RECONSIDERING THE SECULAR REPUBLIC OF TURKEY: THE PLACE OF RELIGION IN A DEMOCRATIC, SECULAR AND MUSLIM MAJORITY STATE

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All information presented in this work has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. This thesis is the sole work of the author and all information and materials not original to this work have been fully cited and referenced in accordance with academic standards and ethics.

Jeremy Paul Barker

May 2012

ABSTRACT

Jeremy Paul Barker   **May 2012**

RECONSIDERING THE SECULAR REPUBLIC OF TURKEY: THE PLACE OFRELIGION IN A DEMOCRATIC, SECULAR AND MUSLIM MAJORITY STATE

The role of religion in the public sphere in the Republic of Turkey has been a contested issue since the earliest days and continues to be into the present. The principle of secularism has been a core feature of the state. The understanding of what secularism requires has been influenced by the secularization thesis of modernization theory which saw the reduction of religion as a sign of advancement. The reality of world events has proved to be rather different and the conception of secularism is now being reexamined to understand what it does and does not mean. This thesis builds on the work done across a variety of academic fields to understand what secularism actually means and how it relates to democracy within a pluralistic society. The insight gained from these fields is then considered in relation to the particular historical and present context of the Turkish case.

The history of the development of secularism in Turkey is considered in detail. At the founding of the Republic there was an adoption of a strict and controlling assertive secularism that was not only a political principle but also a commitment to a secularization of society. The current context is examined which illuminates why there is a need for a reconsideration of the understanding of secularism. A model of secularism is proposed which is better suited for both the commitment of the Turkish state to a consolidated liberal democracy while providing checks against the abuse of religion. The potential impact of this model is then examined across a variety of domestic and international issues. The contention is that a redefined understanding of secularism will aid the consolidation of democracy and the role of Turkey as an influential actor in global affairs.

Keywords: Secularism, Religion in Public Sphere, Secularization, Democracy, Turkey, Kemalism

KISA ÖZET

Jeremy Paul Barker   **Mayis 2012**

Laik Türk Cumhuriyetini Yeniden Düşünmek:
Demokratik, Laik ve Çoğunluğu Müslüman bir Toplumda Dinin Yeri

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde halk açısından dinin yeri, ilk zamanlarından bu yana tartışmaya açık bir konu olagelmiştir. Laiklik ilkesi devletin temel bir özelliği olmuştur. Laikliğin ne gerektirdiği anlayışı, laikliğin ilerleyişinde dinin etkisinin azalması olarak gören modernleşme teorisinden etkilenmiştir. Dünya olayları gerçeği oldukça farklı olduğunu kanıtlamıştır ve laiklik fikrinin ne anlama gelip gelmediğinin anlaşılması için bugün tekrar gözden geçirilmektedir. Bu tez çeşitli akademik alanlarda yapılan birçok araştırma üzerine laikliğin aslında ne anlama geldiğini ve bunun çoğulcu bir toplumda demokrasiyle nasıl ilgili olduğunu anlamak amacıyla yazılmıştır. Bu alanlardan elde edilen görüş daha sonra Türkiye'nin özellikle tarihsel ve güncel olaylarla ilişkisi bağlamında değerlendirilmiştir.

Türkiye'de laikliğin tarihsel gelişimi detaylarıyla incelenmiştir. Cumhuriyetin kuruluşunda, katı, denetleyici, zorlayıcı ve sadece siyasi değil aynı zamanda toplumun da laikleşmesine bağlı bir laiklik benimsenmişti. Mevcut durum, laiklik anlayışının neden tekrar gözden geçirilmeye ihtiyaç duyulduğunu aydınlatmak için incelenmiştir. Dini kötüye kullanmaya karşı kontroller sağlarken, Türkiye'nin sağlamlaştırılmış bir liberal demokrasiye olan bağlılığına daha çok uyan bir laiklik modeli önerilmiştir. Bu modelin potansiyel etkisi daha sonra çeşitli yurtiçi ve uluslararası konularda incelenmiştir. Yeniden tanımlanan bir laiklik anlayışı sağlam bir demokrasiye ve Türkiye'nin küresel meselelerde etkili rol oynamasına yardımcı olacağı görüşü savunulmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Laiklik, Halk Kesiminde Din, Laikleşme, Demokrasi, Türkiye, Kemalizm.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The last few decades have made an important statement that religion matters in politics and international affairs. This comes in stark contrast to the secularization thesis embedded in modernization theory that was dominant in sociology and political science until the later part of the 20th century. The reality of religion's influence in domestic and international affairs requires that the dominant strands of thinking regarding religion and its place in public life need to be reconsidered.

This reconsideration is taking place across a variety of academic fields from sociology and religious studies to political science and international relations. This thesis will draw on the considerable work that has been done in each of those fields. Beginning by drawing insight from the work of sociology, reconsidering what secularism is and its role in ordering the place of religion and diversity within in a state, this thesis applies this work to the particular Turkish case, proposes a revised conception of secularism for Turkey, and ultimately considers the implications of this understanding of secularism across a variety of important areas including both domestic and foreign relations.

1.1 Secularism in Turkey: Contested Meaning?

Turkey presents a very compelling case study for considering the meaning of secularism as the Turkish society is a demonstrably religious society and also secularism is a fundamental characteristic of the state. Since the founding of the Republic Turkey's modernization process "has been inextricably linked with the question of secularism" (Grigoriadis 2009, 1194). There is a dominant majority religion in Sunni Islam but also other significant minority religious communities both Muslim and non-Muslim. From the Ottoman period there is a long history of religion

intertwined with the state, but since the founding of the Republic the state has embraced a controlling secularist stance towards religion and yet has been prone to an instrumental use of a particular understanding of religion. Turkey today is a country that is striving to develop its liberal democratic credentials in transparent civilian government and more freedoms for its citizens and yet in doing so should allow for greater religious freedom and acknowledgment of diversity within society.

This democratic process has reversed the traditional roles and makes those strict secularists who want to control religion, rather than the religious, appear as the impediment to progress. The accession process to the European Union has been a contributing factor in anchoring many of the democratic reforms. Also the wave of democratic uprisings in Turkey's neighborhood has attracted many watchers to study how Turkey retains both its Muslim identity and the principles of liberal democracy. Thus the place of religion within Turkish society is an issue which has not only domestic implications but foreign ramifications as well. It is the goal of this thesis to further the discussion of the place of religion in Turkey both in the political realm and other areas of society as this is an important issue to be considered as Turkey continues its development as a consolidated democracy. As Ahmet Hadi Adanali points out discussions of the role of religion have a polarizing effect and are rarely undertaken in a calm and objective manner (Adanli 2008, 238). It is asserted that by rethinking the conception of secularism in Turkey away from a narrow, assertive, and controlling secularist interpretation to a passive and inclusive secularism implemented through a process of consensus that Turkey will move farther in the direction of good governance, robust freedoms and liberties for all of its citizens, and continue its

progression to becoming a democratic country with a vast influence in international affairs.

1.2 Secularism in Context: The Big Picture

The concept of secularism, which has occupied a central aspect of modernization theory since the 19th century, has recently been subjected to greater scrutiny under the light of recent events. The idea that states should be radically secular with religion banned from any contribution in the public sphere has not held true. Thus across the fields of sociology and religious studies to political science and international relations the effect of religion is being more seriously considered. This thesis intentionally borrows from the work done in sociology to understand in greater depth the history and development of secularism. By considering secularism in its wider context the fundamental elements of the relationship between democracy and secularism can be established. Then a historical analysis of the development of secularism in Turkey is conducted to see why the particular conception of secularism was adopted by the founders of the Republic and how that has been contested throughout the years. It also benefits from the field of international relations and scholars who have considered the role of religion in the consolidation of democracy and the impact that has on the relationship between states.

This study will draw from the work done by sociologists and political philosophers such as Charles Taylor (2007), Jose Casanova (2006; 2008), and Akeel Bilgrami (2011) who have advanced the understanding of secularism in general and have put out a call for why and how it should be reshaped. The need for rethinking secularism is not purely about religion but about how religion contributes to public life within a democratic context with a diversity of voices. Thus the concepts of

citizenship and the articulation of values in the public sphere is also part of the discussion. In this case the interaction between John Rawls (1993) and Jurgen Habermas (2006) on the ethics of citizenship and Craig Calhoun (2010; 2011) who has considered specifically how religion and secularism fit into the public sphere are particularly relevant for providing a philosophical background.

The work of Monica Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Shah (2011) together with Elizabeth Hurd (2008) argue the fact that religion truly does matter in international affairs. This assertion stands in contrast to modernization theory but is substantiated by recent events and by an examination of the reality across different states. Jonathan Fox (2008) provides hard data on the relationship between religion and state across the globe which provides the empirical data to support the conclusion that there is not a singular conception of what secularism is or how religion must be incorporated into a democratic state. Alfred Stepan (2000; 2010) looks at a variety of democracies, using the empirical works of Fox, among others, and argues that rather than requiring a separation of church and state (such as what is seen in the American and French separatist tradition) the reality is much more varied than is usually acknowledged. He articulates that the baseline commitments of secularism can be better framed along the lines of his "twin tolerations." These rather than a particular institutional arrangement are hallmarks of the "multiple secularisms" of democratic states. Murat Somer (2010), Murat Akan (forthcoming) and Ahmet Kuru (2006, 2007) apply some of this thinking of "twin tolerations" and an inclusive and "passive secularism" rather than a strict "assertive secularism" to the Turkish case.

For the historical development of secularism in Turkey Erik Zurcher (2004), Ayla Gol (2009), Soner Cagaptay (2006) and Hakan Yavuz (2009) provide the

storyline for how the Turkish Republic came into being and the place that religion was given and how it was controlled by the new state and as it created a particular conception of identity. Umut Azak (2010), Gunter and Yavuz (2007), and Andrew Davison (2003) look at the development of secularism in general towards the modern era and particular debates that highlight the policies that were adopted and the tensions this created. Ihsan Yilmaz (2011) and Menderes Cinar and Burhanettin Duran (2008) look at the transformation of political Islam in Turkey. This process alongside of the continued development of democracy in Turkey has created a more plural and open public sphere. The singular national identity is being challenged across a variety of fronts. This development has sparked the fears of some that secularism is in danger. The reality, when considered in a broader spectrum, is that a particular understanding of secularism is being challenged through progress in democracy. The question remaining from the literature is what this ought to look like.

This thesis will attempt to fill a gap in the literature through applying the recent research on secularism and religion in international affairs to the Turkish case. It will build especially on the work of Azak (2010) who sees the need for a reworking of secularism and provides the back-story by showing secularism's continuous reconstruction. Drawing on elements of Kuru's (2007) passive secularism coupled together with insight drawn from Stepan (2000), Taylor (2007), and Bilgrami (2011) a new model can be proposed and then its implications considered across a number of different issues particular to Turkey in its efforts to consolidate its democracy and increase its influence in regional and global affairs. This study will require a serious engagement with the place of religion in public life and international affairs. This is

an aspect that has been largely missing from the traditional theories of International Relations.

1.3 Secularism in Theory: Religion and International Relations

This thesis is part of a growing body of literature that attempts to deal seriously with the role that religion plays in public life, both domestically within a particular society and state and internationally in relationships between states. This growing body of literature is in many ways an attempt to refresh a field that was largely absent for long period of time (Sandal and James 2010). The second chapter will consider in some amount of detail the origins of the secularization thesis and how this impacted the social sciences and predicted – and in some senses attempted to encourage - the decline of the role of religion. Jonathan Fox and Shmuel Sandler attempt to bring religion into international relations and in doing so question why it is that "religion is rarely included in most major theories of international relations and when it is addressed, it is usually through viewing it as a subcategory of some topic that is considered more important such as institutions, terrorism, society, or civilizations" (Fox and Sandler 2004, 9). The theories of international relations have been ill-suited for making sense of the role of religion in recent decades and are now attempting to catch up and develop adequate explanatory frameworks.

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd has been a voice that has sought to explain the underlying cause for why it is that international relations theories have been poorly equipped for understanding religions' influence not just on the individual but on society collectively and relationships between states. She says that this is due in large part to the phenomenon of "the unquestioned acceptance of the secularist division between religion and politics." She argues that rather than this phenomenon being

something universally fixed it needs to be understood to be a social and historical construction and that it is the failure to grasp this that has hindered the inability of students of international relations to grasp the power of international relations (Hurd 2008, 1). In her book, Hurd provides a number of concrete cases to show how and why this is the case. Among the cases where she argues that international relations theory is missing an understanding of religion as a useful explanatory factor is the case of Turkey.

In attempting to make sense of recent developments within Turkey she recognizes the difficulties traditional explanations have had and that these developments are part of "efforts to grant cultural and historical legitimacy to alternative models of religious separation and accommodation. They are attempts to refashion the secular" (Ibid., 71). As will be seen later in this thesis this process of refashioning has been one that has been hotly contested and oftentimes polarizing. For this reason an understanding of the philosophical grounding of secularism as is laid out in the second chapter is quite valuable. In examining the philosophical roots of secularism it is an attempt to shed light on how it came to be and not succumb to the "unquestioned acceptance" that Hurd critiques.

Fox and Sandler provide an argument for why it is that the rejection of religion by international relations scholars was so profound. "While sociologists and political scientists had a body of theory explaining why religion was believed to be of declining significance, there is no analogous body of theory in international relations" (Fox and Sandler 2004, 15). They investigate in depth the underlying reasons for why religion has been absent within international relations. In summary they believe that first, the social sciences are rooted within western thought that rejected religion as an

explanation for the world. Second, international relations is, in their opinion, perhaps the most Western-centric of all the social sciences. Third, international relations is primarily concerned with quantifiable measurements and tends to ignore things that cannot be measured, and religion is particularly difficult to measure. Fourth, the major theories are based on assumptions that favor more concrete factors in opposition to religion and other less tangible factors (Fox and Sandler 2004, 9-10). These factors Fox and Sandler identify help to explain why it is that the traditional theories largely ignored religion until just recently.

The relative absence of religion within international relations theory in the past does not necessarily leave a pessimistic picture for the future. There is potential for religion to be integrated within some of the traditional theoretical models. Some theories are much better equipped to do this than others. Nukhet Sandal and Patrick James "encourage thinking about religion without abandoning the widely used frameworks in IR theory" (Sandal and James 2010, 19). From their survey they show how it is possible within classical realism is suited to examine the sub-state accounts of religion, while neoliberalism is able to examine religious organizations and related transnational phenomena. Structural realism and neorealism face a more difficult challenge, yet for Sandal and James bring religion into the these theoretical models has the potential for "important research implications" and thus is worth pursuing (Ibid., 18-19). As part of this effort to bring religion into the field of international relations there is a need for analyzing individual case studies that can be brought into the broader discussions on the transnational and global system (Cady and Hurd 2010, 6). As particular cases are studied they help to challenge a singular interpretation of the way that religion and politics come together. This process might be understood as

the multiple secularisms that are part of the modern world. This thesis deals in particular with the Turkish case and the development of secularism in Turkey throughout its history. This process of development has been marked by challenges and changes.

1.4 Secularism in Development: Challenges and Changes

Secularism as a concept has faced a number of challenges and changes not just within Turkey but also when considered in a much broader spectrum. This thesis begins with a study of the conceptions of secularism. This is done by tracing the roots of secularism back to the philosophers of the 18th and 19th century who laid the groundwork for a "disenchanted world." This philosophical thread was part of modernization theory and ultimately formulated in the "secularization thesis" that was extremely influential in social sciences and international relations until the last part of the 20th. Thus understanding its background and the challenges it has faced is particularly helpful.

Another important element of the conceptions of secularism is a clarification of the vocabulary and the important distinctions between "secular," "secularization," and "secularism," also where "laicism" fits into the schema. These terms are also considered within the larger framework of the relationship between secularism and democracy. A final and important concept of secularism in relationship to Turkey is to consider the dominant strands represented by France and the United States. These can be employed as "ideal types" which help to distinguish concepts while recognizing the latitude that exists between them. The first chapter sets the study of secularism in Turkey within its wider context both philosophically and globally.

The second chapter provides the narrative for the development of secularism from the founding of the Republic to the present. In this development the logic for why the particular style of secularism was adopted by the Kemalist elites is considered. It also considers how religion was controlled by the state not only to limit its influence but also to be used as an instrument of the state. Religion has been a polarizing part of social and political life and the tension between religious groups and secularist groups is examined. This competition is considered in the current context which demonstrates why there is a need to rethink secularism. This need is not necessarily due to the failure of the Kemalist project, but might actually be seen as a necessary outcome of the embracing of liberal democracy which respects the rights of the citizens and allows for a diversity of voices in the public sphere.

In light of the current context, both in Turkey and the broader thinking of the place of religion within democratic states, a model of secularism is proposed which is better suited to the realities of modern Turkey. This model advocates for both a strong secular state and the freedom for all citizens irrespective of their religious or non-religious viewpoints to contribute in the public sphere. It is a secularism that is not oriented against religion but by means of a lexical ordering positions the values agreed on by the citizens first if and when there is a conflict between religious practice and those values. This model of secularism is then defined within the context of the "twin tolerations" and its commitment to the political principle of secularism while not necessarily forcing a secularization of society. Thus it lies within the tradition of a passive rather than an assertive secularism.

The final chapter considers what the results of the proposed secularism might be in regard to both domestic issues and foreign relations. It is argued that such a

model, which requires a process of consensus building and interaction by all facets of society, will help to reduce the polarizing nature of religion. There are also particular challenges in terms of minority rights and religious freedom that face the Turkish state in its efforts to consolidate its democracy. While not claiming that the religion-secularism debate is the only issue, the proposed model may be beneficial in the process of resolving these issues. How Turkey is able to do this will have significant effects both domestically and internationally.

Turkey's position as a leader in its region as a Muslim majority state that has made advances in democracy is being watched closely by the broader Muslim world. As a number of states made a significant shift towards democracy in recent days, Turkey's role in being both a liberal democratic state with freedom and participation for all of its citizens religious and non-religious, Muslim and non-Muslim is of even greater significance. Turkey's policy towards religion also has effects in its relationships with the European Union and the United States. The European Union membership process has been a significant part of anchoring the democratic reforms Turkey has made to the present. If Turkey is able to shift from a controlling stance towards religion to a liberal approach, without abandoning its democracy it will come more into line with the values of freedom articulated by the West. In this aspect the role of the United States and the European Union to show in the Turkish case that they support democracy in all countries including those with an active contribution from Islamic political actors over authoritarian secularism. Thus the place of religion within the Turkish state is not only a domestic question but carries significance in the international realm as well.

CHAPTER II: CONCEPTS OF SECULARISM

To attempt to define the place of religion in public life in modern states is no simple task. There are a variety of answers and all of them offer a particular understanding of the issue. In the introduction to his article "Rethinking Secularism," social scientist Craig Calhoun offers this observation "secularism is often treated as a sort of absence. It's what is left if religion fades. It's the exclusion of religion from the public square but somehow in itself neutral" (Calhoun 2010, 35). Is this an accurate portrayal? Is secularism the neutral absence of religious view points? Can this condition be achieved so long as religion is sufficiently isolated or at the very least ignored? Is this the natural state of affairs that is best for individuals to live in? The assumption that secularism is neutral is quite a big assumption. As Calhoun continues "Whether we see it as an ideology, a worldview, a stance toward religion, a constitutional approach, or simply an aspect of some other project – of science or a philosophical system – secularism is something we need to think through, rather than merely the absence of religion" (ibid.). The idea that secularism is more than a natural state that exists when religion is removed from the society requires that it be addressed and properly understood and applied.

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd in *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* comes to a conclusion similar to Calhoun. She says "secularism needs to be analyzed as a form of political authority in its own right, and its consequences evaluated for international relations" (Hurd 2008, 1). If secularism is "something" then it needs to be considered and evaluated on its own merits and not simply assumed to be correct. This opening section will spend some time considering this

issue and its historical development and multifaceted character in general before returning to the particular case of Turkey.

2.1 The Secularization Thesis

To consider the issue of secularism and religion is most generally to discuss life in the public square. The issues over which debates arise are when religion enters into public life. As Peter Beyer states "without doubt, the most frequently contentious issues with respect to religion in contemporary society have had to do with the boundary between religion and nonreligion" (Beyer 2003, 51). Roger Trigg takes up this issue in his work *Religion in Public Life* and acknowledges that one of the chief problems concerns even defining the nature of the terms "public" and "private" (Trigg 2007, 204). It is at this point when religion becomes interesting in the social sciences.

One of the foremost thinkers in the process of defining public life or the public sphere has been Jurgen Habermas. In his seminal work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* he envisioned a space that was distinct from the state, the economy, and the family where ideas could be presented, debated, reasons accepted or rejected (Habermas 1991). As Mendieta and Vanatwerpen point out, though in his initial work religion was at the very least absent if not treated negatively, in later works Habermas came to see the important role that religion does play in the debates in the public sphere (Mendieta and Vanatwerpen 2011, 3-4). The issue of religion in terms of sociology and the other social sciences is about the relationship between the individual and the society.

In their summary of sociologists who have had a significant impact on the study of religion Furseth and Repstad identify the common theme of the "emphasis on a tension between individual and society" (Furseth and Repstad 2006, 71-72).

Religion as it relates to the individual becomes meaningful in sociology and political studies when it crosses into the public sphere, or when the political structure takes measures to ensure it is confined to the private life. While some may wish to privatize religion and exclude it wholesale the reality is this is nearly impossible. As Trigg argues in the early pages of his work, to attempt to keep religious controversy off the public stage is simply to restrain forces that will inevitably burst forth. It is much healthier to allow religion to play its part in public and rational debates about matters of common concern (Trigg 2007, 9). This line of thinking has not always been the normative viewpoint towards religion and public life.

A dominant strand of thinking towards the relationship of religion and public life is what has come to be known as the secularization thesis. This view which was based on the western experience of industrialization and modernization subsumed secularization as a natural part of development. The original ideas of early thinkers were repackaged and considered as various forms of modernization theory on which the secularization theory is based (Wuthnow 2003, 18-21). While the realities of recent years have caused this thesis to be reconsidered, as Jonathan Fox and Shmuel Sandler do in their study (Fox and Sandler 2005, 317), the secularization thesis continues to cast its shadow over much of the thinking concerning religion and secularism and, therefore, is worthy of a significant discussion.

Central to this view was the belief that modernism was inextricably linked with secularization. The result, it was believed, was that religion would give way to the products of the modern world. Jurgen Habermas in earlier years was a spokesman for this belief. Furseth and Repstad describe that Habermas believed that "religion is a phenomenon that is bound to abdicate to the force of rationality and retreat to a

private sphere set apart from science and politics" (Furseth and Repstad 2006, 51).

Habermas was not alone in this belief that religion would give way to the modern

world. In the opening pages of *God's Century*, Toft, Philpott, and Shah cite a quote

from another thinker of the same era. "In 1968, Peter Berger, one of the past

generation's greatest sociologists, predicted that by 'the 21st century, religious

believers are likely to be found only in small sects, huddled together to resist a

worldwide secular culture'" (Toft, Philpott, and Shah 2011, 148). Berger was

speaking here in line with the prevailing trend both within academia and political

science as a whole. The secularization thesis saw the decline of religion as inherent to

modernization and, in fact, the end result of the modernity narrative.

While Peter Berger and Jurgen Habermas among others represent the mid to

late 20th century proponents of the secularization thesis, its foundations go back to the

Enlightenment era. Immanuel Kant, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and thinkers of the

French Revolution, and then throughout the 19th – 20th century with philosophers like

Auguste Comte, Henri Saint-Simon, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, and

Friedrich Nietzsche. Comte and Saint-Simon laid the groundwork in a theory of

history that society passes through stages and on the way traditional religion is

gradually and irreversibly undermined by science and the state. Religion and

modernity simply don't mix (Gorski 2003, 111). It was Nietzsche who, through the

voice of his "madman," forebodingly declares "God is dead. God remains dead. And

we have killed him." Nietzsche's intention here as Heidegger assesses it is that the

"suprasensory world is without effective power. It bestows no life" (Heidegger 1977,

61). In the modern world, according to Nietzsche, man has discovered the explanation

for life and this has left no place for God.

For Marx his theory of historical materialism would result in the individual worker's realization of a "true consciousness of reality" and this would lead to the displacement of religion. In his view religion was most often embraced by those near the bottom of a social hierarchy and would be abandoned as one advanced (Furseth and Repstad 2006, 31-32). Because for Marx nothing can be understood without relation to the economic order, religion was a dependent variable. Marx took the view that religion was a "social malformation which disguises the exploitative relationships of capitalist society. Religion persuades people that such relationships are natural and, therefore, acceptable" (Davie 2003, 62). Marx thought that once religion was stripped away the real injustices of the social system would be exposed. He did not however, according to Davie, advocate for the forced removal of religion as was adopted by Marxist regimes. His view was that "religion would disappear of its own accord given the advent of the classless society: quite simply, it would no longer be necessary" (Ibid., 63). Marx here laid a seed that would be picked up on by others in this sociological stream.

