a visible problem in colonies and housing. The most of immigrants live in the slums. They are poor persons, suffering from unemployment, and a rare reach to good schools and

hospitals. The construction of these suburbs took place in 1970s. The purpose of this construction was to help poor immigrants and their families with temporary housing. Currently, 81 percent of non-European immigrants reside in these areas (ibid: 3).

Finally, there is racism in public perception and French attitudes towards Muslim immigrants. In a recent poll, the proportion of respondents (49 percent) who held that immigrants were hardly to be integrated into the French society, it was almost identical to the level of support (46 percent) expressed for repatriation in preference to integration (ibid: 3). The immigrants differ from the native French, both in religion and race. The native French are mostly Catholic, but they mostly do not practise religion. They think that religious practice is not good thing and it is out-dated phenomena. They think that, at least, in public place religious symbols should not be used. Headscarves in public schools and face covering are banned since 2004 and 2010 respectively. On government level and also on social level, Muslims think that they are discriminated on religious angle. They think that their religion is being diminished deliberately.

4.5.2 Economic Discrimination

Academicians, social activists and politicians have been discussing about economic disparity in France. Many economic and unemployment studies are conducted to know about the Muslim and other immigrant communities. These results show that Maghrebis are living in worse condition in comparison to any other immigrant groups. First generation Maghreb immigrants had limited access to higher education and professional job skills that European immigrants had. They are mostly unskilled as they are uneducated. They feel alienated and build up a high degree of frustration. This alienation, frustration often leads many of them to crime (Israelli 2008: 17)

The major factor is responsible for their economic condition is that they are discriminated on the basis of ethnicity or religion. There are several instances in which French companies have denied to hire Maghrebis for jobs. The employers have a fear associated to them with the crime and work ethics. On the one hand, crime is indeed a serious problem among Muslim immigrants, especially who are living in the outskirts of French cities. On the other hand, most of crime is directly linked to their

poverty and poverty is directly linked to their inability to find and keep a job. This creates a vicious cycle in which Maghreb immigrants commit crimes because they are poor, and they are poor because employers are convinced that they will commit crimes (Vladescu 2006: 14).

Many times the French government gave financial help to immigrant communities. But this produced another problem. In 1980s, the French government began some policies to provide funds for those families that contributed more in the French birth rate and population. Since the birth rate was highest in Maghreb immigrants, they got the most financial benefits from government. This financial help was much in quantity. A mother with some children could live far better than she could live by getting a job. By this much quantity of financial help, French natives perceive immigrants as competition for the scarce jobs available or as a social-welfare dependent burden for taxpayers (ibid: 15). People of French natives are afraid about jobs. They are afraid that if Maghrebis got equal representation in jobs, they will lose their job opportunity and they do not want this.

According to a recent data, around thirty percent of Algerian origin (Age group 25-39) is unemployed that is three to five times more than the unemployment rate of native French. There are many circular arguments related to immigration and unemployment issues in France that it is very hard to find out the reality. On the one hand, the French says that immigrants are eating their jobs. But on the other hand, the French also invite immigrants for some jobs which are not suited to them. The French natives fear that this is a social-cultural invasion by the immigrants. But, the immigrants are encouraged to reproduce by the government in order to prevent the continued ageing of the French population. The attitude of the French society is so contradictory in nature that the confusion involved with assimilation is almost predictable. So, economic challenges with political hardships have been major obstacles to assimilation and these are difficulties in the social-cultural integration of immigrant communities in France (ibid: 15).

The economic disparity between French natives and Muslims immigrants is large. The unemployment rate for French natives is nine percent, but it is fourteen percent for Muslim immigrants. For those who have university degrees, unemployment rate is around five percent, but this rate is twenty-seven percent for Muslim immigrants

university graduates (Groves 2008: 110). About this discrimination, an immigrant French, Nadir Dendoune, had a work. He writes about the perception of native French about Muslim immigrants, “You feel you will never make it because you are Arab.” French natives are afraid of taking job; they think that Maghreb immigrants will eat up their jobs. According to a March 2000 survey, majority of French natives thought that immigration causes unemployment to rise, this perception increases during economic recession. The increased hardship fuels negative stereotypes and inhibits natives’ reception of immigrants (ibid: 110).

4.5.3 Socio-Political Discrimination

The problem of discrimination is not only economic but also social-political. The beliefs, values and norms cannot be changed exclusively with regard to economy. It has various dimensions. Some immigrant groups were assimilated economically into French society, they also have assimilated on cultural level. But it is not true for all. But first generation and second generation are adopting French values. The Muslim immigrants have the highest birth-rate in France. So this will contribute to the country’s future generations. France’s Muslim community is probably the first in history all over the world who took the step to assimilate into a Christian society. The proclaimed objective of the Muslim community is to become French while keeping faith with Islam. They are poorly represented in the French government. The Socialist Party, that supports their integration, could not be able to gather much support in the government. The Right Wing has been gaining popularity on this issue but shifting the power away from liberal groups. For their lesser representation of Muslims, some religious reasons are also responsible. The Muslim community is tied to religious organizations; it makes them difficult to enter politics due to French *laicite* (Vladescu 2006: 10).

Muslims are under-represented in the French government; and this fact is one of the main factors to the difficulty in assimilation. In France, 23% (14million) of citizens belong to foreign descent, but most of them are from Italy, Spain and Poland. Former President Nicolas Sarkozy is son of Hungarian parents. This fact tells that immigrants from Europe are not only assimilated in French culture, but also they have participated in the political system and some of them reached the high posts. In all of

France, there are around 300 elected city officials but out of them only some officials who are Muslims. Here, one more important fact is the fight for the rights of Muslims and anti-discrimination policies which has been led by academicians and intellectuals. This has not been done by the political leaders. If this fight would be fought at political level, it could have produced more fruitful result (ibid: 10).

We know the French society is becoming less religious. This fact is also true on Muslims, at least at the level of religious practice. Similar to other French, only 10-15% of French Muslims regularly practise their religion. In spite of this, most of the French natives think that Muslims are fundamentalists. A survey shows that two thirds of the French natives think that Islam and religious fanaticism are two sides of the same coin. So it can be said that the Muslim community feels uncomfortably in France, distant from the goal of becoming truly French. Muslim immigrants are in fear. Although there is no ethnic conflict in France, but Muslims are observed with doubt. This doubt increases when any terrorist activity occurs. (ibid: 10).

If we summarize all types of discrimination, we can say that most of Muslims of France work in less attractive occupations and make up the 'proletariat' of the French cities. A small minority of them are professional, especially in the Paris region. In principle and its manifestation, the rights of Muslims as individuals are respected by the French law. However, as a community, the Muslims are suffering in France from an anti-Islamic attitude. The influence of the Muslim community in France is negligible in practically all fields, especially if one were to compare it to much smaller Jewish and Protestant communities (Kettani 1986: 36).

4.6 Integration Debate and the French Model of Integration

As a result of increasing immigration, France has experienced social and cultural evolution after World War II. The concept of recognition of cultural diversity has produced the circumstances and situations that were new ones. In 1960s and 1970s, the immigrants from North Africa went to France to get job and earn money. They became permanent residents of France. The majority of immigrants were from Maghreb region that was once under French colonialism. These immigrants made marriage relation in France and produced their families. In spite of all these, these

persons have been considered as outsiders by the society, even after they got French citizenship. However, their children who were born in France were considered as French. They were considered French not in narrow sense but it was considered that they have adopted the richness of French culture. These children are educated in French schools. These immigrants of the younger age group wanted to remain in both sides; they wanted to preserve the cultural diversity of their parents and at the same time they were proud of being French citizens. These members of younger generation of immigrants tried to create a dual cultural identity (Fuga 2008: 3).

Though France has traditionally been relatively open in many respects, she has become more exclusionary since the early 1970s. Since the early 1980s, it has become a common to claim that foreign immigration is a threat to French national identity. Two thirds of those questioned in 1985 opinion poll said France would lose her national identity if nothing was done to limit the foreign immigration (Hargreaves 1994: 151). The French have a long tradition of mixing *jus sanguinis* (giving citizenship through filiations) and *jus soli* (citizenship based on birth within the national territory). About the children of French immigrants, it was assumed that they, socialized from birth in France, would be sufficiently the French in outlook to justify the automatic acquisition of citizenship on reaching adulthood. These assumptions are in question in recent years (Hargreaves 1994: 31).

The term integration has been officially adopted by the state as a means of designating the incorporation within French society of people who originate outside it. The notion of integration has become the functional equivalent in France of race or ethnic relations in Britain or USA. This term integration is based on the assumption that different cultural identities is or should be remained in the society. French state believes in assimilation, not simply integration, for newcomers. Both integration and assimilation insinuates conformity, but the process of integration implies fitting in with the dominant culture whereas assimilation demands absorbing into the dominant culture. French national identity is universal by imagining the sameness of all individuals. The French believes that 'sameness' is achieved not only simply by swearing allegiance to the nation but by assimilating to the values and norms of its culture. A French Muslim is not considered a true French citizen until the cultural identity of being Muslim is renounced (Orsino 2013: 135).

In the 1970s, when the French economy began to slow down, many immigrant workers were thrown out from French companies. They were forced to depend on the government aids for their survival. And French government fulfilled their demand within a limit. In 1970s, as France faced the economic crisis, a big chunk of the French people became very sensitive regarding the presence of Muslim immigrant workers on their national soil (Vladescu 2006: 12). The debate regarding cultural diversity became dense in 1980s, the credit for which goes to a Right Wing political party named the Front National. This political party continues to have an extreme anti-immigrant sentiment and a reactionary Right Wing political ideology to this date. In the 80s, this political party started saying that immigrants, especially Muslims, were threats to national cultural identity. This social behaviour of targeting any community regarding their origin was based on the racial prejudice. This was a xenophobic attitude towards them and was not compatible with the values of French Republic. At first, this party did not find any space in public opinion. This concept was considered unacceptable and thus, also harmful for French Republic. The party then tried to hype the fear in the areas especially where immigrants were living. This view made hindrance and did slow the process of their integration into the French society (Fuga 2008: 4).

It was also the time when the concept of European Integration was being developed with the thrust on free movement of labour. This also effected or increased the collective conscience of citizens. On the one hand, it opened the mind of people about European integration and they took an attitude of tolerance regarding cultural diversity of the nations. It also created a comfortable atmosphere for European space. On the other hand, when the national boundaries were being opened for European integration, it nourished the collective fear into Europeans regarding foreign workers coming to European countries (Fuga 2008: 5). Muslim immigrants were considered as a threat to the core existence of the French Republic in the view of French natives. The ensuing debates and proposed solutions addressing this Muslim problem centred either on more forceful integration in France or diminishing the role of Islam, an integral component of Muslim community.

One of the major contradictions in this regard is that the term immigrant is being used for second or third generation of immigrants. When a child is born in France, he/she is not an immigrant. So for that child, to use the term 'immigrant' is misnomer. It shows

that there is reluctance and unwillingness to accept these Muslim people as a part of French society. It divides the society even further into those inside the community and those outside it, if anyone labels someone as 'different'. It provokes resentment and frustration. Why does the French society feel the need to integrate someone who was born and has lived all her or his life in this country in the first place? It appears extremely paradoxical to speak of the need to 'integrate' people who have been an integral part of the social structure of the country for one, two or even three generations. The question is how to integrate those who are already inside social structure. The state does not create special policies to integrate each newly born generation since it is the continuation of the previous generation that absorbs the latter's experience and achievements. Thus, the whole idea of the need to integrate proves again the inability of the French society and the Government to accept its post-immigrant population, to treat them as French who are born in France and have lived in the country all their lives (ibid: 4). The problem with the Muslim immigrants is exacerbated when French society tries to assimilate them in their culture, thus not accepting them as equal citizens and promoting the cultural differences (ibid: 5).

The social- cultural integration of children of immigrant families often begins from primary education level. The children of Maghreb groups go to poor schools. These schools do not provide such grounds for immigrants to assimilate into French society. While the children of European immigrants and Asian immigrants have been successful to integrate into the French educational system. The children of Maghreb groups have more difficulty in dealing with French schools. The education system in France and other European countries and Asian countries is so similar that the children of these countries feel comfortable, and so they perform well. Maghreb groups have different education experience and so they feel difficulty in adjusting to the French approach (Vladescu 2006: 16)

It is argued that voluntary integration is doubtful not only because of the swelling number of immigrants but also due to their inclination to reside in certain areas. This factor transforms the matter of integration into a game of tug-of-war between the host identity and the immigrant identity with the host identity on the losing end. As immigrants live and interact with each other, communal ties are formed based on a common language, religion and culture, thus disassociating with the host country's customs, norms and way of life. The rift between the host country and the immigrants

deepens, as new immigrants are welcomed into community, bringing with them fresh memories of their respective homelands. This cycle continues on and on, keeping alive the immigrants' 'old' culture while ignoring dominant culture (Orsino 2014:129-130). Opponents of *jus soli* often argue that it allows the descendants of immigrants to enjoy the benefits of citizenship without feeling a true allegiance to the French state (Hargreaves 1994: 137).

One of the main racist stereotypes, that is widespread in French society- the Muslim immigrants will never be integrated due to the cultural difference. While it is widely acknowledged that different people do have different cultures and traditions, this cultural diversity does not prevent them from integration in some other countries. Britain and USA are appropriate stances for this. In these countries the people of different cultures sustain with their culture. (Poliscanova 2008: 4). In the past, many times the immigrants have come to France from Europe. But they practise Christianity and speak Latin language. Before immigration from other countries, the largest minority group in France was Protestants. Religious tolerance has been the main policy of French state. Since the French natives and minorities belonged to the same religion, they had similar customs and views about history. So it was easy to integrate and assimilate them in the French culture. In term of French politics, European immigrants have been successful to acquire the French culture due to their language, their practice of religion and custom, and their historical background. But the same did not happen to the Maghreb immigrants. Maghreb immigrants have a completely different experience with assimilation (Vladescu 2006: 8-9).

