

Article

Secularism in Turkiye: Philosophical Perspective, Impact and Solution

Nur Farizah Alya Fadil¹, Noorsyahleen Zulkafli¹, Nurul Cahiriah Zulkifli¹, Nurul Amnie Athirah Subeci¹,
Nur Auni Fatini Abdullah Jaya¹, Nur Alia Zulaikha Mohammad Shiraj¹ & Atika Shafinaz Nazri² *

¹Faculty of Economics and Management, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

²Institute of Ethnic Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

*Corresponding Author: atikashafinaz@ukm.edu.my

Received: 15 June 2023

Accepted: 26 September 2023

Abstract: The declaration of the Republic of Turkiye under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1923-1939) paved the way for a more aggressive process of secularization compared to before, resulting in the absorption of ideology in the military sector and encompassing the entire framework of administration, leadership, and a free way of life that completely alienated the teachings of Islam. Our study seeks to explore the meaning of the characteristics built in secularism simultaneously to discuss more deeply what type of secular culture is in Turkiye. On the other hand, this study also intends to untangle how philosophy has an insight into secular culture. At last, we will also discuss the implications of secularism and what measures could act to curb this belief or culture. In the findings, we argue that the secular culture in Turkiye is manifested in various aspects of society, including politics, education, legal system, and public institutions. It is reflected in the Turkish Constitution, which guarantees religious freedom and prohibits discrimination based on religion. Turkish secularism also influences the education system, where religious education is separated from general education, allowing individuals to receive a secular education while also having the option to pursue religious studies if they choose.

Keywords: Islam, philosophy; secularism; secularism in Turkiye; Turkiye

Introduction

Islam originates from the Arabic word (aslama, yuslimu, Islam), which means to submit, obey, and peace, well-being, and tranquility (Azizi, 2021). Islamic philosopher Mustafa Abd' ar-Raziq, states that Islam is a religion (ad-din) consisting of beliefs and actions that comply with the state of purity, which means being able to distinguish between what is permissible and forbidden and encourages and motivates people to embrace it to become a community with strong spirituality (Deta, 2020). Quoting from an article in Sinar Harian's, Sinar Islam section in June 2020 entitled "Practice the true Islamic way of life," Islam guides life from the moment we wake up until close our eyes. Islam is considered a guide for life because its teachings encompass an individual's mental, physical, and spiritual aspects. From the smallest bedtime prayer to the grandest ways and guidelines in governing a state, everything is taught in Islam, showing the uniqueness and subtlety of this religion. The uniqueness and perfection of Islam can be seen and studied through the rules and laws that Allah SWT has established through the verses of the Quran and the narrations taken from the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (Ismail, Stapa & Suhaimi, 2012). Particularly for us, the conventional society today, who are the followers of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the last Prophet and Messenger on this earth, we are undoubtedly

facing great challenges that test our faith and steadfastness in our beliefs. Nowadays, the onslaught of Western media's influence and the impact of social media on secular or liberal individuals, which poses a great challenge to our minds.

Sometimes, some are willing to compromise their faith and religion by unthinkingly following Western propaganda to remain relevant in the modern world. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, 'Hasten to do good deeds before a fitnah (trial) appears, for it is like a part of the night. A man may be a believer in the morning and a disbeliever in the evening or a believer in the evening and a disbeliever in the morning, selling his religion for worldly gains.' (Narrated by Muslim). Imam Nawawi (may Allah be pleased with him) interprets the meaning of this hadith by explaining that the ease with which people change their beliefs is due to the intensification of trials and the fact that they are willing to compromise Islam for worldly desires (Fadzil, 2020).

It is clear that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has given a long-standing warning, indicating that we are approaching the end times, where worldly trials penetrate from all imaginable aspects. In the aftermath of this scenario, like mushrooms growing after rain, numerous new-age ideologies contradict Islam's teachings. The ideologies such as liberalism, feminism, secularism, and the acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) individuals within a country have emerged. This phenomenon escalates to the point where Muslims often agree to normalize such ideologies. Some even boldly make statements that can damage their faith. The question is whether the context of the da'wah (Islamic propagation) promoted by those who hold such ideologies is relevant. What leads them to accept such doctrines? Therefore, our study seeks to explore the meaning of the characteristics built in secularism simultaneously to discuss more deeply what type of secular culture is in Turkiye. On the other hand, this study also intends to untangle how philosophy has an insight into secular culture. At last, we will also discuss the implications of secularism and what measures could act to curb this belief or culture.

Literature Review

1. What Does Secularism Mean?

The emergence of secularism was due to the corruption within the church institutions during the post-Renaissance era in Europe, from the 14th to the 16th century. This ideology arose due to a series of opposition by society towards the dominating and oppressive control of the church and clergy, which led to a chaotic and cruel atmosphere amid the community. It started when religious figures (Christian) began to exhibit cruelty, oppression, and misuse of religious power, hiding behind slogans such as clerical authority, the Lord's Buffet, the sale of indulgence cards, and so on (Salleh, 1999). Hence, the ideology and understanding of secularism emerged as a response to counter the church's greed during that time. However, secularism tends to support advancing science and technology in the modern era and opposes religious ethics that hinder such progress (Abidin, Kamaruddin & Arsad, 2020).

