Secularization

Mai Jianjun

Introduction

What is Secularization? Think about what's happening in your community. When your grandparents were young, nearly everyone went to mosque regularly. Now, many of your friends might never go. This shift is part of secularization—the process by which religion and religious institutions lose their influence in society over time.

However, it's not just about mosque attendance. Secularization means religion plays a smaller role in public life, becoming more of a personal, private choice. Overall, you see a decrease in religious beliefs and practices.

Definition

There is no single or widely accepted definition of secularization. Secularization has been defined in a variety of different ways by social scientists. Some definitions are unidimensional, but most are multileveled. Here are some notable definitions provided by scholars:

1. Jacobson describes secularization as "a process of replacing religious influence with worldly influence in society".[1]
2. Brian Wilson defines secularization as "the process whereby religious thinking, practices, and institutions lose their social significance".[2]
3. Steve Bruce provides a multifaceted definition, characterizing secularization as a "social condition" manifest in:
   a) the declining importance of religion for the operation of non-religious roles and institutions such as the state and the economy;
   b) a decline in the social standing of religious roles and institutions; and
   c) a decline in the extent to which people engage in religious practices, display beliefs of a religious kind, and conduct other aspects of their lives in a manner informed by such beliefs".[3]

Renowned Islamic scholar Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, in his famous book "Islam and Secularism", provides a very comprehensive definition of secularization:

> Secularization is defined as the deliverance of man "first from religious and then from metaphysical control over his reason and his language". It is "the loosing of the world from religious and quasi-religious understandings of itself, the dispelling of all closed world views, the breaking of all supernatural myths and sacred symbols... the 'defatalization of history', the discovery by man that he has been left with the world on his hands, that he can no longer blame fortune or the furies for what he does with it. ... ;

1 Jacobson, C.K. (1992). "Religiosity in Black Community: An Examination of Secularisation and Political Variables", *Review of Religious Research*, vol. 33, no. 3, pp.215-228.
2 Karel Dobbelaere.(2006). Bryan Wilson's Contributions to the Study of Secularization. Social compass 53(2), pp141–146.
3 Steve Bruce.(2002). God Is Dead: Secularization In The West. Blackwell Publishing. p 3.

[it is] man turning his attention away from the worlds beyond and toward this world and this time".[4]

Key words:
☐ **Process**: Secularization is a dynamic social process, not a closed philosophical ideology.
☐ **Religious Influence**: It involves the changes in religious influence within a society or country.
☐ **Decline:** It signifies a noticeable decline of such influence.

Historical Development of the Concept

The meaning of secularization has evolved over time. Throughout its long development, the term "secularization" has often been a point of contention and has continuously acquired new meanings without entirely shedding old ones. Here is a brief summary of the historical development of this concept:[5]

1. Ancient and Early Christian Era:

   * The term "secular" comes from Latin "saeculum," meaning a generation, age, or century.
   * In the Vulgate (Latin Bible), "saeculum" had dual meanings:
     o a) A neutral sense of a long time span
     o b) A religiously negative sense of "this world" under Satan's power

2. Middle Ages:

   * The concept of "this world" became somewhat neutralized.
   * Terms like "secular clergy" or "secular arm" didn't imply hostility to religion.

3. 17th Century:

   * First appearance of "secularization" (saecularizatio) in its modern sense during the Peace of Westphalia negotiations.
   * It referred to the transfer of lands and possessions from ecclesiastical to civil control.
   * Generally maintained a neutral, descriptive connotation.

4. 18th Century:

   * Some argued that all ecclesiastical property should be at the state's disposal.

5. French Revolution Era:

---

4 Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas Islam and Secularism (1978) (Kuala Lumpur: Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM); reprint, Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (IS TAC), 1993. p 17.
5 Larry Shiner., (1967) The Concept of Secularization in Empirical Research. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion. Vol. 6, No. 2. pp. 207-220

- Principles of secularization began to be implemented and expanded to all areas of life.

6. 19th Century:

- G.J. Holyoake coined "Secularism" as a militant term.
- It meant "a practical philosophy for the people" organizing life without supernatural elements.
- A parallel usage developed, defining secularism as indifference to religious institutions, practices, or questions.