Here it is very important fact that these conflicts and disturbances does not mean that Muslims are incompatible with the French culture and cannot be integrated. Anyone who criticize today the French policy, this criticism is not itself about French values, but in fact the meaning of criticism is these values are not manifested in their daily lives. French citizens of African origin want their social and economic upliftment in a more united and less unequal society where democratic aspirations should be shared by all (Poliscanova 2008: 5). In 1989, three Muslim girls were expelled from public school. Anti-racist organizations SOS *Racisme* and some other Left organizations opposed this expulsion. They started a clear-cut struggle against this discriminatory and racist behaviour. So these helped the Muslims to follow their religion. They gradually became very concerned about their Islamic identity.

Although they are born and educated in France, they still could not accept French *laicite* about headscarf and burqa. They believe that French secularism has been more tolerant to the Jewish and Christian people, but not to the Muslims. They felt that they are identified as potential ‘fundamentalist’, and so it is obvious that it would encourage them to resist such groundless allegations and rise to defend their dignity (Maillard 2010: 21).

When we talk of multicultural diversity in France and integration of Muslims, it is closely related to French model of secularism. In the French concept of secularism, *laicite* emerged as the opposition to the dominance of Catholic Church. So the model of cultural integration should be traced in the concept of secularism. According to traditional theory, Church and state should be separated from each other and minority should be protected from any kind of discrimination. The 1905 French law gave the recognition to everyone to practise his/her beliefs including the religious signs in public places. When in contemporary period, headscarf is banned in public place, it brings the minority in doubt and it takes away the right of religious practices. So, from the viewpoint of Muslims it can be said that contemporary secularism is not consistent with the 1905 law (Poliscanova 2008: 1). So, French model of integration should recognize the cultural diversity. This is based on the collective concern of social cohesion.

The construction of mosques in France also involves a funding problem. According to 1905 law, the funds cannot be paid by the French public authorities. There would be a controversial issue if France takes the fund from abroad for the construction of Muslims’ places, because people expressed doubts for the relationship between the Muslim society in France and the Middle East countries. The leaders of those countries have made smart use of the secularism in France to expand their influence and prestige within the Muslim minority of France with strong financial resources. Since the French public authorities cannot provide financial assistance to build the mosques, the rich Middle East countries have filled this vacancy to help the Muslims in France generously. It is to show for the French Muslims that the Middle East countries are very helpful to them. But this helping provokes the Muslim youth against French Republic. In this situation, many Islamic Maulanas or terrorist organizations are getting chances to provoke Muslim youth (Maillard 2010: 19).

French Republic is based on democracy and *laicite*. It has great, grand and long history since the French Revolution of 1789. They have got this more than 200 years ago. Many great philosophers, writers and rulers contributed towards this. The French people are very proud of their democratic Republic and *laicite*. It is defined as popular sovereignty. For French people, Republic and *laicite* are like religion; they have 'faith' in *laicite* and French Republic. Their attachment is not to any traditional religion. On the other hand, Islam is based on God and Quran. For them, God is supreme power that is omnipotent and omnipresent. The popular sovereignty and *laicite* of French Republic is completely incompatible with the God of Islam (ibid: 14).

Every society faces a great problem at the time of social and cultural transition. Society is dynamic concept. So rules could be made according to its social structure. It depends on its own local particulars, long history and social dynamism. This is also true for France. France has a lot of immigration on her land; there are different types of immigration as temporary workers, labourers, persons asking for political asylum, foreign students desiring to study in French universities etc. It is discussed that number of French citizens of foreign descent is very high (23%). It means that average one in four French citizens is from foreign descent. So it can be said that to a large extent France tried to solve the problem of cultural integration for definite success, in spite of many major faults. Integration of immigrants in French society is neither automatic nor is it given by any law. It is started by every person, who likes multicultural society. The process of adopting the immigrants is called naturalization. It is also noticeable fact the immigrants are adopting the French culture, to whom it is not said to renounce his own culture. Then it naturally gives the outcome that he contributes to the French nation. In the framework of French model of cultural integration, the naturalization comprises an important way of approach in the local society (Fuga 2008: 5).

The French model of integration is unique in itself. It has some specific characteristics that make it very particular. This model is very different from other European countries. On the other hand, it has many problems and limitations. The characteristics of French model of cultural integration are related to difficulties and bitter experiences that are taken into consideration by immigrants. The demand of redistribution and representation can be there to fulfil the social inequalities. There is

a large gap in the social and economic status in society. There is more demand to reduce these social and economic inequalities. This demand is being fulfilled by avoiding the origin, culture or religion of an individual. From administrative point of view, 'social and economic inequalities are not linked with specific conditions of immigrants.' Immigrants face some specific conditions; they are in unequal position in comparison to French natives. So for social and economic development it is essential that the programs should be pro-immigrants. The policies should be such that the immigrants could be benefited. As these policies exist presently, they see all citizens as universal citizen and do not view immigrant as a part of the particular community. Their beneficiaries, saying it roughly, have not been chosen because they are Maghreb, but because they are poor (ibid: 6).

Any nation could only be strong when culture prejudice, social inequalities and economic disparities could be removed from the society. These inequalities and disparities should be removed from the individuals and different regions of the French nation. Without doing this, the concept of strong French Republic could not be fulfilled. The founder of French Republic wanted the same. The policy of French model is based on the idea that only practices of disadvantageous groups of the society may correct different inequalities from society (ibid: 6). An egalitarian society is such in which all communities could be used with all capabilities. A strong republic should ensure equal opportunities to all citizens regardless of their creed, race, culture, religion, etc.

It is true, in France, social policies equally treat immigrants, that of foreign descent, or that of second or third generation of immigrants. But, the immigrants are in different social and economic situations. Actually the model of integration of cultural diversities is shared mostly by French nationals, while it is more important that it should be shared by all immigrants. The policies should be made of such type that they could fulfil the French feeling in immigrants. At policy level, an individual is considered as universal while he/she is not just individual; it would be true to say that he/she is a part of social grouping. Many positive efforts are made for their upliftment but they are made taking as individual. They are not considered a member of community legally. Their cultural identity is not thought of in mind. It is thought that there is no need to identify the cultural group for their welfare. The social orientation

of French policies put them on the antipodes of adjustment between unequal groups, which are essentially elitist policies (ibid: 6).

This model of integration of different cultural identities remains extremely attentive in the public space that is secular in nature. It reduces the expression of religious practices in the interior of private and public space where citizens together live and act (ibid: 7). By observing this principle the French state can put the efforts for promoting to manifest the cultural identities. This contributes to strengthen the cultural heritage of the French Republic and support of free expression of different cultural identities. But the main characteristic of cultural integration model of French policies is secular in nature. It does not express the religious symbols. It also reduces the religious difference in both private and public place. People live in the space where many cultural identities should live together. They follow the same political rules and also they act in the same political space. It should be not only limited in political space but also in other areas as artistic, cultural, sport activities. This gives a lot of contribution in strengthening the cultural diversity of French nation. This also supports the freedom of speech and expression for all identities.

This model of cultural integration has its own drawbacks. The most important thing is a tendency among those who speak of integration to assume that the effacement of differentiation through ever fuller incorporation into the national community is not simply a useful model for analytical purposes but also a self-evidently desirable goal. Integration is implicitly and uncritically equated with assimilation, i.e. the wholesale elimination of differences through the generalization of pre-existing national norms. In this respect, the discourse of integration functions as part of the project of nationalization (Hargreaves 1994: 32-33).

After 1990, the era of globalization, privatization and liberalization started. This helped in the progress of multiculturalism. But on the issue of immigrants, France gets itself surrounded by problems. In 1995, French administration issued a circular. This affirmed that the appreciation of the assimilation of a foreigner is based on an ensemble of elements, first of all by the level of knowledge of the French language, as well as the participation in the social life. On the contrary, certain behaviours, such as exclusive frequentation of foreigners or strict observation of practices strongly opposed by French, may prevent assimilation (cited in Fuga 2008: 5). Thus, it can be

said that some fundamental criteria were outlined for immigrant integration which were knowledge of French language and the adoption of customs and moral values of the French. Some criteria can be put in customs and values as secularism is core value of French culture, and also monogamy in conjugal relationship. There is unanimous opinion that criteria should be related to integration of the applicant for socialization. It becomes an unavoidable element that largely determine on the result of the administrative process. (ibid: 5).

We should take into consideration not only the gap between both communities but also it should be admitted that it is ideal to speak of a perfect and harmonious social model in this field. Everywhere in contemporary world the question of multiculturalism and its implication has created endless debates and conflicts without a definitive outcome or general consensus. But in spite of all these things, the French society tries to overcome in its evolution towards a conjuncture that undertakes the duty of integration of immigrant Muslims, by observing both the cultural differences coming from their different ethnic identities and republican principles (ibid: 8)

4.7 The Rise of Reactionary Right Wing

It is far-right wing party in France that is socially conservative, economically protectionist, anti-immigrant and extremely nationalist. This party was founded in 1973. When the oil crisis in the entire world came in the 1970s, it affected France also. The French government expelled many workers from jobs. Then this thought came in the mind of some sections of French natives that the immigrants are eating their jobs. There are many causes as to why this Right Wing party emerged. The French people were unsatisfied taking the issues related to Muslim immigrants. This was the main cause for the emergence of this Party. In 1970s, economic problems such as immigration and unemployment emerged as a political debate. The French public was dissatisfied with political parties. They thought that their problems are not being addressed. So they supported the far-right wing party. This party could play on this discontentment of French people and so, gained more support than even it thought of. The large portion of French society has always been tolerant, educated and liberal. In spite of they believed on the propaganda of this Party. (Vladescu 2006: 7).

The integration and assimilation of Muslims is a challenging problem in France. The Social Democrats and Left parties are unable to convince the French voters that they are capable of resolving this social problem. French public is also unable to understand how this problem could be solved in consistence to the French values. In this background, a part of French people are going to extreme policies. These radical and conservative policies are in the name of patriotism. Actually, in 1990s these elements began to gain strength. In the 2002 French Presidential election, the party leader Jean Marie Le Pen came at second place and went to run-off round. This was the biggest success of the Party. Many analysts were shocked that in France, which country is known for tolerance, how any such radical party could emerge. In this election, the Party candidate got victory over socialist candidate.

This party politicized the problems of immigrants. The programme and discourse of this party incorporates xenophobic and discriminatory rhetoric portraying Muslim immigrants as a threat to nation unity. It creates a climate of insecurity in the minds of French natives. It strongly opposes to multiculturalism and its policy would give preference to French natives in housing, social security and employment (Marthaler 2008: 384-385). The main agenda of this Party included - the European Union and the Maastricht Treaty should be abolished, abolition of the Euro and the revival of the Franc, trade barriers should be imposed between France and other European Union member states, a ban on building mosques in France, a criminalization of abortion, reinstating of death penalty, and strict enforcement of a zero immigration (Vladescu 2006: 7).

In 2010s, it tried to change the image of the Party by softening its policies. In 2012 election, it tried to avoid the neo-fascist and anti-Semitic sentiments. In this election, the party leader said that legal immigration should be reduced by 95%. It is well known fact that in World War II, Nazi Germany raised the issue of immigration and nationalism. Nazi Germany committed the atrocities in the name of nationalism and immigration. Hitler crushed the whole Europe. Currently, the Front National Party is raising same issue. This party has forgotten that on the same issue, the Nazi regime committed crime to the French people in the World War II. Jean Marie Le Pen said many times that the German occupation was not inhumane in nature; nevertheless, it had a few blunders. It is question that the Nazi regime committed the crimes on

humanity and also on French people, then how a French leader could say that German occupation was not inhumane.

In the history, from past to present time, the French government has been responsible for immigration. It offered asylum to political refugees and invited workers of former French colonies countries to work. After World War II, France welcomed Muslim workers who belonged to the former French colonies, especially Maghreb countries. Now, immigrants from Maghreb countries are blamed for current problems as - the rising unemployment, high taxes and poor performance of the French economy. The issues of culture and religion are perhaps far more relevant than ever imagined when attempting to determine what the intensions of the French state are in terms of immigrant assimilation (ibid: 7). So this includes politically sensitive issues like race, religion, and ethnicity. But the French government has taken a completely different approach. When national census is done in France, it does not include the questions related to religion or ethnicity of a person. In the absence of approximate number of immigrant French, the Front National Party should not blame that immigrants are root cause of French problems. The leaders of this party are claiming that the differences between the native French and immigrant French are precisely what prevent assimilation from occurring in the French society (ibid : 7).

4.8 Charlie Hebdo and November 2015 Terror Attacks

Charlie Hebdo is a satirical French magazine. A terrorist attack was made on the office of Charlie Hebdo magazine by some Islamic militants. This was the pre-planned attack and 12 persons including eight journalists died at once. This incident occurred on 7 January 2015 (Frontline 2015a). The incidents continued for 3 days till 9 January. This incident shocked not only France but the entire world. This incident gave a milestone impact on French society and its multiculturalism. Charlie Hebdo makes satirical cartoons. It made some satirical cartoons of Prophet Mohammed. This attack was the fiercest terrorist attack till January 2015 in the history of France after World War II. This incident left many questions. This incident is the signal for the entire Europe with religiously motivated terrorism. In the last decade other European countries like Britain and Spain have faced terrorist attacks in 2005 and 2007 respectively.

Just after the attack in Charlie Hebdo office, many protest marches were held in Paris, Lyon and other cities in France. They came with waving posters with the slogan ‘*Je Suis Charlie*’ in defiance of terrorist activities. President Francois Hollande addressed the nation in a television and said, “Nothing can divide us, nothing can separate us.” This terrorist attack clearly shows that a group in Islam is very fundamentalist. That group is not ready for freedom of expression. It is not that this magazine made cartoons of Prophet Mohammed only; it has made cartoons about all religious figures and leaders. Even after the attack, the magazine made the cartoons of those persons who rallied against the attack. But those persons took these cartoons happily because it was a satire. In satire, any important thing is explained by portraits. But if any community or part of a community is vehemently angry on cartoons, this shows their religious intolerance. It is not that any person would attack in such manner, just because of hurting of religious sentiment; it is not possible, unless and until they do not have other benefits and interests.