The term 'cularism' was popularized by George Jacob Holyoake, a secularist. George Jacob Holyoake, born on April 13, 1817, is considered the foundational figure for understanding secularism today. He was also a staunch supporter of Robert Owenite, the father of Owenite's socialist beliefs. Apart from advocating Owenite socialist ideas, George Jacob Holyoake supported the concept of 'rational religion', which involved completely removing any notion of divinity. In his youth, Holyoake was somewhat influenced by books on utopian ideologies by Robert Owens. Due to his socialist views, it became challenging for him to become a teacher due to stark differences in opinions. In 1831, Holyoake joined the Birmingham Political Union, and later, in 1832, he became involved with The Chartists. After eight years, Holyoake decided to become a 'socialist lecturer' and one of Robert Owen's followers. He moved to Worcester to become a full-time socialist lecturer. Holyoake chaired the inaugural meeting of the Rochdale Cooperative Store in 1845, setting an example for other cooperative organizations. This success was followed by other cooperative movements, making it one of the catalysts for the development and starting point of the cooperative movement. He gained prominence in the cooperative movement, holding positions as a leader and authority figure (Syhadtha, 2020).

Holyoake continued to spread the doctrine of secularism throughout the country, but over time, his views began to construct. By the late 1850s, Charles Bradlaugh, a young and more energetic man who was more articulate, radical, and organized than Holyoake, challenged his leadership in the secular movement. Bradlaugh was elected as the president of the London Secular Society in 1858. When Holyoake opposed the publication of 'The Fruits of Philosophy' by Bradlaugh and Besant and later helped establish the British Secular Union as a competitor to the National Secular Society, tensions peaked in 1877. After Bradlaugh's death and the downfall of the British Secular Union, Holyoake later rejoined the National Secular Society. He also played a significant role in establishing the Rationalist Press Association (RPA), serving as its first chairman. Holyoake took his last breath on January 22, 1906, in Brighton. He contributed significantly to the emergence and prosperity of secularism and progressive causes. In his long life, he witnessed the rise of Chartism, developments in cooperation, the years-long struggle for a free press, and Bradlaugh's parliamentary battles. Holyoake's home, built as a tribute to him and inaugurated in 1911 in Manchester, is still occupied by the Cooperative Union. Holyoake himself strove to promote ethical organizations, and his daughter, Emilie Ashurst Holyoake, later became actively involved in the humanitarian ethics movement. Holyoake first used the term 'secularism' to refer to himself and his supporters 1851. According to him, secularism is a code of duty about this life, founded on considerations purely human. He preferred that term over atheism. He became renowned in the secularism movement and strongly advocated for cooperation, freedom of the press, and equality in all areas of society (Syhadha, 2020)

From a terminological perspective, secular definition is unrelated to religious understanding or teachings. However, in a more accurate context, secularism refers to a philosophical movement that separates religion from politics and civil affairs. The primary goal of secularism is to ensure that any mythology, religious beliefs, and religious laws are separated from government affairs. However, secularism is not merely a movement that opposes religion but prevents religious influence from permeating civil and political matters.

The term 'secular' is derived from the Latin word 'saeculum', which means 'this world'. An individual or organization advocating secularism is referred to as a secularist. A state that practices secularism in its governance is called a secular state. A secular state does not have an official religion, respects all religions equally, and prohibits clergy or religious figures from having any influence in its political operations. The ideology of secularism emerged from the seeds of modernization (Hänninen, 2002). Secularism became a principle of modernization in the West. Eastern countries adopted it by keeping spirituality and religious beliefs distant from societal norms. This ideology then emerged as an expression of disappointment towards religion, attempting to distance itself from it. The concept of secularism brings together individuals or communities with different beliefs and perspectives to discuss matters of public interest that are more general and impartial to any party (Abiddin, Kamaruddin & Arsad 2020).

2. Secularism in Turkiye

The ideology of secularism, originally developed in the Western, has also made its way into the Eastern, such as India. The concept of secularism in India began in 1950. Nevertheless, in this study, we will explore the origins of secularism in Turkiye. It started with indirect warfare, which contributed to the emergence of cultural and civilizational assimilation between Islamic civilization and the West. After the leadership of Sultan Suleiman al-Qanuni (1520-1566), the Ottoman Caliphate began to experience a period of decline, especially after it failed to conquer Vienna in 1683 (Ibrahim & Nor, 2018). The crisis in leadership and administration led the Ottoman Caliphate to adopt ideas of reform from the West to address the problems within the government. The progress achieved by the West as a result of the French Revolution in 1789 caught the attention of Muslims, as it was seen as a movement of enlightenment focused on material progress and devoid of religious characteristics (Shaukhi, 2012). Originally, ideas from the West were absorbed for modernization and renewal in various fields, particularly to elevate and enhance new elements within the military administration of the Ottoman Empire for the benefit of Islamic civilization itself. The series of events not only disseminated knowledge to improve the military but also became a platform and factor in spreading secularism's ideology in Turkiye. Although Islam played an important role in shaping the framework of

thinking and the identity of Turkish society, applied modernization significantly influenced society at that time.