7. Early 20th Century:

- Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch used "secularization" as a descriptive and analytical term in sociology and history.
- In theology, it still designated a militant force to be combated.

8. Post-World War II:

- Theological shift: Some theologians (e.g., Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Friedrich Gogarten) argued that secularization is partly a result of Christian faith and should be fostered.
- Gogarten viewed the independence of science and culture from the "Christian" worldview as appropriate.
- Many theologians, including some Catholic progressives, began to view secularization more positively.
- Some "transformationists" believed secular society should be leavened with the sacred.
- "Secularization" became more of a descriptive and analytical term rather than a term of opprobrium in theological discourse.

Currently, there are six types of definitions of secularization in use as identified by Larry Shiner:[6]

1. **Decline of Religion**: Previously accepted symbols, doctrines, and institutions lose their prestige and influence. The ultimate outcome would be a religionless society.
2. **Conformity with "This World"**: Religious groups or religiously informed societies shift their focus from the supernatural to become increasingly interested in worldly matters.
3. **Disengagement of Society from Religion:** Society separates itself from religious understanding, constituting itself as an autonomous reality and confining religion to the private sphere. The culmination of this kind of secularization would be a religion of a purely inward characreter, influencing neither institutions nor corporate action, and a society in which religion made no appearance outside the sphere of the religious group.
4. **Transposition of Religious Beliefs and Institutions**: Knowledge, behavior patterns, and institutional arrangements once understood as divinely grounded are transformed into phenomena of purely human creation and responsibility.

---

6 Ibid.

5. **Desacralization of the World**: The world is gradually stripped of its sacred character as humanity and nature become objects of rational-causal explanation and manipulation. The ultimate result would be a completely "rational" world society devoid of supernatural phenomena or mystery.
6. **Movement from a "Sacred" to a "Secular" Society**: The culmination would be a society where all decisions are based on rational and utilitarian considerations, with complete acceptance of change. This represents "the movement away from traditionally accepted norms and sensibilities in the life interests and habits of a people."

Secularism and Secularization

Many people confuse secularism with secularization, but these two concepts, though closely related, have distinct differences.

Both stem from the word "secular," which is derived from the Latin *saeculum*. This term conveys a dual connotation of time and location: time refers to the "now" or "present," while location refers to the "world" or "worldly."[7]

Secularism is a philosophical stance or ideology that advocates for the separation of religion from civic affairs and state governance. It promotes the idea that religious institutions and doctrines should not influence public policies, laws, or government operations. Secularism aims to establish a secular state where laws and policies are formulated independently of religious teachings, ensuring religious neutrality in public institutions.

Secularization is a sociological process that describes the gradual decline in the influence and prominence of religion across various aspects of society, such as culture, institutions, and individual behaviour. As societies modernize, industrialize, and become more rationalized, religious beliefs, practices, and institutions tend to decrease in significance. This phenomenon occurs organically as a result of factors like urbanization, scientific advancement, and shifts in cultural norms and values.

While secularization may contribute to the establishment of secularism by reducing religion's influence in public life, it is not a deliberate effort to implement secularism. Rather, secularization is a broader social and cultural phenomenon resulting from various societal transformations, whereas secularism is an intentional principle or ideology advocating for the separation of religion and state.

Historical Context of Secularization

The roots of secularization go back to the Enlightenment period in the 17th and 18th centuries, when reason and science began to challenge the church's authority. Thinkers like Voltaire, Diderot, Hume, and Locke promoted reason, empiricism, and skepticism over traditional religious authority. They questioned long-held beliefs, critiqued clerical power, and sought to understand the world through rational inquiry rather than divine revelation.

Science played a crucial role in this shift. Copernicus's heliocentric model and later, Darwin's theory of evolution, challenged biblical interpretations, suggesting that the natural

---

7 Al-Attas (1993), p 16.

world could be explained without invoking supernatural causes. This intellectual climate planted the seeds of secularization. As scientific explanations gained credibility, they began to replace religious ones in understanding natural phenomena.