Ali Asani is director of the Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Islamic Studies Program at Harvard University. He said, “Every religious tradition is vulnerable to satire, especially in secular societies.” He added, “In France, where religion is seen as something backward, I think the issue here is larger, because it’s the resort to violence to address the offense”.¹⁸ It can be (and is) true that in Quran or in any Islamist text it is not written that Prophet Mohammed is able to be symbolized. However, certain depiction of Prophet Mohammed is considered as blasphemy. But some Islamist scholars think otherwise. Dr Hatem Bazian, professor of Middle East Studies and Ethnic studies, University of California, Berkeley says, “The problem...in the cartoon is the fact that they are blasphemous from a strictly Islamic point of view”. Rather it should be understood as racist and bigoted discourse for Muslim community.

The same issue can be understood in some other way. In whole of Europe, Muslims are in minority. They are alert of perceived religious prejudices and stigmatization. Sara Silvestri, senior lecturer at City University London, who specializes in Islamism, religion and politics, said, “They are still in the process of protecting their corner and identity in European societies and for this reason are perhaps more sensitive to satire”. Many things are related to this concern. A recent report by the US think tank, Rand,

¹⁸ <http://www.ibtimes.com/after-charlie-hebdo-attack-muslim-scholars-explain-role-satire-european-muslims-1778132>

noted that al-Qaeda, had moved away from direct control of attacks on Western targets and become far more dependent on its affiliates and allies and on its ability to inspire home-grown terrorist to carry out attacks on its behalf. The two of attackers were saying themselves that they are from Al-Qaeda. They were French citizens.

A key area of activity in broader counterterrorism efforts will also be in the ether rather than on the streets. The changing nature of terrorist recruitment and communications has opened up a new front in the battle between religious fundamentalism and Western values. The counter attack of Charlie Hebdo attack was seen in France at many places. Grenades and gun shots have struck many Islamist places. At some places, mosques were struck by grenades.¹⁹

November 2015 terrorist attack is a series happened in Paris and its northern suburb on the night of 13 November. Many gunmen and suicide bombers hit a concert hall, major stadium, bars and restaurants. These attacks left 130 people and hundreds wounded, of whom 89 seriously. Seven attackers also died. These attacks were deadliest after Second World War. Three teams launched the six distinct attacks. The three explosions occurred outside the *Stade de France stadium* on the northern fringe of Paris where France was playing an international football friendly match with Germany where President Francois Hollande was attending. A man wearing a suicide belt was reportedly prevented from entering the stadium after a routine security check detected the explosives. These attacks happened at a time when France was on high alert prepared for the global Climate Change Conference scheduled to be held in late November 2015.

Islamic State (IS) terrorist group took responsibility for attacks and said that this is retaliation for the French attack in Syria and Iraq. Francois Hollande declared it as ‘an act of war that was prepared and organised abroad and with complicity’. Many world leaders termed it ‘crime against humanity’. Prime Minister Manuel Valls told French television that the government ‘will annihilate the enemies of the Republic, kick out all these radical imams, strip all those who defame the French spirit of their nationality (Frontline 2015b).’

¹⁹ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/08/muslims-fear-backlash-charlie-hebdo-grenades-islamic-france>

4.9 Islamic ‘Fundamentalism’ and Muslim Integration in French Society

In the broader sense, it feels that French and Islamic norms demonstrate that these two cultures are incompatible. John Bowen distinguishes between two visions of Islam in the French state – *Islam en France* (Islam in France) and *Islam de France* (Islam of France). According to him, most Muslims in France feel obligated to have by *Islam de France*. This should be regulated by the French state with French Islamic institutions and French trained imams. In order to foster *Islam de France*, Muslims living in France may place Islam in a European context, while preserving Islamic practices and norms (Black 2010: 15).

The present generation of the immigrants demanded the rights of their culture, dignity and citizenship. They also want the right to religious expression in public place. They want the right to express as a Muslim, wear Islamic symbols and build mosques. On the other hand, the native French want their assimilation in the French society. They see it as a need. Assimilation involves the moderation of Islam, where they mostly do not practise religious symbols. This term implies that it is the responsibility of immigrants to espouse the French culture and norms. The state recognize them as a complete political individual by socializing in public institutions as citizens and not Muslims (ibid: 15).

In France there is a lack of harmony between Muslims and the native French. The concept of an *Islam en France* conveys an image of isolation. Muslims may physically reside in France, but they should belong to an entirely different sphere. Attempting to develop an *Islam de France* raises issues of assimilation and its demands. Assimilation requires a reduction in piety, which suggests that true commitment to Islam cannot exist within the French state. The association of practising Muslims with terrorism also indicates an incompatibility between French and Muslim societies. In fact, there exists a tendency in France to confuse a locally increased visibility of Islam with surges of political Islam elsewhere in the world, as the Muslims remain connected to other Muslims across national borders. (Ibid: 16)

‘Communalism’ and ‘Islamism’ are two specific threats to French society. Communalism threatens French society by valuing ties to communities over ties to the nation. A separation of Muslim community within France echoes this concept. Most persons of Muslim community are suffering economically and are living in suburban

areas. While communalism places Islamic communities at odds with the French nation in their separation from one another, fear of Islamism represent the perceived threats of Islam itself. Islamism may refer to movements that advocate creating Islamic states as well as those that merely promote public manifestations of Islam. Headscarf and Burqa bans intensified this tension. The tension grew between Muslims and non-Muslims due to their spatially separated communities and the socio-economic gap, as well as fear of Islamism. Both communalism and Islamism present definable dangers to the French nation (ibid: 17). Both the terms – communalism and Islamism convey the importance of the nation to France. But this has some other aspects. Christian Joppke notes that 42 percent of Muslims in France identify themselves as ‘French first, Muslim second’ Furthermore, 70 percent of Muslims in France – compared to 63 percent of Protestants and 58 percent of Catholics – think that French democracy is well (ibid: 17).

Muslim representation is less in the National Assembly in comparison to their population. This under-representation causes the unrest to grow among young Muslims. A Muslim organization the *Union des Organisations Islamiques de France* (‘Union of the Islamic Organizations of France’ or UOIF) held the 2005 riots as ‘incompatible with Islam’. People criticized the UOIF for not calling the riots incompatible with the French law. Conflicting public messages about Islam in France further separate the religious community from the state. The Muslims resorted to rioting as a means of expressing discontent. Beyond this discontent, Islamic and native French institutions, each maintained, that riots violated its principles. The clash between Islamic and native French interests in the field of public relations suggests that the two cannot co-exist without controversy (ibid: 18). These riots happened because the Muslims are in discontent. They are economically backward and socially excluded and so their anger is expressed in the riots. The Muslim organizations take this economic backwardness and social exclusion as an opportunity; and they mislead the Muslim youth. Some Muslim youths get themselves trapped into the terrorist activities.

In contemporary period, there is a huge debate how Muslim community should be integrated in French society. In this relation two terms are popular – integration and assimilation. This is a plan by which French society could become a symbol of diversity in unity. These terms are similar but they have some different meaning. To

some extent we discussed these concepts in section 4.3 of this chapter. The first term refers to their acceptance by native born French citizens. The second refers to their individual acceptance and adoption of French culture (Groves 2008: 111). Any government cannot do this in whole but it can influence it. This is also true for French government. French government can contribute to both the processes. We have to evaluate what recommendations should be for integration and assimilation for this community. These policies would be decided by the fact of 'what is the condition of Muslims'.

For betterment of the condition of Muslims, French government can improve the policies. Government should focus on the policies that encourage better education, social security and job creation. This will help improve the conditions of Muslims. Then, they can be expected to rely on government. They will also feel that France is theirs as much as the people of French natives claim. Using these methods, government would be succeeding in the integration of Muslims into the French society. When the jobs would be created, this will help in reducing the poverty of Muslim society. Poverty and unemployment are two major problems to which they are suffering. Muslims are mostly engaged in low skill jobs. The Muslim youths, who are unemployed, are fit for these jobs. The high unemployment rate among these communities, the low education level, and the hard life which many of them experience in their native countries cause them to be open to jobs that many French natives would not want, though this varies somewhat by generation (ibid: 111).

By getting jobs, their economic conditions will be improved. This will help in bringing them into the French society and will fulfil their needs. The government and administration should contact the private firms and encourage them to give job to French Muslims. They live in the suburb cities and they are a huge bag of labour force. Hiring them provides immigrants work and the company with individuals who have a personal incentive to see the job done well and rapidly. To hire immigrants, though, will require adjustment of restrictive labour code that does so much to keep away poor immigrants – not least poor Muslim immigrants – from finding work and integrating themselves into French life (ibid: 111). So, for this, existing labour laws should be relaxed. This will encourage the immigrants to find employment. Muslim Immigrants will go into the areas of native French and will mix up with each other. While working, they will come in contact of each other. This will help in the

integration process at home and at work both. Relaxing the labour laws – already tried once and rejected by the people – will require a proactive public relations campaign to overcome the significant left-right divide. This gap will have to be bridged but only by substantial political negotiation (ibid: 111).

Education can be a very helpful tool for the integration. The government has already implemented the primary and secondary school education for all until the age of sixteen. Other potential methods can be to provide individual incentives to Muslims, to earn French citizenship and some other incentives such as to attend and graduate from institutions of higher education, to participate in government and public service at all level.

The government should publicly celebrate French heroes from all backgrounds. The government needs to be more vocal about telling the success stories of Muslims alongside those of French natives (ibid: 113). The captain of the French national soccer team, Zinedine Zidane, is one such story. Zidane is of Algerian descent and is a perfect example of a successful French Muslims. Making some of these known in meaningful ways is a great way to demonstrate to all Muslims that the government values them as productive members of French society. This can change the perception of French natives towards Muslims.

4.10 Regulation of Religion by French Government

Religious issue is the big problem to be solved. We know every religion has many dogmas. These dogmas are mostly irrational and illogical. Somewhere a particular religion differs from other religions. Here we have a lot of chances of conflict between two religions. Religion leads and guides the lifestyle and social customs. These social customs differ from other's social customs. So in any multicultural society, the interpretation of any religious texts and religious laws should be moderate. This should be of such a nature that it could not produce the conflict with other religions. In France three religions are popular – Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Christianity and Islam are newer than Judaism. Christianity is the reformed form of Judaism. Islam also came out in certain cultural and historical context. There are a lot of places where the religious texts of these religions teach different things

and also contradictory things. So we can live in multicultural society, when the interpretation should not be contradictory. The founders of French Republic were aware of these things. Having this in the mind, they separated the sphere of state from religion. They declared religion as a private matter.

In Islam, some imams are very orthodox and fundamentalist. They spread hatred in the society. This is very dangerous situation for French society and also national security. French government is trying to solve this problem. It launched many efforts to institutionalize Islam in the country. Its aim is that the option of communication to everyone should be open and to avoid fundamentalism.²⁰ In order to open a dialogue between the many Muslim organizations in France and the French state, the French Council of the Muslim Faith was launched in 2003. In 1999, many prominent imams recommended this launch. The foundation of the Council was welcomed by the Muslim community. It plays dual role – it gives representation to Muslims and also it has a control on them. The government started the program for training of Imams who will do the moderate interpretation of Islam. The government feels that these imams are unfamiliar with French culture.

It is also a matter of concern that some of the imams are from the Arab countries, and they preach extremist views. They preach the hate or advocate for acting on that hate through violent means. So, France needs a positive alternative to these imams and needs to prevent extremist imams from preaching in French mosques. A related problem is that in Islam no formal training is necessary to be an imam (Groves 2008: 110). There is a general debate about ‘Islam’ in France, but there is most of the time about specific aspects of Islamic presence and practice- about the headscarves; imams, Islamic schools; mosques and their size, location in the city; radicalisation, blasphemy. It is around a limited set of problem related to Islam that contentious processes occur. (Maussen 2006: 2)

To solve these problems, the French Council of the Muslim Faith was set up in 2003, decided that the imams should be trained in French universities. In 2005, the French government funded course, was started for imams in the Sorbonne University in Paris that started to give training to them. This training has a liberal Islamic perspective.

²⁰ http://www.forbes.com/2006/01/30/france-muslim-integrate_cx_0131oxford.html

Here are some issues which are more related to imams and are unresolved, on which we have to think:

1. Community acceptance: In the Islamic tradition, imams are appointed by communities, and are not required or expected to have a formal degree of learning in religious studies. Hence, the idea of a “trained” imam may be difficult to accept for some communities.

2. Imam remuneration: The material conditions of imams are normally rather unfavorable. Typically, imams do not receive a formal salary, and live on donations or welfare. In these conditions, it is unlikely that many newly trained young French citizens will choose to become imams (Groves 2008: 110).

It is better that the government should encourage the French Muslims to utilize imams of these centres. This will help in community acceptance by Muslim community. And community acceptance is more important than formal training (ibid:112). If any imam preaches extremist speech, the community will not accept this. Along with, government should take action against him. He should be legally punished after gathering substantial evidence. If government and administration do not do this, it reinforces the perception of public prejudice. And further it alienates them to integrate into society. Some civic and educational measures should be implemented in this direction. The compulsory primary and secondary education should be enforced. Up to the age of sixteen, the government has already implemented mandatory schooling.

The government should open immigration offices at local levels to help Muslim immigrants. Muslim immigrants are in the transition period. They are culturally changing from Arab to French values. With this, the government should start an informal and voluntary sponsorship program that will help the Muslim immigrants. This system will provide opportunities for interaction between Muslim immigrants and French natives where dialogue is very important. This could motivate natives and immigrants to move past their differences to find common ground and help immigrants adopt to the local culture. It could also make it more difficult for natives to continue negative stereotyping. While some natives may still have very real concerns about losing their jobs, any interaction that fosters positive relationships (ibid: 112).