The reforms undertaken marginalized the presence of Islamic law, causing concern among the ulama and religious scholars of that time. This raised questions about whether Islamic teachings should be applied in every aspect of society, including governing the state. Evidently, the concept of secularism, which was hidden behind the cause of modernization, is not in line with Islamic teachings. The declaration of the Republic of Turkiye under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1923-1939) opened the way for a more aggressive process of secularization than before (Ibrahim & Nor, 2018). This resulted in not only the absorption of secular ideologies in the military sector but also encompassed the entire administrative framework and leadership, completely excluding Islamic teachings. In this sense, it meant that no ulama or religious scholars were required or prohibited from interfering in state administration. Consequently, the impact of secularism in Turkiye began, leading to the decline of the Ottoman Islamic civilization. On March 3, 1924, Atatürk removed Islamic education from the school system, which was one of his efforts to separate religion and implement secularism in Turkish society.

From the perspective of legal modernity, the unification of legal systems is a priority, where private and segment-specific laws need to be replaced with general and uniform laws. This entails the replacement of Islamic law with secular laws, in line with the intended meaning and purpose. However, unlike the objectives of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the separation of religion did not stop at matters and affairs of state administration and politics. Atatürk aimed to instill the concept of secularism in the Turkish people, as he believed that this understanding of secularism would contribute to establishing civilization within the country. To further legitimize the process of secularization in his reform program, secularism was identified as one of the six principles of Kemalism outlined by Atatürk as the foundation for nation-building (Ibrahim & Nor, 2018).

Despite that, initially, Atatürk recognized the status of Islam in the country because he realized its importance in shaping the culture of Turkiye, which had been deeply ingrained in the psyche of its people. This can be observed through the original Article 2 of the Turkish Constitution of 1924, which was the first official constitution adopted after the establishment of the republic. In line with this event, the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı-Diyanet) was established. Diyanet aims to focus on and manage matters related to the Islamic religion. However, Diyanet existed only briefly, as it was officially disbanded in 1928. Finally, through an amendment in 1937, the principle of secularism was accepted as the state's identity. This amendment brought about significant changes in two aspects: secularism became more prominent and the main influence in spreading secularism ideology in Turkish society. This served as a major catalyst for accepting secularism ideology as the amendment solidified secularism as the state's identity. In other words, it gave a green light to the ideology of secularism in Turkish society. Secondly, these changes indirectly legitimized secularism as the policy governing all activities in Turkiye, where Islam was denied its role in all aspects (Ibrahim & Nor, 2018).

When discussing on secular culture among Turkish, we could relate with the Western culture; it has significantly influenced various aspects of Turkish society, particularly in urban areas and among younger generations. First, lifestyle and fashion: Western cultural influences have shaped Turkiye's lifestyle choices and fashion trends. Western-style clothing, music, films, and entertainment have become popular, especially in urban centers. Second, individualism and personal freedoms; the culture emphasizes individualism and personal freedoms, which have gradually influenced Turkish society. There is a growing emphasis on self-expression, autonomy, and pursuing personal goals and aspirations. Third are consumerism and materialism; cultural influences have contributed to Turkiye's rise in consumerism and materialistic values. The influence of Western advertising, consumer products, and commercialism has led to a culture of consumption and the pursuit of material wealth. Fourth, gender roles and women's rights; ideas and feminist movements have influenced gender roles and women's rights in Turkiye. There has been progress in promoting gender equality, empowering women, and challenging traditional gender norms and expectations. Fifth, education and academic practices: models of education and academic practices have been adopted in Turkish schools and universities. There is an emphasis on critical thinking, research-based learning, and interdisciplinary approaches to education. Sixth, arts and cultural expression: cultural influences have impacted the arts Turkiye's

cultural expressions in Turk Western art forms, such as painting, sculpture, literature, and theater, have found their place in Turkish artistic traditions, leading to a fusion of Western and Turkish cultural elements. Finally, social values and liberalization: culture has influenced social values and liberalization in Turkiye. Ideas related to democracy, human rights, individual freedoms, and social equality have gained traction, leading to societal changes and discussions on social issues. It's important to note that Western cultural influences coexist with traditional Turkish culture and values. Turkish society is diverse, and different segments may embrace or resist Western cultural influences to varying degrees. Additionally, there are ongoing debates and discussions about the impact of Western culture on Turkish identity and the preservation of Turkish traditions and heritage.