The Enlightenment's emphasis on human reason over divine authority gradually shifted the source of truth from the church to human intellect. Moreover, the promotion of individual rights and the questioning of institutional power undermined the church's traditional role in governing social and moral life. These changes laid the groundwork for the gradual process of secularization, where religion's influence diminished in various areas of public life—such as government, education, and law—becoming more a matter of personal, private choice in an increasingly rationalized, disenchanted world.[8]

Secularization Theory

Secularization theory emerged in the 19th century as an attempt to understand and explain the decline of religious belief and practice in Western societies. The classical secularization theory has made two basic claims:[9]

1. It assumes that the social significance of religion in modern societies is weakening in comparison to earlier eras.
2. It assumes that the decline in the importance of religion can be attributed to processes of modernization.

According to Tschannen, secularization theory consists of three core elements: differentiation, rationalization, worldliness.[10]

- Differentiation: It means that religious institutions, beliefs, and practices no longer dominate or control other social spheres such as education, politics, economics, and culture.

  Key points:

  1. Religion becomes one distinct sphere among many in society, rather than an overarching framework.
  2. Various social institutions (government, education, healthcare, etc.) operate independently of religious control or influence.
  3. Different areas of life develop their own norms, values, and operational logic separate from religious dictates.

- Rationalization: refers to the process by which rational, scientific, and bureaucratic modes of thinking and organization increasingly replace religious or traditional ones in society.

  Key points:

---

8 Warner, Rob.(2010). Secularization And Its Discontents. Continuum International Publishing Group. pp 13-26.
9 Larry, Shiner (1967). p 215.
10Tschannen, Olivier. (1991). The Secularization Paradigm: A Systematization. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion. Vol. 30, No. 4. pp. 395-415

1. People start relying on scientific worldview which is based on empirical evidence and logical reasoning, thus challenging religious explanations of natural and social phenomena.
2. When this rational and scientific interpretation of the world is applied to human affairs, we witness a "sociologization": an attempt to determine social life in a rational fashion, thus further liberating it from religious influence.

- Worldliness: it is the result of the effect of differentiation and rationalization processes. The impact of these processes on the religious sphere itself cause it to lose some of its sacred functions and to become more worldly.

Key points:

1. Religion starts losing its overarching influence and dominance. It's now competing with other social organizations in the society.
2. Religious organizations start to cater to its members' psychological needs. In other words, religion itself has lost its role in providing salvation for people and has instead become one of the tools that people use to solve their worldly problems.

Indicators and Manifestations of Secularization

How can we identify the secularization in a society? Here are some common indicators of its influence on society.

1. **Decline of Religiosity**
   A key indicator of secularization is the notable decrease in religiosity. This trend manifests in various ways, including reduced attendance at religious services and shifts in religious affiliation and identity. Additionally, there's a marked decline in adherence to religious values and norms.

   Eg: Western societies have experienced a steady decrease in church attendance over recent decades. The once-central role of religious rituals in people's lives has increasingly given way to a more secular orientation, with alternative activities and commitments taking precedence over traditional religious practices.

   As secularization advances, traditional religious beliefs and worldviews are gradually eroding. People are more likely to question or reject religious doctrines, narratives, and explanations, often favoring secular or scientific perspectives instead.

2. **Separation of religious institutions and State**: This is a fundamental aspect of secularization, where the state and its institutions operate independently from religious organizations and their doctrines. In secular states the governance is conducted independently of religious authorities to ensure that laws and policies are formulated based on secular principles rather than religious teachings.

   Eg: In France, the 1905 French law on the Separation of the Churches and the State established a strict separation between religion and the state, prohibiting the state from recognizing or funding any religion.

Another example, founded as a secular republic in 1923 by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Turkey implemented significant reforms to separate religion from state affairs. These reforms included abolishing the caliphate, closing religious courts, and promoting secular education, banning traditional Islamic attire, etc.

3. **Dissociation of Public Education from Religious Ideology**: In secular societies, public education systems are typically designed to provide education without promoting or favoring any particular religious beliefs or practices. The curriculum and teaching methods are based on secular principles and scientific knowledge.

    Eg: In Turkey, the educational system is secular, with religious instruction being an optional subject in public schools rather than a mandatory part of the curriculum.