4.11 What is French Identity?

When it is said that French Muslim should adopt the French identity, then this question naturally arises what is 'French identity'. The native French and also the French government too argue that the immigrant Muslims should adopt the French identity. In 2009, the Minister of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Mutually-Supportive Development (IINIMSD), Eric Besson launched a debate over this question following a promise made by former President Nicolas Sarkozy during the 2007 French presidential election. Addressing the French people, the Government of France and the Department of IINIMSD submitted a simple question on a website – for you, what does it mean to be French? For many months this debate continued (Caron 2013: 223).

Some critics said that Sarkozy government started this debate because Sarkozy wanted to hide the failure of his office. This debate is perceived more as a political ploy than as a real attempt to foster social cohesion around a unified collective identity. According to critics, in the garb of this debate the Sarkozy government wanted to divert the attention of the people. And in the end, in February 2010, this website was closed. This experiment proved unsuccessful because this issue turned out to be Muslim problem and Muslims' failure to assimilate into French culture. It seeks to shift the focus of analysis from the Muslim component to French component.

In spite of this debate is crucial important for both –Muslim immigrants and French natives. The central question revolves- Can someone belong to France and still have ties to a minority culture or a foreign country? While the concept of 'dual identity' is accepted in multicultural societies (such as USA and Canada). But it has been criticised in France where identity is perceived as a zero-sum game (Simon 2012: 1)

National identity is not only product of individual feeling of belonging and attachment, it is also affected by external perceptions of identity.

The conclusion of this debate was that it is impossible to provide a single definition of what constitutes the French national identity. J.F. Caron identifies four theoretical frameworks of being French – the ethno-symbolic sense of attachment, the ethnic conception of nationhood, the constitutional patriotism and, lastly, the ideal that

citizenship is defined by civic contributions and sacrifices. These are inter-related and cannot be separated from one another. Now, we shall discuss them, in the next four subsections.

4.11.1 Ethno-Symbolism and Belonging to a Community

Joseph H. Carens has given the concept of citizenship. This concept defines the sense of belonging. This belonging is related to question of citizenship. It has both legal and political dimensions. Citizenship is decided by legal rules, and its political dimension is based on the idea that the state's sovereignty depends on the people. This is called civic nationalism. Its membership is defined by the possibility of participating in public debates. With this, the creation of the community sense requires "a psychological dimension" and it has been filled by "nationalism" (Caron 2013: 224).

The civic nationalism has its origin in culture. Its founder is Ernest Renan. He said that it rests on a desire to perpetuate a rich cultural and historical heritage. His concept about nation is very influential. About nationalism his views are in his speech, 'what is nation'? He has defined nation as the desire of people to live together. He argues that the nation is the culmination of a long past of endeavours, sacrifice, and devotion. The idea of democracy has become pivotal in understanding, what constitutes a political community. Historically, the formation of modern states has been associated with a nation-building process whose objective is to unite the members around the same collective psyche. Every state has used the same elements in order to generate a sense of belonging and a form of patriotism on the part of its members. They share a common history composed of heroes representing the national virtues, a common language, 'official symbols' and a specific mentality (ibid: 225).

For many citizens, heroic figures are not the sole historical example that embodies a sense of pride of being French. Historical events are also often quoted, such as the French Revolution, the Resistance and the Enlightenment.

4.11.2 National Identity and Ethnicity

When we talk about French nationalism, this was best explained by French thinkers Ernest Renan and Victor Hugo. But the debate started by the government had the advantage of highlighting the fact that some French citizens do not share this spirit of nationhood. According to Renan, for nationalism it is essential that people share the common joys and grieves, and here, sharing grieves is more important. Contrary to this belief, some Frenchmen are favouring instead a sense of attachment closely associated with ethnic nationalism. So this form of attachment is not a matter of choice because it presupposes that the collective sacrifice is established around racial, ethnic or religious grounds.

National feeling is constructed not only by the patterns of attachment and belonging that develop during an individual's life, but also in relation to the perception that others have one's identity. This interaction is revealed particularly clearly in the dimension of national feeling – a feeling that can be denied by a restrictive definition of national identity based on skin, colour or socio-economic norms (Patrick 2012: 12)

J.F. Caron tells the meaning of being French in the following ways –

1. Being French is a matter of historical and ethnic belonging.
2. Being French means to be “white, Catholic and to be able to date back the ancestors to many centuries”.
3. A Frenchman is white, of Judeo-Christian tradition and of Western culture.
4. Being French implies three conditions; “firstly, be a direct descendant of the Gauls, the Romans and the Franks; secondly, claim a belonging to the Western world; to be inspired by our catholic roots” (Caron 2013: 228).

The idea of nationhood is directly associated with the contemporary events and situations. There is an incompatibility of Islam with the Western world. Those who defend this form of nationhood share the belief that French nationalism is based upon some principles; these are of popular sovereignty and *laicite*. This tradition is rational and logical. On the other hand, Islamic traditions do not have scientific temper. So the idea of French nationalism is incompatible with Islam. It is prevailing notion in Western world that the Western culture is superior to Islamic culture. Dutch

philosopher Paul Cliteur has argued that Enlightenment values are superior to those of non-western cultures. The Western world has Islamophobia in the mind. Geert Wilders declared, “I am saying it in a clear manner, my culture is better than Islam. We do not treat women, homosexuals and our political relations like this retard culture.”

While, the Right Wing people think that ‘Frenchness’ is under ‘attack’ by Muslims who are trying to recreate their cultural norms, values and practices in their welcoming country. It is a sign that Muslims are refusing to integrate in France. Marine Le Pen, President of Front National Party, claims the right of native French to affirm their specificities and their right to difference through their Judeo-Christian heritage. The supporters of conservative party argue that the Christian values should be at the centre of social life. For them, French nationhood and Catholicism are inseparable. Xavier Lemoine, leader of Christian Democratic Party, spoke against Muslims, “It will either be them or us. If they will win, we are dead. I am proud of Catholic and Frenchman and I do not have intention to live like a *dimmi* in my own country. We are different from them and they don’t represent France” (ibid: 229).

4.11.3 Sense of Belonging and Constitutional Patriotism

Some Frenchmen are supporting a more inclusive definition of nationhood. This is based on their identification to a community through universal principles. This is closely attached with Jurgen Habermas’ idea of constitutional patriotism which explains the identification to a community through universal principle. The idea is that members of a political community will develop a common political identity by feeling attached to universal political ideals. In order for these ideas, they need to culturally resonate for the individual.

France’s universal values that manage to generate a sense of belonging to the country are usually associated with the ones in its motto, liberty, equality and fraternity. These values are universal and are inherent to other western countries. Since France has been a driving force behind the realization of the Enlightenment ideals all over Europe, these values are nourishing a political pride and identification. Being French is to be loyal to our values – liberty, equality, and fraternity. Those are values of

humanity that we must defend at any cost. French national identity is essentially represented by its republican values. Nicolas Sarkozy said, “France was built by immigrants, and people who come here are welcome. But they have to respect our values” (Orsino 2014: 126). French means to be able to freely express yourself, to have freedom of opinion, of culture, the equality of everyone, the fraternity and the help for impoverished individuals. It is not just to favour certain groups to the detriment of the majority.

4.11.4 French Nationalism and Universalism

Since the 1789 Revolution, France has made a lot of changes in the concept of nation. In this revolution the concept of nation-state was given for the first time. Now this concept is in hot political and legal debate. Patrick Weil observed three stages of construction of the modern understanding of French nationality. The first phase of the French nationality is characterized in the 1803 Civil Code. In this Code it was made clear that a person is French if a child is born to a French father. So the nationality becomes an inheritance from father to child. The second phase of nationality begins during the late nineteenth century. Here nationality depends on the birthplace. The third phase begins in the twentieth century (Orsino 2014: 127).

Many scholars called third phase of French nationalism as collective civic nationalism. This nationalism defines nationhood on the grounds of legal rational principles, universalism, and voluntary attachment to the nation and its institutions. Third phase made nationality as an instrument of demographic policy. This phase opened French citizenship to all immigrants through the process of naturalization or marriage (ibid: 128).

Louis Dumont writes about French nationality that it is not just that the human subject exists as universal but that it is France itself that gives best expression to this aspiration towards universality. The destiny of France is to be teacher of mankind (cited in Jennings 2000: 577-578). French nationalism can be called as civil nationalism. Civic nationalism is associated with the modernist view. This is political in nature, because it defines nationality as a vow to defend the same values. Citizenship is determined by the concept of *jus soli* (citizenship by birth within the

territory of a state). Birthplace is no longer the sole indicator of nationality; individuals can now choose where to pledge their allegiance. In theory, civic nationalism is sincere and progressive allowing for individuality and rationality (Orsino 2014: 131).

Greenfield termed the French nationalism as collective-civic nationalism (cited in *ibid*: 132). He theorized that the development of a collective nation depends upon the nature of the groups actively involved in the articulation of the new ideology, and the situations they face. For that reason, the collective form is guaranteed if the initial social basis of nationalism is limited; that is, if nationalism adopted serves the interests of a narrow traditional elite intent on preserving its status which then transmits it to the masses by indoctrination. The modern French nationalism evolved true to Greenfield's hypothesis (*ibid*: 133). Collectivism rests on the perception that the group is far more important unit than the individual. It also presumes that individual is too egocentric and society functions better. In relation to nationalism, collectivism defines nation as a collective individual (*ibid*: 134).

At the time of French Revolution of 1789, Rousseau gave the theory of popular sovereignty and it created the modern French nation. He acknowledged the nation as a political body and only source of political power. For him, nation is a pre-political entity that gives rise to governmental institutions. Therefore, according to Rousseau, state is intentional product of the General Will of nation. State produces a moral and collective body which receives from this same act its unity, its common me, its life and its will. Rousseau saw the state as representative of the people. In this way, the nation and its sovereignty were used during the Revolution to challenge the monarchy (*ibid*: 133).

The crisis of French nationalism is rooted in its tradition of being a homogenous nation. While civic nationalism promotes the rights and freedoms of each member, collective nationalism denies this feature as it assumes the nation to be a homogenous, collective entity. This development of the unitary nation is one of the greatest achievements of French Revolution (*ibid*: 134). If we talk about French Universalism, then it is based on assumption that one set of values is applicable to everyone. This worldview believes in the universality of human experiences. James Boyle described universalism as a way of knowing, an idea of morality, and above all, a mode of life –

a plan for living. France is a proper example of universalism. Louis Dumont wrote about French universalism, the basic or global French ideology is as powerful as it is simple, and devoid of concrete elements. At bottom it consists of a single principle – the human subject as universal. It means French universalism insists on the oneness, the sameness of all individuals to become the French citizen. French Universalism prioritizes national identity over group identity. This eliminates cultural differences within the nation (ibid: 135).

The French universal identity creates solidarity among its citizens, which is a way by which the Republic guarantees an egalitarian society. Moreover, it places state loyalties over cultural loyalties. France is facing the crisis of the French universalism. Despite being a society of immigrants, France does not consider itself a pluralist society. Since the days of Revolution of 1789, France considered itself a mono-ethnic nation. Foreigners and immigrants were welcomed to the country so long as they learned the French language, committed themselves to the Republic, sent their children to state schools and celebrated Bastille Day. But today, Muslim immigrants are considered the biggest threat to French identity.

France' pressure on immigrants to assimilate is done under the pretext of achieving equality. Actually contemporary France is made of more than one culture; but French society has been homogenous society with a highly distinctive and singular culture. France does not consider itself a pluralist society. The French Republic does not tolerate the idea of a nation within a nation. There is only one nation and that is the French nation. Assimilation does not mean equality. Staying true to the Republican tradition, assimilation is done for the benefits of the collective nation, the general interest, not to favour the rights of minorities (ibid: 139).

The present problem of France is conflicts of cultural-ethnic identities. Many scholars say this as identity politics. The identity politics locks the expression of cultural identities. Daniel Beland says, “identity politics disguises an important issue in modern societies: the problematic relationship between social regulation and the political institution of an egalitarian citizenry” (ibid: 126) Now, this conflict is more increasing, particularly after Charlie Hebdo attacks of 2015. So, some questions have emerged as – Can France remain ‘French’?

This question led many to perceive French Muslims as a threat to the core existence of the Republic. The result of the debate may be as – the immigrant Muslims would integrate in French society or the role of Islam will be diminished that is an integral component of Muslim identity. But these questions are based on French-Muslim conflict. These questions are in binary. But this problem should not be watched in binary. In binary, the real questions are hidden. So, this is to understand the real problem and refuse to the compromising solution. Joan Scott writes about this binary, as it leaves no room for self-criticism, no way to think about change, no way to open ourselves to others (and by) refusing to accept the differences of others we turn them into enemies, producing something which we most feared about in the first place (ibid: 127).

4.12 Multiculturalism and its Crisis

In general form, a society in which two or more than two different cultures exist is called multicultural society. The systematic study of multiculturalism in philosophy has only flourished after Second World War, and most of the countries adopted the policy of multiculturalism. In France, because of immigration, multiculturalism has become a major topic of political and intellectual discourse. This debate is not only hot in France but also in the whole Europe. The terms ‘multiculturalism’ or ‘multicultural society’ are being put forth strongly as concepts that could help clarify the picture of European immigration (Heckmann 1993: 1).

Contemporary political theorists have labelled this phenomenon of the coexistence of different cultures in the same geographical space multiculturalism. That is, one of the meanings of multiculturalism is the coexistence of different cultures. In a multicultural society, immigrants are encouraged to integrate rather than required to assimilate. This means that they are to be enabled to retain elements of their own culture. They can make the cultural and ethnic associations, and these are seen as important vehicles of integration. The multiculturalism never encourages ‘separation and segregation’. It involves the creation of structures in which the incorporation of immigrants and ethnic minorities occurs fairly and with the recognition that the desire of immigrants and minorities to retain aspects of their cultures is reasonable. In this

situation, cultural diversity is itself desirable. It has an equal opportunity and anti-discriminatory strand towards ethnic minorities (Rattansi 2011: 8).