A second philosopher whose views have been particularly influential in the formulation of the secularization thesis was Max Weber. Weber as a sociologist and economist was concerned with religion as it was a particular kind of social action. What Weber saw was the development or evolution of religion. Furseth and Repstad comment that he claimed the process of rationalization has shifted religion from the realm of the rational into the non-rational, making the modern world one "robbed of gods" (Furseth and Repstad 2006, 35). It was this movement from an "enchanted" world to a "disenchanted world," a category that Charles Taylor picks up as part of the "axial age theory" in his work the *A Secular Age,* that for Weber was a sign of

modernity (Taylor 2007, 446). Weber attempted to avoid an essentialist interpretation of religion and analyzed it in relation to the contribution it makes in recognizing the meaning of life (Hall 2003, 365). While much could be drawn from Weber's work a particular aspect is important for the discussion of the secularization thesis. In a fashion somewhat similar to Marx, who saw religion becoming unnecessary in a classless society, Weber foresaw an erosion of religion as an effective force in society. As Davie shows, central to Weber's views on religion was the belief that religion was something separate from society or "the world." A connection that was implicit in this concept was that the distance between these two spheres in modern societies is being eroded and this is the process of secularization or what Weber labeled the "disenchanted world" (Davie 2003, 63-64). This is the evolution of society that brought about the world "robbed of gods," where religion had lost its usefulness. Weber was here arguing for a differentiation of value spheres that he felt was fundamental to modernity (Calhoun 2010, 46). From the philosophy of both Marx and Weber an evolution was identified. Through the progress of science, modernization, and industrialization, and as a result of those developments, in increasingly complex and advanced societies religion was on its way to losing its effectiveness and value in the modern world.

From this stream of philosophy the secularization theory was developed. It was believed that the decline in Christian belief and practice, primarily in the West and especially Europe, was part of a general decline in the power and plausibility of religion and religious institutions (Gorski 2003, 111). The diminishing role of religion was interpreted as a sign of maturation in the modernity of a society (Calhoun 2010, 47). While writing largely in refutation of the classical secularization theory, Charles

Taylor provides a good description of what composes the theory. While there are variations of it, secularization theory can be described as a three-storey house. The ground floor is the factual claim that religious belief and practice have declined both in numbers and in influence. The basement is the philosophical underpinnings to explain why this is the case. The upper floor consists of a statement that the religious beliefs that do exist today have been changed and it is a new kind of belief (Taylor 2007, 431-432). This picture helps to conceptualize that perhaps more is included in the secularization thesis than first meets the eye. It is not simply about a decline in religious adherents or a neutral public sphere but it is rooted in a specific philosophical tradition and makes a judgment on the value and nature of religious belief that continue to exist.

The accuracy of the secularization thesis as a guide for understanding global affairs is a topic which has been severely questioned in recent years, but it forms an important part of the development of Turkish society. The general proposition of the secularization thesis is that (1) the general number of people who identify themselves as religious and regularly participate in religious activities decreases as a country modernizes. (2) There will be a retreat of religion from the public square as social, economic, and political institutions are transformed toward a religiously neutral identity. (3) Religion in a modern society can remain influential only if it is appropriately "modernized" and proves itself compatible with modern norms (Thomas 2005, 52). This thesis was a dominant strand of thinking throughout the late 19th century and into the decades following World War II and its influence was felt not just in sociology but in political science and international relations sometimes explicitly and sometimes through seemingly objective categories and explanatory

frameworks and the assumptions that international relations theories were based on (Cady and Hurd 2010, 9).The study of secularism or the place of religion in modern societies has developed within a philosophical stream that emerged in a particular context. In modernization theory religion was seen as a holdover from a bygone age and the absence or decrease of religion was perceived as a progress towards the ideal of modernity. An example of the influence of this thinking can be seen as some of these same notions are articulated in the founding years of the Turkish Republic.

2.2 Secular, Secularization, Secularism, and Laicism

The philosophical trend that led to the secularization thesis was based on the idea that religion would lose its usefulness, its effective power as Heidegger described, or just disappear altogether in Marx's classless society. In the process of these ideas moving from philosophy to practice in modern societies there has been a great amount of ambiguity. The language which is used to debate the ideas has developed. Various connotations based on particular experiences have been interwoven among the variety of denotative meanings. What exactly is meant when someone speaks of the "secularization" of society? What is the distinction between the terms "secular," "secularism," and "secularization"? Where does "laicism" fit into the schema? What of the difference between the secularization of society and the secularization of the state? In order for there to be a fruitful discussion on an issue as wide-ranging as the role of religion in public life there is need for a categorization of terms.

Tom Boyd provides a helpful starting point in his overview of the language used in this debate. The term "secular" emerged within the religious community from the Latin *saeculum* "meaning belonging to an age or generation. It suggests

immediate and mundane life in this present, as opposed to any other, dimension, or world" (Boyd 2006, 1). Calhoun points out the root notion of secular "is a contrast not to religion but to eternity." It was not in opposition to religion but within the context of religion that the term emerged, and only over time did the spheres of the "sacred" and the "secular" become polarized. Even for the early Christian thinker Augustine in his distinction between the City of God and the City of Man, it was not a banishment of religion from the "secular" affairs, but a contrast between the religious who live in the secular with the guidance of God and those who inhabit the same space, the secular, without the guidance of Christianity (Calhoun 2010, 38). The terms "laic" and "laicism" emerged in a similar manner but offers a slightly different emphasis. "*Laicus* refers to the "laity," that is, those within the religious community who have no ecclesiastical title or standing" (Boyd 2006, 2). Davison also reflects on this aspect by saying that *"lay* certainly has some secularized meanings (e.g., "nonexpert"), but its English usage still seriously conveys its core original affiliation with the nonclerical, but still religious, members of a community of believers" (Davison 2003, 334). According to Boyd, this term, like secular, only gradually came to mean against religion and in this reflected the historical movement of elevating the sacred at the expense of the secular. In speaking of the secular it is not necessarily against religion but simply of the mundane ordinary period of life in which all live.

The cognate "secularization" is a process that advances on the idea of the secular. Boyd takes this as the process by which the secular is made increasingly central or dominant (Boyd 2006, 3). While this is helpful it does not do justice to the multiplicity of ways in which the term is employed. In the search for clarity sociologist Jose Casanova has done a valuable service to the discussion. In speaking

of "secularization" he argues there are three connotations of the term that need to be distinguished. (1) Secularization as the *decline of religious beliefs and practice* in modern societies. (2) Secularization as the *privatization of religion.* (3) Secularization as the *differentiation of the secular spheres*. By beginning to form categories such as these we are able to assess the validity of each of these components that are often interwoven (Casanova 2006, 7; italics in original). The first is the most recent development and is central to many present debates and its validity will be considered in a subsequent section. The second understanding of the privatization of religion was a central part of the application of the secularization thesis to modern life. It is described as religion "giving up (voluntarily or involuntarily) any direct political roles, and the simultaneous creation of limited space for the free exercise of religion" (Jansen 2010, 72). The third understanding Casanova says was a "core component of the classic theories of secularization" which is defined as the transfer of persons, things, meanings, etc. from religious to civil use and control (Casanova 2006, 7-8). This third understanding is parallel to Boyd's idea of the secular becoming central. Secularization, then, is the process whereby the secular becomes the norm in society. Religious faith and practice has been privatized and when practiced in the community it is only within the confined space assigned to it. Secularization also encompasses the functional differentiation whereby it is the non-religious, the secular entities, that are able to provide meaning, symbols, and language and the religious is confined to its assigned space.

If there is an element of ambiguity in defining the concept of secularization, secularism is even more imprecise in relation to its popular usage though it has specific denotative meanings. Cady and Hurd trace the origins of secularism to the

19th century English philosopher George Holyoake and his 1854 *Principles of Secularism.* Holyoake's vision was for a life orientation that was bigger than the anti-Christian beliefs of atheism. "Secularism, as Holyoake fashioned it, was not the antithesis of religion or one side of a religion-secularism binary. It was a canopy large enough to house some forms of religion as it excluded others. Its capaciousness was one of its defining virtues" (Cady and Hurd 2010, 3). Thus within secularism there was space for a wide variety of viewpoints including both religious and non-religious. Secularism for Holyoake was as Davison points out "a policy of life for those who do not accept theology" but it was not exclusive of those who did (Davison 2003, 334). Rather than being against religion it was actually just an attempt to better incorporate a variety of beliefs within a society.

Jose Casanova points out that the often overlooked fact that secularism was to a large extent shaped by the internal transformation of European Christianity (Casanova 2008, 107). Tom Boyd describes that "secular-ism, as with all 'isms,' tends to harden the idea of the secular into an ideology" (Boyd 2006, 3). Within this ideology, as will be seen, there has been a wide range of applications. In terms of the relationship between secularization and secularism Berkes states that "the two are often interrelated, but the later is not a necessary accompaniment or a necessary product of the former" (Berkes 1998, 3). Secularism as an ideology is itself shaped by a number of factors around it and it is not a monolith that can be imported in country after country. Calhoun makes this point, after sketching in brief some of the particular states that claim the banner of secularism, he concludes "in each of these contexts, secularism takes on its own meanings, values, and associations; it is not simply a neutral antidote to religious conflicts" (Calhoun 2010, 37). This reality is what leads

Mahmood to state that "secularism is a historically shifting category with a variegated genealogy" (Mahmood 2006, 323). The reality of varied secularisms is beginning now to be acknowledged but for a long and critical period when a number of states were being formed an ideal of "secularism" was envisioned and nation-building projects were undertaken to achieve this prospect.

Building on the philosophical grounds that in modern societies religion becomes ineffective and irrelevant in the public square, which is an area outside of its prescribed position, it was embraced that religion must be made irrelevant. Cady and Hurd provides a useful summary of the narrative of secularism. "Throughout most of the twentieth century the conventional understanding has been that modern democracies are secular democracies, with little attention devoted to parsing the competing strains and dissenting elements of various forms of secularism" (Cady and Hurd 2010, 4). Jose Casanova reflects on the "secular European narrative" that after seeing the conflict that occurred due to the pre-modern fusion of religion and politics they realized that the political ideology of secularism was the best way to avoid such religious wars and the Enlightenment provided the philosophical basis. They assumed it was from this ground that democracy grows and thrives (Casanova 2007, 6). This narrative, while rooted in elements of historical fact was also part of what Casanova calls the "foundational myths" of contemporary European identity.

These modern democracies became the standard of modernity and central to that modernity was their version of secularism. What was meant by secularism though when applied broadly? What were those competing strains and various forms of secularism to which little attention was paid? Parsing those conceptions will help to provide a more thorough understanding of the ideology of secularism. Secularism as

an ideology stands apart from its cognate "secular" which is not inherently against religion but descriptive of those mundane things or the non-eternal. The other cognate examined is "secularization" which is the process by which the secular is made central. This term has garnered multiple connotations including the concepts of the privatization of religion and the differentiation of spheres that determine the acceptability of religion in some spheres and its exclusion in others. Secularism as an ideology has developed in a multiplicity of ways as it has been applied in particular democratic contexts.

2.3 Relationship of Secularism to Democracy

Embedded within the secularization thesis was the idea that modern societies were inherently secular societies. Religion simply did not have any place in the broader society. In the introduction to a comprehensive empirical study of government involvement in religion Jonathan Fox considers the place that religion continues to occupy. It is his observation that the idea rooted in modernization theory that a radical secularism, completely free of religion, is necessary for a modern democracy does not mesh with reality (Fox 2008, 13-19). The reality is that there is a variety of ways in which modern democracies integrate religion.

Alfred Stepan identifies four religion-state arrangements in democratic countries. Despite the prevalence that has been given to the separatist tradition, of which France and the United States are representative, the separatist strand is far from a normative arrangement for all democratic states. Stepan's four arrangements are: (1) "separatist" (France, United States, Turkey), (2) "established religion" (Denmark, Norway, United Kingdom), (3) "positive accommodation" (Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland), and (4) "respect all, positive cooperation, and principled distance"

(India, Indonesia, Senegal) (Stepan 2010). Each of these cases could be considered in more detail to show how democracies relate to religion in a variety of different ways.

As further example of the variety of religious practice, specifically within Western democracies which were believed to be the heart of secularity, of the twenty-seven examined by Fox nine have an official state religion, thirteen support one or more religion, and one regulates all religions. This means by his standards just four of twenty-seven western democratic governments neither endorse nor are hostile in terms of the Government Involvement in Religion variable (*GIR*) (Fox 2008, 107). All Western democracies, with the lone exception of the United States, fund religious education. A significant number of them fund religious charities (9/27), use tax money for religious purposes (11/27), fund clergy (12/27), have a government religious affairs department (10/27), and require registration of some form (11/27) (Ibid., 128). In conclusion to his examination of Western democracies Fox notes that "religion is ubiquitous but manifests itself in different ways. Certainly the region has characteristics which differentiate it from other regions including a relatively low level of religious discrimination and particularly low levels of religious regulation" (Ibid., 139). What can be drawn from this overview of the place of religion within Western democracies is that the particular institutional arrangement may vary from state to state but there is a baseline commitment that should be ensured in the arrangement of religion to the state in a consolidated democracy.

While accounting for a variety of arrangements of religion and state within democracies, making room for what Stepan labels as "multiple secularisms of modern

democracies" (Stepan 2010) or what Casanova labels as "multiple modernitites," (Casanova 2008, 107) certain common values can be identified.

In the analysis by Toft, Philpott, and Shah they look at two key factors that most often indicate whether the relationship between religion and the state will be peaceful or marked by conflict. These two factors are: political theology, which both shapes and is shaped by a religious actor's activities, and the independence or integration of political authority and religious authority (Toft, Philpott, and Shah 2011, 1027). Amal Jamal points to these two factors in response to those who say that either a particular kind of separation or integration of religion and the state is necessary for democracy. Through his comparative study of religion-state relationships in three Middle Eastern countries, Turkey, Egypt, and Israel, he elucidates that the same actions in one context will have widely varying results in another. The same principles when applied in different contexts will appear quite differently. Not only is this true in comparison of different countries but also as an individual country's character, circumstances, and political and social culture develop dynamically over time the application of the guiding principles of the state must not remain static but they too must develop.

Jamal argues that a dynamic view of the relationship is required. This is an understanding that recognizes that "the separation or the integration between state and religion, although different, does not precondition democratic transformation or democratization. It is the form and the measure of separation or integration that makes the difference" (Jamal 2009, 1144). Rather than it being a particular institutional agreement or the presence or absence of religion, it is the presence of certain baseline

democratic principles on which the state-religion relationship is established that marks the relationship of secularism and democracy.

While there may be other principles that could be considered the following are two of the most important principles of liberal democracy that need to be applied within the religion-state relationship. The first commitment is the safeguarding of the principle of autonomy for both church (religious actors) and state and the fundamental right of the freedom of religion and conscience. (WRR 2004, 6) What is meant by this is the recognition of separate domains of authority. The state is free to operate without direct interference from religious communities. On the other hand the state is without direct authority over internal affairs of religious communities, so long as their actions remain in accordance with the principles of the law. Stepan frames this in his "twin tolerations." These are, first, the toleration of the religious actors to the state to be free to make laws and govern without being subject to the control of the religious actors. Secondly, it is the toleration from the state to religious actors to form institutions, to advance their ideas in public and private life and even to form political parties in keeping with the rule of law (Stepan 2000, 39). In the relationship between religion and the state the spheres of autonomy or tolerations are necessary, while total absence of religion or a particular arrangement is not. The other underlying principle in liberal democracies is the assurance of freedom of religion and conscience.

Murat Somer highlights three freedoms that Stepan is promoting in his twin tolerations. They are (1) the freedom of elected governments from "constitutionally privileged" influence from religious institutions, (2) complete freedom of worship, and (3) the freedom of the pious to express values in both civil society and politics

unless they impinge on other people's liberties. For Somer, "the three conditions that characterize Stepan's twin tolerations may be interpreted as pointing to such a democratic notion of secularism" (Somer 2010, 35). This is that within a democracy and in keeping with the principle of secularism, the individual of any belief, majority or minority, or no religious belief is assured their constitutional liberties. There is no restriction as a result of a particular belief (WRR 2004, 29). This allows for the freedom of exercise and expression of religious beliefs for all religions without restriction.

To ensure the freedom of religion means that individuals are free not only to give mental assent but also to act in keeping with their religious beliefs including being part of a community of other believes and sharing their beliefs in public (Farr 2008, 23-25). Jurgen Habermas offers some explanation for what the manner in which these beliefs are articulated as part of the discourse in the public square while maintaining these "twin tolerations." While recognizing that the institutions of the state are of a secular nature this does not exclude religious citizens from participating in the public discourse but the burden of "translation" is placed at the legislative realm (Habermas 2006, 9-10). While this certainly raises issues of discussion and potential areas of debate, which the proposed model will attempt to resolve to a limited degree, it remains that if the hallmark of democratic societies is equal rights for all individuals then this freedom needs to be ensured. These values which allow for the protection of the rights of all individuals and the ability of the elected officials to rule without undue interference from religious actors, rather than a particular arrangement of religion and state relationships, are what define the relationship between secularism

and democracy. In practice these principles can take a variety of forms based on particular contexts.

2.4 French and American Secularism

Perhaps the two most dominant strands of secularism, at least in Western societies who have adopted a "separatist" stance, are commonly labeled as "the Anglo-American and French Republican interpretations" (Yavuz 2009, 145). These same general categories are also labeled as an Anglo-Saxon liberal model and French political laicite (Gole 2010, 41), Judeo-Christian secularism and laicism (Hurd 2008, 2), and also Passive and Assertive secularism (Kuru 2006). While there are some slight variations among each of these labels they help to provide an analytical and explanatory framework. In his work, Ahmet Kuru employs them as "ideal types (a la Max Weber), which help analyze complex concrete cases through abstract modeling" (Kuru 2006, 2). These ideal types are beneficial in constructing a mental imagery that allows for closer examination.

While a full examination of the history and development of secularism in France and the United States is beyond the scope of this work, there is the need for a brief examination of them as they have particularly influenced the development of secularism in the Turkish context. These two also are common points of reference for much of the debate concerning secularism.

In Hurd's two paths of secularism the first takes up an aggressive stance towards religion. The laicist approach draws its name from the French *laicite* (Warhola and Bezci 2010; Davison 2003). The goal is to create a neutral public sphere. This concept connotes the idea of the state protecting itself from any excess of religion (Yavuz 2009, 145). It is not essentially anti-religious, so long as religion is

kept separate from public life. Hurd describes it this way, "religious belief, practices, and institutions have lost their political significance, fallen below the threshold of political contestation, or been pushed into the private sphere. The mixing of religion and politics is regarded as irrational and dangerous" (Hurd 2008, 5). In this approach a false set of dichotomies is created. Stepan considers four of them: traditional vs. modern societies; high religious practicing societies vs. low religious practicing societies; little separation of religion and state vs. strict separation of religion and state; non democratic regimes vs. democratic regimes (Stepan 2010, 4). Hurd adds a similar set: prodemocracy, pro-Western, and secular or religious, tribal, and theocratic (Hurd 2008, 5). In this sense secular and limited religiosity was considered to be a fundamental requirement of modern society.

Another aspect of this strand of secular tradition draws upon the Kantian conception of an authoritative public morality based on a singular conception of reason. This makes theology inherently dangerous in public life because it poses a challenge to this concept of reason. In order to make the public sphere neutral, competing conceptions of reason must be excluded and the basis on which these claims can be made is reason or the dictates of logic (Hurd 2008, 26). This first conception of secularism has also been described as assertive secularism, a Rawlsian "comprehensive doctrine" that aims to eliminate religion from the public sphere (Kuru 2007a, 571). There are certain acceptable grounds on which public arguments can be made but religion is not one of them.

In relation to the use of religious arguments in the public-political discourse an assertive secularism would lean heavily towards the viewpoints of those such as Richard Rorty who see religion as a "conversation stopper" and therefore it ought to

be banned completely from public discourse (Irlenborn 2011, 1-2). Most, however, would not go as far as Rorty but would, nonetheless, place extensive burdens of "translation" and an unequal burden of censorship on citizens who hold religious beliefs in order to articulate views for public consideration (Yates 2007). It is this requirement of "translation," for a religious person to provide secular language to express values in the public sphere, which may result in either self-censorship or the exclusion of any substantive content from religious voices (Habermas 2006, 11). In summary the first conception of secularism largely advocates for the privatization of religion, based on the dictates of logic that the public sphere must be made neutral, and holds this as a hallmark of modern societies.

The second conception of secularism, to continue with Hurd's labels, is the "Judeo-Christian" secularism or the Anglo-American tradition. This is a "discursive tradition that aspires to negotiate the modern relationship between religion and politics" (Hurd 2008, 38). Contrary to the *laicist* desire to define and confine religion within the private sector Judeo-Christian secularism "does not present the religious-secular divide as a clean, essentialized, and bifurcated relationship" (Ibid., 6). Secularism in this sense is a core value of this religious tradition and is a sort of common ground on which the rest of Western democracy is established.

The historical context helps to understand the logic of the secularism that was adopted. In France the secular Republic was established in the shadow of an "ancien regime based on the marriage of monarchy and hegemonic religion." The conflict between the leaders of the new republic and previous power holders of the clergy accounts for some measure of the antagonistic stance adopted towards religion. The American experience did not have an ancien regime but was founded as both religious

and secular leaders worked on the basis of overlapping consensus (Kuru 2007a, 572).

In this setting the variety of actors agreed upon the political process, though each

perhaps coming from their own starting point.

In the American case, freedom of religious practice was seen as a positive

liberty to maintain religious exercise without interference. In contrast to the French

experience where secularism was a negative principle to protect the citizens from

compulsion to adopt a faith against their will (Habermas 2006,3) In France, the

assertive secular approach was adopted to make sure that religion understood and

stayed in its place. In America, rather than a freedom of the state from religion this

passive secularism was more concerned with maintaining religious freedom from the

state (Kuru 2007a, 591-592). The particular historical setting shaped the debates that

emerged and the concerns that were negotiated in the application of secularism in the

individual context.

Picking up again a helpful description from Kuru's parallel labeling of passive

and assertive secularisms he describes the contrast this way: "Passive secularism is a

pragmatic political principle that tries to maintain state neutrality toward various

religions, whereas assertive secularism is a 'comprehensive doctrine' that aims to

eliminate religion from the public sphere" (Kuru 2007a, 571). While there may be

continual debate within the passive state about the level of separation or

accommodation that should be afforded within the society, it allows for this to be

worked out without imposing a forced *areligious* viewpoint on public society

(Sullivan 2010, 108-109). A survey of the American social and political landscape

would immediately illustrate these debates over the role of religion in public life that

exist within a still functioning secular democracy (Trigg 2007; Drinan 2004, 48-85).

Kuru illustrates the distinction between the two in regards to the French ban on headscarves and two documents produced in 2003. The French Statsi Commission released on December 11, 2003 embraced the recommendation of a law prohibiting religious symbols in private schools, with the headscarf being the primary, though not only target. Murat Akan recounts how for the vast majority this was celebrated in France "as a triumph of laicite's universalism over culturalism – the reaffirmation of a more religion-free public sphere" (Akan 2009, 239). A week later the United States released its 2003 Report on International Religious Freedom. At the press conference related to the release of the report Ambassador John Hanford specifically stated it was the United State's policy on the very same issue that "all persons should be able to practice their religion and their beliefs peacefully without government interference" (Kuru 2007a, 568-569). This instance is just one of many that illustrate the differences between these two countries that both embrace secularism.

In regards to the exposition of religious viewpoints in public-political discourse the passive secularist allows for much more latitude. The recognition of core values born out of a religious tradition allows for a freedom for religiously driven ideas to be expressed. The line at which religiously based ideas must be expressed in non-religious language will vary, but Habermas for one draws the line at a political institutional level rather than at an individual level or in public life in general. This would be at the level of law-making and the burden is then placed on legislators who hold formal office (Yates 2007). Certainly even this articulation still has room for debate but advances the conversation far beyond the viewpoint of an assertive secularist such as Rorty. In summary, the second strand of secularism allows for religion to play a more active role in public life. It does not fundamentally exclude

religion and religious actors to a private sphere. At an institutional level the state is not religious but pragmatically works to maintain state neutrality toward all of its citizens both religious and non-religious. Rather than maintaining that religion is an impediment to democratic governance, this secularism is of the opinion that it may ultimately be good for democratic politics (Hurd 2008, 42).

The preceding section has sketched out two conceptions of secularism(s) within the "separatist" tradition that have been largely associated with democratic governance. As with many areas of social and political studies the neatness of theories gets cluttered in practice. These two conceptions are poles or ideal types with most states falling and fluctuating somewhere in between based on the particular concerns of a given society. It is also important to understand the development of secularism as an ideology and how it was interwoven into modernization theories.

Throughout much of the twentieth century the idea that modern societies were necessarily secularized societies was widespread. The secularization of society along with a secular state is part of the assertive strand of secularism, as opposed to a passive secularism which embraces a secular state but allows freedom for various religious practices within the state. With this framework established we can now examine the history of secularism in Turkey with a view to understand how its particular secularism was established and how it has developed over time.