Methodology

In the context of Turkiye, our research adopts a qualitative data methodology to investigate the phenomenon of secularism within the Islamic community. Utilizing secondary sources, this study offers a comprehensive and profound comprehension of the subject matter under examination. The secondary sources employed in this study were meticulously curated, with careful consideration given to their alignment with the research topic, their credibility, and their adherence to rigorous scientific standards. Prior to inclusion, factors such as the authors' reputation, the prestige of the publication venues, and the quality of research or analysis presented in the sources were scrupulously evaluated to ensure the foundation for a robust analysis. The process of data analysis from these secondary sources was carried out with a critical and thorough approach.

Moreover, the research was conducted comprehensively through extensive searches across academic databases, including Google Scholar, where specific keywords such as 'secularism,' 'Muslims,' 'Turkiye,' and 'culture' were employed. Additionally, scholarly journals and reputable online sources were diligently scrutinized to gather a comprehensive array of materials for this investigation. The analysis can be further explored in depth and detail when the appropriate methods are utilized. Based on the purpose of this study, the analyzed data can be interpreted to better understand the culture of secularism among the Islamic community in Turkiye.

The researcher has conducted a process of coding on the entire dataset. This phase refocuses the analysis on broader thematic levels rather than codes, involving the organization of different codes into potential themes and arranging all relevant coded data excerpts within the identified themes. Essentially, the researcher begins to analyze codes and consider how different codes can merge to form overarching themes. Although themes have been named, the researcher will review these themes and assess whether the data findings placed under specific themes are appropriate or not.

The final stage, commencing when the study has a fully developed set of themes. This phase involves the culmination of analysis and report writing. The task of writing thematic analysis is to convey the intricate narrative of the data convincingly to the readers regarding the validity of the analysis. It is crucial that the written analysis, including data excerpts, provides a concise, coherent, logical, and engaging narrative about the story presented by the data across the identified themes.

Finding and Discussion

The research findings on articles related to the research topic indicate that the culture of secularism has become a belief among the Islamic community in Turkiye. Consequently, they tend to no longer adhere to religious norms. According to the Turkish government, 99 percent of its population is Muslim, with approximately 78 percent identifying as Sunni Hanafi. Representatives of other religious groups estimate their members to be 0.2 percent of the population. Simultaneously, a recent public opinion survey published in January 2019 by the Turkish research and polling firm KONDA Research and Consultancy suggests that around 3 percent of the population identifies as atheists and 2 percent as non-believers. These percentages indicate that Islam is the majority religion in Turkiye. However, in 2008, respondents identifying as 'religious scholars' decreased from 13% to 10% in 2018, and those choosing 'religion' decreased from 55% to 51%. As a result, the percentage of those claiming to fast during the holy month of Ramadan decreased from 77% to 65%. Therefore, the percentage of individuals characterized as believers seem to be declining, which can be

attributed to a secular culture in Turkish society that encourages them to view religion as a personal matter unrelated to the state, with individuals free from religious guidance and regulations.

Meanwhile, a growing number of young Muslims in *Turkiye* find themselves grappling with the imposition of religious constraints enforced by their devout parents, who strictly adhere to Islamic doctrines. Consequently, Turkish youth are increasingly inclined to engage in behaviors that deviate from the established Islamic norms. Noteworthy among the behaviors exhibited by the younger generation in *Turkiye* are the adoption of provocative attire, falsehoods during Ramadan, and a propensity to disregard the counsel of devout parents concerning religious devotion. Furthermore, the figures for 'non-believers' and 'atheists,' which were almost non-existent in 2008, now stand at 2% and 3%, respectively, and have increased to 6% in 2021. Additionally, other social customs may also change. According to opinion polls, the percentage of respondents who believe that a man and a woman must have a religious marriage to live together remains in the large majority. Still, it has dropped by five percentage points to 74%.

1. Philosophers' Insight on Secularism

The culture of secularism is believed to originate from Western countries and is not derived from Islamic culture. Since its first appearance, secularism has attracted the attention of various individuals, including scientists, theologians, thinkers, and religious scholars; this introduced culture of secularism has many deviations and contradictions with Islam, leading many scientists, thinkers, and others to provide their opinions and views on secularism.