Yet multicultural claims include a wide range of claims involving religion, language, ethnicity, nationality, and race. Culture is a notoriously overbroad concept, and all of these categories have been subsumed by or equated with the concept of culture. About multiculturalism, Harper Collins Dictionary of Sociology says, the acknowledgement and promotion of culturalism...multiculturalism celebrates and seeks to promote cultural variety, for example minority languages. So the multiculturalism celebrates the cultural diversity and pluralism, and redresses the inequalities between majorities and minorities (ibid: 11). It is sometimes said that multiculturalism is a form of 'identity politics' and this is always matter of both identities and interests (Kymlica 2002: 327-328). Caleb Rosad (1996:2) defines multiculturalism,

“Multiculturalism is a system of belief and behavior that recognizes and respects the presence of all diverse groups in an organization or society, acknowledges and values their socio-cultural differences, and encourages and enables their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context which empowers all within the organization or society.”

Friedrich Heckmann (1993: 245) talks about seven different uses of this term:

1. First, multiculturalism is used as an indicator of social change, by referring to the changing ethnic composition of the population; an allegedly homogenous population has become more heterogeneous.
2. Secondly, this term is used in the normative-cognitive way. It can be the recognition of the fact that we have become a country of immigration that we need immigration and we should accept the social and cultural consequences.
3. A third use describes both an attitude and a norm – multiculturalism as tolerance, as friendly and supportive behaviour towards immigrants.
4. Fourthly, multiculturalism is an interpretation of the concept of culture. Each culture has incorporated elements of other cultures. Cultures are the result of interaction with one another and are continuous processes and change.
5. Fifth, on a more superficial level, multiculturalism is an attitude that looks upon some aspects of the immigrants' culture and sees it as a possible enrichment of culture.

6. Multiculturalism as a political-constitutional principle is, where it refers to ethnic identities as a major basis for political and state organization for the distribution of rights and resources.

7. Seventh, multiculturalism is a critical category. It is regarded as well-intended but illusory concept which overlooks necessity of a common culture, language, etc.

France is multicultural in this sense because it has many ethnic-cultural groups, otherwise France is not multi-cultural country. Michael Walzer writes, “France has been a society of immigrants. And yet it is not a pluralist society – or at least it does not think itself. And it is thought of as a pluralist society (cited in Jennings 2000: 1). Despite having a large level of ethnic-cultural diversity, France has been a mono-cultural country.

French policy about multiculturalism is different from that of Britain and USA. The policy of Britain and USA is based on public recognition of ethnic minorities, and a general celebration of cultural diversity and multi-ethnicity. French policy about multiculturalism is based on *laicite*. *Laicite* separates and strictly divides religion and state. So, French secularism is the hard secularism. In hard secularism religious symbols are banned in public place. According to this policy, praying in public, refusing to eat certain food (pork) in school canteens, and wearing religious symbols, are all regarded as violation of *laicite* (Rattanasri 2011: 32). French society is facing the conflicts related to these issues at this time.

The immigrants are mostly Maghrebs, and they are in double problem. The French had a strong tradition of ambivalence and hostility to overt expressions of religious identity that have clashed with Muslim practices of public religiosity. The first generation workers (of Muslim immigrants) were able to accept the French way of life in exchange for employment and a higher standard of living. Now their second and third generation in asserting in favour of Islam (Vladescu 2006: 12)

In practice, the French state also has *de facto* multiculturalism. In 1981, the French government permitted them to make ethnic associations (Rattanasri 2011: 34). There is a contradiction between the public rhetoric of universalism and opposition to multiculturalism. The government has funded training institutes for imams to create French Islam, free of foreign influences. In 2003, a national representative central

Muslim Council was set up. So, it seems clearly that French governments have come to this conclusion that the best course of action for France is to find ways of combining the recognition of cultural difference with the traditions of French Republicanism (ibid: 34).

French government founded many committees and councils for helping these Muslim immigrants. A High Council of Integration is one of them. In spite of these things, the Court of Account, a Government Watchdog concluded that French integration policy has failed (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4399748.stm>). The court warned that this situation could lead to social and racial tensions in France. When Islamic headscarf debate started in 1989, when three girls were excluded from the school because they were wearing the Muslim headscarf, Muslims felt alienated in religious matters. In spite of opposition of Muslims, the French state banned the headscarf in public schools. Muslims consider that the French government is trying to bring them in the fold of French culture. The European Union, the Amnesty International and the UNO do not agree with the ban on headscarf. So this feeling is embedded in the heart of Muslims that French government is not giving their rights, and that the French majority wants to demolish their cultural identity. The European Convention on Human Rights recognizes the individual's right to express religious faith publicly.

The problem in France is not the idea of secularism itself, but rather the rhetoric behind it, its implementation and its interpretation in contemporary legislation. European Union stresses upon 'unity in diversity' and the virtues of multiculturalism. Many European countries are emphasizing multiculturalism to solve this issue and giving cultural and political rights to them. But France does not seem to be in tune with political trends. The policy of multiculturalism is not being applied to integrate the immigrant population in France (Poliscanova 2008: 1). When this policy is not smoothly applied, the anger and resentment is there within the Muslim community. This anger and resentment is expressed from time to time.

Muslim community in France has undergone challenges and processes similar to those experienced by Muslims elsewhere in Western world. There are serious problems of racism and discrimination at work and in schools, but the younger generation is in many cases debating its own status in the multicultural milieu. There is a growing accent on professionalism and networking, with simultaneous pressure

on official and private institutions to assume a more supportive and positive attitude towards pluralism. While Muslims may remain divided into various ethnic-sectarian or even class based clusters, there is still a small community of intellectuals engaged in a multidimensional debate (Malik 2004: 130).

Multiculturalism is overwhelmingly rejected by French Political leaders as a model relying on the recognition and valorisation of ethnic communities and their cultural differences. It is strongly associated with foreign experiences, especially British and USA models, and perceived as the opposite of the French model of integration. It is seen in conflict with Republican values and national cohesion, and defined only in negative terms: as what the French society is not and should not become. It is closely associated with what is referred to as ‘communitarianism’: a form of cultural separation seen as the inevitable outcome of group recognition and the promotion of cultural differences (Simon 2012: 14).

This model of secularism and immigration through cultural assimilation differs from the relative cultural and religious pluralism in countries like USA and Britain. Former President Jacques Chirac had once stated that France would lose her soul if she succumbed to Anglo-American multiculturalism. French policy about multiculturalism is one of a ‘proverbial melting pot’ rather than an American style salad bowl where multiple religions and other identities can be preserved as individual ingredients of the whole (Powell 2012: 123-124)

Multiculturalism is a burning issue in Europe since 25 years. Thirty years before, Europe was on the policy of multiculturalism; but in these 25 years many terrorist and extremist activities happened, by which now European leaders are saying that multiculturalism is bad for Europe. In 2011, British Prime Minister David Cameron said that “doctrine of state multiculturalism failed and will no longer be state policy.” German Chancellor Angela Merkel too denounced multiculturalism and spoke out against its dangers. The question is how did this transformation come about? According to multiculturalism’s critics, Europe has allowed excessive immigration without demanding enough integration—a mismatch that has eroded social cohesion, undermined national identities, and degraded public trust. Multiculturalism’s proponents, on the other hand, counter that the problem is not too much diversity but too much racism” (ref).

Just as multiculturalism is generally a code word for tensions between Europeans and immigrant Muslims, Europe is a code word for Christendom. The continent's historical roots are steeped in traditional Christian culture, teachings, morals and values. Put simply, multicultural problems in Europe are a result of tensions between two religions: Christianity and Islam. They both - two religions struggle to coexist. Today, when EU Christendom and Muslim immigrants alike refuse to give up their respective cultures, it should come as no surprise. These two religions have never budged". The French natives want to assimilate them in French society, but they are unable to understand which methods they should adopt. There are many issues related to Muslims which are to be solved. Historically, France rejected any policy that gave official recognition to the new immigrants (Rattansi 2011: 9). Some other countries such as Australia, Canada, Britain, and USA have adopted the policy of multiculturalism.

In Europe, relations between European people and Muslims are in conflict, which has further increased after the terrorist attack in Madrid (March 2004) and London (July 2005). Danish Cartoon debate, the contemporary Charlie Hebdo attack, and November 2015 suicide attack gave rise to anti-Muslim sentiments. Due to these attacks a common prejudice has been created about Muslim community in France as well as in the whole of Europe. Many political parties are cashing in on this prejudice that is embedded in French mind-set. The rising influence of the National Front Party is a consequence of this prejudice. In France, relation between Muslims and French natives has become politically consequential on many dimensions such as foreign policy in regard to Middle East countries and migration of Muslim population in France (Adida 2007: 1).

Overall, it is clear that these cultural differences are present in all aspects of the life. This is not only in some areas. These cultural conflicts are on many issues such as about headscarf, about imams, about Islamic schools, about mosques, about pork and food habit, about radicalism, about blasphemy. Then the pertinent question arises can any minority culture exists in the France? Both sides have opposite views on this issue. French Republic is not ready to give status as a minority culture. It does not believe in dual allegiance. France says itself as 'exception'. But Muslim are not ready this concept of 'exceptionalism'.

A gap is slowly bridged between French natives and Muslim community. A lot of work is remains to be done to strengthen this relationship. Both societies – they have to learn to cohabitate so they have to prevent marginalization of Muslim community and to promote the inclusion of all immigrants. If this end can be achieved, this would be peaceful end for all. To achieve this goal, the government should initiate to remove their poverty, to bring them into mainstream society. In this context, both process-assimilation and integration would be fruitful. Only one process cannot be successful.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

The present research is a study of religion and secularization in France. The first chapter discussed about the concept of religion. In this chapter, the study found that different religions are more divergent as compared to similar. The chapter discussed that religion is dynamic phenomena which differs from community to community. Every religion has some different traditions and customs. Religion was also found to be related to the notion of culture.

The above mentioned trait of religion holds true for contemporary France. In France, for French native and the Muslim community, the connotation of religion differs. After a long process of secularization, European countries became secularized. Most of native French people do not practice religion. They have no interest to go Church regularly. And, religion does not control the society. The social sectors are free from religious dominance. For the mostly French natives, religion is a private issue. But this does not hold true for Muslims.

In general term the process of secularization occurred in entire Europe. In France, the process played the most significant role as compared to other nations. Though the revolution happened in Britain in 17th century and in America, which was contemporary of French Revolution – these revolutions were not based on antagonism to religion. On the other hand, French Revolution was based on antagonist relation with religion. American declaration of Independence (1776) included the name and mentioned that before God all men are same. But French Revolution did not include or refer to any divine power of God. The French were aware that Clergy could misuse the name of God, because they had monopolized their position on society on the name of God.

In 19th and 20th century, although it is correct that religious influence remained in France, yet along with it, in French society a strong feeling against religion always was present. French society was characterized an ideological war within itself. On the

one side, there were anti-religious, secular and republicans, on the other side were Catholic clergy and conservative forces. This 'anti-religious', secular, republicans, anti-clergy had also a deep grip on society. They tried to change the society so that people could have secular and democratic thinking. They became successful. The government made the laws that were based on secularism, scientific and rationality. The establishment of Third Republic, Jules Ferry laws (1881), *laicite* and provisions in French Constitution 1946, 1958 are evidence of such a phenomenon.

In the last two centuries, France has made various efforts to solve the religious conflicts. In the 20th century France – there are many groups who want forceful or assertive or combative secularism. This secularism has antagonist relation with religion. On the other hand, some are other groups who favour a pluralistic form of secularism. In the 20th century, France has always adopted the policy of assertive secularism continues till present times.

Theorists like Regis Debray, Henri Pena-Ruiz support combative secularism or 'secularism from above'. They support a public sphere free from all religious symbols and discourse. They claim a monopoly over the meaning of secularism by rejecting the possibility of its diverse interpretations. On the other hand, thinkers like Jean Bauberot, and Jean Paul Willaime are in favor of pluralistic secularism. They argue that secularism in France should be reconsidered in a way that would open it to changes and diverse interpretations. According to them, secularism should be regarded as a shared value on mutual understandings (Kuru 2008: 8-9).

The notion of *laicite* has been very significant for France. It has given a lot of contribution in nation-building in France. It contributed to make France a powerful country. Currently though, the matter is different. On time to time it has been interpreted in different ways by French government. Originally, this notion gave freedom about religious practice including the right to wear the religious symbols. When headscarves disputes came in 1989, and this issue reached the court, the court gave the decision, "the religious symbols are not itself incompatible with *laicite*, until they hurt others." In 1994 the French government brought regulation and this provision was included that 'the authority has right to declare religious symbols as illegal'. In 2003, Stasi commission declared it totally illegal. Here one question can be

put. If religious symbols were not declared illegal, in 1989, how did they become illegal in 1994 and 2003?

Behind the whole issues, there are a lot of prejudices and stereotypes on which the French government avoids discussion, although these are main and decisive component of this discourse of secularism. Their prejudices and stereotypes are related to Muslim community. Mostly Muslims suffer from these prejudices.

Former president Jacques Chirac described that *laïcité* was one of pillars of France's new Republic. This has led to recent cases of French national identity often prevailing over individual religious and cultural diversity. As interpreted by Stasi Commission, under the principle of *laïcité*, religious symbols threatens the secular France. It is seen that many French people think that Islam has no place in the French legal structure. In this argument, Islam is not a simply a personal religion that can be practiced by citizens within the legal boundaries of a secular state.

The main argument against headscarf (also face-veil), mainly directed against Muslims, is that it is against women's dignity. Women wear this because they are victim of men's oppression. So this is against the law of equality of women. However this notion is not completely true and is only half truth. Be it men or women, they wear the dresses according to their choice. It is also true that choice is made of social construction. But to wear the dress is a fundamental right. It is linked to three major social concerns- about communalism - the closing in of ethnically defines communities on themselves, about Islamism - political project to reshape public life around Islamic norms - and sexism - about the denigration of women.