CHAPTER III: HISTORY OF SECULARISM IN TURKEY

In order to examine the current place of religion in the Turkish Republic and how that may change and continue to develop through the application of the principle of secularism in the present and future context, it is necessary to first consider the particular history of secularism in Turkey. The previous chapter showed that the principle of secularism is not a static or monolithic concept which can be packaged and exported but it is shaped by the particular culture and context. The variety in application can be seen as the principles of secularism cross cultures from one state to another and also within the same state as over time the particular situations and settings within a culture necessitate change. To begin tracing the history of secularism in Turkey in the modern era requires a return to the years immediately following World War I.

After the final collapse of the Ottoman Empire the new Republic of Turkey that emerged under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was one characterized by radical changes from the Ottoman past and yet there was a certain amount of continuity as well. During the early years of the Republic of all the areas of concern and reform for Ataturk the place of religion in society was among the foremost. In establishing these reforms the Republican leaders adopted an assertive model of secularism to deal with the particular challenges they were facing.

3. 1 Reasons for an Assertive Model of Secularism

The particular historical and social setting of the founding of the Turkish Republic helps to illuminate some of the decisions that were made in regard to religion. By the turn of the 20th century the Ottoman Empire had lost much of its

grandeur. At the close of the 18th century the Empire stretched from the Balkans, through Anatolia, and most of the Arab world including into Saudi Arabia and parts of North Africa (Zurcher 2004, 9). Though there had been attempts to reform the Empire such as the *Tanzimat* and experiments with parliaments its greatness was significantly diminished (Yavuz 2003, 19). Then with the close of the World War I not only the lands of the empire but the heartland of Anatolia itself was in danger of being carved up and control handed to outsiders leaving only a small swath of land in central Anatolia under Turkish control (Yavuz 2003, 45). So when following the War for Independence the chance came for elites who had been schooled in the capitals of the West to reshape society, they wanted to establish a radical break from the elements of the Ottoman Empire that they viewed as backward (Yilmaz 2005, 387). Chief among this was the place of religion in society. This had been on the agenda of the Young Turks during the later years of the Empire and throughout the 1920s-30s these reforms were carried to extremes (Zurcher 2004, 181). In reshaping the place of religion in society Mustafa Kemal Ataturk and the other "Kemalist" Republican era leaders took a very strong controlling approach.

The secularism that was adopted in Turkey has often been related to the French *laicite* tradition. While in some senses it may be accurate that some elements of secularism were borrowed from Jacobin tradition of the French Revolution, in actual practice the Turkish brand of secularism has clearly taken on its own character (Mardin 1971). Murat Akan reflects that "Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's most explicit and repeated statement on religion in the 1920s and 1930s was on preventing religions from becoming a 'tool for politics'" (Akan forthcoming, 13-9). Rather than securing religion from the state (American style secularism) or even securing the state from

religion (French style secularism), the Kemalists established direct control over religion.

While it may in some sense it may seem contradictory for a secular state to establish for itself direct control over religion, this approach was adopted as a means of securing the state and recognizing the potential that Islam might have to be used as a political force (Yilmaz 2005). This is what Gol, and others, considers "authoritarian secularism," which in the Turkish case placed Islam under the control of the state (Gol 2009, 802). The French *laicite* looked at religion as something from which the state needed to be protected, and the Anglo-American looked at religion as something that needed to be protected from the state, the Turkish secularism looked at religion as something that needed to be controlled by the state. This strict assertive secularist approach was adopted because of a number of particular reasons and motivations.

3.1.1   Break with Ottomans

One of the motivations for adopting a strict policy towards religion was to indicate a break of the Revolutionary leaders from the political and religious authority of the Ottoman sultan. As Edel Hughes summarizes, the period following the War for Independence and what was to come in 20th century Turkey "stands in marked contrast" from the six centuries of Ottoman rule (Hughes 2008, 17). As Serif Mardin describes, the Turkish Revolution, which was not the product of a movement of the masses, but a project of an educated progressive class of elites, took as its "target the values of the Ottoman *ancien regime*" (Mardin 1971, 202). Mardin draws the parallel to the efforts to disestablish the Catholic Church during the Jacobin revolutions in France. The target for the leaders of the Turkish Revolution he points out was not the

social structure per se, but rather the symbolic system of society and culture and "within culture, religion seems to have been singled out as the core of the system" (Ibid.). The reason that religion was given such central attention was that it had been a source of political legitimacy.

Religion in the Ottoman context played a crucial role. "Islamic law and the ulema [Islamic legal scholars] were an important element of the state structure. Moreover, the Ottoman sultans claimed to be the caliphs of all Muslims. The Westernist elite in the late Ottoman and early Republic era, therefore, regarded Islam as a barrier against their modernizing reforms" (Kuru 2007a, 588). From the mid-16th century onward the Ottoman Sultan had used the title of caliph, the leader and protector of the entire Muslim community, as a source of legitimacy (Azak 2010, 2). The abolishment of the caliphate then was not merely a symbolic domestic action to ensure the loyalty of the citizens but it was a security concern which carried an international significance as well.

The legacy from the Ottoman Empire as the caliphate representing all Muslims "carried the potential to complicate the international relations of the young Republic." The abolishment of the caliphate removed the grounds for interference and also minimized suspicions about the ambitions of the Republican leaders (Bilgin 2008, 600-601). The new republic was to be a nation-state and no longer an "Islamic empire" and removing the sultan and the title of caliph from the Turkish head of state was an important symbol demonstrating this fact.

The ulema, the religious scholars, also served a role as a bridge between the Sultan and the people and utilized Islam as means of encouraging loyalty. The state both derived its popular legitimacy from Islam and also controlled and organized religious institutions and scholars (Yavuz 2003, 40). Davison describes the attitude Ataturk embraced in regards to the repositioning of religion in the state system. The reform undertaken that abolished the caliphate was designed to "raise and purify Islam" and to remove it from its condition as being a "political instrument" as it had been for centuries (Davison 2003, 340). This idea of removing religion from the political realm was particularly important.

A part of the explanation for why some of the policies adopted were of an assertive manner was an attempt to articulate distinction between the Ottoman caliphate-ulema coalition that used religion as a means of seeking political legitimacy. The Kemalists saw the way Islam had been used as an abuse of religion in the political realm and incompatible with the secular state they were seeking to establish. In the discussion concerning the abolishment of the caliphate the Minister of Exterior on March 3, 1924 said the following during a speech in parliament:

> In Islam, as opposed to Christianity, there is no clergy; in other words there is no clerical government…. All the civilized world has been advancing on the path to progress. Are we going to be left behind? … How odd! It would be very odd if we were left behind when the Religion of Islam is so noble and so progressive…The nation cannot be represented…The nation says that it will manage its own affairs…This is what *Kuran-i Kerim* insists on. It says that Muslims manage their own affairs among themselves with consultation. (Akan Forthcoming, 13-17)

The policies adopted were to make sure that there would be no clerical government anymore. The speech also leads into a second reason for the embracing of an assertive

secularism and that was to speed the country down the "path to progress" lest they be left behind.

3.1.2 Desire for Westernization and Modernization

When the Turkish Republic was established in 1923 the secularization thesis and the relationship between secularization and modernity was in full swing. The intellectual and philosophical milieu of the day was that religion if anything was a hindrance to truly modern societies. This is the secularization thesis that was embedded in modernization theory which "regards religion as a traditional phenomena that will eventually decay in social life as a result of the modernization process" (Kuru 2007a, 573). During the later Ottoman period there were some reformers who wanted to embrace the technological and institutional modernization that was seen in the West but this could not be fully accomplished because there was no desire to fully accept Western civilization.

In the Republican period this reluctance disappeared. "The Republican elite's passion for modernization, seen as an escape from backwardness, translated itself into a total dislike and distrust of all things associated with the ancient regime and the old way of life" (Yilmaz 2005, 387). The Kemalist reforms in areas of religion, language, dress, education, calendar, legal code and religious organizations were "aimed to secularize and modernize society" two processes which were considered inextricably linked (Zurcher 2004, 173). The public square and the state needed to be cleansed of those elements that had caused the Turkey to fall behind Western civilization.

The Ottoman dynasty and in particular the caliphate and the ulema were portrayed as responsible for falling behind which inevitably led to the catastrophe following World War I (Azak 2010, 18). Bilgin argues that the pursuit of westernization in society was not merely one of advancement but was portrayed in terms of survival. As an example "the founding leaders portrayed the fez as a symbol that marked the Turks' difference from 'contemporary civilization'. They maintained that the adoption of the hat as head gear would help the world know that the Turk was no longer different but similar to them. The urge to be similar, in turn, was portrayed as a matter of 'survival'" (Bilgin 2008, 602). This portrayal of religion as backward and anti-modern became a crucial element of the justification for the rapid and decisive steps taken to implement modernization and to disestablish Islam from its role in society (Yilmaz 2005, 387). A strong centralized and highly bureaucratic system was part of the Ottoman legacy. Ataturk would remold this system as part of the westernization process. "Believing that Turkey's indigenous traditions – including, most importantly, Islam – were unequivocal expressions of backwardness, Ataturk believed that national progress would come by emulating, absorbing and reproducing 'European' cultural values and political institutions" (Haynes 2010, 314)

As the narrative of the history of secularism will show, this representation of the backwardness of religion and the danger of the public display of religion – outside of the particular state-sanctioned type – was not just unwelcome but perceived as dangerous and an existential threat to the state. M. Hakan Yavuz explains it this way.

> [Kemalism] defined itself in obsessive antagonism to the *ancien regime*, in this case the Ottoman-Muslim state and society. Kemalist "secularism" was meant to represent "progress" and "civilization" against alleged Islamic

"backwardness" and "Oriental barbarism." For this reason, Kemalist ideology has been obsessed with "the security of secularism," which is manifested as fierce hostility to public manifestation of Islam. Resistance to or even mild questioning of secular objectives has been viewed as tantamount to high treason against the state, and such challenges have always been regarded as security issues to be dealt with outside the normal political processes. (Yavuz 2003, 46)

The Kemalist stance was that religion posed a threat to the state and might be used as a political weapon. Secularism offered the best sense of security and this secularism must be defended with harsh measures. Religion was not merely an ideological issue but it was interpreted as a security issue. As Bilgin argues the Kemalist's use of "discourses of danger" and the potential threats of religion while arguing for secularism carried significance both in the domestic and international spheres (Bilgin 2008, 595-596). The fear of the division of the state was another of the core motivations for the adoption of the assertive secularism.

3.1.3   Single National Identity

Religion was an issue that attracted extensive and intense attention not only because it was associated with the Ottoman state and it was seen as an impediment on the road to a modern society but also because it had the potential to be a divisive force against the construction of a single Turkish national identity. The main task that Mustafa Kemal Ataturk undertook was the transformation of society to enable it to reach "the level of contemporary civilization," meaning the European model. This meant the basis of an identity would not be Islam as it was under the Ottoman system but a new identity and institutions that imitated the European model (Yavuz 2009, 24).This produced a new sense of new Turkish nationalism and in many ways it would be used to replace religion.

Secularism and nationalism were two of the primary tools used by the Kemalist state in the creation of a national identity. Secularism meant not just the separation of religion and state but the removal of religion from public life and state control over the remaining religious institutions. Nationalism "with the attendant creation of historical myths" was intended in many respects to replace religion in the new national identity (Zurcher 2004, 182). This new national identity would be based on "Turkishness," a concept that lacked real clarity but increasingly came to be associated with ethnic nationalism. The goal was the creation of a unitary nation (Altunisik and Tur 2005, 20). Islam, if left to its own devices and not under the strict control and watchful eye of the state, was too divisive for the state. As the civilian political elite imposed their assertive secularism the military played an important role in this process. They provided their support to the regime against "any socio-political actor with a certainly level of Islamic and/ Kurdish tendencies" (Kuru 2012, 46). The maintenance of the official interpretation of secularism was a security issue and the military played a guardian role.

The primary unit of concern for the Republican elites was the "Turkish nation" not the Islamic community. Islamic discourse had been a tool of the Ottoman state of securing the alliance of different ethnic groups on the basis of a shared religion. The Republican elites did not share this same concern and the elimination of Islamic sources of legitimacy was seen to strengthen the political authority of Ankara (Azak 2010, 9). By excluding religion based arguments from the realm of politics the Kemalists were able to secure their own interests and also establish a rational or "objective foundation for political practice" absent one of the primary difference

markers. The privatization of religion was a key component of the single identity domestically, and as Bilgin recognizes, internationally in relation to European states. By minimizing the role of religion in contributing to Turkish identity it pushed "a significant marker of their difference into the private realm" (Bilgin 2008, 606). The basis of the new state would be a shared "Turkishness" and not a shared religion.

The efforts to create this Turkish identity took place across the whole spectrum of society. Fellman articulates how it was the slogan of "Turkey for the Turks" that led to the creation of the Turkish Language Academy and was part of Ataturk's efforts to secularize and purify Turkey of its Islamic accretions, including its linguistic baggage (Fellman 1973, 247). This went into elements such as the "Sun Language Theory" arguing that all other languages came originally from Turkish (Yavuz 2003, 51). The "Turkish History Thesis," of which Ataturk was the fulfillment, became a central part of the education curriculum (Gulalp 2005, 363). Through these, and a variety of other efforts, a new set of symbols and new institutions were established to replace traditionally religious ones. "Thus, Turkish secularism was radical in terms of its symbolic, political, and social disestablishment of religion and the strict control of religious knowledge by the state" (Yavuz 2009, 26). The state filled the void it had created by eliminating religion from the national identity.

Kemalism aimed to move into the space that Islam had once occupied replacing it with nationalism (Gulalp 2005, 357). However this did not mean that religion became a neglected topic. The state building process was not only a

secularization of the state political system but included elements for the secularization of society.

Murat Somer provides a summary of the motivations for the control of religion by the state. Turkish secularism "exemplifies high state regulation of Islam in the name of promoting national unity, of secularizing social and political life, and of making room for modernization/Westernization" (Somer 2007, 1276). For the elites religion was not fully eliminated from their agenda but was utilized pragmatically for legitimatization or for cultural homogenization of the national identity (Sakallioglu 1996, 235). So while on one hand the secularism policy that was implemented was aimed at the reduction of the influence of religion both in the state structure and society in general, at the same time it meant religion occupied a central political space during the creation of the nation-state (Gulalp 2005, 351). The reason for the central place of religion – in the sense of an assertive and strict secularism – is that it was a source of conflict and became a contested sphere and so rather than being pushed to the side resided at the center stage of many political battles (Azak 2010, 14). The following section will look in detail at these various political battles and the way in which the place of religion and the right type of religion was a fundamental issue within the secular Republic of Turkey.

3.2 Development of Turkish Secularism

The reality that the place of religion has remained an important question in the Turkish context is adequately described by Umit Sakallioglu in the opening pages of her article. Despite the background of "the most radical secular revolution of any state

in the Muslim world" Islam was not banished or excluded from the official public sphere. "The Turkish state adopted a double discourse: on the one hand, establishing rigid segregation between Islam and the public political realm; on the other, accommodating and incorporating Islamic politics into the system in various ways" (Sakallioglu 1996, 231). In tracing the narrative of religion and public life in Turkey both elements of this discourse need to be acknowledged. To identify only the harsh secularization process without recognizing the strategic accommodation would be to present a skewed picture. Yet, the opposite is true as well, to portray the religious nature of Turkey without addressing the aggressive secularist policies of the state would be no more accurate.

3.2.1 *Early Republic (1920s-1950s)*

In the aftermath of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and following the War for Independence in which the borders of modern Turkey were secured and the European powers who threatened to partition it had been removed Mustafa Kemal Ataturk on October 29, 1923 established the Turkish Republic with himself as the first president and Ismet Inonu as the first prime minister (Zurcher 2004, 167). As Kucukcan quotes, Ataturk declared that there was "a sufficient social base for establishing a secular republic" (Kucukcan 2003, 480). In order to establish a secular republic there were a number of significant reforms that the Republican elite embraced and implemented within the society to shift from the Ottoman religio-cultural legacy. These reforms in the religious sphere were incorporated into the guiding principles of the state "*Kemalism,* [which] situated modernization and civilization within a Western model of development along with a particularly strict interpretation of Turkey as a secular state" (Walker 2009, 501). These reforms of both

institutions and symbols were deep in their significance and broad in the areas of society which were affected.

One of the most influential of the reforms was implemented on March 3, 1924 through Law No. 431. This law formally abolished the caliphate which had been a core element of Ottoman Islam for centuries. It also completely removed the functions of Sheik ul-Islam and the ministries of Religious Affairs (*Şeriye*) and Pious Foundations (*Evkaf*). Each of these reforms was aimed at detangling the state from religion. Yet, in an interesting and somewhat paradoxical manner in its place was established the Directorate of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Reisliği;* hereafter Diyanet) whose role will be considered later on (Azak 2010, 9). The abolishment of the caliph was especially significant as this represented the unity of Muslims as a faith community without respect to the variety of ethnicities from which they came (Yavuz 2003, 52). In the new "Turkish" republic the need to appeal to a variety of ethnic groups was not necessary. The role of the Ottoman Sultan had been abolished prior to 1924 but the caliphate still existed in an entirely religious function. Zurcher points out that it was inevitable that many of the people were prone to see the caliph as the head of the state, even if only in a ceremonial role. The significance of the abolishment of the caliphate was also due to the fact that the caliph's role transcended the boundaries of the Turkish state and reached to the entire Muslim community (Zurcher 2004, 166). This measure not only showed domestically the emphasis the Republican leaders were placing on secularism, but by removing a primary tie to the Muslim world this also indicated the Western orientation Turkey was adopting (Walker 2009, 501-502).

The institutional aspect of the "modernizing reforms" also extended beyond the caliphate. The educational system was unified to better train the young people in the ideas of a secular state. Traditional Islamic schools (*medrese*) and the religious seminaries were closed down. This took place under The Law of the Unification of Education which attempted to standardize all institutions under a single secular curriculum (Alam 2009, 357). Kuru examines the field of education as the locus of crucial debates as the "main battlefield" on the nature of secularism and state-religion controversies within a society. The schools, he feels, are such a contested sphere because they are a crucial place for shaping the worldview and lifestyle of the youth. The instruction within the Turkish system is "directly related to the state's desire to control religion" (Kuru 2007a, 570). The state was directly involved in the not only the secular education but also in the education of religious leaders.

Though the Diyanet was given the task of overseeing and providing religious services and appointing religious leaders it was not given the ability to educate them. "The Diyanet also had no authority related to the education of its employees. […] This ensured that all the Diyanet employees were to be trained in the national schools (Ulutas 2010, 392). To supply the religious leaders the state created the *Imam-Hatip* schools "to train preachers and other religious personnel in accordance with the priorities of the nationalist regime, and these schools were placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education" (Gulalp 2005, 357). Jamal sees the motivation for this as fear of allowing for such an important area of society to possibly fall into the wrong hands. So the government invested vast amounts of resources to make sure that this was controlled by the state (Jamal 2009, 1149). The

modernization and secularization of the educational institutions was a significant focus for the reformers.

The reforms also targeted the legal system. Even during the Ottoman era there had been a slow movement towards an adoption of European legal codes in addition to the traditional Muslim law. The Kemalist leaders saw that it was necessary to remove the Muslim law completely. As Ataturk said "it is our purpose to create completely new laws and thus to tear up the very foundations of the old legal system." To accomplish this they imported the Swiss Civil Code, the Italian Criminal Code, and the German Commercial Code (Yilmaz 2002, 118-119). The Minister of Justice, Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, who had studied law in Switzerland, saw this new civil code as the closing of the doors of old civilization and the opening of contemporary civilization. In many ways he was right. As an example it gave women equal rights in inheritance law, applying for divorce, and outlawed polygamy, although this remained a practice in places outside the reach of the state (Azak 2010, 10-11). The area of marriage as a basic institution of society and women's rights is a telling indicator of the way in which an unofficial Turkish Islamic law persisted primarily in the rural areas of the country. Yilmaz studies this concept and acknowledges that though this secular legal code was officially instituted from above Islamic legal structures remained deeply rooted in the minds and hearts of the people (Yilmaz 2002, 120). The goal was a forced reordering of society for the benefit of the people, whether embraced by them or not.

The state also passed laws targeted at the Sufi and other religious orders and saw to the closing down of their meeting houses and shrines (Azak 2010, 10; Gulalp

2005, 356-357). The Ottoman era ministry of Religious Affairs and Pious Foundations was shut down. In its place two new directorates were created directly under the control of the Prime Minister. One was the Directorate for Religious Affairs (Diyanet) and the other the Directorate-General for Pious Foundations (Zurcher 2004, 198). These two institutions show that the policy adopted was not one that truly removed the entanglements of religion and the state but rather rearranged the place of religion in order for it to be more directly controlled by the state. The first of these directorates, the Diyanet, played, and continues to play, an important role in defining the place of religion.

The role of the Diyanet and its administrators will be the locus of a number of debates throughout the history of Republican Turkey (Ulutas 2010, 395-396). Attached directly to the office of the Prime Minister it was authorized to oversee all affairs of Islam related to beliefs and rituals of worship. It includes the oversight of all mosques, appointment and dismissal of imams, and all other employees of a religious nature (Davison 2003, 337-338). The Diyanet is not merely a management board but it also exists to "execute services regarding the Islamic faith and practices, to enlighten the society about religion," in addition to its management of the places of worship. Yet the Diyanet has at the same time been a "means of 'securing' the secular nature of the state in Turkey for over 80 years" (Gozaydin 2008, 216). This dual nature of the Diyanet as both the place of religious practice and activities and also the tool to secure the state is quite indicative of the overall policy towards religion.

As Yilmaz discusses the Republican elite had come to the conclusion that embracing Western technology and Western institutions was beneficial for the state.

"Yet, no one could come up with a formula as to how Western technology and institutions would be adapted to an Islamic society without accepting Western civilization itself. This led to the creation of dual institutions" (Yilmaz 2005, 387). The Diyanet is the result of this process within the religious realm. Islam was present and could not be completely ignored because it possesses the potential to become a tool against the state, so it is controlled to be used as a tool by the state. The means of controlling religion was through the propagation of the right kind of Islam, an Islam compatible with this new secular state and opposed to a "reactionary" Islam that could be dangerous to the survival of the state (Azak 2010).

Since its foundation the Diyanet has largely reflected mainstream Sunni beliefs. This occurred on one hand because Sunni Islam represented the vast majority of the population. It also was the case because, as Ulutas describes, "they considered Sunni-Islam as, in Ernest Gellner's terms, 'high culture' as opposed to folk Islam (i.e. Alevism and Sufism) and chose to promote the 'high culture' through the Diyanet. […] 'High Islam' was easier for the state to control than folk Islam, which was not canonized, and had many different interpretations" (Ulutas 2010, 391). The Diyanet became the location of the "official Islam" of the state or what has been labeled "Lausannian Islam," which served as a "helping hand" in accomplishing the goals of the state (Yilmaz 2005). Though the article in the Turkish constitution declaring "The religion of the Turkish state is Islam" was abolished in 1928 a particular type of Islam was propagated that was supportive of the state (Adanali 2008, 228). The official Islam was disseminated through the Diyanet in a number of different roles.

In the formation of religiosity in the Republican era the Diyanet has an "informative, educative, and directive influence on Turkish society" (Okumus 2008, 353). The Diyanet is responsible for appointing imams, preachers, and *mufti*. It also distributes the Friday sermons to the mosques throughout the country (Azak 2010, 12). The influence of the Diyanet during the single party era, from 1924-1950, was part of the state's efforts to reform both the practices and the mentality of religion in alignment with the goals of the state (Okumus 2008, 354). Through the propagation of an official Islam lines were drawn between "tolerable and intolerable" religious practices. Cinar argues that by establishing an acceptable and unacceptable form of religion rather than individualizing religion, even though the tolerable religious practices were to be confined to the individual conscience, this policy actually politicized personal beliefs and further blurred the distinction between public and private (Cinar 2008, 114). As religion was politicized there were specific symbols that were modified as part of the modernizing reforms.

A new set of symbols that identified with "modern European" civilization was established to replace traditionally religious ones. This was the most significant aspect of the dress code reforms implemented in 1925 which banned traditional headgear such as the fez and turban for men and restricted religious dress to prayer services (Zurcher 2004, 187). The dress code reform aimed to change the outward appearance and was one of the most significant and visible because the traditional clothes often indicated allegiance to Islam. The fez was viewed by Ataturk as the most visible symbol of Muslim distinctiveness and wearing it was a refusal to conform to the West and thus became a criminal offense (Bozdaglioglu 2003, 48-49). The ban on wearing

the headscarf by women in state institutions was another clear manifestation of the

assertive nature of the secularist policies of the state (Grigoriadis 2009, 1201). In

addition to the dress code reform, the change from the Arabic script to the Latin

script, the replacement of the Islamic calendar with the Gregorian, female suffrage,

and regulations promoting Western-style dress and the ban on any display of religious

symbols in public places (public schools, universities, hospitals, state buildings) were

also adopted (Karakas 2007, 9). All of these reforms were part of the "civilizing

mission of the Kemalist elite" (Azak 2010, 11). This mission had set its sights firmly

on the West and through implementation of reforms on the institutional and symbols

level was striving to achieve it quickly.