Yusuf al-Qaradhawi is a respected scholar, intellectual, and writer highly regarded by the public, both in Islamic and Western countries, due to his mastery of classical and modern Islamic knowledge. His views and criticisms of the culture of secularism have been expressed in the books he has published. Some of the books written by Yusuf al-Qaradhawi include 'Al-Islam Wal-'Ilmaniyah' (Islam and Secularism), 'Hatmiyat Al-Hillul Islamiy' (The Necessity of an Islamic Solution), and 'Al-Islamu Kama Nu'minu Bihi' (The Islam We Believe In). In these writings, Yusuf al-Qaradhawi critiques secularism and advises that Muslims follow the guidance of the Quran and Sunnah daily. The term 'secularism' originates from the English language, specifically 'Secularism' and 'Secularité' in French, which later became 'Al-'Ilmaniyah' after being translated into Arabic. Some Arabs translate secularism as "Al-'Ilmaniyah," derived from the word 'al-'ilm' (knowledge), with the endings 'alif,' 'nun,' and 'ya' indicating the quality of knowledge. According to Yusuf al-Qaradhawi, this translation proves that the meaning of secularism, as translated, is vague and superficial. He argues that secularism does not connect with the word 'al-'ilm' (knowledge).

According to Yusuf al-Qaradhawi, secularism is more appropriately translated as 'Al-Ladiniyah' or 'Ad-dunyawiyah.' This is because the culture of secularism has no connection to religion, and if it does have any relation to religion, it is merely confrontational. The use of the translation 'Al-'Ilmaniyah' for secularism in Arabic is incorrect because they believe that the word has a connection to knowledge. However, according to Yusuf al-Qaradhawi, the concept of secularism has no connection to knowledge because the culture of secularism introduced by Western societies leads to a life far removed from religion, separating worldly life from religion. Therefore, according to Yusuf al-Qaradhawi, the appropriate translation for secularism is 'Al-ladiniyah," meaning a worldly ideology without connection to religion.

Yusuf al-Qaradhawi has criticized the introduced and promoted culture of secularism in Western countries because it contradicts Islam. He also emphasizes that the concept of secularism has its laws and will affect the laws of any country that supports secularism. Thus, Yusuf al-Qaradhawi highlights secularism as the main enemy of Islam, particularly in upholding Islamic laws. He also expresses that secularism contradicts the beliefs of Islam.

In addition to Yusuf al-Qaradhawi, Naquib al-Attas, a Muslim scholar and philosopher, has also published a book titled 'Islam and Secularism' in which he discusses his views on the culture of secularism. In the book, he asserts that the culture of secularism opposes the secular understanding. According to Naquib al-Attas, the word 'secular' originates from Latin, specifically 'saeculum', which means time and location. Saeculum signifies the present moment, where 'masakini' refers to the present reality, and 'di sini' refers to

the present time. Thus, Naquib al-Attas concludes that the understanding of secularism is related to the meaning of 'kedisinikian,' which denotes the present reality.

According to Naquib al-Attas, if the term "kedisinikian" is translated into Arabic, the most appropriate translation would be 'hunalaniyyah,' where 'huna' in Arabic means 'here' and 'al-an' means 'now.' Therefore, the term 'al-hunalaniyyah' that signifies 'kedisinikia' aligns with the meaning of secularism. Based on Naquib al-Attas' study of etymology, he concludes that translating secularism into Arabic as 'almaniyyah' does not accurately explain the meaning of secularism. Instead, he believes secularism is better represented by the term 'waqi'yyah,' closely related to the positivist ideology. Thus, Naquib al-Attas suggests the term 'al-waqi'yyah' is more suitable as it conveys the meaning of 'kedisinikian'.

Although Naquib al-Attas suggests that the term secularism is appropriate to be translated as al-waqi'yyah, he advises against translating the term secularism into Arabic due to the disagreement between Islamic views and the concept of secularism to prevent confusion among Muslims regarding this cultural concept of secularism. He wishes to emulate the cautious approach of previous scholars who carefully translated external concepts from Greek into Arabic. However, Naquib al-Attas recommends that secularism be translated as sikulariyyah in Arabic and not interpreted in Islamic thought to avoid misunderstandings among Muslims regarding the term's usage. However, in his book *Islam and Secularism*, translated into Arabic, he used secularism as al-Islam wa al'Almaniyyah because the term has already become prevalent among Arabs.

Harvey Cox, an American theologian, also expressed his views on secularism. Cox gained prominence for discussing secularization and secularism in his book *The Secular City* (1965). In this book, he elucidates his thoughts on secularization and secularism. According to Harvey Cox, the concepts of secularization and secularism are distinct. Secularization is the liberation of society from religious authority and differing metaphysical worldviews. In contrast, secularism is the name given to an ideology that functions almost like a new religion. Furthermore, he states that secularization involves the separation of religious affairs from societal affairs because he believes that religious matters should not be intertwined with societal matters. For Harvey Cox, secularism describes a perspective that does not acknowledge or believe in the existence of God. According to Harvey Cox, secularization and secularism has impact on society. In this context, he provides an example of the negative consequences that occurred in Boston. The problems in Boston demonstrate that not all issues need to be addressed according to religious teachings; instead, they require state intervention to resolve them. For instance, he criticizes Playboy magazine, first published in 1953 and attracting a wide range of readers from 18 to 30 years old. The content of the magazine contained explicit material, leading the society in Boston to become excessively permissive and exploit sexuality for the economic benefit of the country. Cox argues that the economic system in that country supports sexual activities to maintain a strong economy. A state that embraces secularism requires a society with high understanding and knowledge and a society with high morals and ethics because he believes that a morally upright society will set boundaries in all matters, including issues related to sexual liberation. Freedom within society must have limits because the freedom enjoyed by society can have both positive and negative effects on that society. Therefore, he asserts that a secular state greatly depends on a responsible society to avoid negative repercussions in the future (Fauzan, 2017).