Thus, there should be no universal compelling law for all. Any such forceful legislation leads that Muslims to think that this is an intrusion into their religious rights. The problem in this case is that the law does not deal the cultural stereotypes and prejudices that exist among the Muslim community and, therefore, the girl is exposed to the pressure, resentment and contempt from her community. Such daily pressure takes different forms, ranging from insult to violence.

Burqa ban was condemned by Amnesty International. This institution told it as a violation of freedom of expression and religion. USA and British government also did not agree with headscarves and burqa ban. Many writers, scholars and human right

activities also opposed a law infringing on such customs, After France, Belgium and Netherlands also banned the burqa. Currently Bulgaria too has banned Burqa legally. It is being done on legal level, otherwise on social level burqa and headscarves are being discouraged at big level.

The burqa and headscarves are not confined to religious-cultural issues, but are also discussed within feminist ideology as this issue is connected to women. The center of this problem is a discrepancy in norms, particularly related to gender issues. Muslim women are living in a Westernized country, where to cover face is not dress code. The French make assumptions about headscarves, its root cause and its impact on women. These assumptions show the degradation women in Islam. These assumptions may be true in some areas but it is not necessary true for every area, as we find in France. When burqa law was implemented, a Muslim woman Kenza Drider came out in burqa, and said “I am not favor of burqa. I don’t wear it. But it is wrong for the government to ban on burqa.” She is right on her point. In the defense of burqa, the Muslims women have mostly raised their voice. French society perceives veil as oppressive, they perceive it as tool for both-female and religious oppression. On the other hand, Muslim women do not perceive it same. Although the French government claim that it is promoting measures such as burqa ban for living together in the society, but this ‘living together’ cannot be done forcefully. No doubt women should be emancipated, but they cannot be emancipated forcefully. Along with this, it should be noticed that on the pretext of burqa, some other purposes was being fulfilled. The Sarkozy government brought this issue to hide the failure of its government.

The issues of headscarves and face-veil are also the same. These issues are simultaneously religious, cultural, ethnic, legal feminist, legal, traditional, social and political. The issue of headscarf (face- veil) is not a mere an issue of ‘bit of cloth’. It has wider impact on the social life, as it is linked with the rage of social concerns such as radicalism, fundamentalism. This has led to alienation of Muslims. They think that their culture is in danger, and they think that the French government is not giving their religious freedom to them.

The issue of wearing headscarves or veil is contingent upon the manner in which the women are taught in the families to wear these dress. It can be said that this is a tool

to control them. But every society has some rule and regulation by which the society runs and operates. Without rules and customs any society cannot run. But the question arise whether these rules are ‘fundamentalist’ and who can judge and who can decide on them? Can dominant culture or majority culture has right to decide the rights of minority? Whenever set rules do not violate others’ freedom, how can such rules can be negated authentically?? How it can be decided that woman wears burqa of her own desire or family pressure? This is a perplexing question.

‘Islamophobia’ in Europe runs like this – When any Muslim wearing burqa is going, it feels that any terrorist is going. The status of religion in France will depend on the ways in which the French society conceives secularism. The definition of secularism determines where we draw the limit between private and public sphere and where they overlaps. The difference of public and private sphere is told, but this difference is not clear. In Islam, nothing is private. In Islam, all aspects of life are determined by the principles of Islam. Islam is not only ‘faith’, but it governs the whole aspects of life. So the definition and division of public and private sphere, done by French view, cannot be successfully applied to Islam, and a complete application of it is doubtful among French Muslims. There is a very thin line between public and private sphere of religion, and if such a line is actually drawn, it is highly doubtful that the entire community would accept such a division.

It can be said that a ban on religious symbols by the French government may inspire atheism? If Muslim fundamentalist are doing wrong, can this wrongness be removed by other wrongness? Is implementing secularism from above is not wrong? The answer to this question presents before us. USA and Britain have adopted tolerant and plural form secularism; which more successful than that of France. If secularism is there to eliminate religious disputes, and to promote tolerance and acceptance of differences, then in France it achieves the opposite- it imposes some kind of obligatory atheism or hides the religious-cultural symbols. France must reconcile the tensions between religious freedom and expression in the public sphere with the – value of *laicite*, to what extent Muslims can reconcile with their tradition.

The Muslims think that the present status of idea of secularism is not suited to them. Actually the idea of secularism is good in itself, but Muslims have the problem with its interpretation that is being done in present time. ‘Unity in diversity’ can only be

protected when diversity is respected. If secularism is there to eliminate religious disputes, it can be done by promoting tolerance and acceptance of cultural differences.

The French views the veil as a symbol of oppression, while Muslim perceive it as liberating. The contradiction clarifies the unusual position that France occupies as a Western nation. While it identifies the veil as a site of oppression given its ties to oppressive regimes, its own limitation on public attire may also appear to be oppressive to some communities. French standpoint on the veil also can be fit within the framework of its commitment to *laicite*. The roots of secularism extend far back into French history, and *laicite* helps to define the state's attitude towards multiculturalism within its borders. Secularism turns the veil into a symbol of identification with a foreign group, deems it is incompatible with the French nation.

There are many examples of argumentations in which 'mosques' or 'headscarf' become 'problematic' while the actual object of concern seems to lie elsewhere rather than just a ban on religious symbols. Still, simply reducing all argumentations which problematic aspects of Islamic practice has led to a fear of the unknown and seems to be a pointless endeavor. It is too simplistic to reduce these debates to a simple confrontation between pro and anti-Islamic practices.

As it was mentioned above French native have a different perspective on religion as compared to Muslims. Yet, a question can be put that when the French native have right to choose dress, then why not Muslims? The most important fact is how the French people themselves perceive the French Republicanism and ban on religious symbols is only a minor side effect.

This conflict is between two religious groups- but these groups are not only religious, they are also cultural. With these bans, French state places Islam in opposition to French national identity and implies that both cannot coexist. Debate on ban is always incomplete; but the outcome remains inconclusive. . In contemporary times, question of multiculturalism and practices for its implementation have created endless debate without reaching a definitive outcome or a political and intellectual census

Currently, if French secularism is not really under challenge, but it finds itself under intense discussion. This is due to the fact that Islam is not only a 'faith', but it

contains a social-political dimension. So it is necessary to separate what is religious from what is not. This is a delicate operation. The problem is with Islam that Islam cannot be confined in private life. It is therefore necessary to proceed in a pragmatic fashion in order gradually to induce Islam to restrict itself to its religious dimension.

A person cannot have dual religions, and he/she can be member of only one community. The same is the case with nationality. A French national cannot have allegiance with any other identity. Studies have found that only 10 or 15 % of France's Muslim population regularly practice their religion, and most identify with faith socially, chiefly by celebrating its major holidays. Yet in French society and mind, Islam is linked with fundamentalism. Only 2000 or fewer Muslim women in France wear burqa or niqab. Many of them are young. The veiling trend is becoming more popular though after the ban. This phenomenon might encourage a turn to violent Islam as a form of rebellion.

On one hand, churches have lost their membership and attendance and are in decline. But French people have never lost contact with Christian heritage. People get strong morality from Christianity that are raised on political platform such as capital punishment, birth control, gender issues, protection of environment etc. On other hand, despite the relegation of religion to the private domain by the process of secularization, religion never ceased to be in public space.

Secularization process was seen, almost universally, and irreversible phenomenon in its last phase. Return of religion in Europe is observed as a regressive force. The revival of religion cannot be understood as attempts at returning religion to its original forms, but rather should be seen as responses to globalization and geo-political scene. Religion is being viewed currently as a public utility rather than a freely chosen voluntary activity. Religion is neither obligatory nor binding for them

The idea of secularization has been developed to infuse the concept of democratic pluralism. At the same time, it remains problematic to justify the intervention of the state in certain religious expressions and rituals. It is difficult to speak of equality, pluralism and tolerance if the definition of religious identity is determined by the strict imposed by the secular state. The secular, democratic and pluralist state has to be capable of absorbing the variety and diversity of its minorities

French officials should concentrate on integrating the country's Muslim population, a group which has been marginalized economically, socially and politically. Feelings of discrimination have pushed many younger Muslims to embrace a more fundamental form of Islam that is difficult to reconcile with the French values. Reality of the situation is that Muslims in France do feel marginalized to some extent and bans on cultural and religious symbols only add to such insecurities. It is also disturbing to see that French decision-makers focus on Muslim integration from security reasons rather than social, cultural and economic reasons. Absence of a humanitarian aspect by the French policy makers and media has strengthened 'Islamophobic' tendencies within society by emphasizing radicalization rather than integration.

The French state has been relatively successful in integrating many of its immigrants in its fold. But issues remain in such an integrating process. Work remains to be further done in this regard. It should be ensured that none of the immigrant groups becomes marginalized in the future. Then only French Republic can be a nation in actual terms.

France is witnessing a struggle to find equilibrium in a balancing to limit religious and cultural expression without limiting individual or human rights. In order to successfully handle the issue of integration of Muslim communities into French society, it is vital to find ways to ameliorate their economic situation, social mobility and ensure greater political participation. It is also crucial to introduce inclusive forms of secularism and citizenship that help to create a common identity between the French natives and Muslim immigrants. There seems to be a basic policy gap in the manner in French Government engages with the issue of integration. It should be realized that there is fundamental difference between the integration of Muslims in society as citizens with equal rights and opportunities and the integration of Islam itself. The majority of Muslims in France are loosely affiliated with religion but consider them Muslims in cultural terms.

In order to address the question of how to integrate Muslims in the French society, it is necessary to analyze the Islamic component and such contribution to a non-Islamic society. It is crucial to provide a peaceful and cohesive concept of Islam in the French society where religious aspirations with democratic secular society are seen to bring benefit to the community as a whole.

There are racist sentiments among the French that hamper peaceful and prosperous co-existence and co-operation in French society. Neither the French government nor society is capable of eliminating the problems concerning ethnic minorities residing in the country. When other European migrants can be integrated in French society, then why not Maghreb? France needs flexibility and respect for cultural and religious diversity.

French natives identify Islam as the most frequently cited obstacle to integration in France, and discuss *laicite* as indifferent to cultural and ethnic traits which they believe that it should remain in the private sphere. This fact should be accepted that national identity is not a biological but a political fact: anyone is French through the practice of language, through the learning of a culture, through the wish to participate in an economic and political life. One enters this community dressed simply and solely in the garb of an individual citizen divested of all particularistic affiliations.

It is also true that, wherever and whenever the cultural conflicts exist, they cannot be resolved in a short time. Thus, the French government will have to need to learn to discriminate between religious Muslims and radical Islamism. France should not stigmatize Muslims as a special case. The government must confront to combat Islamophobia if it wants Muslims to embrace wholeheartedly the notion of a 'Frenchness' as it is the general norm.

Once, President Jacques Chirac said that France would lose her soul if it succumbed to Anglo-American multiculturalism. This view means that rather a society with diverse cultures, France believes in a 'melting pot' where differences in cultural and religious terms diminish, and unitary notion of a 'Frenchness' prevails. So, Muslims suffer from an identity crisis because French republic does not recognize their religious cultural identity. So they fear regarding their identity. They want to assert their identity. The hijab and burqa have become vehicles through which Muslim woman assert their identity.

Radical Islamic terrorism is more deeply rooted in the poor suburbs than in the cities. Islam is understood as a religion of fanaticism and perceived as threat to French republic and its *laicite*. It is not that all Muslim oppose French *laicite* or Republican values or they are all in support of hijab or burqa. Only a small percent of Muslims do regularly religious practice. But if some Muslims are radical or fundamentalist, on this

basis no one can should stereotype the entire Muslim community. In order to curb 'fundamentalism', from 2003, a training program for imams has been initiated. French Council of Islam's primary mission was to be a barricade against the 'bad' 'fundamentalist' Muslims who posed a threat to national and international security. Imams were taught to influence French people that the progressive views propagated by French state were not inimical to Islamic practices and principles

In the changing status of religion of European society, it would be mistaken that only Islamic fundamentalism is responsible for posing threat to Europe. Internal European transformations contribute to the new public interest in religion. General process of globalization, the global growth of transnational migration and the process of European integration are presenting decisive challenges to European model but also religious-secular and church-state relation in Europe. Not only in France but also in entire Western world, democracy will largely depend on the ways in which the society conceive of secularism, and on how it evaluate the different shapes it can take as a normative framework for governing ethno-religious diversity.

The study finds that the process of secularization in the last two centuries has led to an overall decline in the social dominance of religion. This validates the first hypothesis of the research that the processes of modernization such as urbanization, industrialization, and individualization have led to a decline in the social significance of religious institutions, beliefs and practices.

The second hypothesis of the research stated that as a consequence of secularization, people in contemporary secular French society favor minimal influence of religion in public life as religious tendencies are seen as forces impeding the national integration. The study found that in French society, there was a decline in the social dominance of religion, but in the last three decades, there has been a spurt in debates and discourse pertaining to religion, as compared to previous times. This partially proves the hypothesis.