The Kemalist vision of the state used strict and assertive secularism combined

with nationalism to create a new national identity and "brought about a radical rupture

at the level of symbols" (Gulap 2005, 363). Cagaptay, in discussing the creation of the

Turkish nation and other modern nations, highlights the role that "memory, myth, and

symbols" play in the birth of a new nation (Cagaptay 2006, 4). The state filled the

void it had created by eliminating religion from the national identity. Kemalism aimed

to move into the space that Islam had once occupied replacing it with nationalism

(Gulap 2005, 357). In the early Republican years nationalism was intended to take the

place of religion in many respects and provided the elements for the creation of a new

nation (Zurcher 2004, 181-82). Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was elevated to the level of a

national hero. He was the one who had brought about the salvation of the nation and

the fulfillment of the ideal destiny of Turks in the Turkish nation-state (Ibid., 363).

Not only was the person of Ataturk a hero, he also provided a text which became

extremely significant. Zurcher describes the *Nutuk* or "The Speech" given by Ataturk in 1927 over the course of six days at the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP) convention as "remarkable and hugely influential." This speech which spanned 36 hours has become the basis for much of the historiography of that time period. It begins with the arrival of Ataturk in Anatolia in 1919 with the majority of the time discussing the events up until 1925. This speech "determined the historical vision of the genesis of the new Turkish state for generations" (Zurcher 2004, 175). After his death Ataturk was buried in a mausoleum, *Anıtkabir,* in Ankara that continues to be a symbol of the secular nature of the state and a place of homage to the founder of the Turkish state (Gulap 2005, 364; Grigordias 2009, 1204).

Through this process of reform of the symbolic system of the state the goal was to "disassociate people from their old sense of identity and create a new one that would replace Islam" (Bozadaglioglu 2003, 51). To accomplish this goal it required changes at multiple levels of the society. "Thus, Turkish secularism was radical in terms of its symbolic, political, and social disestablishment of religion and the strict control of religious knowledge by the state" (Yavuz 2009, 26). Religion was not fully eliminated but was utilized pragmatically for legitimatization or for cultural homogenization of the national identity (Sakallioglu 1996, 235). The religion that persisted continued to have a central role in society, but the state ensured that it was the "right kind of religion" that existed.

Two events from the era will provide examples of how the state wanted to ensure that the right type of religion, compatible with the new norms of the state, was practiced and that "reactionary Islam" that was considered dangerous to the state was

suppressed. The first is the Menemen Incident, that took place in December of 1930, and the second is the debate over the Turkish *ezan*, the Islamic call to prayer. These two incidents help to illustrate how and why the state worked to eliminate the presence of the "wrong" kind of religion and create a "right" kind of religion that was in line with their vision of the state.

The Menemen Incident or "the story of the death of Kubilay" took place in the Western town of Menemen, located not far from Izmir. The town has since become linked to the danger of reactionary Islam (*irtica)* through this story which has been integrated as an important part of the public school curriculum covering the history of the modernization of Turkey in the 1920s-1930s (Azak 2010, 21). The event is not only a historical event but has become a "commemorated event" that is attended by thousands of Kemalist supporters each December 23. The young teacher and military officer Kubilay who was killed has become an icon of Kemalist secularism. This story was incorporated into the state curriculum and official narratives to highlight the danger of the wrong kind of religion and to strengthen an emotional bond to the secular regime (Ibid., 22). While certainly there was a very tragic event that occurred it was used as a justification for strict policies and brought about harsh reactions.

The incident took place after a short period of opening up the political system to a hand-picked leader of a second party, in addition to Ataturk's ruling Republican People's Party. A second party had been experimented with for just a short period of seven months in 1924-25 before being shut down because of anti-establishment demonstrations. At the same time as the first experiment with an opposition party there was also an ethno-religious (Kurdish) revolt led by Sheik Said. The revolt was

suppressed and he was caught and hung by the army in Diyarbakir in 1925. This first ethnoreligious uprising in the Turkish Republic caused the state to be extremely suspicious of any Kurdish or Sufi, Naqshbandi, orders that might organize activities to oppose the state (Yavuz 2003, 52). When in August 1930, Ataturk selected his close friend Fethi Okyar to establish the Free Republican Party (Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası) the results were not much better. The people in rural areas used the new party to express discontent with the ruling party's policies and after just three months, in November of 1930, Ataturk ordered for the party to be closed down. It was just a few weeks after this second unsuccessful experiment with multi-party politics that the incident in Menemen occurred and indicated that the reforms had not penetrated into the periphery of society (Mardin 1973, 182).

The Menemen event happened on December 23, 1930 when a group of young Sufis from the city of Manisa, who were led by a Dervish Mehmet, came into town and unfurled a green banner and called for the restoration of the caliphate and Sharia law (Zurcher 2004, 179). Azak provides an in-depth treatment of the issue based largely on the accounts given during the trials following the event, and elaborates on more details than the narrative that has been part of the state curriculum (Azak 2010, 25). Dervish Mehmet, who was most likely an immigrant from Crete, was said to be a disciple of a Naqshbandi sheikh. Together in Manisa a small group of seven or eight mostly illiterate young men gathered around Dervish Mehmet and began to meet regularly to engage in religious practices and also to teach negative things about the state. In early December, Dervish Mehmet told the group they would spend fifteen days meditating in a cave outside the city and after receiving divine inspiration would

spread Islam and reopen lodges that had been closed by the state. After a few days a group of seven set out and stayed for fifteen days near the village of Bozalan. During this time Dervish Mehmet claimed to be the *Mehdi*, a Messianic-type figure within Islam. This claim to be the *Mehdi* received a mixed reaction by the villagers of Bozalan. During this stay Dervish Mehmet told his group of followers of his plans to go to Menemen before moving on to Istanbul and Ankara in hopes of restoring the caliphate.

On the morning of December 23 the group entered Menemen and Dervish Mehmet proclaimed to those gathered at the mosque for morning prayers that he was the *Mehdi* and would restore the religion. He then proceeded to attempt to gather support. The group moved into the town square and, according to Azak, about 100 people joined them. The commander of the Gendarmerie, Farhi Bey, asked them to leave but to no avail. Farhi Bey asked for reinforcements from the military. This drew some support from the people as Dervish Mehmet showed he was able to stand up to opposition from the state. It was in response to this request that reserve officer Mustafa Fehmi Kubilay led a group of ten soldiers into the town square. Kubilay tried to intervene alone and unarmed. Dervish Mehmet shot Kubilay in the leg. Then after Kubilay collapsed while trying to flee Dervish Mehmet went over and cut off his head and put it on top of the pole holding the green banner. The crowd, which had gathered in the square, did not come to the defense of Kubilay, but is recorded to have watched and even applauded the actions of Dervish Mehmet. The squad of soldiers was paralyzed and only after reinforcements came were they able to end the rebellion.

During the fighting, two village guards and three of the rebels were killed. The outcome of this event would be widespread. Without a doubt this was a tragic event and there was a need for punishment of those involved. Azak, however, points out four specific historical details that were skewed or misrepresented in the way in which this event was interpreted by the state. He says it is not acknowledged:

> 1) that the protagonists of the rebellion were not from Menemen but from Manisa;
> 2) that the whole event in Menemen lasted only a few hours;
> 3) that the casualties were largely caused by the inefficiency of the security forces;
> 4) that there is no evidence that Derviş Mehmed planned the rebellion in collaboration with larger Sufi networks. (Azak 2010, 31)

In the aftermath of the event the government took harsh action. What was most troubling to the state officials was that the crowd had not done more to stop the actions of the group. According to Zurcher, martial law was declared in the city. Over 2000 arrests were made not only in Menemen but across the country. In the end twenty-eight people were executed. The idea of the complete destruction of the city and the forced deportation of the residents, though initially supported by Ataturk, was not implemented (Zurcher 2004, 179).

The event in Menemen, which was the result of awful actions by a group of individuals, became the pretext for a nationwide sweep of those who the state believed were in some way connected to the rebellion or to the Naqshbandi orders. The press and the state portrayed the events as part of a bigger scheme against the state, part of a "mysterious illegal network" of the Naqshbandi order, and the latest evidence of the dangers of reactionary Islam (Azak 2010, 33). In fear that this event might have been representative of more popular unrest Ataturk more firmly

consolidated his hold on power and ensured the continuation of the one-party state (Cagaptay 2006, 42). Structures and communities, such as the Sufi lodges, that might be used to develop an opposition to the state were shut down. Those religious groups were forced to transform themselves, by either becoming more individualistically religious or seeking out a place within the state sanctioned religious structure of the Diyanet (Yavuz 2003, 140). Religious activities outside of this state sanctioned sphere had the potential to be dangerous and the severe measures the state employed in the aftermath of Menemen were intended to eliminate the wrong kind of religious expression.

A second event from the period between the reforms of the mid-1920s through 1950 displays the way in which the state tried to utilize a particular kind of "right" religion. The ban on the Arabic *ezan* (call to prayer) and implementation of the Turkish *ezan* was part of the effort to create an Islam compatible with the Turkish state. This was part of the project sponsored by the Diyanet to accomplish its objective of creating "good citizens" and a "Turkish version of enlightened Islam" (Yavuz 2003, 49-50). The goal of the revolution was to create a nation that was bound together by Turkishness rather than a religion which spanned borders.

Debates over the use of Turkish in the religious services to make religious teaching more accessible pre-date the Republican period, but in the 1930s as part of the Kemalist efforts to make the Turkish language dominant in all cultural fields it took on new life (Azak 2008, 163-169). As part of the broader project for reforming religion the state in 1928 commissioned the faculty of divinity at Istanbul University to make recommendations for religious reforms.

Among the recommendations made by the reform committee was to conduct all the worship in the vernacular. There was some argumentation that by conducting the services in Turkish the people would be able to better understand the teaching. During ceremonies in January and February 1932 under the direction of Mustafa Kemal the prayers, readings of the Koran, and the sermons were given in Turkish (Azak 2010, 54-56). The state initially tried to implement this more broadly but with variegated success. "However, in terms of the call to prayer they were unbending in their demand that it be in Turkish. It was the public auditory space that the call occupied which made it such a target for reform. To allow the call to be publicly broadcast in Arabic would be to allow 'unadulterated' Islam into the public arena" (McPherson 2011, 5). The public nature of the *ezan* is what made it a valuable reform for the secularists. In terms of instruction and accessibility of teaching the *ezan* is the least valuable, but in public symbolism it is the most obvious. It demonstrated the commitment to "Lausannian Islam" that was distinctly Turkish in nature and not the transnational Islam with the caliphate as its head. Thus it was important that this area where religion was so obviously on display in the public sphere be secularized by the state.

The *ezan* in Turkish was recited for the first time by Hafiz Rifat in the Fatih Mosque on January 30, 1932. The Diyanet distributed to all mosques a final version of the Turkish *ezan* and by November had initiated courses to train the Muezzin's in the different tunes of the *ezan*. By February 1933 the chair of the Diyanet announced that any Muezzin who hesitated to recite the *ezan* in Turkish would be punished (Azak 2010, 56-57). The reactions to these changes were not wholly positive. In the

western city of Bursa in 1933, Topal Halil recited the *ezan* in Arabic and by the time

he had descended from the minaret the police were waiting to arrest him. This sparked

protests by many of the people who felt mistreated by the restrictions placed on their

religious expression. Ataturk himself visited Bursa and on his order the local religious

administrator, the attorney general and the justice of the peace were fired. Nineteen

people involved received prison sentences (McPherson 2011, 7). This incident in

Bursa was ultimately framed as another example of the danger of reactionary religion

(*irtica)* and various mayors around the country sent telegrams to show their support

for the policies of the state (Azak 2008, 174*)*. The language of the *ezan* became

another arena in which the battle between the right and wrong kind of religion was

waged.

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was directly involved in the implementation of the

Turkish *ezan* from the initial idea, to even assisting on the translation of particular

words, and the implementation throughout the country (Azak 2010, 54). Even after

his death in 1938, the government continued to implement these reforms. In 1941 an

amendment was added to the penal code that explicitly stated the punishment for the

recitation of the *ezan* in Arabic was up to three months in prison or a fine between 10

and 200 lira (McPherson 2011, 7). Under Ismet Inonu, the successor to Ataturk, the

ban on the Arabic *ezan* was more strictly enforced in keeping with his broader

policies of purging out the Arabic and Persian elements remaining in the language.

Throughout the 1940s there were a variety of protests against this policy

including the efforts of various Sufi groups such as the Ticaniye who travelled around

the country to recite the Arabic *ezan* as a means of protest against the state (Azak

2008, 175-176). McPherson records details of perhaps the largest and most well-coordinated protests that took place on February 4, 1949. "That day, simultaneous Arabic recitation took place in the listeners' boxes at the Turkish National Assembly, at a national football match at Istanbul's Dolmabahce Stadium, at a cinema in Istanbul's Beyoglu district, in the presence of the governor of Ankara, and in the city of Eskisehir." The state did not respond gently to this protest. Some of those responsible were sentenced to time in mental hospitals; others were imprisoned or fined (McPherson 2011, 8). A protest in multiple public venues like this helps to give an indication that the top-down reforms had not reached every part of society. The protest movements created a public debate between those who saw the reform as a crucial part of the new state and those who saw it as a violation of freedom of conscience.

When in the elections of May of 1950, the Republican People's Party was defeated by the Democratic Party (*Demokrat Parti,* DP) the first action of the new parliament was the lifting on the ban of the Arabic *ezan* (Azak 2008, 176). For the majority of the people it was received as step forward in allowing for freedom and the removal of a law that violated a principle of conscience, yet for others, particularly those among the Kemalist elite, this was a step backward and toward the dangerous kind of religion they had worked to safeguard the country from.

From the founding of the Republic until 1950 the political system was heavily dominated by Mustafa Kemal's Republican People's Party. They were able to implement reforms in a top-down manner. While there was opposition to these reforms it was outside the political system. However, in the multi-party period which

began shortly following World War II and gathered momentum with the election of the Democratic Party in 1950, there will be continuous conflict over the proper place of religion and a competition emerges between the Kemalists and the Islamists.

3.2.2   Kemalists versus Islamists (1950s-1997)

As has already been mentioned above, during the 1920s the Kemalists abolished the caliphate, replaced the Sharia legal code with European civil and penal codes, changed to the European calendar, as part of a radical program of secularization (Zurcher 2004, 172-173). These reforms were not imposed democratically but were top-down changes undertaken with the goal of bringing Turkish society into the modern world. This Kemalist legacy was directed by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk until his death in 1938 and then through his Republican People's Party (CHP) which remained in power until the 1950s (Akan forthcoming, 13-10). The Turkish experience contains a long tradition of conflict between the "secularists and Islamists" for influence both in society and for political positions (Gole 1997, 47). Following World War II and the defeat of the Axis powers there was a movement towards democracy and a multi-party system. There was pressure placed on Turkey as it more closely aligned itself with western powers to pursue a more democratic political system. This process began in 1945 and slowly gained momentum.

In parliamentary elections in 1946 the newly formed Democratic Party (DP) won 62 of the 465 seats. In the elections of 1950 the DP which ran on the slogan "enough!" took 53.4% of the vote over the CHP's 39.8%, resulting in 408 seats in parliament for DP compared to just 69 for CHP (Zurcher 2004, 206-217). This was a major shift as the Kemalist hegemony was broken by the loss of popular support. In

light of these developments the military took a stance as the protector of the Kemalist project. From this point forward the tension between the elected officials and the unelected military and civilian guardians is a constant presence in the political realm (Yavuz 2009, 28). With the transfer of power to a new ruling party a major first step was taken towards establishing democratic credentials.

Turkey has been largely characterized by party politics, beginning with the DP as an opposition party in 1950 and then real competition expanding beyond the two parties after 1960 and the growth of ideological debates (Altunisik and Tur 2005, 24-25). In terms of its relationship to religion the DP maintained the commitment to modernization through secularism by controlling Islam. It did however, allow for some opening up of Islam in areas that were safely considered cultural and not a challenge to the state system.

The DP, led by Adnan Menderes, was willing to utilize religion as a tool of the state when useful. Thus, while the policies did not appear as radical as the CHP, to portray the DP as soft on Islam would be overstating the case (Sakallioglu 1996, 236-238). Three different views have emerged in analyzing the stance on secularism adopted by the DP in contrast to the CHP. Ari, in his analysis of the educational curriculum of the era provides a good overview. One view is that the DP represents a serious change in policy from the secularism of the CHP. The DP essentially "paused" the progress of the revolution. A second view is that the progress had actually been halted twelve years earlier, with the death of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in 1938. A third view would reject the idea of a serious change in the policy towards secularism (Ari

2010, 2). Each of these views sheds some light on the reality that occurred during the early stages of multi-party politics.

There was from the beginning of the Republic a practice within the policies of the CHP to on the one hand modernize the country by controlling the place of religion and at the same time instrumentally use religion to support the state. Even during the period between 1946 and the 1950 elections, CHP adopted a policy that allowed more space for religion in an unsuccessful attempt to retain support. The DP recognized that some elements of the reform process had been accepted but others had not. To continue this process some areas of secularization were opened up for debate. Central to their efforts was a continuation of an instrumentalist use of Islam (Altunisik and Tur 2005, 28-31). Though they made some steps, such as the return of the Arabic *ezan,* the expansion of religious education in schools, and an increase in the schools for training preachers the same understanding of secularism remained. Kemalist secularism had been "not so much a separation of church and state as the subjugation and integration of religion into the state bureaucracy" (Zurcher 2004, 233). So while there are many ways in which the secularism policies of the DP vary greatly from the single party period there remains elements of consistency as well.

One of the chief accomplishments of the Menderes-led government in terms of religion in the public sphere was to show through a religiously liberal stance that religious individuals could participate in the political process, rather than splintering off into radicalized elements (Karakas 2007, II). In a speech given to support the removal of the ban on the Arabic *ezan* Menderes specifically stated that this was not a

move towards "reactionary" religion but was done for the sake of freedom of religion and freedom of conscience.

The DP did not envision themselves as abandoning secularism for the sake of Islam, but implementing a better secularism that was less authoritarian. The DP brought to the forefront a debate over what secularism was to mean in the Turkish context (Azak 2010, 73-76). While the Kemalists may have desired to portray the Islamic groups as "reactionary impediments" to a modern Turkey the fact remained that it was the Islamic groups support for the DP in the 1950s that allowed them to remain in power (Gunter and Yavuz 2007, 289). The DP was able to appeal more broadly to the masses than the CHP had attempted to do. They claimed to represent the periphery against the Kemalist secular intelligentsia. They also received the support of landowners who benefited from their economic policies. The base of their support viewed religion more important as a cultural value and faith system than as a political ideology. This is reflected in the reforms that allowed for more expression of religion, but very little dismantling of the secular state that had been established (Sakallioglu 1996, 236-237).

The early years of the DP's rule were marked by strong economic performance and a more liberal approach to cultural and religious expression. They were more negative towards the secularization of society but without attempting to alter the secular nature of the state. However, as the economy began to struggle in the latter half of the 1950s the DP began to revert to more authoritarian measures. Along with this the DP began to more overtly use Islam as an attempt to gather greater support from the masses. It was this greater instrumental use of religion that would be

one of the main factors that sparked the military coup of 1960 (Altunisik and Tur 2005, 31-32). In 1960, "the Kemalist elites were of the opinion that the ten-years rule of Democrat Party (DP) was reactionary, and thus incompatible with the Kemalist version of secularism" (Bacik 2011, 174). The military considered itself the guardians of the Kemalist secularist state and would step in to challenge and if needed overthrow the government if this was threatened.

In the 1960 coup the DP leader Adnan Menderes and two ministers were executed and other notable DP members were imprisoned but as a whole it was not marked by large scale violence. One of the key factors that motivated the coup was the fear that the elites were losing ground and thus the military cooperated with the CHP elites, and removed the ruling government and installed a new institutional structure and constitution, they then returned control to an elected civilian government (Demirel 2005, 248-49). The 1960 coup was a critical period and laid the foundations of the polarization of society that continues to the present. While the coup was significant in its own right, as Bacik reflects, "however, most important is the 1960 coup's legacy, and the symbolic set of meanings it produced that survive to the present day. […] It drew the historico-pyschological line between Kemalism and the conservative, mainly Islamic, masses" (Bacik 2011, 174). The military coup of 1960 was the first of three formal coups (1960, 1971, and 1980) and two other more subtle interventions (1997 and 2007). These interventions mark the times when particular actors strayed too far outside the prescribed limits and the military stepped in as guardian of the Kemalist secularist state.

From the 1950s to the 1990s various groups with Islam-based ideology would gain influence and at times rise to power. As the public sphere became more liberal there was more space for religiously minded actors including participation in the political process. Broadly speaking religious groups articulated three general views towards secularism and the role that religious actors should play in public and political life: the *Liberal view* of many of the center-right parties with a desire to move towards a more passive secularism; an *Ascetic view* that remained silent and isolated from public or political life such as the Nur movement; and the *Islamist view* such as Necmettin Erbakan's parties that were politically active (Kuru 2006, 5-6). These different views would go through periods of greater and lesser prominence as they attempted to represent the views of the Turkish people.

The DP was the first party in the Republican period that had not attempted to sideline religion and religious actors. The DP represent this liberal view and a number of political parties have followed, or claimed to emerge from, the same line of thinking, including the Justice Party (*Adalet Partisi*) of the 1960s-1970s, the Motherland Party (*Anavatan Partisi,* MP) of the 1980s, andthe Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi,* AKP*)* of the 2000s (Dagi 2005, 30). The DP, as the beginning of the center-right tradition, utilized religious issues to challenge the controlling tendencies that were the standard during the CHP single-party era. In their discourse they promoted the unifying elements and symbolism offered by Islam, the value of human rights and a respect for culture, and the responsibility of the state to protect the values of the individuals. This is the articulation of "civil religion" (Yavuz 2009, 42). The goal of these groups is to create

space within public life for religious symbols and identity while not trying to Islamize the political system.

The second view, what Kuru labels the *ascetic* approach, is represented in movements that were generally unconcerned with politics. Kuru cites Said Nursi, the founder of the Nur movement, who said "ninety-nine percent of Islam is about ethics, worship, the hereafter, and virtue. Only one percent is about politics; leave that to the rulers" (Kuru 2006, 5-6). The Nur movement, Naqshbandi orders, and other similar Sufi groups generally supported the parties that allowed more freedom from the strict secularism of the CHP but the political arena was not their primary concern (Kosebalaban 2007, 238). For the most part these groups rejected the Islamist discourse of foreign writers such as Sayid Qutb and Mawlana Mawdudi that argued for the complete transformation of state and society (Yavuz 2009, 40). Another leader who stands within this same trend is Fethullah Gulen who views Islam as a "repository of discourse and practices for the evolution of a just and ethical society" rather than a political project (Yilmaz 2005, 396). While not necessarily discouraging the active involvement of individuals in political society, this view does not take the creation of an Islamic state as its objective. As religion was allowed more space in the public sphere the Naqshbandi groups were continuously developing in both means and content or "operational code," the term Mardin employs in his analysis of the transformation of Turkish Islam (Mardin 2005). Through the process of this development some remained relatively unconcerned with the political realm, some employed a more liberal stance enabling greater exercise of civil religion, and others formed Islamist political parties.

The third view is the *Islamist* approach. Islamist, though employed to mean a variety of things in common usage, is here referring to the view that Islam ought to be the ruling characteristic of the state. The most prominent figure of the Turkish Islamists is Necmettin Erbakan who was the founder of the first successful Islamist party, the National Order Party (*Mili Nizam Partisi,* MNP) in 1970, and ultimately the leader of three other parties (Mardin 2005, 157-158). Erbakan's Islamist movement is known as *Milli Görüş* or "National View" which referred to Turkey's historical past and ultimately its Islamic nature manifested in an anti-Western stance. Erbakan's movement believed that historically, culturally, and geographically Turkey belonged to the Islamic world and not the West. They attempted, however, to make a case for accepting the technology of the West but devoid of the culture (Dagi 2005, 24-25). Though the influence of the Islamist movements in Turkey will be limited their experience is an important aspect of the development of secularism in the last half of the 20th century.