In conclusion, there are diverse perspectives among philosophers regarding secularism. According to the views of Yusuf al-Qaradhawi and Naquib al-Attas, the culture, and ideology of secularism are contradictory and conflict with the teachings of Islam. The issue of secularism needs to be highlighted by society due to its detrimental impact on the thinking of individuals and Islamic nations. Furthermore, based on Harvey Cox's understanding, it has also been elucidated that secularization and secularism negatively affect society if the community is not responsible and lacks a deep understanding of this cultural concept (Fauzan, 2017).

2. The Impacts of Secularism in Turkiye

Mustafa Kamal Atatürk introduced the ideology of secularism to Turkish society to transform Turkiye into a more advanced and democratic nation. However, proponents of religious beliefs argue that secularism can undermine the foundations of an individual's faith and beliefs (Ismail, Stapa & Suhaimi, 2012). Over time, the

influence of secularist ideology has spread throughout Turkish society. The issue of secularism has become increasingly heated and has sparked debates among philosophers discussing their views on this ideology. The core principle of secularism revolves around the idea that everyone has the right and freedom to practice their beliefs without being restricted by others. With the emergence of secularism, there have been significant effects and impacts on Turkish society. Despite Turkiye being a predominantly Muslim country, the ideology of secularism has gained momentum and strength. The most significant impact of secularist teachings is the potential dilution of individuals' religious identity and erosion of their beliefs. Muslims should constantly strive to strengthen their faith and live a lifestyle based on Islamic principles; this contrasts with secularism's values, which may lead individuals further away from Islam. For the Muslim community in Turkiye, the presence of secularism has resulted in a diminished sense of complete faith in Islam. Furthermore, it has contributed to disregarding matters related to sin and reward among Muslims. The ideology of secularism has had a negative impact on Islamic society, as it easily influences an individual's lifestyle and encourages adopting a Western-oriented way of life instead of adhering to Islamic values.

The Eastern countries that have begun adapting Western modernization policies to their nations have pushed spirituality and faith further away from the lives of their societies (Abidin, Kamaruddin & Arsad 2020). Secularism has had a profound impact on how Muslims lead their daily lives. The absence of Islamic laws and regulations in Turkiye allows individuals to engage in any activity without concern for Islamic wrongdoing. For instance, they may not take fasting during Ramadan seriously due to their diminishing beliefs. As a result, secularism brings about social problems and weakens their faith. Furthermore, it leads to the destruction of the Islamic civilization and culture in Turkish society; secularism in Turkiye allows them to engage in actions that contradict Islamic teachings. The decreasing practice of Islamic ways of life among Turkish Muslims will result in a decline in Islamic civilization, eventually leading to the loss of culture; will further expand the influence of Western lifestyles among Muslim communities. They will no longer prioritize living as Muslims and consider Western lifestyles their normal routine. One example is the liberal mingling of genders among adults, where they can live together without concern for the Islamic perspective; could contribute to an increase in extramarital affairs, and they may not take it seriously as it is not considered wrong under Turkish law. This Western lifestyle is significantly different from what should be practiced by a Muslim. In Islam, commanded to maintain boundaries between genders and refrain from activities that could damage faith. The impact of this situation is that the Muslim community in Turkiye will normalize this lifestyle and refuse to base their lives on the teachings of Islam. The ideology of secularism will disrupt the thoughts of Muslim individuals and lead to disputes within the Muslim community. These conflicts will result in a lack of unity among Muslims as they hold different views regarding their beliefs.

Numerous elements and factors practiced in Turkiye that are highly contradictory and divergent from Islamic beliefs. Education in Turkiye plays a crucial role, and this aspect impacts the Muslim community's faith and spirituality. The influence of secularism in Turkish education leads to children being easily influenced by teachings that differ from Islamic teachings. Children are important as their minds absorb all the teachings and education imparted to them during this developmental stage. The ideology of secularism diminishes the teaching of Islam-based education that should be imparted to children. For instance, secularism affects the use of the Jawi script and the Arabic language in matters related to Islam. In Islam, Arabic is significant, particularly in performing religious practices. Mustafa Kamal Ataturk's actions to reduce the use of the Arabic language have resulted in the Muslim community in Turkiye having limited knowledge and difficulty learning this language. Moreover, Kamal Ataturk also transformed Arabic-based schools into secular-based ones, leading to a decline in knowledge, especially among school students, regarding Islam and affecting their thinking because from a young age, they are not taught and exposed to Islamic teachings, resulting in a lack of interest in acquiring knowledge about Islam when they become adults.