REFERENCES

- Abilmouna, R (2011), "Reconciling the hijab within *laicite* France", *Journal of Islamic Law and Culture*, 13(2-3): 117-132.
- Adida, C. L. et al. (2010), "Identifying barriers to Muslims integration in France", [Online: web] Accessed 20 May 2015, URL: <http://www.pnas.org/content/107/52/22384.full.pdf>.
- Adrian, M (2006), "La'icit Unveiled: A Case Study in Human Rights, Religion, and Culture in France", [Online: web] Accessed 4 February 2014 <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs12142-006-1018-3#page-1>.
- Adrian, M (2009), "France, the Veil and Religious Freedom", *Religion, State and Society*, 37(4): 345-374.
- Algan, Y, et al. (2010), "Cultural Integration in France", [Online: web] Accessed 5 March 2013, URL: <http://econ.sciences-po.fr/sites/default/files/file/yann%20algan/France.pdf>.
- Altglas, V (2010), "*Laicite* is What *Laicite* Does-Rethinking the French Cult Controversy", *Current Sociology*, 58(3): 489-510.
- Amara, F. (2006), *Breaking the silence: French Women's Voices From the Ghetto*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Amiriaux, Valerie (2004), "To be laic or not be laic: A French dilemma" in Valerie Amiriaux et al (eds.) *Faith and Secularism*, London: British Council.
- Amiriaux, Valerie and D. Koussens (2013), "From Law to Narratives: Unveiling Contemporary French secularism", *Online Working Paper* No. 19.
- Anderson, J. M. (2007), "*The French Revolution*", London: Greenwood Press.
- Asad, T. (1993), *Genealogies of Religion*, London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- (2003), *Formations of the Secular*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- (2006a), "French Secularism and the 'Islamic Veil affair'", *Academic Journal*, 8 (1/2): 93-10.
-(2006b) Trying to Understanding French Secularism, in Hent de Vries and Lawrence Sullivan (eds.) *Political Theologies*, New York: Fordham University Press.
- *Assemble Nationale (1958), "*Constitution of October 4, 1958*", [Online Web] Accessed 1 December 2012 URL: www.assemblee.nationale.fr/english/Bab.asp.
- Astier, H. (2004), *The Deep roots of French Secularism*, BBC [Online Web] Accessed 10 December 2012, URL: www.news.bbc.co.uk/z/hi/europe/33258285.stm.

- Bader, V (2011), *Religion and Myths of Secularization and Separation*, RELIGARE Working paper No.8/March 2011.
- Bakir, S. (2008), "Secularism, European Identity and Muslim Communities in Europe" in Motzkin G. and Fischer Y. (eds.) *Religion And Democracy In Contemporary Europe*, London: Alliance Publishing Trust.
- Barbier, M (2005), *Towards a Definition of French Secularism*, [Online Web] Accessed 18 April 2012, URL: <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/IMG/pdf/0205-Barbier-GB.pdf>.
- Barras, A (2008), "Using Rights to Re-invent Secularism in France and Turkey", *EUI Working Paper RSCAS 2008/20*.
- Bauberot, J. (2003), "Secularism and French Religious Liberty: A Sociological and Historical View", [Online Web] Accessed 18 April 2012, URL: <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/IMG/pdf/0205-Barbier-GB.pdf>
- Bauberot, J. (2009) "Laicite and the Challenge of 'Republicanism', *Modern & Contemporary France*, 17(2):189-198.
- Bellah, R (1967), Civil Religion in America, *Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 96(1):1-21.
- Berger, Peter L. (1967) *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*, New York: Doubleday.
-(2006), "Observations from America" in Michalski Krzysztof (ed.), *Religion in the New Europe*, Budapest: CEU Press.
- Bevelander, Pieter and R.Taras (2013), "The Twilight of Multiculturalism? Findings from across Europe" in R Taras (ed.) *Challenging Multiculturalism*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Bilgrami, Akeel (2012), "Secularism: Its Content and Context", *Economic and Political Weekly XLVII (4)*: 1-35.
- Black, Hillary (2010) "Freedom, Norms, and the Ban of the Muslim Veil in France: 1830-Present", [Online Web] Accessed 10 July 2014, URL: <http://web.artsci.wustl.edu/tparsons/tparsons/black-article.pdf>.
- Bonney, R. (2004), "Reflections on the Differences between Religion and Culture", *Clinical Cornerstone*, 6 (1): 25-33.
- Bourdeau, Michel (2015), "Auguste Comte", in Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, [Online Web], URL: <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2015/entries/comte>.
- Bristow, W. (2011), *Enlightenment*, New Delhi: Critical Quest.
- Brown, G. S. (2003), *The French Revolution*, London: Greenwood Press.

Byrens, T.A.(2008), “European Politics Gets Old-Time Religion”, *Current History*, 107 (707): 126-132.

Caputo, J.D.(2012),*On Religion*, London : Routledge.

Caron, J. F. (2013), “Understanding and Interpreting France’s National Identity: The Meaning of Being French”, *National Identities*, 15(3): 223-237.

Carrera, Sergio and Joanna Parkin (2010), *The Place of Religion in European Union Law and Policy: Competing Approaches and Actors inside the European Commission*”, RELIGARE Working Document No.1/September 2010.

Carrette, J.R. (ed.) (1999), *Religion and Culture by Michel Foucault*, London: Routledge.

Casanova, Jose (2006), “Religion, European Secular Identities and European Integration” in Michalski, Krzysztof (ed.), *Religion in the New Europe*, Budapest: CEU Press.

..... (2007), Rethinking Secularization: A Global Comparative Perspective, [Online Web] Accessed 14 October 2014 URL: <http://www.iasc-culture.org/THR/archives/AfterSecularization/8.12CCasanova.pdf>.

..... (2008a) “The Problem of Religion and the Anxieties of European Secular Democracy” in Motzkin G. and Fischer Y. (eds.) *Religion and democracy in contemporary Europe*, London: Alliance Publishing Trust.

.....(2008b), ‘Public Religions Revisited’ [Online Web], Accessed 15 July 2014, URL: http://dev.wcfia.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/religionseminar_jcasanova.pdf.

Cesari, Jocelyne (2008), “Muslims in Western Europe after 9/11: Local and Global Components of the Integration Process” in Motzkin G. and Fischer Y. (eds.) *Religion And Democracy In Contemporary Europe*, London: Alliance Publishing Trust.

Chadwick, O. (2000), *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chelini-Pont, B. (2010), “Is *Laicite* The Civil Religion Of France”, *The Geo. Wash. Int’l L.Rev.* 41(4): 765-815.

Cherian, John (2015a), “Shocking in paris”, *Frontline* 32(3): 48-51.

Cherian, John (2015b), “The Terror in Paris”, *Frontline*, 32(24): 2-9.

Cherry, K (2016), Freud and Religion, [Online Web] Accessed 9 July 2016, URL: <https://www.verywell.com/freud-religion-2795858>.

CNN (2010), French parliament debates burqa ban [Online Web] Accessed 7 July 2013, URL: <http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/europe/07/06/france.burqa.ban/>.

Concordat watch (2008), Law separating Church and State (1905): Excerpts, [Online Web], Accessed 23 August 2014.URL:www.concordatwatch.eu/kb-1525.834.

**Conseil d'Etat* (2004), *Public Report 2004: Century of Secularism.*, [Online Web] Accessed 10 December 2012, URL: <http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/brp/notices/044000121.shtm>.

Cox, Harvey (1965), *The Secular City*, New York: The Macmillan Company.

Cox, H.G. and Swyngedouw J. (2000), The Myth of the Twentieth Century: The Rise and Fall of Secularization, *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 27(1/2): 1-3.

Croucher, S. M. (2009), "French-Muslims and the Hijab: An Analysis of Identity and the Islamic Veil in France", *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 37(3): 199-213.

Crowder, G. (2015), *The Theories of Multiculturalism*, New Delhi: Rawat Publications.

Daly, L. (2005), "Reviews Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide", *Journal of Market and Morality*, 8(1)

Davie, Grace (2001) Global Civil religion: A European Perspective, *Sociology of Religion*, 62(4): 455-473.

..... (2006), Religion in Europe in the 21th Century: The factors to Take into Account, *European Journal of sociology*, 47(2): 271-296.

Davies, N. (1996), *Europe: A History*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Dimier, V (2008), "French Secularism in Debate", *French Politics, Culture and Society*, 26(1): 92-110.

Diotallevi, Luca (2008), "Church-State Relations in Europe and the Crisis of 'European Social Model'" in *Religion And Democracy In Contemporary Europe*, London: Alliance Publishing Trust.

Dow, J.W. (2007), "A Scientific Definition of Religion", [Online Web], Accessed 15 July 2014, URL: <http://www.anpere.net/2007/2.pdf>.

Durkheim, E. (1995), *Elementary forms of the Religious Life*, New York: Free Press.

Eisenstadt, S.N (2008), "The Transformations of the Religious Dimensions and the Crystallization of New Civilizational Visions and Relations" in Motzkin G. And Fischer Y.(eds.) *Religion And Democracy In Contemporary Europe*, London: Alliance Publishing Trust.

Elliott, J.H. (1991) *Richelieu and Olivares*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Encyclopedia Britannica (2016), *Louis-Philippe* [Online Web] Accessed 30 June 2016 URL: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Louis-Philippe>.

- Fernandez, Christian (2013) "The challenge of Multiculturalism: Political Philosophy and the Question of Diversity" in Raymond Taras (ed.) *Challenging Multiculturalism*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Ferrari, Alessandro (2008), "Religious Education in a Globalised Europe" in Motzkin G. And Fischer Y. (eds.) *Religion and Democracy in Contemporary Europe*, London: Alliance Publishing Trust.
- Ferrari, Silvio (2008), "State Regulation of Religion in the European Democracies: The Decline of the Old Pattern" in *Religion And Democracy In Contemporary Europe*, London: Alliance Publishing Trust.
- Fischer, Yochi and Motzkin, Gabriel (2008), "Introduction" in Fischer, Yochi and Motzkin, Gabriel (eds.) *Religion And Democracy In Contemporary Europe*, London: Alliance Publishing Trust.
- Forelle and Gauthire-Villars (2010), French Parliament Passes Law Banning Burqas , September 15, *The Wall Street Journal*, [Online Web] Accessed 30 June 2015 URL: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748703376504575492011925494780>.
- Fortescue, William (2005), *France and 1848: The End of Monarchy*, London: Routledge.
- Fuga, A. (2008) "Multiculturalism in France : Evolutions and Challenges, [Online Web] 29 March 2014, URL: http://eurospheres.org/files/2010/08/Eurosphere_Working_Paper_12_Fuga.pdf.
- Fukuyama, Francis (1993), *The End of History and the Last Man*, London: Penguin Books.
- Gellner, Ernest (2003), *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion*, London: Routledge.
- Gendt, Rien Van (2008), "Closing Remarks at the Conference on Religion and Democracy. Jerusalem", 3 September, 2007" in Fischer, Yochi and Motzkin, Gabriel (eds.) *Religion And Democracy In Contemporary Europe*, London: Alliance Publishing Trust.
- George, R. (2006) Ghetto Warrior, 17 July 2006 , *The Guardian* [Online web] Accessed 30 March 2014, URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/jul/17/france.politicsphilosophyandsociety>.
- Goldhammer, A. (2009), "The Future of French Culture", [Online Web] Accessed 10 January 2014, URL: www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~agoldham/articles/FutureFrenchCulture.pdf.
- Gole, Nilufer (2006), "Islam, European Public Space, and Civility" in Michalski, Krzysztof (ed.), *Religion in the New Europe*, Budapest: CEU Press.
- Groves, B. (2008), "A Two Prolonged Approach for France and its Muslims: Integration and Assimilation", *Yale Journal of International Affairs* 3: 109-115.

- Gunn, J. T. (2004), "Religious Freedom and *Laicite*: A Comparison of the USA and France", *Brigham Young university Law Review*, 2: 419-506.
- Halman, L. and V. Draulans (2006), "How Secular is Europe", *The British Journal of Sociology* 57 (2): 263-288.
- Harisson, V. (2006), "The Pragmatics of Defining Religion in a Multi-cultural World", [Online Web] Accessed 6 January 2015, URL: http://www.gla.ac.uk/0t4/humanities/files/mindmapping/Religion1_files/docs/Pragmatics.pdf.
- Harvey, C. (1966), *The Secular City*, New York: The Macmillan Company.
- Harvey, G. (2000), *Indigenous Religions: A Companion*, Cassel: London.
- Haynes, J. (1997), "Religion, Secularisation and Politics: A Postmodern Conspectus", *Third World Quarterly*, 18 (4): 709-728.
- Heckmann, F. (1993), "Multiculturalism Defined Seven Ways", [Online: web] Accessed 14 December 2014, URL: <http://www.unz.org/Pub/SocialContract-1993q4-00245>.
- Heelas, Paul (1998), (ed.), *Religion, Modernity and Postmodernity*, Blackwell: Massachusetts.
- Hervieu-Leger, D. (1990), "Religion and Modernity in the French Context: For a New approach to Secularization", *Sociological Analysis*, 51:S155-S25.
- Hinnells, J. R. (2005), (ed.), *The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion*, London: Routledge.
- Hitchcock, J. (1982), "The Secularization of the West", [Online: web] Accessed 22 November 2014 URL: <http://www.catholiceducation.org/en/culture/history/the-secularization-of-the-west.html>.
- Holscher, Lucian (2008), "Civil Religion and Secular Religion" in Motzkin, G. and Fischer Y. (eds.), *Religion And Democracy In Contemporary Europe*, London: Alliance Publishing Trust.
- Hunter- Henin, M. (2012), "Why the French don't like the 'Burqa: Laiite, National Identity and Religious Freedom". *International and Comparative Law quarterly*, 61(3):613-639.
- Huntington, Samuel (1997), *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New Delhi: Penguin books.
- Hurd, E. S. (2008), *The politics of Secularism in International Relations*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Immerfall, Stefan and Goran Therborn (eds.), (2010), *Handbook of European Societies: Social Tranformation in the 21th century*, New York: Springer.