Erbakan's MNP was established in January of 1970 only to be shut down the following year during the 1971 military coup. A year later a second Erbakan-led Islamist party, the National Salvation Party (*Mili Selamet Partisi*, MSP) was founded. The party envisioned a developed Anatolian industrial sector leading to a strong Turkey that would emerge as the leader of the Muslim world with a common currency and defense alliance (Yilmaz 2011, 256). In this party Erbakan fared better than in MNP. In the 1973 elections the MSP received 11.8% of the vote, the third highest of any of the parties, receiving a large amount of support from the Kurdish areas of the southeast and other neglected areas of Anatolia. The MSP was able to remain part of

the coalition governments through the 1970s before being closed down in the 1980 military coup (Karakas 2007, 14). The 1980 coup was preceded by economic decline, increasing polarization of the society along a variety of spectrums, and fears of the Islamic Revolution in neighboring Iran spilling over into Turkey and the Soviet Union invasion of Afghanistan. The Turkish military took control, shutting down political parties and reshaping the political landscape (Yavuz 2009, 50). The return to civilian rule in 1983 gave opportunity for the Erbakan's movement to again slowly gather momentum.

When the military returned to the barracks, Erbakan was able to again lead an Islamist party, the Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*, RP). Despite receiving limited amounts of votes in the elections of the 1980s, when Turgut Ozal's Motherland Party held power, by 1996 the RP was the largest party in parliament. After the military intervention in 1980 a new constitution was written and passed in 1982 that was aimed at strengthening the state to prevent a return to the polarization and "terror and anarchy of the 1970s [that] were interpreted as a direct result of the previous constitution's attempt to limit political power and thus weaken the power of the state" (Altunisik and Tur 2005, 44). In the first civilian elections in 1983, the military allowed three parties to enter. The Motherland Party led by Turgut Ozal, and the party least supported by the military, took over 45% of the vote, with the Populist Party (*Halkçı Partisi*) receiving 30%, and the Party of Nationalist Democracy (*Milliyetci Demokrasi Partisi*) receiving 23% (Zurcher 2004, 282).The victory of Ozal's MP which claimed to the main pillar of society, a broader middle class that would

represent a centrist position and bring together different aspects of society. Ozal was able to do just that and his party would continue in power until 1991.

The Motherland Party represents a prime example of the liberal view towards the role Islam played in public life. It "was a 'nationalist and conservative party, devoted to national and moral values,' and had 'a liberal outlook based on free market and free enterprise'" (Murinson 2006, 947). Under Ozal the Motherland Party attracted the support of a wide range of groups. He had a background as a well-educated engineer and a successful manager in private industry with connections to big business and he also had connections with the Islamic groups. He represented the kind of politician with which the "average Turk" could identify (Zurcher 2004, 282-283). Ozal was key to attracting and keeping the support of these groups. "By emphasizing that his party was representing multiple identities in the population Ozal tried to keep under control the fragmentation of identities and different ethnic and religious groups that were developing during that period (Altunisik and Tur 2005, 47).

Ozal was largely successful in this effort though the end of the 1980s though as more political parties were formed and some of the older leaders who had been banned again entered the scene there were more challengers to the Motherland party. The economic success of the early years regressed in the face of higher unemployment and greater inflation rates. This period though has provided influential in shaping the current context both through the liberalization of the economy and as a demonstration of the success of a center-right party in attracting support from a variety of groups. "Despite their shortcomings, economic liberalisation and export-oriented growth strategies brought the Turkish economy into a new stage and by the

end of the decade Turkey had gone a long way towards integrating with the world economy through trade and foreign investment" (Ibid., 82). An important aspect was that these developments benefited not just traditional big business but also the small-scale family businesses in Anatolian cities that produced exportable manufactured goods.

During the 1980s religion was given more space and was more openly integrated into public life. During this period there was a growth in Islamic presence in public life. New mosques were built, the graduates of the religious *Imam-Hatip* schools were able to enter university, and other social expressions increased (Zurcher 2004, 289). The rise of a "Turkish-Islamic Synthesis" incorporated being a Muslim into part of being an ethnic Turk. While this idea of joining the two was in some ways a contrast to the original idea of Turkishness it was another way in which the state was able to use religion. "When the two ideologies [Islam and Turkish Nationalism] were packaged together, they became attractive to the military government of the 1980s. […] In the guise of nationalism, the military government could also exploit Islamism to reach the men and women in the street and mobilize them against what the government considered to be the existential challenge of communism" (Carkoglu and Kalaycioglu 2009, 10).

Ozal himself was a good picture of this as he was both liberal in many of his views and policy decisions and also religious and was able to underline the unity and compatibility of Islam with liberal democracy (Yilmaz 2009, 121). This convergence of Islamic values and a democratic state is a hallmark in contrast to the Islamist view which sees Islam as the guiding principle. By the early 1990s the difficulties that

arose from economic struggles as inflation increased put strain on the coalition that Ozal been holding together. The various groups within the Motherland party begin to splinter and lend their support to other parties. Some of them put their support behind other liberal groups and others put their support in the Islamist movement.

In the elections of 1996 Erbakan's RP received the largest portion of votes. After some difficulty in establishing a coalition, Erbakan became the country's first Islamist Prime Minister (Kosebalaban 2007, 238). Upon taking this position as Prime Minister Erbakan attempted to initiate some of his long-held goals. Erbakan made a distinct effort to emphasize the importance of other Muslim countries in his foreign policy agenda (Kuru 2007b, 144). This effort can be seen in the Developing-8 (D-8) organization that that Erbakan was a key figure in establishing in 1997.

This organization brought together eight countries whose combined population totaled nearly 800 million or roughly 65% of the total population of the Islamic world (Aral 2005, 91). Despite producing very little over the long run, the D-8 project attracted a lot of attention and harsh criticism for Erbakan both in Turkey and abroad. Within Turkey, Erbakan's effort was criticized by some Islamic leaders who saw this as an empty political project and a "cheap message" to his supporters to show his emphasis on the Muslim world (Kuru 2007b, 144). To the secular establishment this only enhanced the appearance of Erbakan as a "radical" Islamist and a threat to the secularism of the state (Yilmaz 2011, 257). The response to these threats led to the military's public campaign warning against the "unconstitutional 'exploitation of religion'" and ultimately the "Resolutions of February 28" that implemented serious measures against a wide range of religious activities (Karakas 2007, 27). Outside of

Turkey, Erbakan's role in the D-8 was seen by some Western observers as a danger and evidence that he was "anti-western."As a result there was at least tacit support by some Western leaders for his removal as part of the February 28 process (Aral 2005, 101). In this instance the politics of secularism in Turkey had not only a domestic but an international dimension to them.

Beginning in the political context following the 1980 coup, debates took place within the RP over what its character ought to be. This was the start of a division between "modernists" and "traditionalists" within the Islamist movement (Altunisik and Tur 2005, 51). Erbakan's time as head of the government lasted only until the February 28 Process of 1997, when the military-led National Security Council (*Mili Güvenlik Kurulu*) began a process of cracking down on "anti-secular" activities before forcing Erbakan to resign in June of 1997. This was followed by the Constitutional Court in January 1998 banning Erbakan from politics for five years and closing down the Welfare Party (Yilmaz 2011, 256-257). The experience of this generation of Islamists parties who were able to garner support because of the religiosity of the citizens but ultimately unable to retain control of a secular state led the younger generation to re-think their actions and adopt a different political philosophy (Kosebalaban 2007, 238).

Somer calculates that of the five Islamist parties that were formed after 1971 they were able to participate for an average of 6.5 years before being closed down. During this period there were moments of major gains including participating in ruling coalition governments and even occupying the office of Prime Minister. Thus there were clear incentives to participate within the democratic system (Somer 2010,

40).Yet, through this participation it also became quite clear there were red lines that once crossed the Kemalist elements would react to.

In light of this experience the younger generation, what Heper in his article published in 1997 labels as *Yenilikçiler* (Innovators), who were more liberal and democratic in their aims than Erbakan had been (Heper 1997, 37). With the bans placed on the leadership of the party the new politicians who would emerge described this event as painful but also a major learning experience. Yavuz records some of the responses of leaders of the current ruling party who cite this as an instructive moment. During this time, in the words of President Abdullah Gul, "[we] changed and learned a great deal." Minister Bulent Arinc described it as a "critical turning point" for his political worldview (Yavuz 2009, 68). The result of the experiences of Islamic political parties since the 1950s and the experience of the February 28 Process had cleared the political space for a new generation of leaders and had also allowed them to learn, through particularly painful experiences, some of the redlines that the Kemalist establishment tried to defend.

In a summary of the Erbakan era, Karakas concludes, that the RP did not lead a transformation of Turkey into an Islamic state but within the confines of the democratic system politicized religion, increased the pressure of the "secular front" and ultimately weakened the Islamist movement by distancing the emerging "Anatolian bourgeoisie" (Karakas 2007, 28). The Islamist movement ultimately failed to deliver on its promises and the majority of religious individuals were left searching for political representation that was compatible with the democratic system.

The experience of the multi-party period from 1950-1997 shows a variety of approaches that were adopted by religiously minded actors. Beginning with the DP in the 1950s, religion was progressively able to obtain a more active role in public life than had been possible during the single party era. For the religious groups this sometimes took the shape of a liberal party that allowed for more individual freedoms or at other times in support for the Islamists with aims of an Islamic state. For the hard-line secularists who had embraced a zero-sum relationship between Islam and secularism this was quite difficult and the results were at times bloody (Heper 1997, 42). Over time the actors, both the secular Kemalist establishment and the religious political actors, have moved through a process of transformation in their aims and methods and the result has been the continued existence of the democratic system.

However, while there has been a process of transformation and a gradual opening of the system to more religious actors it has been through direct competition and has not been with deliberation and compromise. Religion has continued to be one of the polarizing issues over which there are deep social cleavages. Murat Somer points out that the result is that the perception has been that neither party has viewed the changes as "positive-sum compromises." For the religious they have been gains wrested from unwilling pro-secular actors and for the secularists they have been losses through deceit or corruption (Somer 2010, 40). It is with this reality in mind that the following section will consider the current context and the role religion is playing and the need for a conception of secularism that is embraced by the society as a whole rather than as a victory for one side at the expense of a loss for the other.

3.3 Current Context and the Need for Rethinking the Conception of Secularism

Tracing the history of secularism from the founding of the Republic in 1923 through to the February 28 Process in 1997 provides the background and shows that the place of religion within society and political life is a contentious topic. Throughout this period there was a competition between the Kemalist secularists and the various religiously based groups, both more liberal Center-Right parties and Islamist parties, for political office and ultimately the support of the people. The outcome of this competition has made possible the current situation where the Justice and Development Party (AKP), a political party led by openly religious figures, has convincingly held power for more than ten years. Religion appears to be playing a more significant role in public life, not just in terms of practice but also in its influence. It seems that unlike previous experiences when there have been liberal religious parties in power a secularist-led military coup to remove the political party and push religion back to the fringe will not be likely.

From one vantage point this might indicate a failure of the modernization process and a return to an Islamic system. Another view, is that this is actually a sign of the success of the modernization process that has brought about a more liberal and democratic system that now allows for greater diversity and challenges to take place within the democratic political sphere. This section will look more closely at some of the particular recent trends that have made this possible and how these new realities need to be acknowledged by a reconsideration of the application of the principle of secularism within the current context.

3.3.1 Globalized Liberal Democratization

In considering the increased role that religion occupies in Turkey it should not be divorced from trends occurring globally. As the opening pages demonstrated the secularization thesis produced by the Enlightenment thinkers, embraced by the Jacobins of the French Revolution, and modeled by the founders of the Turkish Republic has begun to wane. Religion is making a comeback. Its influence on life and – more importantly for this discussion – on politics is significant. Baskan describes how "according to secularization theory, modernization leads to a decline in religion's role in the public realm, with it turning into a matter for the private sphere. Instead, however, the contemporary world has witnessed a resurgence of religion with the emergence of religious movements throughout the world" (Baskan 2010, 168).

As Toft, Philpott, and Shah argue throughout their book religion is making a resurgence globally. Of even greater importance is the nature of this resurgence, it is not simply a revival of religious practice, but the significant element is that religious actors throughout the world experience a greater capacity for political influence now than at any other time in modern history (Toft, Philpott, and Shah 2011, 1107). This change has been remarked on by some who were previously proponents of this thesis. It was Habermas who said "Religious traditions and communities of faith have gained a new, hitherto unexpected political importance" and "the significance of religions used for political ends has meanwhile grown the world over" (Habermas 2006, 1-2). In his later years Peter Berger offered this reflection on his own thinking, "the major change-of-mind has been, precisely, the abandonment of the old secularization theory – not, I would like to emphasize, because of some philosophical or theological change, but because the theory seemed less and less capable of making sense of the

empirical evidence from different parts of the world" (Berger 2001, 445).There are a number of factors to which this may resurgence may be attributed, some the very same things the proponents of the secularization thesis thought would spell the doom of religion.

One explanation for the increasing influence of religion is the emptiness of modern narratives. This was a potential outcome noted by some of the early philosophers such as Max Weber who looked to the end of the modernization process and saw that as modernization and scientific advancements explained away the unknown, people might once again have questions that science thought it had answered. The result of modernization and the creation of a "disenchanted world" was that the narratives that gave meaning to life would be explained away and yet in their place new secular narratives would emerge, such as radical nationalism (Kim 2008). The creation of a singular Turkish identity was a significant part of the Kemalist efforts in Turkey and the secularization of society was part of maintaining that identity.

Carkoglu and Kalaycioglu recount "Turkish nationalism had been established as a modern ideology in the early days of the twentieth century with the assumption that religion (Islam) had its day with the end of the Ottoman empire, and thus failed to provide any meaningful solutions to the problems of the present day" (Carkoglu and Kalaycioglu 2009, 9). These nationalist identities were based in the modernist readings of history. One of the effects of globalization has been the rising challenge to these identities (Banchoff 2008, 13-14). This has occurred globally and within Turkey as well. Bilgili recounts how "by the last quarter of the 20th century, the same period that globalization became more and more important in shaping people's minds, new

criticisms of Kemalist secular ideology began to emerge. These criticisms have been primarily based on the futility of this system in creating a meaning for life" (Bilgili 2011, 139). Religion has been and continues to be a crucial element for providing a meaning for life and thus this may be one reason for the resurgence in its influence.

One of the primary modes of Turkey's engagement with the broader world has been through its process of accession into the European Union (EU). Part of what has contributed to the European Union project is its framework to transmit influences and pressures to affect the path of democratization of its member states. These pressures have been shaped by the assumption that they are beneficial for both the EU member states and the candidate states (Hughes 2008, 15). Certain democratic credentials have been a prerequisite for EU membership since its inception (Onis 2003, 10-12). Thus for Turkey to make progress in accession to the EU it means a commitment to certain democratic reforms.

As Turkey has made progress in democratic reforms an outcome of that has been the greater significance of religious actors. "The European Union's emphasis on further democratization has been an important factor that has increased the visibility of religious communities in social and even political spheres" (Bilgili 2011, 141). The EU reform process has also included structural changes that have also made the need for rethinking secularism more relevant. The military has been a guardian of the state's secularism and intervened multiple times throughout the Republic. The EU process has made steps to normalize its position and minimize its influence over the elected government (Kuru 2012, 47). The weakening of the military as a guardian is to be met with a strengthening of the democratic system and the civilian protection of the values of the state through the constitution and elected governments, and the

judiciary. Through democratization and the EU process there is an emphasis on the strength of the elected government and rule of law and also a greater respect of the rights of individuals, especially minority groups, and attendant to that is a need for a redefinition of secularism that makes this possible.

Another impact of globalization has been that technological modernization rather than destroying religion has been used effectively by religious actors. In Turkey since the mid-1980s, under the Turgut Ozal administration, there has been an opening up of new markets through liberalization and globalization. For Ozal Turkey's isolation from the global economy perpetuated the status quo. "He thus embraced both neo-liberal economic policies that would increase wealth and enhanced political rights that would create a civil society that could criticize the status quo" (Bilgili 2011, 138). Through this a new Islamic middle class has emerged that has become more active and influential in society and politics (Baskan 2010, 170-174). The role of this new middle class and its impact will be considered in more detail below. The opening of the Turkish economy produced a greater need for engagement with the world.

It has also given rise to a new wave of communication. These new media opportunities allow for an ever expanding reach of ideas. "The incorporation of media strategies and technologies allow activist networks to reach a broad audience of affiliated, like-minded, complacent, and adversarial consumers alike" (Hendrick 2009, 289). Traditional boundaries are broken down and new horizons are available to be utilized for both recruitment of new followers and the cohesion of current followers. "Riding the wave of globalization, religious actors have deployed new communications technologies and invoked human rights norms to mobilize public

support, reframe debates, and support winning political and policy coalitions (Banchoff 2008, 4) This summary by Thomas Banchoff of how globalization has influenced religious actors is clearly relevant in the case of Turkey.

As Turkey has become more engaged with the world through the EU accession process there has been added pressure for substantial changes in terms of democratic freedoms and human rights for all citizens both religious and non-religious. Along with this the broader phenomenon of globalization has created both communication tools and spaces for the articulation of a diversity of views. The engagement on a global level has not only produced a new discourse but it has had tangible results in the economic sector that has also contributed to the need for a new model of secularism.

3.3.2 *Rising Significance of Conservative Businessman (Anatolian Tigers or Islamic Calvinists?)*

An important factor to take into account in considering the current context and the increased role religion is playing in the social and political realm is the economic realm. During the last two decades, more than ever before, there has been significant growth among small and medium size businesses run by more traditional and religiously conservative individuals. The result has been that some cities located in central Anatolia have emerged as centers of growth to challenge the traditional dominance of western and traditionally more secularized cities of Istanbul and Izmir. "The upswing created a new middle class, the so called 'Anatolian bourgeoisie', which is firmly grounded in the Turkish Islamic culture" (Karakas 2007, 20). This middle class has formed a large amount of the support base for the more religious AKP. This rising middle class of conservatives have increasingly "supported political

parties that respect religious tradition and belittle neither Turkey's Islamic heritage nor the country's expression of that heritage" (Fuller 2004, 53). Since the 1980s one method of characterizing the tensions between the religious and secular actors could be seen as "a struggle between two middle classes," as the more conservative religious middle class became more firmly integrated within the Turkish and global economic system (Baskan 2010, 183).

The creation of this new middle class is largely credited to the liberal economic policies that were put into place during the government under Turgut Ozal from 1983-1993. In contrast to the import substitution policies that were embraced in the 1960s and 1970s, Ozal began a shift towards an export-oriented economic policy (Yavuz 2003, 82). This shift in focus was particularly beneficial for businesses that were able to quickly adapt and take part in the increasingly globalized economy. Kosebalaban looks at two prime examples of this in the cities of Konya and Kayseri. These cities, despite being landlocked in the geographical center of Turkey and neglected by the political center went through a period of surprising economic growth in the 1990s. Some have labeled them as an example of the "Anatolian Tigers" drawing a comparison to the economic development in East and Southeast Asia.

Kosebalaban nuances this comparison because unlike the Asian experience which benefited from the support of the West and the developed economy of Japan, the growth of these Anatolian cities was viewed with suspicion by the political center of Turkey (Kosebalaban 2007, 232). The majority of the businessmen and entrepreneurs who were at the center of the growth in these cities were Islamic without negating western values or the importance of a liberal market economy. Due

in part to suspicion and exclusion by traditional secular elites many of these companies ended up working together.

A chief means of this cooperation was through the Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (*Müstakil Sanayici ve İşadamları Denerği*, MUSIAD). Through this organization, which by 2006 represented 2,600 companies and 12% of Turkey's gross national product, these businessmen demonstrated that Islam was a strategic resource for working within a liberal economic system (Karakas 2007, 21). This group stands as a religiously conservative alternative to the pro-secular Association of Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen (*Türk Sanayicleri ve İşadamları Denerği,* TUSIAD) to help facilitate the growth of these smaller and companies (Baskan 2010, 399). As opposed to the comparison drawn from the economic growth of these Anatolian based companies to the economic growth of the "Asian Tigers," Kosebalaban prefers the reference of "Islamic Calvinists" to examine their growth due to the fact that their success was not the result of either state sponsorship or large amounts of direct foreign investment, but through personal efforts, an observation that Baskan agrees with as well (Kosebalaban 2007, 234; Baskan 2010, 405).

The "Islamic Calvinists" term gained wide popularity due largely to a 2005 study of Kayseri by the European Stability Initiative (ESI). This study drew attention to the comparisons made by leaders in Kayseri between the emerging strength of the religious businessmen and the work ethic of the Protestants that Max Weber identified as undergirding the rise of modern capitalism. "Celal Hasnalcaci, owner of a textile company and branch manager of the Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's

Association (MUSIAD), explained: 'The rise of Anatolian capitalists is due to their

Protestant work ethic. No personal waste, no speculation, reinvest your profits" (ESI

2005, 24). These leaders represent a strand of thinking where being Muslim and

interacting in the modern world are fully compatible. In the words of ESI "a new

generation in Central Anatolia has made its own peace with modernity" (ESI 2005,

25). This experience has been seen in Kayseri, Konya, Sivas, Adana, and Gaziantep

among other cities. These areas that have been the chief beneficiaries of the

liberalizing of the economic structure have also formed strong areas of support for the

conservative AKP (Kosebalaban 2007, 234-235). A large portion of the MUSIAD

members supported the AKP, including members elected as AKP deputies, and

MUSIAD was an influential actor in the emergence of the AKP in the aftermath of

1997 (Baskan 2010, 408). The economic growth of a particular class of society can be

influential in the political realm.

Filiz Baskan in her study applies the framework established by Eva Bellin to

explain the role of business communities in the process of democratization to the

Turkish case and MUSIAD's role in the emergence of the AKP (Baskan 2010, 399).

In terms of state dependence, the first variable in Bellin's framework, MUSIAD was a

contributor to democratization because its growth was due to globalization and

economic liberalization rather than being reliant on state sponsorship. Bellin's second

variable is fear and that business groups tend towards democratization as their fear of

lost profitability and property rights declines. In Baskan's application to the Turkish

case she shows that MUSIAD's fear, based on their experience of the February 28

Process was of lost profits due to the repression by secular elites and thus "Turkey's

Islamic business elites have become 'contingent democrats' to protect their material interests" (Baskan 2010, 409). With these material interests MUSIAD played an important role in the rise of the AKP to power receiving 34.3% of the votes and enabling it for the first time in fifteen years to form a single-party government. MUSIAD was crucial not only in providing support in terms of human resources and votes, but also in terms of ideology and advocating a "free-market economy, export-oriented economic growth, and a limited state role in economic life" (Ibid., 412). MUSIAD represents a concrete example of the way in which the economic success of the conservative Islamic businessmen facilitated the growth in significance of religion in public life.

3.3.3 *Statistics Demonstrating Increasing Levels of Religion Not only in Practice but Influence*

There is statistical evidence to demonstrate that the role of religion in politics and public life is increasing. The previous case of MUSIAD and its role in providing both human and financial backing as well as ideological support to the AKP is one specific example. It is in support with the observation that as a stronger middle class develops which retains its religious nature it is also likely to become more active in public life and influential in political spheres (Toft, Philpott, and Shah 2011, 2353, 4409-4424). This growing middle class is part of the significantly religious Turkish population and it appears from the trends that this is increasing (Farr 2008, 113).

Based on surveys conducted the vast majority of Turks profess to believe in God and to participate in religious activities. They view religion as important to their lives and see it as contributing to their character as an individual. According to the ARDA World Values Survey the percentage of those identifying themselves as a

"religious person" increased from 74.6% to 82.6% from 1990 to 2005. The number who meditate or pray is more than 95% (ARDA 2011). The public display of religion in Turkey can also be considered, as Gol does, in terms of "performative reflexivity" that has resulted in a newly assertive and influential public expression of religion (Gol 2009, 803-805). It is not just the participation in religious activities but it is also its political influence that is increasing.

According to research carried out by the Pew Research Center the number of people who feel that Islam plays a large role in political life has increased by 25% from 2002 to 2010 from 45% to 69% (Pew Research Center 2010). The level of those who identify primarily as Muslims also appears to be on the rise. In a 2006 survey 51% think of themselves first as Muslims rather than Turks, only 19% identified first with nationality. Just one year prior only 43% identified primarily as Muslims (Grim and Wike 2007). Toros cites two longitudinal studies conducted by the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) between 1999 and 2006 which again confirmed the increasing religiosity of the population across a variety of areas. What is also and perhaps just as important is that at the same time as the religiosity increased the desire for a Sharia based state decreased from 21% in 1999 to just 9% in 2006 (Toros 2009, 264). So while there is an increase in religious feelings and exercise it is not necessarily aimed at changing the state towards a religious system but is a demonstration of the level of secularization in society.

In analyzing the nature of the seeming resurgence of religion in Turkey, Elizabeth Hurd concludes that it is "not a threat to the foundation of modern politics as conventional accounts would have it. It is a modern contestation of an authoritative secularist tradition (Kemalism) that has been authorized and regulated by state

authorities since the founding of the modern Turkish Republic in 1923. It is modern

politics" (Hurd 2008, 72). In her assessment the facts show that while there is a

resurgence of religious practice and influence, it is not an attempt to circumvent the

democratic nature of the state but to renegotiate the space that has been controlled by

the Kemalist state.