    In 2019, the UK introduced Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) as a mandatory part of the curriculum in all English schools, including faith-based schools. The curriculum covers topics like LGBTQ+ relationships and safe sex, ensuring that education is inclusive and secular.

It's important to note that the extent and manifestation of secularization can vary across societies. Some secular societies may exhibit these examples more prominently than others, and there can be degrees of separation between religion and various societal institutions or practices.

Factors Contributing to Secularization

The process of secularization is driven by many interconnected factors. This section explores the primary contributors to this phenomenon: economic development and industrialization, urbanization, science and technology, education, political infrastructure, and cultural pluralism in the context of globalization.

Economic Development and Industrialization

Economic development and industrialization play crucial roles in the secularization process. Western sociologists, such as Karl Marx, have argued that improved material conditions reduce the need for religious solace[11]. As societies transition from agrarian to industrial and post-industrial economies, socio-economic development mitigates insecurities related to basic needs, such as food, drinks and shelter, etc., diminishing the appeal of religion as a source of comfort.[12]

Key aspects of this process include:

1. Reduction of existential insecurities: As basic needs are met, reliance on religious institutions declines.
2. Post-industrial societies: Service-based economies and technological advancements correlate with lower levels of religious adherence.

11 Folmer, Henk & Abdul Hamid, Ahmad & Beaumont, Justin.(2014). Secularisation in Western Society: An overview of the main determinants. La Pensée. Vol 76, No. 6.
12 Norris, P. & Inglehart, R. (2006). Sellers or Buyers in Religious Markets? The Supply and Demand of Religion. *The Hedgehog Review,*. Vol.8, No. 1. pp 69-92

3. Welfare states: Economic prosperity often leads to social safety nets that further erode the necessity for religious support systems.

Urbanization

Closely linked to industrialization, urbanization plays a significant role in secularization. Cox argues that urban areas, characterized by diverse and liberal social environments, foster individualism and reduce communal religious pressures prevalent in rural settings. The social anonymity and weakened community ties in cities allow for greater personal freedom in matters of faith, facilitating a decline in religious observance. [13]

Urbanization contributes to secularization in the following aspects:

1. Social diversity: Urban environments expose individuals to a variety of beliefs and lifestyles, potentially weakening traditional religious ties.
2. Anonymity and individualism: The relative anonymity of city life reduces community pressure to conform to religious norms.
3. Alternative social structures: Urban areas often provide secular alternatives to the community functions traditionally fulfilled by religious institutions.

Science and Technology

The advancement of science and technology has profoundly influenced worldviews, offering empirical explanations for phenomena traditionally attributed to divine intervention. Since the Enlightenment, scientific progress has challenged religious doctrines, gradually diminishing their credibility and influence in many societies. [14] Technological advancements, particularly in mass media and communication, have further accelerated this secularization process.

Key aspects of this transformation include:

1. Empirical explanations: Scientific discoveries provide evidence-based interpretations of natural phenomena, often contradicting or superseding religious narratives.
2. Reduced uncertainty: Scientific and technological advancements have mitigated many life uncertainties, potentially reducing the perceived need for religious explanations or divine intervention.
3. Economic development: The application of science and technology has contributed to economic growth in many countries, which may lead to a reduction in existential insecurities and, consequently, decreased reliance on religious institutions.
4. Information accessibility: The proliferation of the internet, television, and social media has exposed individuals to a diverse array of perspectives and ideas, challenging traditional belief systems and promoting critical thinking.
5. Facilitation of secular movements: Online platforms have provided spaces for atheist, agnostic, and secularist communities to form, share ideas, and organize, further amplifying non-religious voices in public discourse.

---

13 Cox, H. (1965). The Secular City: Urbanisation in Theological Perspective, Pelican Books, New York.
14 Evans, J.H. & Evans, M.S. (2008), Religion and Science: Beyond the Epistemological Conflict Narrative. *Annual Review of Sociology,* vol. 34, pp. 87-105.

Education

The expansion of modern secular education systems and the teaching of scientific and rational modes of thinking have played a significant role in accelerating the secularization process by undermining the transmission of religious beliefs and values, particularly among younger generations. Gulecsi and Meyersson posit that higher education levels correlate with reduced religious adherence as educated individuals are more likely to question religious dogmas and embrace empirical evidence[15].