- Ignehart R. And Baker W. (2000) Theories, Concepts and Measurements, [Online Web], Accessed 18 August 2014 URL:
- Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy (2016), *William James*, [Online Web], Accessed 23 August 2014 URL: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/james-of/>.
- Israeli, R (2008), *"The Islamic Challenge in Europe"*, London: Transaction Publishers.
- Jansen, Y. (2009), "French Secularism in the Light of the History of the Politics of Assimilation", *Constellations Volume* 16(4): 593-603.
- Jennings, Jeremy. (2000), "Citizenship, Republicanism and Multiculturalism in Contemporary France", *B.J.Pol.* S.30, 575-598.
- Jones, C. B. (2007), *Introduction to the Study of Religion*, Virginia: The Great Courses.
- Jones, N. (2009) "Beneath the Veil: Muslim Girls and Islamic Headscarves in Secular France", *Macquarie Law Journal* 9: 47-69.
- Kettani, M.A. (1986), *Muslim Minorities in the World Today*, London: Mansell Publishing Limited.
- Khosrokhavar, Farhard (2010), "Islamic Radicalization in Europe" in Jocelyne Cesari, (ed.) *Muslims in the West after 9/11*, London: Routledge.
- Klass, M. (1995), *Ordered Universes: Approaches to the Anthropology of Religion* London: West view Press.
- Knoblauch, H. (2008), "Spirituality and Popular religion in Europe", *Social Compass*, 55(2):140-153.
- Kosebalaban, H. (2013), "Secularism and state policies toward Religion: the United States, France, and Turkey. Ahmet T. Kuru", *Cont Islam* 7:229-231.
- Kosmin, Barry (2007), "Contemporary Secularity and Secularism" in Barry Kosmin and Ariela Keysar (eds.) *Secularism and Secularity: Contemporary International Perspective*, Cambridge: ISSSC.
- Kuru, A. T. (2007), "Passive and Assertive Secularism: Historical Conditions, Ideological Struggles and State Policies toward Religion", *World Politics* 59:568-94
- Kuru, A. T. (2008), "Secularism, State Policies, and Muslims in Europe: Analyzing French Exceptionalism", *Comparative politics*, 41(1): 1-19.
- Kymlica, Will (2002), *Contemporary Political Philosophy*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Laborde, C. (2005), "Secular Philosophy and Muslim Headscarves in Schools", *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 13(3): 305-29.

Lechner, F J (2003), "Secularization", [Online: web] Accessed 21 October 2014 URL: <http://sociology.emory.edu/home/documents/profiles-documents/Lechner-Secularization.pdf>.

Lynch, Gordon (2012), Emile Durkheim: religion- the very idea part-2: new forms of the sacred, December 17, The Guardian, [online web] Accessed 10 December 2014, URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/dec/17/emile-durkheim-religion-sacred>.

Mackenzie, D Brown (1965), *Ultimate Concern - Tillich in Dialogue*, Religion, Online: web] Accessed 21 October 2014, URL: <http://media.sabda.org/alkitab-2/Religion-Online.org%20Books/Brown,%20D.%20Mackenzie%20-%20Ultimate%20Concern%20-%20Tillich%20in%20Dialogue.pdf>.

Maillard, D. (2010), "The Muslims in France and the French Model of Integration", *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia)*, 4(4): 1-24.

Malik, I. H. (2004), *Islam and Modernity: Muslims in Europe and the United States*, London: Pluto Press.

Marthaler, S. (2008), "Nicolas Sarkozy and the politics of French immigration policy", *Journal of European Public Policy* 15(3): 382-397.

Martin, David (2006), "Integration and Fragmentation: Patterns of Religions in Europe" in Michalski, Krzysztof (ed.), *Religion in the New Europe*, Budapest: CEU Press.

Maussen, M. (2006) "Representing and Regulating Islam in France and in the Netherlands", [Online: web] Accessed 22 December 2013 URL: www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~ces/conferences/muslims/Maussen.pdf.

Mayeur, J. M. and Reberioux M. (1987), "The Third Republic from its Origins to the Great War, 1871-1914", *Cambridge University Press*, Cambridge.

McCaffrey, E. (2009), *The Return of Religion in France: From Democratisation to Postmetaphysics*, Hamshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Michalski, K. (2006), *Religion in the New Europe*, Budapest: CEU Press

Michelinewalker (2014), Americans in Paris: George Washington, [Online web] 23 February 2015 URL: <https://michelinewalker.com/tag/the-edict-of-versailles-1787/>.

Minkenberg, M. (2009), "Religion and Euroscepticism: Cleavages, Religious Parties and Churches in EU Member States", *West European Politics*, 32(6): 1190-1211.

Modood, Tariq (2006), "Muslims and European Multiculturalism," in Michalski Krzysztof (ed.) *Religion in the New Europe*, Budapest: CEU Press.

Modood, Tariq (2005), Remaking Multiculturalism after 7/7, 29 September, Open democracy, URL: https://www.opendemocracy.net/conflict-terrorism/multiculturalism_2879.jsp.

Motzkin, Gabriel (2008), "Secularization, Knowledge and authority" in Fischer, Yochi and Motzkin, Gabriel (eds.) *Religion And Democracy In Contemporary Europe*, London: Alliance Publishing Trust.

*National Consultative Commission on Human Rights (2003), *Secularism today: a progress report* [Online Web] Accessed 10 December 2012 URL: <http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/brp/notices/034000728.shtml>.

Nemo, Phillippe (2006), *What is the West*, translated by Kenneth Casler, Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press.

New World Encyclopaedia (2015), French Revolution [Online Web] 23 November 2015 URL: http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/French_Revolution.

Norris P. and Inglehart R. (2011), *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nye, M. (2008), *Religion: The Basics*, New York: Routledge.

*O'Brien, R. (2005a), *The Stasi Report*, New York: William S. Hein & Co, Inc. Buffalo.

*O'Brien, Robert (2005b) "*The Report of the committee of reflection on the application of the principle of Secularity in the Republic*", New York: William S. Hein X Co.

Orsino, Y. M. (2013), "The Social Construction of French Identity: Re-Examining the French debate on Muslim Integration", [Online: web] Accessed 11 August 2014, URL: http://www.academia.edu/6830064/The_Social_Construction_of_French_Identity_Re-Examining_the_French_Debate_on_Muslim_Integration.

Outhwaite, William (2005), "Social Structure" in Richard Sakwa and Anne Stevens (eds.), *Contemporary Europe*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Pala, V. S. and P. Simon (2007), "Public and political debates on multicultural crises in France", [Online: web] Accessed 18 September 2013 URL: http://www.eliamep.gr/old/eliamep/files/France_report_multicultural_discoures_Final.pdf.

Pannenberg, W. (1996), "How to Think about Secularism", [Online: Web] Accessed 16 July 2013 URL: <http://www.firstthings.com/article/1996/06/002-how-to-think-about-secularism>.

Parekh, Bhikhu (2006), "Is Islam a Threat to Europe's Multicultural Democracies" in Michalski, Krzysztof (ed.), *Religion in the New Europe*, Budapest: CEU Press.

Pedziwiatr, Konrad (2008), "Publicising, Secularizing, and Integrating Islam in Europe" in Motzkin G. and Fischer Y. (eds.) *Religion And Democracy In Contemporary Europe*, London: Alliance Publishing Trust.

Pickering, W.S. (2001), *Emile Durkheim Critical Assessments of Leading Sociologists*, London: Routledge.

Polayani, K. (2001), *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins Of Our Time*, Massachusetts: Beacon Press.

Poliscanova, J. (2008), "What went wrong with multiculturalism in France", [Online: web] 28 May 2013 URL: <http://www.global-politics.co.uk/issue%203/Multicultural%20France.htm>.

Pollack, D. (2008), "Religious Change in Europe: Theoretical Considerations and Empirical Findings", *Social Compass*, 55 (2): 168-186.

Powell, L.R.(2012), "The Constitutionality of France's Ban On The Burqa In Light Of The Europe Conventions's Arslan vs Turkey Decision On Religious Freedom", [Online: web] 27 October 2014 URL: http://hosted.law.wisc.edu/wordpress/wilj/files/2014/01/Ragep-Powell_final.pdf.

Regout, S. (2011), "*The Integration of Immigrant Communities in France, United states and Netherlands: Nation Model in the European Context*", Migration Studies Unit Working Paper 2011/9, London School of Economics.

Rigoulot, P. (2009), "Protestants and the French nation under the Third Republic: Between recognition and assimilation", *National Identities*, 11(1): 45-57.

Rosado, C. (1996), "Toward a Definition of Multiculturalism", [Online: web] 22 June 2013 URL: http://www.rosado.net/pdf/Def_of_Multiculturalism.pdf.

Roy, Oliver (2006), "Islam in Europe: Clash of Religions or Convergence of Religiosities" in Michalski, Krzysztof (ed.), *Religion in the New Europe*, Budapest: CEU Press.

.....(2007), "*Secularism confronts Islam*", New York: Columbia University Press.

Russell, B (2009), *The Basic Writing of Bertrand Russell*, London: Routledge.

Sabine, G. H. (1973), *A History of Political Theory*, New Delhi: Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. PVT. LTD.

Sakwa, Richard (2005), "Introduction: The Many Dimensions of Europe" in Richard Sakwa and Anne Stevens (eds.), *Contemporary Europe*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Salmon, J. H. M. (1979), *Society in Crisis: France in the Sixteenth Century*, London: Methun.

Schultz, K. M. (2008) "Secularization: A Bibliographic Essay" [Online: web] 7 January 2015 URL: <http://www.iasc-culture.org/THR/archives/AfterSecularization/8.12RBibliography.pdf>.

Scott, J. W. (2007), "The Politics of the Veil", [Online: web] 2 November 2013 URL: <http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/i8497.pdf>.

- Sengers, Erik and Thijl Sunier (2011) eds. *Religious Newcomers and the Nation State: Political Culture and Organized Religion In France And The Netherlands*, Delft: Eborun.
- Sharpe, E. J.(2013), “The study of Religion in Historical Perspective” in John S. Harding and Hillary P. Rodrigues (eds.) *The Study of Religion: A Reader*, London: Routledge.
- Simon, P. (2012), “French National Identity and Integration: Who Belongs to the National Community” [Online: web] 19 January 2014 URL: file:///C:/Users/mukhty/Downloads/FrenchIdentity.pdf.
- Smith, G. (2007) *A Short History of Secularism*, London: I.B. Taurals.
- Smith, J.Z. (1998), “Religion, Religions and Religious” in Mark C. Taylor (eds.) *Critical Terms For Religious Studies*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Speight, S.L. (2005) *Social context for Religious Violence in the French massacres in 1572*, Arlington: University of Texas.
- Stark, R. (1999) “Secularization, R.I.P.” *Sociology of Religion* 60(3): 249–73.
- Stathopoulous, Michael (2008), “Can the Democratic State Impose Limits on Religion” in *Religion and Democracy in Contemporary Europe*, London: Alliance Publishing Trust.
- *Stasi Bernard (2003), Commission on the application of secularism in state institutions: report to the president / Bernard Stasi. President’s Office.
- *..... (2005), *The Spiritual and Cultural Dimension of Europe*, Luxemburg: EC.
- Talyor, C. (2010), “The Meaning of Secularism”, *The Hedghog Review*/Fall 2010.
- Tannenbaum, E. R. (1961), *The New France*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Tarhan, G. (2011), “Roots of the Headscarf Debate: Laicism and Secularism in France and Turkey”, *Journal of Political Enquiry*, 4(2011): 1-30.
- Tawney, R. H. (2004), *Religion and The Rise of Capitalism: A Historical Study*, New York: The New American Library.
- Taylor, Charles (2006), “Religion and European Integration” in Michalski, Krzysztof (ed.), *Religion in the New Europe*, Budapest: CEU Press.
- Therborn, G. (1995), *European Modernity and Beyond: The Trajectory of European Societies, 1945-2000*, London: Sage.
- Therborn, Göran (2006), “Post-Western Europe and the Plural Asias” in Gerard Delanty (ed.), *Europe and Asia beyond East and West*, London: Routledge.
- Thompson, D. (1990), *Europe since Napoleon*, London: Penguin.

- Tschannen, O. (1991), "The Secularization Paradigm: A Systematization", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 30(4): 395-415.
- Veer, Peter Van Deer (2008), "The Religious Origins of Democracy" in Gabriel Motzkin and Yochi Fischer (eds.) *Religion and Democracy in Contemporary Europe*, London: Alliance Publishing Trust
- Ventura, M.(2011),*The changing Civil Religion of Secular Europe*,[Online: web], Accessed 20 March 2012 URL: <http://docs.law.gwu.edu/stdg/gwilr/PDFs/41-4/JLE412.pdf>.
- Virtual Museum of Protestantism (2014a), The Edict of Nantes [Online web], 18 August 2015 URL: <http://www.museeprotestant.org/en/notice/the-edict-of-nantes-1598/>.
- Virtual Museum of Protestantism (2014b), The Edict of Fontainebleau, [Online Web] 23 August 2015 URL: <http://www.museeprotestant.org/en/notice/the-edict-of-fontainebleau-or-the-revocation-1685/>.
- Vladescu, E. (2006), "The assimilation of Immigration Groups in France – Myth or Reality" [Online Web], Accessed 13 October 2013 URL: <http://www6.miami.edu/eucenter/VladescuWP%20French%20Immigration.pdf>.
- Vreese, C. H. and H. Boogaarden(2009), "Introduction: Religion and the European Union" *West European Politics*, 32 (6): 1181-1189.
- Ward E.A. (2009), *The Paris Commune As A Social Revolution?*, University of Arizona.
- Weber, M. (1992), *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, London: Routledge.
- Weil, P. (2009), *Why The French Laicite Is Liberal*, [Online Web], Accessed 14 April 2012 URL: <http://www.patrick-weil.com/WEIL.30-6.pdf>.
- Willaime, J. P. (2004), "The Cultural Turn in the Sociology of Religion in France", *Sociology of Religion*, 65(4): 373-389.
- Willsher, K. (2014) France's burqa ban upheld by human rights court, 1 July 2014, *The Guardian* [Online Web] Accessed 23 April 2015 URL:<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/01/france-burqa-ban-upheld-human-rights-court>.
- Wilson, B. R. (1966), *Religion in Secular Society: A Sociological Comment*, London: C.A.Watts & Co. LTD.
- Wohlrab-sahr, M. and M. Burchardt (2012), "Multiple secularities: Toward a Cultural Sociology of Secular Modernities", *Comparative Sociology*, 11: 875-909.
- Yegenoglu, Meyda (2012), *Islam, Migrancy, and Hospitality in Europe*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

*indicates primary sources