The experience of the conflict between the Islamists and the Kemalist's from

the 1970s-1990s had a significant impact on the thinking and aspirations of Muslims

in Turkey. The transformation of their thinking, which has sometimes been referred to

as "post-Islamism" has been that they no longer hold aspirations for an Islamic state

but advocate for more freedoms for Islam within the public sphere. "The opposition of

the post-Islamists to the Kemalists regime continues but this is done not in the name

of Islam *per* se any more but of pluralism, democracy, human rights and the rule of

law. […] We now see even an advocacy of secularism along the Anglo-Saxon

tradition deemed leaving space for freedom to religious groups" (Dagi 2004, 140).

With this development the difference between the two points of views still exists but

rather than taking place outside of the democratic system through Islamist attempts

for an Islam based state or the Kemalist's use of military coups the challenges are

more often taking place within the democratic political realm. This process of the

AKP challenging the place of Kemalism within the context of increased

democratization of the political sphere is the same observation made by Kuru and

Stepan in the introduction to their volume (Kuru and Stepan 2012, 3). The primary

religious actor within the modern context has been the AKP which has emerged as a

representative of much of the religious population while at the same time a political

party that is able to operate within the limits of the political system, as opposed to the

Islamists parties of the 1970s-1997.

3.3.4 AKP as a conservative and influential actor

While a full treatment of the emergence, ideology, and actions of the AKP is

beyond the scope of this thesis it is important to highlight as it is a significant step in

the process of the consolidation of democracy within Turkey, especially in terms of

the place of religion and the state. In the opening of his chapter on the interaction

between "Islamic-Conservative and Pro-Secular actors," Murat Somer provides a

succinct and helpful summary of the emergence of the AKP out of the political

turmoil that marked the decade of the 1990s and the competition between Kemalists

and Islamists.

> These social and political crises and frictions represent a seeming paradox
> because, in many ways, Turkish democracy made major advances during the
> last decade. During the late 1990s reformist Turkish Islamists were
> transformed into a 'conservative-democratic' force represented by the ruling
> Justice and Development Party (JDP, AKP). This enabled the AKP to gain the
> support of major segments of the secular intelligentsia in the name of
> democratic reforms and EU membership. […] Yet, these steps of
> democratization seem to have divided the social and political actors, rather
> than unite them behind more reforms that would further strengthen democratic
> institutions and secure the rule of law. (Somer 2010, 28)

The AKP took power in the elections in November of 2002 with 34.3% of the vote.

Due to the electoral process and the 10% threshold required to enter parliament the

AKP received 363 of the 550 seats in parliament (Karakas 2007, 28-29). The success

of the AKP while remarkable and has been substantiated as they have been able to

increase their percentage in each of the following elections (2007: 46.7 %; 2011:

49.9% of national votes cited in Albion 2011, 3) needs also to be qualified.

The reason for the large levels of support is not due only to its ideological and religious views, though these have not proven an insurmountable obstacle to its electability and been a benefit for attracting many voters, pragmatic reasons such as economic performance have influenced the strong showing of the AKP in the past three elections (Gol 2009, 802-808; Karakas 2010, 29-32; Carkoglu 2008). To merely point at the results of the elections as people voting for more religion in the country would not represent the whole picture.

The economic and financial crisis in Turkey in 2001 in a country still recovering from the massive earthquake in Istanbul in 1999 formed the backdrop as people were voting with tangible interests in mind. The AKP offered a compelling amount of hope and prospects for change. The feeling was that the country was in need of change and the AKP was committed to the idea of transformation. The transformation was driven by multiple factors and in large part by a desire to achieve greater legitimacy for the accession process to the European Union (Duran 2008, 80-81).

The AKP government during its time in power has implemented several reform packages across a wide spectrum of areas including greater civilian oversight and a decreased role of the military, minority language rights, and freedom of the press and freedom of organization, which took on greater weight due to their role in the European Union accession process. (Altunisik and Tur 2005, 65). These reforms, which are generally moving towards liberal democratic trends, have increasingly raised questions from the Kemalist segments of society about the open expression of religion in the public sphere and fears of an "Islamization" through the back door. The

divide and distrust between various groups has not disappeared. In some respects the polarization between the secular Kemalist elites and the more religious actors is no different than what has been present since the founding of the Republic. Yet, the environment is rather different at present than it was in 1950.

Two primary differences between the present situation and that of the past are that, first, the levels of political and economic development and external support through the EU accession process is much higher than before and, second, the Islamic-conservative actors in politics, economics and other areas have a greater level of self-confidence and self assertion than ever before (Somer 2010, 30). Here the impact of the Anatolian bourgeoisie can be seen as they lend popular support to the AKP. Many of them are generally in support of a return to more traditional values and religious tolerance but not outside of the democratic parameters or by means of the implementation of an Islamic state (Karakas 2007, 35-36). These factors are marks of progress in the consolidation of democracy though with more work yet to be done. While facing criticism from the traditional elites the AKP has maintained a strong electoral base in the strengthened middle class who in large part agree with their values ideologically and are benefiting from the economic liberalization financially.

The previous sections have laid out to some extent how the situation in Turkey has shifted over the past decades. The process that began at the founding of the Turkish Republic with the desire to create a modern and democratic state in Anatolia continues to be a work in progress. The Turkey of today is becoming more influential and assertive in seeking its interests both domestically and in foreign affairs. As

Turkey seeks to play a more significant role in international affairs it must also continue to consolidate its own democracy.

In concluding his book *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey,* M. Hakan Yavuz identifies three principles that are fundamental to the newly emerging Turkey. These are (1) the desire for *secularism* not be seen as a source of tension and polarization in society by redefining the meaning and function of authoritarian secularism; (2) an attempt to redefine the *political community* on a cosmopolitan and multi-cultural basis rather than an ethnic nationalism; (3) a desire for a *democratic state* with a thicker civil society and less of a public sector role in economy and national identity (Yavuz 2009, 281). Throughout this process there are still areas of debate that are both necessary and healthy within a democratic state.

The disagreement and debate ought to move beyond a polarization of society, and through open dialogue seek to act in a way that produces consensus and agreement from both sides, even if the agreement is reached for differing reasons or from different starting points. The inability of political parties and other social-political actors to move beyond "zero-sum narratives" is a continuing source of polarization and weakness within the consolidation process of Turkish democracy (Somer 2010, 42). Through these debates the outcome will be one of compromise as each side negotiates what is ultimately in the best interest of the citizens that make up the state. The following section will sketch out a proposed model of secularism which is intended to better accommodate the rights of all citizens without regard to their religious beliefs or lack thereof. It is an attempt to contribute to the first principle mentioned by Yavuz above which desires to remove the tension and polarizing and

elements surrounding secularism and give a conception that is better suited to modern

Turkey.

CHAPTER IV: PROPOSED SECULARISM MODEL

The challenging of the traditional views of secularism is by no means unique to the Turkish experience. As Rajeev Bhargava acknowledges, "over the last three decades, secular states, virtually everywhere, have come under strain. It is hardly surprising then that political secularism, the doctrine that defends them, has also been subjected to severe criticism." (Bhargava 2010, 8). This criticism in some circles has led some to adopt the standpoint that secularism should be jettisoned altogether. This conclusion, however, is unnecessary and should be rejected. Rather, as Bhargava states, when understood in its wider context and recognized to be not against religion, but against religious homogenization and institutionalized domination, secularism's value becomes more evident. "Of all available alternatives, secularism remains our best bet to help us deal with ever deepening religious diversity and the problems endemic to it" (Ibid.). This starting point is quite important. In states that claim to respect the values and rights of the individual, one of the hallmarks of democracy, there is a need for protecting the rights of individuals who come from and hold a diversity of religious viewpoints. It is imperative that any understanding of secularism for the present be able to accommodate a diversity of viewpoints.

Charles Taylor, who has contributed to the re-thinking of secularism in countless ways, provides a helpful insight that undergirds the whole discussion of secularism, or, more simply, the arrangement of religion within the public sphere. One of the fundamental problems is that in many ways the wrong problem is often examined. The questions do not probe deep enough. He says, "One of our basic difficulties in dealing with these problems [integrating different religious communities] is that we have the wrong model, which has a continuing hold on our

minds. We think that secularism (or *laicite)* has to do with the relation of the state and religion, whereas in fact it has to do with the (correct) response of the democratic state to diversity" (Taylor 2010, 25). While certainly secularism is about the state and religion, what Taylor highlights is that it is just one application of a bigger question. The goal of state neutrality is to avoid favoring or disfavoring any basic position, not just religious positions. So the question of secularism is, on an even more fundamental level, about how a state handles diversity within democracy.

In the modern Turkish case there was from the founding a desire to create a nation-state that was homogenous, sharing a singular national identity. The modernizing project sought to reduce differences within the state not only in religion, but also in terms of ethnicity, language, and dress, among others. Diversity rather than something to be acknowledged and addressed was minimized and ignored. It was in this context that a strict and assertive secularism was adopted. This has begun to change in a variety of areas and the place of religion is among the most pressing. Thus an understanding of secularism that secures the fundamental values of the Republic of Turkey while at the same time accounting for the plurality of religious and non-religious viewpoints is needed and can contribute to a reduction of the polarization that has often occurred in Turkish society.

The model proposed here may be seen as a movement between the two "ideal types" that Kuru identified to a position that better suits the present Turkish context. In an attempt to put forward an understanding of secularism that is able to do that the formulation by the political philosopher Akeel Bilgrami provides a very helpful starting point. His characterization of secularism is preceded by a discussion of some

of the fundamental characteristics concerning secularism and the logic or the
justification for why secularism should be adopted in a democratic society at all.

Without delving too deep into the field of political philosophy, the basis for
adopting secularism as a political ideology is on the grounds of an *overlapping*
consensus based on *internal reasons*. These are contrasted to *external reasons*, those
that an individual may hold independent of their substantive values or commitments
or reasons that are universal in scope. There is not an external reason that can be put
forward and agreed upon by all that justifies the adoption of secularism. To put it in
Bilgrami's words, "there are no external reasons that would establish the truth of
secularism. If secularism were to carry conviction, it would have to be on grounds that
persuaded people by appealing to the specific and substantive values that figured in
their specific moral psychological economies" (Bilgrami 2011, 4). Bilgrami's
argument to this point is that secularism must be adopted on the basis of internal
reasons, or conclusions that individuals or groups reach in keeping with their
particular set of values.

The particular set of values may vary from individual to individual and group
to group and so the reason for the adoption of a particular policy within a diverse
polity is that they agree on the policy on their own, and perhaps differing, grounds.
Taylor gives an example of how this might be the case with the different justification
for the rights to life and freedom that might be put forward. For a Kantian he might
point to the dignity of a rational agency, a Utilitarian would point to the need to treat
beings that can experience joy and suffering in such a way as to maximize the first
and minimize the second, while a Christian might justify it on the basis that man is
created in the image of God. "They concur on the principles [rights to life and

freedom], but differ on the deeper reasons for holding to this ethic. The state must uphold the ethic, bust must refrain from favoring any of the deeper reasons" (Taylor 2010, 25). This is the idea of *overlapping consensus* most thoroughly conceived of by John Rawls in the contractual understanding of political philosophy (Rawls 1993). While Bilgrami would offer critiques of elements of Rawls framework, it is due to the concept of overlapping consensus, that even from the variety substantive values particular groups and individuals hold they agree on the same policy, that secularism can be adopted within a diverse society.

If the motivation for accepting secularism as a political philosophy is on the basis of internal reasons, how can it be articulated in a way that will engender the support from a wide diversity of groups within the country, including both the religious, whether Sunni Muslim, Sufi, Alevi, Orthodox Christian, Jewish, Protestant Evangelicals, or any other faith community and non-religious individuals? Akeel Bilgrami's characterization of secularism provides a very helpful starting point that will then be elaborated on in more depth. His proposal is this:

> Should we be living in a religiously plural society, secularism requires that all religions should have the privilege of free exercise and be evenhandedly treated *except when a religion's practices are inconsistent with the ideals that a polity seeks to achieve* (ideals, often, though not always, enshrined in stated fundamental rights and other constitutional commitments) *in which case there is a lexical ordering in which the political ideals are placed first*. (Bilgrami 2011, 7-8; italics in original)

This characterization or redefinition of secularism introduces a number of important facets for constructing a model of secularism for the Turkish context..

Bilgrami's secularism acknowledges that within a religiously plural society, of which Turkey would most certainly qualify, secularism requires fair treatment and

free exercise of religion. Religion in general is not sought out as a target to be removed from society, and particular religions, especially minority traditions are assured of the same treatment as the majority. This in the first instance would be a movement towards the passive secularism articulated by Kuru, though with a caveat. Thus, this secularism is not adversarial to religion but accommodating, except when certain religious practices violate the ideas that the society as a whole has agreed upon as fundamental rights of the state.

This is somewhat different, at least in emphasis, than Taylor who seeks a redefinition more generally termed along the lines of the state adopting a "kind of neutrality or 'principled distance'" (Taylor 2010, 23). Bilgrami begins with that basic understanding but recognizes that neutrality does not quite go far enough, but the lexical ordering, or the idea that when there is a conflict between the fundamental ideals or values of the state and a particular religious practice the ideals of the state would take priority. In the Turkish context where the fear of the abuse of religion is prevalent, as was described in the historical narrative of religion in Turkey, this is an important element to maintain. It provides a check within the political system itself, without needing to resort to an outside actor such as the military, to secure the secular nature of the state.

Thus this conception of secularism "*can be adversarial* against religious practices and laws, but *only* when, from the point of view the ideals one starts with, it needs to be that, i.e., when those practices and laws go against […] the ideals and goals (formulated without reference to religious or anti-religious elements) that a society has adopted" (Bilgrami 2011, 8; italics in original). This observation brings up

one of the first and important clarifications that ought to be understood concerning secularism, it is primarily about an ideological stance and not about institutional arrangements.

4.1 Ideological, not institutional (twin tolerations)

When considering what secularism is there is a tendency to first think of a particular institutional arrangement, perhaps captured in a slogan such as "the separation of church and state" in the United States or "*laicite*" in France and then from there explain why that is proper secularism. The reality is that the secularism practiced in the vast majority of western democracies would not conform to the "separation of church and state" notion that is common in the United States or the French slogan of a strict *laicite*.

Stepan makes this quite clear in his article where he cites research showing that in twenty-five western democracies: all fund religious education, 76% have religious education as a standard offering in state schools, 52% collect taxes for religious organizations, and 36% have established religions (Stepan 2010, 6). So to subscribe to a particular institutional arrangement as the *sine que non* of secularism is untenable. As Taylor concludes this "fetishization of the favored institutional arrangements" becomes the starting point. While they may in fact be a crucial part of the end result what these mean in practice ought to be determined primarily by the efforts maximize the goals of a society rather than embody an institutional model (Taylor 2010, 28). As Bilgrami observes in agreement with Taylor when these institutional arrangements become the mantras preserving the ideals of a state

becomes secondary to preserving the institutions of the state (Bilgrami 2011, 7). What are the goals that ought to be fundamental to a society and the determining factors of its policies? What are the ideological commitments which should determine the contours of the religion and state relationship?

There are a number of ways in which these ideals could be framed. As Bilgrami in his formulation of secularism acknowledged, often, though not always, these are written and secured in the constitution of a particular state. In his expression of these ideals, Taylor adopts the familiar trinity of the French Republic: liberty, equality, and fraternity. Liberty meaning that no one must be forced in the domain of religion or basic belief. This is often considered religious liberty, in the United States the "free exercise" of religion, including the freedom to not believe. Second, is the equality among beliefs that ensures that no worldview or religious outlook (religious or areligous) enjoy a privileged status before the law. Third, is the idea of fraternity which in this context Taylor considers as all the voices contributing to the discussion and being heard in the ongoing process of determining political identity, what the society is about, and how it is accomplished, the rights and privileges of the citizens (Taylor 2010, 23). He puts these forward as an example of general ideas and goals that a society may set as primary and then are worked out within a particular context and take a variety of shapes as they are put into practice.

Alfred Stepan in his studies on the place of religion within both established and consolidating democracies puts forward an especially helpful formulation that highlights the ideological over institutional nature of secularism. These are what he frames as the "twin tolerations" or the "minimal boundaries of freedom of action that

must somehow be crafted for political institutions vis-à-vis religious authorities, and for religious individuals and groups vis-à-vis political institutions" (Stepan 2000, 37). In his article, Stepan looks at what truly marks a consolidated democracy. This means advancing beyond just the idea of free and fair elections or even expanded to the eight institutional guarantees Robert Dahl identifies, to also include a constitution that is democratic and respecting fundamental liberties including the protection of minorities, and the means to ensure that the elected government rules in line with the constitution and is bound by both the rule of law and institutions that provide accountability. Part of what marks a consolidated democracy is "a robust and critical civil society that helps check the state and constantly generates alternatives." (Ibid., 39). Thus in his description of democracy there is the freedom for all groups to participate in the democratic process so long as they do not cross a "minimal institutional threshold" of the use of violence, the violation of the rights of others, or the circumvention of the democratic process. So then when it comes to religious groups how do they relate to this threshold?

These are the "twin tolerations" of the religious institutions towards the government and of the government towards religious groups and individuals. This is on the one hand religious institutions tolerate the democratically elected governments to rule and have no constitutionally privileged position for mandate public policy. On the other hand religious groups have the freedom to worship as individuals and communities of faith and also to publically advance their values, so long as they do not violate the liberties of other citizens or the rule of law and the democratic process. This means that no group - religious or otherwise - is prohibited *a priori* from the

political process but only upon violation of the rule of law and the rights of other citizens. This is the basic framework present in consolidated democracies, or the minimal freedoms of the democratic state and minimal religious freedom for citizens that can then be expanded on in a wide variety of concrete ways in various contexts (Stepan 2000, 39-40).

These tolerations can exist within a wide variety of institutional arrangements as seen in a survey of democratic states. There are also many states that are "secular" or "pro-secular" regimes that are not in reality democracies because of the absence of these minimal freedoms (Fox 2008, 105-139; Stepan 2000, 40-43). So Stepan in his articulation of the minimal freedoms present within democracies does not necessarily provide the details for what religion-state relationships must look like but gives the baseline commitments or minimal freedoms that need to be present for a strong democracy.

Murat Somer draws from Stepan's work and applies it in particular to the Turkish case. He sees the emergence of the "twin tolerations" as a key question in Turkey's continued process of democratization. "Both liberal and religious-conservative actors in Turkey demand that this model [state control of religion through heavy regulation and support] be reformed to reduce the state's involvement in religious affairs" (Somer 2010, 36). The recognition that there is a need for change is not only coming from the more religious individuals who want freedoms that have been denied in the past.

The non-religious or liberal actors are also wary of the current model because with a more religious government currently in power the state mechanisms are in place to promote religiosity. Markus Dressler shows how since the 1990s the gradual liberalizing of the public sphere has brought critiques from the liberal along with the religious actors. "This process has led to increasingly open and sophisticated contestations of the Kemalist legacy, which is scrutinized both by the Islamic movement, as well as by liberal voices in the public sphere" (Dressler 2010, 122). From both perspectives the current model is in need of reform. Somer puts the need for reforms this way. "This is necessary to make Turkish laicism compatible with a more pluralistic democracy in which religious actors enjoy more freedoms, the state is more neutral vis-à-vis different religions and religious interpretations, and the state's role is shifted from controlling public religion to ensuring that religious liberties do not impinge upon other liberties such as secular freedoms of expression" (Somer 2010, 36). This is a call for an application of Stepan's twin tolerations. There needs to be protection of the rights of the non-religious to not be dictated to by the majority religious group. Thus reconsidering secularism is for the benefit of all citizens and to secure their liberties against homogenization by the majority. This is an application of Bilgrami's "lexical ordering" that places the ideological commitments of the state in priority to the religious commitments.

What Somer identifies as the third reason for reform, to ensure that "religious liberties do not impinge upon other liberties," is an example of when Bilgrami's secularism becomes adversarial to religion. Thus the relationship is not seen as "zero-sum" for either side where secularism means the exclusion of religion or religious

liberty means the absence of secular individuals. Framing secularism in this way is not to conclude that secularism is not an important factor in democracy, but it is to articulate that the ideological commitments rather than the institutions are primary.

4.2 Secularism, not secularization (political principle)

Another important factor in the model of secularism being proposed is an emphasis on secularism rather than secularist policies. As was examined in the previous discussion of the concepts of secularism there is a distinction between secularism as a political ideology and being a secularist or the making of the secular, that is non-religious things, dominant within the society. Bilgrami, in this sense, indicates how secularism is in fact something quite specific, namely, a *political doctrine* (Bilgrami 2011, 2). Secularism is something different than secularization and while sometimes connected are not necessarily.

This idea is what Ahmet Kuru is targeting in his "Myths and Realities" about secularism in Turkey. "Secularism in the Turkish Constitution, as in the constitutions of other secular states, implies a political principle that delineates the relationship between the secular state and religions" (Kuru 2008, 102). What does this political principle state? He highlights two criteria "1) Parliament and courts in secular states are not subject to institutional religious control, and 2) secular states constitutionally declare neutrality toward religions" (Ibid.). This is what is required of secularism; it is that the political realm is not dictated to by religious institutions. Thus secularism when it takes a stand against religion "does so only in the realm of the polity" (Bilgrami 2011, 3). This is an important distinction, especially for the Turkish

context, as secularism as a political principle was interwoven with the secularization of society.

In the Turkish context secularism has meant "a positivist state ideology to engineer a homogenous and stratified society. […] The Kemalist project has developed an elaborate system of secularism for the purpose of 'controlling' religion and reducing it to the faith of the individual. Turkish secularism, therefore, can be understood only in the context of a modern nation-building project" (Yavuz 2009, 25-26). While at the founding there were historical and contextual factors that contributed to the logic of this intertwining of the political (secularism) and social aspects (secularization) in the context of a consolidated liberal democracy the distinction is necessary. The idea of an ideologically prescriptive secularism might actually run counter to democracy (An-Na'im 2010, 218). It is for this reason that Kuru says that "secularism as a worldview is not a constitutional principle of the Turkish Republic. It is only one of several alternative lifestyles. A neutral secular state cannot impose a secular worldview on its citizens" (Kuru 2008, 102). In this setting individuals of no religious beliefs and of all religious beliefs are able to co-exist within the same country and under the same secular state.

Arguments over the presence or absence of religious symbols in life are not questions of secularism or a threat to the secular nature of the state but they are issues of secularization. Because "the term 'secularism' today, whatever its origins and history of use, describes only a political doctrine, a doctrine about how citizens, even citizens who are devout people, agree to live and try to flourish in a polity that is not governed by religious principles and practices (Bilgrami 2003, 89). A secularization

of society by the state is not necessary and may in fact be contradictory to the consolidation of a democracy that is respectful of the freedoms of the individual.

4.3 Passive, not assertive (freedom rather than control)

A final clarification of the model of secularism that is being proposed here is one that is in the legacy of a passive, rather than an assertive model. This is in some ways related to the previous clarification of secularism as a political principle over against the secularization of society. An assertive style of secularism is adopted by the state when it attempts to enforce secularization on its people. Ahmet Kuru succinctly summarizes the difference: "passive secularism is a pragmatic political principle that tries to maintain state neutrality towards various religions, whereas assertive secularism is a 'comprehensive doctrine' that aims to eliminate religion from the public sphere" (Kuru 2007a, 571). This is especially relevant for the present Turkish context.

As was demonstrated in the historical development religious actors have played an increasingly influential role in the social and political realm in Turkey, especially seen in the rise of conservative Anatolian middle class and the AKP. These actors have challenged the principle of secularism in Turkey, not in the validity of secularism as a political principle or an ideology but as an assertive and controlling worldview. "It should be pointed out," E. Fuat Keyman says, "that these challenges have been directed mainly at the assertive role of secularism, and in doing so challenged what I would call 'the subjective dimension of secularism' which indicates that as modernity disseminates throughout society, more and more people 'look upon

the world and their own lives without the benefit of religious interpretations'"

(Keyman 2010, 144). Put in other terms, the part of secularism that is being

challenged is the "secularization thesis" that in a modern society religion loses its

meaning, its value, and ultimately its place. The resolution to this is not the

abandonment of secularism as a whole but it is the adoption of a secularism, such as

the one proposed here, that is able to secure the secular nature of the state while a

variety of religious and non-religious worldviews are allowed to contribute to the

dynamic nature of the state.

Kuru points this out in relationship to the current debates in Turkey. Citing

criteria similar to those used by Stepan that a state's commitment to secularism is

measured by its secular, (i.e., not religion based) parliament and courts and its

neutrality towards religions he states in Turkey "there is almost a consensus on

secular legislation and jurisprudence." Since that is not a primary area of concern,

"the debates on secularism are largely focused on state neutrality towards Sunnis,

Alevis, and non-Muslims." A truly secular state would be one that has a more or less

neutral treatment towards each group. "Those who support equal rights for these

groups are truly for secularism in Turkey. Conversely, to support the exclusion of

religion from social life altogether does not signify an approval of secularism. Instead,

such support contradicts liberal democracy" (Kuru 2008, 103-104). Here Kuru hits

upon the same theme that Taylor identified that the question of secularism is often not

about religion and the state so much as it is primarily about the state's handling of

diversity within a liberal democracy.