Key aspects of this process include:

1. Promotion of rationalization: Modern education, dominated by Western secular philosophies, encourages critical examination of religious and traditional beliefs.
2. Secularization of knowledge: Teaching without reference to religion reinforces the idea that religion is a private matter, separate from academic and professional pursuits.
3. Enhanced economic opportunities: Education often leads to improved socioeconomic status, which is associated with decreased religiosity.

Political Infrastructure and Reform

In some contexts, state policies and ideologies have actively promoted secularization, either through the separation of religion from state institutions or through deliberate efforts to suppress or marginalize religious influences in public life. The nature of state structures significantly influences the secularization process:

1. Secular foundations: States established on non-religious principles tend to create environments where religion has less influence over public life.
2. Separation of religion and state: Even in nations with religious origins, political systems increasingly adopt secular principles that separate religion from governance.

Globalization

The impact of globalization on secularization is a crucial contemporary consideration. As ideas, cultures, and information flow across borders, the diversity of perspectives challenges traditional religious norms. Globalization facilitates the exchange of secular ideologies and cultures, contributing to the diffusion of secular values across different societies.[16]

1. Cultural pluralism: The increasing interconnectedness of the world has exposed individuals to diverse cultural and religious traditions, challenging the universality claims of specific religious doctrines.
2. Religious diversity: Exposure to multiple belief systems in pluralistic societies fosters recognition of diverse perspectives and promotes secular governance to accommodate various beliefs.

---

15 Gulecsi, S. & Meyersson, E. (2013), For the Love of the Republic: Education, Secularism and Empowerment. *Innocenzo Gasparini Institute for Economic Research Working Paper Series*, No. 490
16 Beyer, Peter. (1999). Secularization from the Perspective of Globalization: A Response to Dobbelaere. Sociology of Religion. Vol. 60, No. 3. pp: 289–301.

3. Consumer culture: The rise of consumerism has shifted focus towards personal fulfillment and material well-being, potentially undermining traditional religious values and communal ties.
4. Individualism: Western emphasis on individual choice and self-expression has led to a more personalized approach to spirituality, often at the expense of traditional religious institutions.
5. Global cultural exchange: The interconnectedness of the globalized world facilitates the spread of secular ideas across national boundaries.
6. Commodification of religion: In some instances, religious practices and symbols have been commercialized, potentially diluting their spiritual significance.

Critiques of Secularization Theory

While the secularization thesis has gained widespread acceptance, it is not without challenges and debates. Some of the major critiques of secularization theory include:[17]

1. Lack of empirical support: The core thesis of secularization theory - a highly probable correlation between modernization and secularization - does not hold up to empirical scrutiny. The United States serves as a prime example, demonstrating high levels of religious vitality despite being one of the world's most advanced countries economically, technologically, and culturally. Similar patterns are observed in Latin America and post-communist Eastern Europe, where modernization has coincided with religious revitalization.
2. Failure to specify causal mechanisms: Secularization theory is criticized for its inability to articulate precise causal mechanisms through which modernization factors influence individual religious behaviour and attitudes. This lack of specificity undermines the theory's explanatory power and predictive capabilities.
3. Oversimplification of the modernization-secularization relationship: The theory assumes a direct, inevitable link between modernization and secularization, neglecting the complex and varied outcomes of modernization processes. In reality, modernization can lead to diverse religious responses, including adaptation, resurgence, and transformation, not just decline.
4. Neglect of cultural and historical contexts: Secularization theory often fails to account for the unique cultural and historical backgrounds that shape religious dynamics in different societies. This oversight limits its applicability to diverse global contexts and leads to Eurocentric biases in understanding religious change.
5. Underestimation of religious adaptability: The theory underestimates the capacity of religious institutions and beliefs to adapt to and coexist with modern social structures and technologies. Even in highly modernized societies, religious practices often persist and evolve, challenging the assumption of inevitable religious decline.

