

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The separation of religion and the state is described through a process called secularization. According to Luke W, the principle that aims to administer human affairs based on moral, naturalistic considerations is secularism. It is most generally defined as the separation of faith from civil affairs and the state, but it can also refer to any stance that believes religion should be suppressed in any public sphere.¹ The process of secularization, which has implications for the marginalization of religion, can differ from one country to another, which is mainly influenced by the cultural and historical background of each society. Countries that are based on secularism have indeed carried out this separation, although the form and the extent of the separation varies. There is strict application of secularism in France and the United States, while in European countries other than France it is rather lenient, so that the involvement of the state in religious affairs in certain matters is still very apparent, such as religious holidays which are used as national holidays, religious education in schools, state funding for religion, the existence of religious parties, church taxes and so on.

France is one of many countries that implements secularism. The principle has been implemented since 1905 through a secularism law. In the 21st century, the culture

¹ Zuckerman, Phil, Luke W. Galen, and Frank L. Pasquale. "The Nonreligious: Understanding Secular People and Societies." In *The Nonreligious: Understanding Secular People and Societies*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

in France is more diverse than decades ago, and this led to the belief that secularism is needed now more than ever before and that it allows all citizens to work together, to enjoy freedom of religious expression, freedom to follow or choose not to practice religion, equal rights and obligations, and Republican brotherhood, regardless of their philosophical or theological beliefs. For others, secularism is a right to share a viewpoint rather than an opinion. It is not a belief, but a principle, which, by maintaining the principles of freedom of faith and equal justice, authorizes all beliefs. Ideally, it is neither pro-religion nor anti-religion.

Adherence to a religion or moral belief is solely a matter of faith for a man or woman on this basis. Secularism confronts new challenges that have arisen in recent decades, in the sense of a rising surge of separatist claims and the misuse of secularism to stigmatize individuals. In France, to face these challenges, Republican secularism must be backed by its heritage. In order to formulate views and recommendations, the Control Center, with its broad variety of stakeholders, has started to analyze the situation.²

Although secularism has been implemented in France since long time ago, numerous religious related issues still occur in France. A schoolteacher, Samuel Paty, was beheaded on October 16th, 2020 because he displayed a cartoon portraying the Prophet Muhammad on the cover of Charlie Hebdo Magazine to his students as part of a freedom of expression class.³ According one of his students, Samuel Paty had asked the

² Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères. (n.d.). Secularism and religious freedom in France. Retrieved February 26, 2021, from <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/coming-to-france/france-facts/secularism-and-religious-freedom-in-france-63815/article/secularism-and-religious-freedom-in-france>

³ 24, FRANCE. "For a Teacher in France, a Lesson on Freedom of Expression Was Followed by Death." *France 24*. France 24, October 17, 2020. Last modified October 17, 2020. Accessed February 26, 2021. <https://www.france24.com/en/france/20201017-for-teacher-in-france-lesson-on-freedom-of-speech-prophet-mohammed-followed-by-death>.

students who were Muslim to leave the class because he knew that the caricature of prophet Muhammad could be offensive for them. A few days later, as a response to the killing of Samuel Paty, Emmanuel Macron, the French president, on Paty's funeral and a national remembrance of Paty made a statement showing his supports on France's freedom of expression. This certainly led to a misunderstanding to Muslim people all over the world. Protests and condemnation from people and leaders of Muslim-majority countries and Islamic State happened all over the world, including Indonesia. Indonesia immediately take an action, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned the French ambassador to Indonesia followed by a statement made by the Indonesian President Joko Widodo. In the statement, Jokowi said that Indonesia firmly condemns the interreligious violence in Paris and Nice, as well as Macron's remarks, which have outraged all Muslims throughout the world, including Indonesia. In addition, The Indonesian people have varying reactions of this. Saying that Emmanuel Macron, the French president, is Islamophobic, or even anti-Islam. Some protesters at the French Embassy in Jakarta criticized President Emmanuel Macron for insulting the Prophet Muhammad.⁴ The protesters demanded an apology from the French president. During the demonstration, many carried posters calling for a boycott of French products. Even a number of people from the GPI (Islamic Youth Movement) were sweeping the products from France. The goods that are delivered are food and beverages. Among them are Aqua products, SGM Milk and others.⁵

⁴ Madrim, Sasmito. "Seribuan Orang Demo Kedubes Perancis Jakarta." *VOA Indonesia*. Seribuan Orang Demo Kedubes Perancis Jakarta, November 2, 2020. Last modified November 2, 2020. Accessed February 26, 2021. <https://www.voaindonesia.com/a/seribuan-orang-demo-kedubes-perancis-jakarta/5644977.html>.

⁵ Arah Kata. "Sejumlah Massa Kembali Demo Di Depan Kedutaan Perancis Di Jakarta." *Arah Kata*. Last modified November 4, 2020. Accessed February 26, 2021.

Five months later, 13-year-old teen admits to lying about a French teacher who was assassinated after presenting his class caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad. As Paty exhibited the images, she admitted to lying about being in the class and falsely accusing Paty of forcing Muslim pupils to leave.⁶ Nevertheless, Macron's remarks in his speech as he defended and support the freedom of expression in France has offended all Muslims around the world, including Indonesia, as the largest Muslim population country. Muslim people considered Macron's stance on freedom of expression is outrageous because in Islam it is prohibited to draw a Prophet physical appearance.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the information given on the background, I suggest the following research questions:

1. Why President Macron's remarks gained significant international attention?
2. Why Indonesia reacted strongly against President Macron's remarks?

1.3 Research Objective

With the proposed research questions in the structure of this thesis, the research objectives are:

1. To understand the reasons why President's Macron remarks gained global attention and sparks strong angry reaction from people and the government in Indonesia.
2. To find out what made the reaction towards interreligious relations sparked strong reactions from Indonesia.

<https://arakhata.pikiran-rakyat.com/berita/pr-128911808/sejumlah-massa-kembali-demo-di-depan-kedutaan-perancis-di-jakarta>.

⁶ *13-year-old girl lied about French teacher who ... - CBS news*. (n.d.). Retrieved November 2, 2021, from <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/samuel-paty-beheading-france-girl-lied/>.

1.4 Research Significance

This research is expected to have a clear understanding on why Macron's remarks gained international attention as well as why Indonesia reacted strongly against the French President, Emmanuel Macron's public remarks on religious related violence in France. This research is expected to highlight the background on Indonesia's foreign policy that influences Indonesia's reaction towards the domestic affairs issues in France.

1.5 Structure of Writing

The first chapter, the introduction part, talks about the background of the thesis topic, which is the beginning of religious related violence in France and its worldwide reaction, research questions that will be addressed, the objective of the research. The second chapter discusses the thesis's structure of ideas, which includes literature reviews for the topic as well as literature reviews on theory and concepts in analyzing President Macron's remarks, which received widespread international attention, and the reaction in Indonesia to President Macron's remarks. The third chapter, the methodology, explains the research approach, research method, data collection technique and data analysis technique in gathering data and information for this thesis. The analysis of this thesis is presented in chapter four. This chapter offers all information needed, as well as an analysis, on interreligious issues in France, followed by Macron's response on religious related violence in France and its worldwide reactions including a deeper explanation on the reaction in Indonesia's using the theory and concept provided in the second chapter. The results of the analysis can be used to answer the thesis's research question. The fifth chapter offers a conclusion and the research significance of the preceding chapters' analysis.

After the introduction has been elaborated and explained in this chapter, the theoretical framework and literature reviews that will be used in creating this thesis will be discussed in the next chapter. In order to address the research question, the theories and concepts mentioned in the following chapter are necessary.