The adoption of the kind of secularism advocated here that is generally passive rather than assertive or adversarial towards religion would be a significant step forward in the democratic development of Turkey. This is not an abandoning of the principle of secularism, but actually solidifies it alongside of strengthening the freedoms of the citizens within the country.

In this conception, secularism is understood not to be an end in itself but a means of securing the higher goals of the society. It does this through a lexical ordering which places the goods agreed on within society first if and when there is a conflict between a religious practice and these goods. This secularism is also understood to be a political principle rather than a comprehensive worldview. It is about securing the secular character of the state rather than the secularization of society. Understood in this way secularism is maintained through a passive approach rather than an assertive stance that dictates to and attempts to control religion. It is for this reason that Kuru, Keyman, Yavuz, Azak, and others are calling for a political project to reform Turkish secularism "in such a way that its assertive state-centric mode of governing can be transformed into a democratic politics of secularism" (Keyman 2010, 144). The question though must be raised as to how this could happen and how the conceptual understanding of secularism could be adjusted.

What is the logic for embracing this kind of secularism if it cannot be advocated for on the basis of universal or external reasons? As Taylor and Bilgrami each indicated in their interaction with John Rawls the basis on which secularism can be advocated for within a liberal and pluralistic democracy is on the basis of

overlapping consensus. That is a variety of actors, perhaps for their own individual underlying reasons, agree on a particular principle.

Somer acknowledges the need for this very same kind of thinking if there is a hope for minimizing the polarization within the Turkish case. In its absence while perhaps structural changes may be made ultimately it does little for the creation of lasting progress. Historically, there have been improvements in the amount of freedoms and rights granted to religious groups and their ability to participate in politics, albeit under certain conditions and with harsh penalties if specific limits were crossed. However, an important element was the way in which these developments came about. It was not through a democratic process and "inclusive public-political deliberation, negotiation, and compromise […] rather, the changes mainly occurred through the administrative decisions of conservative governments despite pro-secular opposition" (Somer 2010, 40). The gains, or opening up of the political system was not viewed as a result of the democratic process but victories that came at the cost of the opposition, only deepening the sense of polarization. "In other words, the opening of the system to religious demands was mainly understood as coerced (forced and determined by opponents) rather than voluntary (chosen freely as a positive move in the right direction). It hardly occurred in a way that could give rise to twin tolerations" (Ibid.).

This summary provides an indication of a way in which this secularism should not be adopted. The idea of the state dictating a particular understanding to the people is incompatible with the principles of democracy. Also, absent a process of deliberation, negotiation, and compromise where the various actors come to an

agreement any decisions that are made will be seen by the other side as a loss that should be rectified once the opportunity presents itself. Thus for an adoption of a re-conceptualized understanding of secularism that will last beyond the current government when the power changes hands there must be a process of reaching an overlapping consensus from a wide variety of actors.

The most natural time when an ideological shift such as the one proposed for secularism might take place is during a "critical juncture" this is a "a moment when both agency and structural conditions are available for a systemic change" (Kuru 2007a, 585). At such a time, a moment such as what was seen in the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the founding of the Turkish Republic, major changes can be implemented and then as the system is consolidated both the ideology and the institutions become "path dependent."This is not an absolute determinism where change is not possible, but that for there to be a major shift it requires deliberate collective political action and necessary structural conditions (Ibid., 586). While it might be debatable, there are some who look at Turkey currently being at a critical juncture beginning with the fallout of the February 28 Process through the rise of the AKP in the early 2000s (Yavuz 2009, 9; Somer 2010, 43; Cizre 2008, 161-162; Keyman and Onis 2004, 174-175). This period, at the very least, is one in which there has been significant changes and progress made in the consolidation of democracy and thus the time may be ripe for a re-conceptualization of the understanding of secularism as well.

For this to happen there is a need for actors from both the traditional Kemalist camp and the religious camps to take collective action towards establishing an

understanding of secularism, like the one articulated here, that is more congruent with the needs of a liberal democratic state. In order for this to take place there must be the articulation of the primary values of the society. These are those values, rights, and freedoms which are agreed upon by the citizens of the state and most likely articulated in the constitution and placed in the first place in the lexical ordering. Once these values are agreed upon then the free exercise of all citizens and communities within the society are allowed, except in the case when those actions impinge upon the agreed on values in terms of the polity at which case the state may then become adversarial to those activities in the protection of the primary. Somer describes how this might happen as pro-secular actors recognize that with appropriate checks and balances pro-religious actors can contribute to the political process and where pro-religious actors recognize the legitimate concerns regarding anti-secular policies and pressures on freedom of thought and secular lifestyles (Somer 2010, 43).

This process, while in the particular case addressed here is concerned with the understanding of secularism and the place of religion within public life, is simply democratic politics. It is the process where a variety of actors from different backgrounds and for different reasons function together for the betterment of all. Thus as Turkey seeks to continue the consolidation of its democracy this is one area of particular concern and one which will have wide-ranging effects.

CHAPTER V: RECONSIDERING TURKISH SECULARISM'S EFFECTS IN THE FUTURE

A primary contention of this thesis is the belief that religion matters in political affiars. Contrary to what the prevailing trends within modernist theories of secularization might assert religion continues to play a meaningful role. The preceding chapters have shown how the concept of secularism has developed over time. It is not a monolithic ideology that is static across cultures and times but is shaped by particular circumstances and events. Secularism is a fundamental characteristic of the Turkish state and has been since the founding of the Republic. The style of secularism that was embraced was not only a political ideology but as an assertive secularism had a vision for the secularization of society embedded in it. In order to promote this vision and to guard the state against an abuse of religion a controlling style of secularism was embraced. The relationship between the Kemalist secular elites and the religious community has been one marked by competition and polarizing debates over the place of religion in public life.

As Turkey continues to develop as a country that plays an active role in international affairs its ability to resolve its domestic issues and represent a Muslim majority country that embraces democracy for all of its citizens will be a major asset. As Turkey takes a more active role on the global scene it has also become subject to increased scrutiny of its own domestic issues. The process of seeking membership with the European Union has also raised the stakes for democratic consolidation. The model of secularism proposed in the preceding section is put forward as an effort to advance the discussion by articulating a way in which the fundamental secular nature of the state can be ensured and protected while also embracing a robust amount of

freedoms for a diversity of views. This concluding chapter will examine in brief a few key areas both domestically and internationally and consider the effects this conception of secularism might have both for Turkey domestically and in its relationship with other states.

5.1 Reconsidering Turkish Secularism and the Domestic Scene

In the domestic realm, the role of religion in public life in Turkey has steadily increased in recent years. Since the 2002 elections the country has been governed by a party which is openly religious and parallel to this there has been an increase in the democratization of the country. It is "Turkey's recent experience of the co-existence and co-evolution in the matter of the transformation of Islamic movements and the democratization and liberalization of political and economic systems" that has made questions about secularism so pertinent (Yavuz 2009, xi). The idea of the hegemony of the Kemalist state has been broken and the result, contrary to the fears of many, has been the increase of democratic freedoms in a variety of areas. Yet at the same time fears persist about the true intentions of religious actors. In this context the place of religion needs to be considered. One of the primary effects a revised version of secularism such as the model proposed here, one that is based on a recognition of the plurality of the state, can have in Turkey will be the ability to move beyond a polarized society to one marked by consensus.

5.1.1   Tension Between Kemalists and Religious Actors

Since the founding of the Republic the Kemalists adopted a secularism that controlled religion and allowed space to only a particular brand of religion. This created a level of competition and hostility between the religious actors and the

secularists. The idea that a singular conception of the state needed to be protected and that the military formed the guardians of the state was a sign that the democratic institutions were not fully developed. Also, the position of Islamists who advocated for a state based on Islam was not in keeping with the principles of the constitution for a democratic state. One of the primary benefits of the adoption of the secularism proposed here is that it forms the basis for a reduction of religion as a polarizing force in society.

The basis on which secularism of the kind advocated for in this thesis can be agreed upon is not through external reasons but through internal reasons. While external reasons are universal internal reasons are those which must be found within an individual's own values. "Internal reasons are reasons we give to another that appeal to some of *his own* values in order to try and persuade him to change his mind on some given evaluative issue" (Bilgrami 2011, 24). Inherent in this is a process of dialogue between actors where a particular policy is discussed and a compromise reached by actors on both sides of the debate.

In this setting rather than it being a zero-sum game where all victories come at the defeat of the other, the process is one of collaboration and consensus to establish a society for the good of all citizens. M. Hakan Yavuz reads the rise of the AKP as part of a greater search for a new "value system and the triumph of democracy over militant secularism." The positive outcome of increasing democratization should be that a "conflict over values should not lead to the tearing apart of the social fabric; it could force Turkey to develop a new social contract among institutions to deal with the diversity of values and also develop a more democratic understanding of

secularism" (Yavuz 2009, 158). The tensions and differences in values between the Kemalists and the religious actors within society are not eliminated, but the democratization of this tension places the debates within the civilian realms of the political process.

In his article while considering the prospects of the AKP and its role in producing democratic consolidation, Somer highlights the important role the opposition plays in producing lasting changes. Democratic consolidation is often described as "democracy becoming 'the only game in town.' More specifically it can be conceptualized as the strengthening of democracy such that it becomes unthinkable for the great majority of the political actors to reverse democratically made decisions, curtail basic freedoms, and employ coercive means to pursue political gain" (Somer 2007, 1280). This process of a strengthened democracy is a part of the reform process Turkey has been going through in recent years, with the help of its European Union accession program.

A key reform has been the "civilianizing" of the political process which has given greater civilian oversight of the military. Moving the role of debates out of the shadows and into the political forum is a crucial part of the strengthening of democracy. "The challenge for Turkey is to ensure that its ideological differences – especially in education, public recruitment, and social life – are sorted out democratically, not by rallies on the streets or by resorting to authoritarian forces" (Ibid., 1286). The history of military interventions in Turkey's past raises serious questions about whether differences can be handled democratically.

The last decade however has seen the growth of political elites who have been much more successful in their ability to "coup-proof" society. "The history of coup-proofing in Turkey reveals that it is no longer possible to create certain sterile structures due to serious domestic and international dynamics. The traditional Kemalist model has no chance to survive upon the rise of new official and civil institutions that dynamically keep coup attempts at bay" (Bacik and Salur 2010, 185). As the likelihood for a military coup to protect the Kemalist version of secularism decreases the greater the need will be for a stronger opposition political party.

As Somer says "in the long run democratic consolidation requires a strong political party system where secularist and religious-conservative parties effectively check and balance each other. The Turkish experience […] suggests that *sustainable* moderation by Islam coupled with democratic *consolidation* may require strong secularist democrats as much as it requires Muslim democrats" (Somer 2007, 1286; italics in original). In the democratic system there is not an absence of tension, but the manner in which those tensions are resolved is within the political system. In his analysis of the current state of Turkish politics Ibrahim Kaya sees that the growth of "anti-democratic sentiment in Turkish society is directly attributable to the weakness of any opposition to the power of the government" (Kaya 2012, 11). Again this highlights the urgent need for a coherent opposition to challenge political hegemony as part of the democratic system. This political system requires strong political parties that are able to generate meaningful solutions to societal issues and do not rely on extra-political means.

Through agreement on a social contract, enshrined in a constitution, the extra-civilian measures of military coups, terrorism, or other subversive measures can be abandoned. As an aspect of this consensus there is a need for an understanding of what the national identity is based upon. When considering the character of a country of more than 70 million individuals there are a variety of religions and ethnicities represented which contribute to the vibrant Turkish culture. The identity of the country, if it is to embrace democracy, must account for this plurality within society. Thus the values which govern the state must be broad enough that Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, Sufi and Alevi, Armenian Orthodox and Protestant Evangelical, Catholic and Jewish, Agnostic and Atheist can be proud of their identity as a Turkish citizen. In order to implement a passive and inclusive secularism, which retains the means to secure the secular nature of the state, the values of the society that are placed in the primary position in the lexical ordering need to be established. These values ideally will be enshrined in a civilian constitution of the state that forms the basis for the rule of law and includes the legal mechanisms to ensure the protection of those rights in daily life (Haynes 2010, 325). The tension between Kemalists and religious actors may not be fully eliminated but it will be a victory for democracy if the tension between these viewpoints is moved within the democratic sphere and governed under the rule of law that values the rights of the individual.

5.1.2 *New Constitution*

The relationship of a reconsideration of secularism to the constitution is quite significant. The principle of secularism is articulated as a fundamental and unalterable characteristic of the state. The meaning of secularism is the place where serious

discussion needs to occur (Kuru 2008, 102). The assertive worldview and comprehensive doctrine of secularism that includes not only the political element but also the secularization of society raises serious questions about its compatibility with another fundamental characteristic of the state: liberal democracy. As the articulation of secularism demonstrated, in a pluralistic society the principles espoused in the proposed model of secularism are beneficial for securing the rights and freedoms of a variety of viewpoints.

While, as Onis rightly acknowledges, "a new constitution which provides a deeper safeguard for democratic rights and responsibilities is no doubt highly desirable. At a more fundamental level, however, there is a need for a change of perceptions among both the conservative and the more Western-oriented secular segments of society" (Onis 2009, 35) This is why the understanding of what secularism means is such an important factor within the broader democratization process.

Turkey certainly qualifies as a society with a plurality of religious and non-religious actors. In order to make real progress in consolidating democracy there is a requirement for the political parties from both segments of society to establish consensus around the things they can agree on. These goals may be issues such as stronger democracy, human rights, economic development, religious freedoms, and preventing the rise of Islamic or Nationalist extremism (Somer 2007, 1286). The articulation of the common values and goals of society and seeing those enshrined in the constitution that is agreed on by a variety of actors is a critical step in the democracy building process. This process gives a strong constitution and vision of

society that can last beyond a single government. It is also more meaningful because it is values based and driven by consensus across a variety of actors.

The current constitution which was implemented under the military regime following the 1982 coup, despite numerous amendments still contains provisions that severely limit the freedom of religion, especially for non-Sunni Muslims (Grigoriadis 2009, 1197; USCIRF 2012, 200-202). The process of writing a civilian constitution in which a wide variety of actors from the various political parties but also including input from religious leaders, NGO and civil society organizations is a significant step forward in establishing a secularism on the basis of consensus. Along with the process of writing a new civilian constitution the means of interpreting the constitution also needs to be reconsidered.

The Constitutional Court has been a means of securing the Kemalist vision of secularism. The judiciary has been an "ideological battlefield" over the correct version of secularism (Albion 2011, 2). It has been argued that the interpretation of secularism by the court has been "that Turkish secularism is a 'comprehensive ideology' that seeks to organize every aspect of social and political life" (Yavuz 2009, 27). While this may be one interpretation of secularism it is not necessarily a positive one and in fact may stand in contradiction with other fundamental values of the state, namely democracy.

Ahmet Kuru cites a 1997 decision by the court in which it "defined secularism as the separation of 'social life, education, family, economy, law, manners, dress codes, etc. from religion'" (Kuru 2008, 103). In this definition of secularism the

process of secularization is embedded with the political principle of secularism. If this court continues to promote a particular assertive worldview the democratic nature of the state will continue to be seriously questioned. A result of the constitution process is both the articulation of values and then derived from those the particular institutional arrangements that will be adopted within the Turkish context.

In this constitution process valuable discussions over the fundamental values and identity of the state can take place. This also will be an opportunity for the minimal boundaries to be articulated that ensures that the government is free to operate without constitutionally privileged influence from religious actors and religious organizations are able to operate without interference from the state. As these twin tolerations are met the details of what the arrangement will look like in the Turkish context will be another variety of the multiple secularisms that exist in consolidated democracies around the world. An area of particular interest is the Diyanet which represents the states' control over the religious affairs, and primarily those of the large Sunni majority.

5.1.3   *Role of the Diyanet*

The Diyanet since its founding has been a source of debates and continues to be into the present day. The Diyanet is a state institution to manage and support Islam was implemented by the pro-secularist groups at the beginning of the Turkish Republic and has been responsible for conducting a wide range of religious activities. The Diyanet was among the first of the Republican institutions that was created. As Adanali describes its history "within the last eighty years, the PRA [Diyanet] survived difficult times, enjoyed opportunities, and experienced various legal changes. It has

become an institution that is severely criticized, passionately defended and delicately handled; today the relation between the PRA and secularism remains a lively topic that motivates many scholarly debates" (Adanali 2008, 229). The Diyanet is a case in point of the paradoxical nature and "prevailing perplexity" of the assertive secularism that was adopted in Turkey (Ulutas 2010, 389). The Republican elites were strong proponents of minimizing the role of religion in society and yet fund and supply the religious leaders and utilize religion as a tool of the state.

The role of the Diyanet has been to provide services for the Muslim community but did so as a tool of the state. The Diyanet was established in 1924 with the purpose of executing services regarding the Islamic faith and practices, to enlighten the society about religion, and to manage the places of worship (Gozaydin 2008, 216). During the early years of the Republic the Diyanet was the helping hand of the state to articulate and propagate the "right" kind of religion that was compatible with the Kemalist vision of the state. The Diyanet officially recognizes only the Hanafi Sunni Islam (Warhola and Bezci 2010, 444). The Diyanet is responsible for the 85,000 Hanafi mosques across the country and providing the 81,000 Imams and religious staff to service these mosques. While the practice of the Diyanet writing the sermons was discontinued in 2007 it continues to provide a list of themes to be addressed in the Friday sermons (USCIRF 2012, 207). The Diyanet plays an active role in society but its role is one that needs to be addressed as there are some who argue that it should be disbanded and others who argue that it should be expanded.

One argument put forward for why the secular state can justify having such a large number of religious employees is in the nature of Islam in Turkey. It is argued by some that "the absence of an organized body of clergy in Islam, or a legally

defined Muslim community in Turkey are the most important considerations put forward in legitimizing the state's intervention in religion, and the legislators' categorizing it as a public service" (Gozaydin 2008, 221). There are, however, some who argue that the Diyanet violates the principle of secularism as it is a government organization that uses tax-payer funds to promote a particular version of religion and this should be left up to the individual (Adanali 2008, 234). There are also those who argue that it is a necessary tool to provide valuable services for the majority of citizens. Under the current constitution that was adopted in 1982 the Diyanet's role was defined to carry out its specified duties "aiming for national unity and solidarity" (Ulutas 2010, 394). Yet, because of a lack of representation by all religious groups in the Diyanet national unity is farther challenged. The role of the Diyanet is an institution whose role needs to be considered.

The Diyanet plays a significant role in the Muslim life in Turkey. Yet, it cannot claim to speak for all Muslims in Turkey and the issue of representation is a major question (Albion 2011, 9). Other Muslim groups outside of the Sunni school are technically banned in Turkey but may persist unofficially. Sufi brotherhoods and other social orders and lodges continue to be active. There is also a Shiite community which also is not part of the jurisdiction of the Diyanet. These minority Muslim groups which exist outside of the Diyanet are not adequately represented in the state. As Kutlu recognizes there is a need for "radical new legislation" to allow the Diyanet to meet the needs of the various religious communities (Kutlu 2008, 253)The most serious challenge posed to the Diyanet in terms of representation comes from the Alevi community which straddles the boundaries between Muslim and non-Muslim.

The Alevis in Turkey account for an estimated 15-25% of the population or up to as many as 25 million people (USCIRF 2012, 207). The Alevi community is recognized by some as being part of the Muslim community, some identify as a Shi'a Muslims, while others reject Islam and view themselves as a unique cultural community. "The Diyanet claims that Alevis and Sunnites are not subject to discrimination because, except for certain local customs and beliefs, there are no differences between these two sects as to basic religious issues; this actually indicates a denial of any separate 'Alevi' religious identity" (Gozaydin 2008, 224). The need for increasing the rights for Alevis within the broader society and to receive recognition of their "gathering places" (*Cemevis*) as houses of worship and ultimately to be given legal and financial benefits through representation in the Diyanet has been supported by some political groups. Akan cites the 2005 speech by a CHP parliamentarian (Akan forthcoming, 15-16). The solution to this issue will not be simple but as a part of the democratization process is one that needs to be sought.

Grigoriadis cites how the reform of the Diyanet was addressed within the context of Turkey's European Union accession process. The EU Commission reported on the unequal treatment of religious groups. In the discussions that ensued concerning the Diyanet two proposals were suggested by various human rights organizations. One was that the Diyanet be transformed into an autonomous state authority and that proportional representation is guaranteed for all religious groups. A second proposal was for the abolition of the Diyanet altogether and for the religious communities to take over its services (Grigoriadis 2009, 1203). Whether either of these options or some other is the best answer or not, the need for this issue to be addressed is apparent.

Central to the issue is not merely the details of representation, but it is part of a larger theoretical debate. As Adanali argues in his article the problems of the Diyanet "can only be solved through a reinterpretation of the principle of secularism in accordance with the current developments and practices in the modern world" (Adanali 2008, 229). The debate over secularism is at the heart of the debate over the particular way in which religious affairs are handled by the state.

The ability of Turkey to acknowledge the existence and the rights of its Muslim community including the majority Sunni, also Muslim minority groups, the Alevi community, and also non-Muslim minorities will be a key feature of its democratic consolidation. "The debates on secularism, therefore, focus on state neutrality towards Sunnis, Alevis, and non-Muslims. Those who support equal rights for those groups are truly for secularism in Turkey. Conversely, to support the exclusion of religion from social life altogether does not signify an approval of secularism. Instead, such a support contradicts liberal democracy" (Kuru 2008, 104). Again this highlights how the commitment to democracy poses a challenge to the authoritarian style of secularism that has been adopted. The Alevi community is not the only minority group that has struggled to find its place within the secular and Muslim nature of Turkey, but non-Muslim minority rights is another issue to be addressed.

5.1.4   *Non-Muslim Minority Rights*

While the non-Muslim minority community is small in comparison to the total population of the state they represent a major area of need if Turkey is to improve its global standing in relation to liberal democracy and respect of religious freedoms. As

acknowledged in a Freedom House report, "Turkey's definition of minorities is not in line with international standards, recognizing only three non-Muslim minorities it pledged to protect under the Lausanne Peace Treaty of 1923" (Albion 2011, 8) The treatment of non-Muslim minority groups recognized by the Turkish state are divided into two groups. The first group being limited to the minorities acknowledged in the treaty of Lausanne (Armenian Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, and Jewish communities) plus three additional ones who existed in Turkey in 1923 but were not acknowledged in the treaty (Syriac Orthodox, Chaldean, and Roman Catholic). The second group being religious groups not linked to a particular ethnic minority group.

There are different laws which relate to the abilities of these groups to own and use property for religious activities. Only the first group of these minorities are permitted to form foundations giving them the ability own property. Other minorities may form associations which grant legal permissions for religious activities but not to own property (USCIRF 2012, 202-203). The restrictions on religious minorities have been due to opposition both from the secular state as well as opposition from Muslim groups. For those who have an assertive secularist viewpoint that was concerned with the removal of religion from the public sphere the rights of minority groups were not taken seriously. Also, as Kuru highlights, a second concern of these groups was that if rights were granted to Christian and Jews groups to have legal entities and associations then independent Muslim groups may make these claims as well (Kuru 2007b, 148).

The problem of rights for minorities has taken many forms including complex regulations in terms of gaining legal recognition and rights as communities of faith. The ability to own property has also been a source of difficulty for a variety of

religious groups. Some are barred from ownership of land because of the inability to gain the legal standing to purchase property. The difficulty of gaining a position in society is not just in terms of physical property but also in terms of personal interaction with the broader society.

For some groups this has led to them disappearing from the country altogether, as current Prime Minster Erdogan referenced in a speech in 2009, "they [Kemalist secularists] have chased members of various ethnicities out of this country […] referring to Turkey's Christians." The result of this has been either Christian groups have disappeared altogether or they attempt to become "invisible" by limiting their role in society. A 2009 research report conducted on the experiences of minorities and highlighting social pressure against "being different" described the experiences of the Christian groups that do remain in Anatolian cities. "The Armenians or Assyrians, who had lived together with the other people of Anatolia throughout history and who had left their imprint on the life and art of Anatolian cities, and moreover who have been decimated today, prefer to be invisible. They survive by isolating themselves from the city's life and imprisoning themselves in a world of their own" (Toprak et al. 2009, 78). The pressure to be "invisible" within society is due not only to strict secularist policies but also because of the pressure by the Islamic community.

A part of the European Union membership process was to address these issues but the results have been mixed and in some cases may have led to increases in violence (ESI 2010, 15-17). Ziya Meral in his analysis draws a connection between the attitudes within Turkish society towards non-Muslims, the US, and the EU and the treatment of minorities in Turkey. He identified a correlation between rising negative feelings towards these groups and an increase of destructive attacks "on non-Muslim

worship centers, clergymen, businesses, and individuals." These in his opinion are illustrations of the social and political battles going on in the country over the place of religion in society (Meral 2010, 27). While the state cannot necessarily be held responsible for the acts of individuals or groups it would be to the benefit of the state to strive to create a society that rather than viewing religious communities as an existential threat to the state recognizes that each of them contributes to the common good. The discourse of secularism in reference to danger and a needed security policy may contribute to the violence that has been perpetrated against religious minorities.