In conclusion, the ideology of secularism negatively impacts all aspects. Secularism is inappropriate for countries with a majority of Islamic population. The prevalence of secularism leads to society, especially the Muslim community, increasingly forgetting their beliefs and teachings of Islam, consequently altering their perspectives. The separation of religious matters from legislation, as promoted by secularism, has detrimental effects on Turkish society. Without Sharia laws, Turkish society does not feel fear or concern about engaging

in actions that contradict Islamic teachings. This perception arises from the notion that their way of life is normal in this advancing technological world.

3. Measures to Overcome the Problem of Secularism in Turkiye

As a Muslims, Islam is not just a religion but a way of life; should adhere to. We can turn to the Quran and Sunnah for guidance on how to lead our lives, and always strive to learn more to stay on the right path. Therefore, institutions such as Islamic institutions, families, and education, need to play a crucial role in addressing the issue of secularism in Turkiye. The Turkish government must strive and assist in addition to playing its role in addressing secularism. The government plays a crucial role and should enact legislation based on Islamic Sharia in Turkiye. The ideology of secularism has been practiced for a long time. Kamal Artatuk made amendments in 1937, making secularism the identity of the Turkish state. This formulation has reduced the power of Islamic law in Turkiye. Therefore, to overcome the issue of secularism, Turkiye needs to prioritize and enact all Islamic laws. Moreover, the Turkish government should separate its secular legislation from Islamic legislation. The government of Turkiye should allocate and limit cases involving Islamic matters to Sharia law alone, excluding secular laws; contradicts the secularism laws in Turkiye, as in 1971, the Constitutional Court directed the closure of an Islamic political party for opposing the secularism policy established by Kamal Ataturk (Ibrahim & Nor, 2018). Therefore, it is evident that the government needs to establish legislation based on Sharia and have a separate entity from constitutional law.

The second step that needs to be taken to combat the spread of secularism is through Islamic institutions. Turkiye has a majority Muslim population, where up to 99% of Turks are Muslims. Secularization has been implemented in laws since the Tanzimat era by adopting Western laws. Still, the process of secularization during Ataturk's time differed from before. According to Ibrahim and Nor (2018), the separation of Islam from forming Turkish legislation stemmed from Ataturk's prejudice toward the Ottoman Caliphate. Islamic institutions in Turkiye need to implement Islamic laws and Sharia for their people. We can follow Islamic Sharia in our daily lives as Muslims, and even though these laws have been in place for a long time, they are still relevant today. Laws that adhere to Islamic Sharia are preferable to civil, criminal laws. For instance, in capital punishment cases, there is room for forgiveness for the accused. In cases of adultery, there must be strong witnesses to ensure no false accusations are made. Similarly, a thorough investigation is necessary to determine the true cause in theft cases. These laws not only focus on Sharia crimes, fundamentally understood as issues related to Islamic law, but they also encompass all types of crimes, including civil crimes.

The next step could take is through the family. The family is the most important place for children's development. Education for children begins not only when they enroll in school but from the moment they are born. The home is the primary educational institution for children. The role of parents is crucial in the upbringing of children. Therefore, parents in Turkiye need to instill religious knowledge in their children. They need to expose their children to what is good and bad. It is time for society to abandon the misguided notion that Western civilization is the sole source of progress and modernity. True greatness cannot be measured solely by external and spiritual achievements. Therefore, Muslims should take pride in the splendor and achievements of Islamic civilization, which began with a small group of warriors and eventually spread throughout the world. We must sincerely try to restore Islam's glory and elevate it above foreign civilizations, such as the West; it will require the collective sacrifice of wealth, possessions, ideas, and energy to restore Islamic sovereignty and make it the foundation of Muslim society. Secularization has profoundly impacted society's lifestyle, particularly in urban communities.

The final step in combating secularism in Turkiye is through education. Education in Turkiye needs to increase the curriculum of Islamic studies throughout the country. It should be based on the principles of Tawhid (monotheism) and the oneness of Allah, as outlined in the Quran and Sunnah. Indeed, Muslims in Turkiye need to prioritize a return to authentic Islamic teachings, which can be achieved by revitalizing Islamic education within the educational system; important matter that needs to be approached carefully and accurately, as neglecting religious education poses risks to societal regression and widespread moral decay. Islamic education emphasizes the spiritual development of individuals as servants of Allah and encourages the cultivation of high moral character and ethics alongside knowledge acquisition. It is crucial for advancing

human civilization worldwide. Several conditions need to be met, including mastering both Islamic knowledge and modern sciences comprehensively to determine the necessary adjustments involving philosophical frameworks, goals, methodologies, strategies, and so on, in line with current developments.