These critiques highlight that the relationship between modernization and religious change is far more complex and varied than secularization theory suggests. The theory's failure to account for empirical counterexamples, its lack of specified causal mechanisms, and its neglect of cultural diversity significantly weaken its explanatory power. A more nuanced understanding of religious change in the context of modernization is needed, one that

---

17 Warner, Rob (2010), p 42-65.

recognizes the potential for religious vitality, adaptation, and transformation alongside secularizing trends.

Secularization and Muslim world

The secularization process once it has taken root in the west, soon spread across the globe. While its impact on Islam and Muslim-majority nations differs from that experienced by Christianity and Western countries, secularization influences have nonetheless shaped Muslim societies and individual lives in significant ways.

Examples

Consider the following examples:

1. Turkey embraced constitutional secularism in the early 20th century, significantly reducing Islamic influence in all aspects of public life..
2. In Malaysia LGBT movements are significantly growing.[18]
3. In Indonesia, the new social movements and organizations which are heavily influenced by western philosophy and ideologies, such as the Liberal Islam Network (Jaringan Islam Liberal [JIL]), start challenging traditional Islamic values and norms.[19]
4. Saudi Arabia, traditionally known for its conservative stance, has recently seen the opening of its first nightclub in the capital city of Riyadh. [20]

Contributing Factors

Apart from factors of modernization such as economic development, industrialization and urbanization, advancements in science and technology as well as globalization, two additional factors have played a particularly significant role in shaping secularization within Muslim-majority countries:

1. Colonialism: The colonial experience profoundly impacted many Muslim societies, introducing Western secular institutions and ideologies. Colonial powers often implemented secular administrative and educational systems, which gradually influenced local cultures and governance structures. This external imposition of secular models, while often resisted, nevertheless laid the groundwork for post-colonial secular movements in many Muslim nations.
2. Western-educated Muslim intellectuals and political elites: A cadre of Muslim thinkers and leaders, mostly educated in Western institutions, became influential advocates for secularization in their home countries.[21]

---

18 Muhammad Faiz Mokhtar, Wan Allef Elfi Danial Wan Sukeri, Zulkifli Abd Latiff. (2019). Social Media Roles in Spreading LGBT Movements in Malaysia. Asian Journal of Media and Communication. Volume 3, No. 2. pp 77-82.

19 Mohammad Sahid, Mualimin & Nasir, Malki. (2020). Guarding Shariah From Liberalism: A Critical Overview On Liberal Islam Network In Indonesia. The 3rd International Conference Of The Postgraduate Students And Academics In Syariah And Law (INPAC2020). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348019487. Accessed on 26 June 2024.

20 Sakina Fatima. (2024). Saudi Arabia Opens First Night Club With No Alcoholic Drink. https://www.siasat.com/saudi-arabia-opens-first-night-club-with-no-alcoholic-drink-3033087/ . Accessed on 26 June 2024.

21 Al-Attas (1993), p 15.

Secularization Debates Among Muslim Scholars

The concept of secularization has sparked intense debate among Muslim scholars, especially in the context of modernization and globalization. The debates among proponents and opponents of secularization revolve around several key questions:

1. Can Islam be compatible with secularism?
2. Can Islam be integrated into modernity?
3. To what extent can Islam be contextualized and reinterpreted to harmonize with liberty?

Prominent proponents of secularization include Nurcholish Madjid from Indonesia and Fouad Zakaria from Egypt. Notable opponents include Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Muhammad al-Ghazali, and Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas.

As secularization continues to influence the Muslim world, these debates persist. Al-Attas highlights the underlying causes of these differences, pointing to the influence of Western ways of thinking. He states:

"But problems arising out of secularization, though not the same as those confronting the West, have certainly caused much confusion in our midst. It is most significant to us that these problems are caused due to the introduction of Western ways of thinking, judging, and believing, emulated by some Muslim scholars and intellectuals who have been unduly influenced by the West and overawed by its scientific and technological achievements. These scholars, lacking a true understanding and full grasp of both Islamic and Western worldviews, have, due to their influential positions in Muslim society, become conscious or unconscious disseminators of unnecessary confusion and ignorance."[22]

Conclusion

Secularization is a complex process that has significantly shaped modern societies, characterized by the declining influence of religion in public life and individual worldviews. Secularization theory proposes that the modernization will inevitably lead to secularization. Driven by factors such as economic development, urbanization, scientific advancement, and cultural shifts, the secularization process has manifested differently across various contexts, including the Muslim world.