Lastly, several aspects need to be emphasized to counter the culture of secularism in Turkiye. Secularism is not a new phenomenon in Turkiye. In modernizing Turkiye, Ataturk made significant changes that led to its modernization, but it adversely affected the Muslim community in urban Turkiye. The influence of secularization in Turkish law has brought about noticeable changes in the lifestyle of urban residents, resulting in deviations from religious norms. On the other hand, the impact of secularization on rural communities has been less significant, as they have remained steadfast in their religious practices. Therefore, it can be concluded that the progress of Islamic management in Turkiye is crucial, as it requires comprehensive implementation rather than mere nominal compliance. Failure to implement management and administration in line with Islamic principles will hinder the Turkish Muslim community from achieving the desired philosophy, objectives, and goals of management and administration to attain success and the pleasure of Allah SWT in both this world and the hereafter. Hence, the need for better and advanced Islamic management in Turkiye is of utmost importance.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, secularism is an ideology that originated in Western countries and has influenced other Islamic nations, including Turkiye, Indonesia, and others. The emergence of secularism was a response to the desire of society to protest against the dominance of the church and clergy in their lives, which resulted in chaos and oppression. The secular culture in Turkiye is manifested in various aspects of society, including politics, education, legal system, and public institutions. It is reflected in the Turkish Constitution, which guarantees religious freedom and prohibits discrimination based on religion. Turkish secularism also influences the education system, where religious education is separated from general education, allowing individuals to receive a secular education while also having the option to pursue religious studies if they choose. Overall, the type of secular culture in Turkiye promotes the coexistence of different religious beliefs within a secular state framework, ensuring the protection of individual rights and freedoms while maintaining a separation between religion and the state.

Since the emergence of secularism, various philosophers, theologians, religious scholars, and others have expressed their views on this ideology. On average, those who provide perspectives on secularism, especially those who are Muslims, do not support and oppose secularism as it contradicts the teachings of Islam. Scholars have been concerned since the emergence of secularism because if Muslims do not clearly understand the context of secularism and become too influenced by Western culture, they may no longer rely on the Quran and Sunnah as guidance in their daily lives.

The culture of secularism lead to a decline in the faith of Muslims and the inheritance of Islamic teachings based on the Quran and Sunnah to future generations. Although some philosophers support secularism, they still acknowledge that this ideology can negatively affect individuals, society, and the nation if individuals are too free to act without any restrictions. The problems arising from secularism must be discussed among Islamic institutions, families, education systems, governments, and others to resolve these issues promptly. Therefore, society needs to have a deeper understanding of secularism, to recognize this ideology clearly, and to prevent misinterpretations that may lead individuals or communities to violate the religious boundaries should adhere to.

Acknowledgement: Acknowledgment is extended to all researchers who have contributed to this study.

Conflicts of Interest: There have no conflict of interest.

References

Abidin, Z. L., Kamaruddin, K., & Arsad, S. (2020). Sekularisme, faktor dan kesan. *International Journal of Muamalat*, 4(1), 162-173.

- Azizi, M. A. M. (2021, 2 July). *Islam sebagai cara hidup*. Bedaie. <https://bedaie.com/2021/07/02/islam-sebagai-cara-hidup/>.
- Fadzil, M. M. M. (2020, 17 February). *Al Kahfi: Pendirian yang longgar di akhir zaman*. Harakah Daily. <https://harakahdaily.net/index.php/2020/02/17/al-kahfi-pendirian-yang-longgar-diakhir-zaman/>.
- Fauzan, F. (2017). Sekularisasi dalam pandangan Harvey Cox. *Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Pemikiran Islam*, 6(2), 251. <http://dx.doi.org/10.24042/klm.v6i2.406>
- Hänninen, M. E. (2002). *The contest of Indian secularism* [Master's dissertation, University of Helsinki]. <https://helda.helsinki.fi/items/d648c963-8afc-47a7-ab2b-9edaab01c077>
- Ibrahim, K. M. & Nor, M. R. M. (2018). Sekularisasi dalam perundangan Turki dan kesannya terhadap masyarakat. *Jurnal Pusat Penataran Ilmu dan Bahasa*, 28, 153-170. <https://doi.org/10.51200/manu.v28i.1589>
- Ismail, M. A., Stapa, Z. & Suhaimi, A. S. (2012). Islam dan pembentukan jati diri Bangsa Melayu. *Jurnal Hadhari*, Special Edition, 143-154.
- Salleh, A. M. (1999). *Sekularisme dalam politik: Satu kajian menurut pespektif Islam* [Master's dissertation, University of Malaya]. <http://studentsrepo.um.edu.my/846/>
- Syahadha, F. (2020). Nasionalisme, sekularisme di Turki. *Majalah Ilmiah Tabuah: Ta'limat, Budaya, Agama Dan Humaniora*, 24(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.37108/tabuah.v24i1.268>