Key Points:

- Economic development reduces existential insecurities, leading to less reliance on religion.
- Urbanization fosters social diversity and individualism, weakening traditional religious ties.
- Advancements in science and technology challenge religious doctrines.
- Modern secular education promotes rational and scientific thinking, reducing religious transmission.

---

22 Ibid.

Critiques of secularization theory emphasize its oversimplification and the failure to account for persistent religiosity in some modern societies, like the United States. Additionally, the theory often overlooks the adaptability of religious institutions and cultural contexts.

In the Muslim world, debates on secularization are intense. Proponents advocate for the compatibility of Islam with secular ideals, while opponents, like Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, argue that Western influences have caused confusion and ignorance among Muslim scholars, undermining a true understanding of both Islamic and Western worldviews. To face the challenge, Muslims must stop imitating blindly the western modernity produced by secular western civilization. Muslims must have their own creative thinking and steadfast onto the true path of Islam.

Reference:

Beyer, Peter. (1999). "Secularization from the Perspective of Globalization: A Response to Dobbelaere." *Sociology of Religion*. Vol. 60, No. 3. p 289–301.

Cox, H. (1965).The Secular City: Urbanisation in Theological Perspective. Pelican Books, New York.

Evans, J.H. & Evans, M.S. (2008). "Religion and Science: Beyond the Epistemological Conflict Narrative". *Annual Review of Sociology*. Vol. 34. pp. 87-105.

Folmer, Henk & Abdul Hamid, Ahmad & Beaumont, Justin. (2014). "Secularisation in Western Society: An Overview Of The Main Determinants". *La Pensée*. Vol 76, No. 6. p 393-413.

Gulecsi, S. & Meyersson, E. (2013)."For the Love of the Republic: Education, Secularism and Empowerment", *Innocenzo Gasparini Institute for Economic Research Working Paper Series*, No. 490.

Jacobson, C.K. (1992). "Religiosity in Black Community: An Examination of Secularisation and Political Variables", *Review of Religious Research*. Vol. 33, no. 3, pp.215-228.

Karel Dobbelaere. (2006). Bryan Wilson's Contributions to the Study of Secularization. *Social Compass*. Vol. 53, No.2. pp141–146.

Larry Shiner.(1967). The Concept of Secularization in Empirical Research. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*. Vol. 6, No. 2. pp. 207-220

Mohammad Sahid, Mualimin & Nasir, Malki. (2020). Guarding Shariah From Liberalism: A Critical Overview On Liberal Islam Network In Indonesia. The 3rd International Conference Of The Postgraduate Students And Academics In Syariah And Law (INPAC2020).
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348019487. Accessed on 26 June 2024.

Muhammad Faiz Mokhtar, Wan Allef Elfi Danial Wan Sukeri, Zulkifli Abd Latiff. (2019). Social Media Roles in Spreading LGBT Movements in Malaysia. *Asian Journal of Media and Communication*. Volume 3, No. 2.

Norris, P. & Inglehart, R. (2006). "Sellers or Buyers in Religious Markets? The Supply and Demand of Religion", *The Hedgehog Review*.

Sacerdote, B. and Glaeser, E.L., (2001). Education and Religion. *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series,* No. 8080.

Sakina Fatima. (2024). Saudi Arabia Opens First Night Club With No Alcoholic Drink. https://www.siasat.com/saudi-arabia-opens-first-night-club-with-no-alcoholic-drink-3033087/ . accessed on 26 June 2024.

Steve Bruce. (2002). God ^Is Dead: Secularization ^In The West. Blackwell publishing.

Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas. (1993). Islam and Secularism. Kuala Lumpur: Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM); 1978. reprint, Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (IS TAC).

Tschannen, Olivier. (1991). The Secularization Paradigm: A Systematization. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion. Vol. 30, No. 4.. p. 395-415

Warner, Rob. (2010). Secularization And Its Discontents. Continuum International Publishing Group. London.