Some religious communities have faced opposition not only in terms of a lack of legal representation, from social ostracism and violence but also in difficulties in regaining land that were previously confiscated by the state. An amendment to the law on foundations in 2008 and a second decision by the government in 2011 allowed for foundations to apply for the return of previously confiscated property. Since the 2008 amendment just over 200 properties have been returned but more than 1,500 applications are still pending (USCIRF 2012, 203). The past few years have seen some improvements in this area but a large number of requests remain outstanding. There has been some progress made but the process is not finished.

The difficulties in owning land or regaining confiscated property and the societal pressures and even violence on minority religious groups have come as a result of both the animosity by other religious groups and also from strict assertive Kemalist secularists. An adoption of a passive secularism such as the kind proposed here which respects the rights and freedoms of all individuals should result in a decrease in the opposition towards minorities. While it allows for more presence of religion in public life it is natural "as maturation in the process of democratization and

transition from assertive to passive secularism. The introduction of such a secular system would mean the simultaneous abolition of Kemalist assertive secularism and Islamism in favour of a liberal democratic solution" (Grigoriadis 2009, 1201). In this sense abuses on the rights of the individual are unacceptable from either a religious or a secular direction. A particular area that has been a battlefield for the protection of the rights of the individual is in education.

5.1.5   *Religious Education*

An area of particular controversy in regards to the place of religion in public life is the arena of education. Kim Shively describes that "it is hard to overemphasize how politically sensitive religious education is in Turkish society" (Shively 2008, 683). Education has been under the sole control of the state since the early years of the Republic. This has meant the state is responsible not only for the compulsory religious education that is part of the state run curriculum but the state is also responsible for the education of religious leaders. Both of these areas are particularly affected by the states' conception of secularism. The topic of religious education is one of the areas that keeps the tension between the secularists and the more religious as "the root political cleavage in the electoral system" and the polarization of society (Yavuz 2009, 32).

The idea of compulsory religious education in secondary school has raised objections from those who do not want their children to be subjected to religious instruction from the state. From the early years of the Republic all education was put under the control of the Ministry of Education. Under this ministry a unified curriculum was developed that articulated "a particular cultural and moral identity"

and "included a very particular interpretation of Islam that was encoded in official religious educational practices and institutions" (Shively 2008, 684-685).

The particular style of assertive secularism that was adopted in Turkey was such that not only did it "not prevent" the mixing of religious instruction in state education but it "made it possible" (Davison 2003, 339). In the 1980s the military government as a means of guarding against the dangers of leftist communist groups and Kurdish separatism which were viewed as more dangerous threats made religious courses compulsory in primary and high schools (Bozdaglioglu 2003, 131). Also during this time there was an increase in those who attended the state run *Imam-Hatip* schools. These schools have been an issue of controversy as in the 1990s to curb the influence of these schools restrictions were placed to limit their ability to enter university (Shively 2008, 701). While these laws have since been modified they represent another aspect of education where the understanding of secularism has practical implications.

The debates are also seen in the presence of religious education courses in the state schools. Those who raise concerns about compulsory religious education in state schools include those of a secularist viewpoint who do not feel that religious education is the role of a secular state (Carkoglu and Kalaycioglu 2009, 33). Others include religious minorities who prefer to monitor the education of their youth. The European Union was also critical of this in its assessment of progress in the accession process (Usul 2008, 188). The Alevi community has appealed for their ability to be exempted from the religious education classes. According to Meral "it was only after a recent decision by the European Court of Human Rights, that children of Alevi parents have been able to opt out of compulsory Islamic religious education" (Meral

2010, 14). This issue has important implications across all spectrums of society and a process of dialogue needs to account for this diversity of voices.

Issues concerning religious education and its place in state schools can be seen as a topic of debate across many secular states. Kuru recounts "historical and contemporary debates on secularism in all three cases [Turkey, France, and the United States] have pointed to education as the main battlefield in state-religion controversies" (Kuru 2007, 569). Thus the understanding of secularism adopted in society will have a clear impact on the field of education.

Another aspect of education is the training of religious leaders. The ability for religious communities to train religious leadership is necessary for their continued existence. One of the most notable areas of controversy for minorities has been the Greek Orthodox Halki seminary on the island of Heybeli. The seminary which was closed down in 1971 along with all other private higher educational institutions has remained closed for more than forty years. The issue of its reopening has been discussed multiple times. A 2004 announcement postponed its opening indefinitely because the "Greek Orthodox minority constitutes a potential security threat to the territorial integrity of the Turkish state" (Toktas and Aras 2009, 716). This is a recent example of the way in which issues of religion and state security are at times portrayed to be intertwined.

The way in which training of religious leaders is managed under the Ministry of Education and the Board of Higher Education has limited the independence of the religious communities. Other religious communities have also struggled to produce qualified leaders to meet the needs of their community. The ability for religious minorities to train clergy is one of the areas of recommendations from outside

observers for improvement in terms of Turkey's respect for religious freedom (USCIRF 2012, 218).

A final area of education that has attracted perhaps the most attention and debate has been in terms of religious dress in education and state institutions. The Kemalist assertive secularism implemented dress code reforms as part of their secularization of society. As such a visible issue the restrictions on religious attire in universities and for civil servants has been a heated debate. "The headscarf issue not only acts as a symbol of the increasing visibility of Islam but also challenges the borders and meanings of the secular public sphere in Turkish politics" (Gol 2009, 804).

A high profile example concerning the understanding of secularism in relation to the headscarf was the court case of Leyla Sahin in June 2004. Leyla, a medical student, was banned from wearing her headscarf while studying at Istanbul University. She appealed to the European Court of Human Rights and lost as the court ruled that it was not a violation of article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights (Hurd 2006, 413). This came as a disappointment to many who feel that the policy is unfair and inconsistent with individual freedom of expression and religious freedoms. In Turkey, as opposed to some other similar issues across Europe, the majority of public support was largely in opposition to the ban.

While similar issues are being faced in other countries, such as France the situation here is in a rather different context. While in France 72% of the population supported the ban in Turkey just 22% were in favor of it (Kuru 2008, 108). The application of the principles of secularism in different countries will have different end results. This is why the principles undergirding the debate need to be addressed

before dealing with particular issues. The current situation of wearing a headscarf to universities in Turkey leaves the policy rather ambiguous and no real solution has been reached.

A 2008 decision by parliament to guarantee the rights of all citizens to enter university was declared by the Constitutional Court to be in violation of Turkish secularism. A 2010 directive issued by the Board of Higher Education stated that universities could not expel students for wearing headscarves, but the application is not universal (USCIRF 2012, 209-210). The ability for the political parties on both sides of the religion-secularist debate to generate a solution to this issue will be a major test of the consolidation of democracy and an understanding of secularism within the context of human rights and democratic freedoms (Somer 2007, 1285).

The issues mentioned here are just a sampling of the ways in which the understanding of secularism that is embraced both in the political realm and in society in general has very real and tangible outcomes. Assertive and secularist policies raise serious questions when measured against the diversity of groups within society, both religious and non-religious, Muslim and non-Muslim and the commitment to liberal democracy and freedoms. The adoption of a more passive style of secularism, through discussion and consensus, is a necessary part of improving Turkey's democratic character and for helping to resolve some of these long-standing domestic issues.

5.2 Reconsidering Turkish Secularism and the Muslim World

A rethinking of secularism as a part of the overall democratic consolidation process will have results not only across a variety of domestic issues but also with regards to Turkey's role in international affairs. Turkey today considers itself an

active player in global politics. A variety of observers have observed its greater engagement with the world, what some have even called "Foreign Policy Hyperactivity" (Meral and Paris 2010, 75). Yet, as it becomes more engaged abroad Turkey is at what Henri Barkey describes as an "moment of inflection" where if the changes that have been started in terms of liberal democratization are ensured through structural changes and a new constitution it can play an important role as a leader in democracy in the world (Barkey 2010, 39-41). The understanding of secularism and the role of the military and the judiciary in enforcing the Kemalist vision of secularism have been major question marks on democratic consolidation in Turkey.

By rethinking its secularism in a way that deepens the liberal democratic commitment to a protection of individual rights and religious freedom for both its Muslim and non-Muslim citizens while not succumbing to an Islamist state, as some have feared, the Turkish experience may be of great value in the international realm, especially to some of its Muslim neighbors who are currently pursuing their own democratization process.

5.2.1   Islamic Arguments for Secularism

In the context of the "Arab Spring" uprisings the idea that Turkey has a significant role to play has been frequently mentioned. Of the variety of contributions that Turkey can make to these Arab countries the most significant may be in this area of the convergence of a secular state, with a liberal democracy and a majority Muslim population.

On a trip to Cairo, Egypt in the months following the removal of Hosni Mubarak, Prime Minister Erdogan gave a speech urging Egyptians, including the

Muslim Brotherhood, to embrace a secular state. In comments on this speech Turkish sociologist Nilufer Gole says what Erdogan is speaking of is a "post-Kemalist secularism, this secularism becomes more open and can embrace all different belief systems. Such a definition of secularism calls for an equidistant attitude of the state with all belief systems, ensuring religious freedom also for non-Muslim minorities" (Gole 2012, 9-10). Here Erdogan is advocating for Egyptians to adopt what is still a work in progress within his own country. This style of secularism, and not the authoritarian secularism that had been prevalent across the Arab world in the second half of the 20th century, is compatible with the freedoms of democracy the uprisings were hoping to achieve.

The idea of a "Turkish model" for the region has been proposed by some as Turkey seems to have confronted some of the most pressing questions that the emerging Arab democracies are facing especially with concern to an increased role of religion in politics in the absence of secular authoritarian leaders (Cook 2012, 84). While perhaps sounding attractive this idea is debatable both in terms of what that model actually would be and whether it is even applicable to other states (Dede 2011, 25-26).

Within the Turkish context, as a state with a variety of religious and non-religious communities that is pursuing consolidated democracy, there is a need for an articulation of a secularism that is consistent with the principles and values of the large Muslim majority and also those of the minority. The model proposed here could allow for this to take place. If this is to be the case the values placed first in the lexical ordering should be those that are argued for from both an Islamic and a non-Islamic

standpoint. Thus universally agreed upon values are placed first and provide the basic guidelines for implementing restrictions on various activities.

While some might make the case that liberal democracy is contradictory to Islamic values this argument does not hold up to scrutiny. Anwar Ibrahim cites an example in the legal and interpretative tradition of al-Shatibi. He argued that the higher principles of sharia "sanctify the preservation of religion, life, intellect, family, and wealth, objectives that bear striking resemblance to Lockean ideas that would be expounded centuries later" (Ibrahim 2006, 7). These are the kind of values which can be argued for both by religious and non-religious groups. Shireen Hunter also demonstrates the compatibility between Islamic values and a democratic system of governance and many of the human rights issues argued for today (Hunter 2009, 9-10). The arrangement of secularism would then allow for the freedom to practice religious beliefs so long as they do not encroach on these values.

There are some within the Turkish context who have put forward arguments for secularism with a similar logic. These would argue that if there exists an appropriate level of freedom, including religious freedoms, in the secular state then there is no need for an "Islamic" state as individuals are free to practice authentic Islam without living in an Islamic political system (Yilmaz Forthcoming, 6). As these values are embraced the freedoms for individuals to live in light of their religion is respected. In a liberal democracy protection of one's' own rights are ensured through protecting the rights of others. Though certainly with work still to be done the move towards a passive secularism in Turkey is what has led some to say that Muslims are more free to live in an Islamic way in Turkey than anywhere else (Hughes 2008, 26). Within this logic the surest way to protect against the creation of an "Islamic" state is

by strengthening freedoms rather than through repression. If individuals are sufficiently free to live in light of their beliefs there will not be a compelling reasons to seek to change the system. Thus those who are of a minority or non-religious viewpoint are able to guard their own freedom to live in light of their beliefs by protecting the rights of others to live in light of their beliefs.

Andrew March in his article on the value of secularism for Islamic actors finds that there are Islamic arguments put forward for secularism, albeit when secularism is understood in a certain sense. He provides a study of some of the most compelling Islamic arguments that can be made for this kind of secularism. Islamic not simply that it is someone with "a Muslim name or writing about Islamic themes," but Islamic in that it is within the textual and legal interpretations of the Muslim community (March 2009, 2846). March cites the arguments put forward by historic scholars like al-Shabiti but also contemporary thinkers such as Ibn Bayya who show an "enthusiasm for secularism, neutrality, and modern citizenship" based on Islamic texts and principles (Ibid., 2847). He finds that many of those who put forward the argument to embrace liberal democracy do so out of the desire to "accommodate the consciences of as many citizens as possible, the desire to include minorities, and accountability for the secular welfare of those subject to it" (Ibid., 2854). This is recognition that a liberal and secular sort of government provides a compelling opportunity to secure the rights and freedoms of those living within the system.

While this philosophical trend is present within Islam it has not been the dominant strand of thinking. For this reason when considering the compatibility of Islam and religious freedoms and respect for liberal human rights there is a need, as Hashemi does, to consider the multiple histories of different societies. The preceding

sections addressed the multiple varieties of secularism that emerged within a variety

of democratic contexts and these arose as particular cultures confronted their own

challenges. This has been the experience for Western Europe and the United States of

America as they moved through issues of religious wars and conflicts between

religious and non-religious communities. The same is likely to take place within the

context of the Muslim world. There will be a variety of applications of the principles

of liberal democracy and the implementation of those principles in specific contexts

(Hashemi 2010, 335). As there is a movement towards liberal democracy and more of

a participatory government structure across the countries of the Muslim-majority

world the reconciliation of multiple viewpoints needs to be addressed. In the current

context it is asserted that "Muslim societies do need to think seriously about political

secularism today, especially if they are interested in constructing a political system

where democracy and human rights prevail" (Ibid., 333). The Turkish experience in

its own right is thinking seriously about political secularism and in light of this plays

in influential role for its Muslim neighbors.

As Turkey works through its own particular challenges of accommodating the

values and freedoms of its citizens and allowing for the religious communities to play

a role in the shaping of society it can serve as an inspiration to other Muslim countries

who are struggling to accomplish these very same things. In demonstrating an

understanding of secularism in the Muslim world that is respectful of religious values

and strong in the protection of individual freedoms for all citizens Turkey has a major

opportunity to be leader in its neighborhood. Through embracing this it may have an

impact not only in the theoretical realm but in the relationships between states as well.

5.2.2   *Turkish Secularism and its Ties to the Muslim World*

Turkey can play an important role in this process as a country with a number of ties to these states who are seeking to develop their own form of democratic governance. Gole comments how Turkey's process of redefining secularism within its broader democratic process is important on a regional level. "Turkey is both a candidate to the European Union and is led by a conservative democrat party, which has its roots in Islam, but Turkey is also a deepening democracy, opening itself to heterogeneity of identity. It is this combination that makes Turkey come forward as a model of reference for emerging Arab democracies" (Gole 2012, 9). While the broad idea of a "Turkish model" lacks the specificity to be a direct referent for Arab states the experience that Turkey has moved through, especially in its recent history, may be an inspiration for its Arab neighbors.

The process that Turkey has moved through in recent years has served to highlight some of the same struggles that its Muslim neighbors may face as they move away from regimes dominated by secular dictators towards a democratic system of governance that allows for broader participation from religious actors. As the Turkish case demonstrates "the real struggle is not between the pious and secular Turks. The fundamental problem that underlies the conflict is the power struggle between the AKP and the secular establishment during the consolidation of democracy in Turkey" (Gol 2009, 807). The same idea of a power struggle between the secular establishment – perhaps supported by the military – and religious actors in the process of consolidating democracy is present in places such as Egypt. The challenge is to bring these conflicts within the sphere of the democratic process rather than allowing the conflicts to take place outside the system through coups or uprisings. While certainly

not an easy or quick task the Turkish experience does offer an element of hope that the process can be accomplished.

Turkey has had an added advantage in its democracy building process in the candidacy process to join the European Union. As Karakas highlights, "the European Union is the greatest promoter of democracy in Turkey" (Karakas 2007, 38). This has provided an anchor point for undertaking many of the necessary reforms. Through the process of conditionality the European Union has played a valuable role for many of the changes brought about in the Turkish domestic and foreign policy spheres (Aydin and Acikmese 2007, 269-272). While certainly the idea of European Union candidacy cannot be extended to every country that is seeking to democratize the example of Turkey and European Union relations might serve as a guide for the constructive ways in which foreign states are able to aid the consolidation of democracy and the establishment of a secularism that guards against the abuse of religion and promotes religious freedoms. The European Union and other global actors can seek out ways in which to support and assist the development of these states.

The process of reconsidering Turkish secularism is a useful case study from which insight can be drawn to be applied in other scenarios. As a large Muslim-majority country that was governed by a strict secularist regime some of the same challenges and opportunities might be faced by other Muslim states. "Now that Turkey's model is more sympathetic to Muslim states, its own domestic accomplishments are viewed with greater sympathy and respect and thus facilitate Turkey's serving in part as a regional model" (Fuller 2004, 61). Though there is not a particular roadmap that can be extracted from one state and applied to another, the challenges and opportunities Turkey has seen may be beneficial for the Muslim

world. The process of reconsidering Turkish secularism also has implications for the Western world as it interacts in numerous ways with Turkey.

5.3 Reconsidering Turkish Secularism and the Western World

The effects of rethinking secularism in Turkey are bound to have an impact not only on Turkey's relationship with its Muslim neighbors but also in its relationships with the Western world. The issue is one with a number of different facets to be considered. On one hand the European Union membership process has played an influential role in anchoring reforms and opening up the system to more liberal expression of individual freedoms. Yet, as this has resulted in a more open expression and influence of Islam in the public sphere this has been met at other times with criticism. The process of establishing a secularism that better embraces individual freedoms and at the same time reduces the possibility of moving towards a non-democratic system of government is one that should be both welcomed and encouraged by the western world in its relationship with Turkey. One of the primary vehicles for aiding this process is through the European Union membership process.

5.3.1 European Union

The influence of the European Union accession process on the development of Turkey's democracy has been substantial. The European Union has provided an anchor for many of the reforms that have been implemented since the AKP took power. The process of coming into line with the membership criteria for the European Union has "hastened the pace of reform and capacity formation." This process which is in line with the westernization aspirations of the Kemalist reforms has actually weakened the secularists hold on society. "The EU benchmarks for candidate

countries have, paradoxically, increased the relative power of previously weak political actors at the expense of the former elites" (Barkey 2010, 45). The reality of this is part of the motivation why early in its first term the AKP "made a concerted commitment" to EU talks and reforms before for a variety of reasons the talks slowed (Meral and Paris 2010, 79). The process of Turkey joining the EU remains uncertain and that for a variety of reasons and is full of starts and stops but is still a policy objective for Turkey.

The ultimate goal of EU membership remains part of the overall foreign policy for the AKP. As Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu has said with some urgency, "let me repeat that membership in the EU is the strategic objective of our foreign policy. We will undertake whatever is necessary. My government is determined to advance its comprehensive reform agenda with this aim in mind" (Davutoglu 2010, 16). The reform process to join the EU covers a wide variety of issues but central to this is a commitment to democracy and the freedom of the individual, including freedom of religion.

While the EU membership is a topic with a variety of factors the relationship of religion and the state is an area with relevance. The question of the EU's own identity is one of internal debate that may have major implications for its ability to integrate a large Muslim majority country. Jose Casanova approaches the topic from a sociological perspective and posits that the secularization thesis has become the lens through which European self-understanding has been shaped. This viewpoint sees a decline of religiosity as "normal" and "progressive." So when coupled with the "barely submerged Christian European identity" it makes serious issues of any religion at all, especially Islam in the form of Turkish accession to the EU and the

increasing population of Muslim immigrants (Casanova 2004, 90). Though there are

certainly major issues of discussion within the EU and its own ability to handle its

increasing Muslim population, Turkey's record on religious control and limitations on

freedom of expression is in need of improvement.

The movement toward liberal consolidated democracy has been promising but

it must continue to follow through on its promises. The religiously motivated actors

must continue to demonstrate their commitment to democratic principles. They should

also show they are not a form of "creeping Islamism," just playing the democratic

game as a cover of their real intentions that would ultimately change the nature of the

state. This will be done through ensuring a constitutional and institutional

arrangement that preserves the secular nature of the state while allowing for the free

and open exercise of religion in the public sphere.

The potential incompatibility between the religious identity of Turkey and the

EU is not primarily of Christianity versus Islam but freedom versus repression. If the

EU vision of identity is truly one in keeping with its multicultural and global

pretensions then, as Graham Fuller puts it, "exclusion for religious and cultural

reasons is simply intolerable," yet there is room for continued development of liberal

democratic values (Fuller 2004, 57). As Turkey moves forward in its ability to allow

the free expression of religion it will continue to bolster its own credentials as a state

with a strong commitment to democratic values. As Turkey is able to limit its strict

control of religion and adopt a style of secularism more in line with the model

proposed here it will move into closer alignment with the principles and practices of

the EU member states.

5.3.2 United States of America

Turkey and the United States continue to have a strong relationship and collaborate on a variety of topics though there have been tensions in the relationship over the past decade over specific issues where Turkey's goals have differed from those of the United States (Ozel and Yilmaz 2009, 11-13). The United States is a major supporter of the Turkey's EU membership and along with that its development of religious freedoms alongside of a continued strong democratic and secular state. In light of its support for increased religious freedoms there have been serious criticisms directed towards Turkey on this topic.

The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, in a contested step, listed Turkey as a country of particular concern, its lowest category for a state's respect of religious freedom. The reason for the downgrade was a feeling by the commissioners that despite promises made in terms of improving the freedoms of religion and *ad hoc* cases of improvements there has been a lack of systemic or judicial changes that would make these changes subject to being revoked (USCIRF 2012, 199). From their assessment the system is prone to abuse should the situation or actors shift and there are not strong enough protections against this. While the controlling secularism that has characterized Turkey has not seriously damaged the relationship between Turkey and the United States on the majority of issues, the United States has attempted to encourage Turkey to move towards a secularism that is in better keeping with liberal democracy.

An important role that US-Turkish relations play in the international dimension is as a demonstration that the United States means what then newly elected President Obama said in his 2009 speech in Cairo. He said "I have come here to seek

a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world; one based upon mutual interest and mutual respect; one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive, and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles – principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings" (Meirowitz 2009, 88). This speech was intended to show the commitment of the United States to support the democratic values and freedoms that the United States values for all people of the world regardless of their religious beliefs. The record in this regard may be mixed, but in light of this stance it helps to better define the reason for the encouragement towards farther reforms. Thus, criticism lodged against Turkey in terms of religious freedom is not against problems because of Islam but problems in relation to the principles of democracy and freedoms.

The relationship between the United States and Turkey can serve as a demonstration to neighboring Muslim states that the West in general and the United States in particular will respect, value, and support those governments which respect the principles of "justice", "tolerance", and "dignity for all human beings." As many states in the region are moving out from under secular authoritarian rule and religious actors are playing a more active role in shaping political and public life this relationship may prove extremely valuable.

While in some ways Turkey's development in this respect may produce additional challenges in the relationship between Ankara and Washington over particular issues, the process is on a whole a beneficial one that the United States should support. A Turkey which is able to exemplify a strong democratic form of governance that respects the contributions of Islamic actors "is more likely to

contribute to a stable region in the long term than a Turkey that conducts its foreign policy as a U.S. proxy" (Fuller 2004, 63). The United States should remain supportive of this even though it may at times come against periodic disagreements.

The United States as a country which has a firm commitment to a secular state and democratic principles and yet an actively religious population has relevance as a model of a passive secularism. Turkey in its process to be both religious and a consolidated democracy within its own context need not attempt to copy the secularism of any other state but define its own understanding that respects the values which it prizes and handles the particular challenges it faces.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

The place of religion within modern societies is an issue to which there are not simple answers. In societies that have become increasingly interconnected the situation is even more complex. A hallmark of democratic societies is the ability for individuals of differing viewpoints to contribute to their own governance through elections and to have their rights valued whether in the majority or the minority. As these two trends of increased freedoms in democratic societies and increasing interconnectedness of diverse identities have converged, the need for states to develop policies to manage this has become more pronounced. The model of secularism proposed here is an attempt to contribute to this effort to provide freedoms for the varieties of religious and non-religious groups within Turkey.

The idea of secularism is at its core a political principle. From its origins it was concerned with providing a space where individuals of a variety of religious communities and those of no religious beliefs were able to co-exist. Secularism when interpreted in line with the freedoms of liberal democracy ought to allow for religious individuals who express faith in a personal God, or those who subscribe to a pan-theistic faith, or those who are atheistic in their beliefs, not only to exist together but also to thrive through being able to live in accordance with their beliefs, meet together with others, and to express their beliefs within the public sphere. For this to take place it requires a commitment of these individuals to certain values, such as human rights, democratic freedoms, and the rule of law, that provide a guard against an abuse of their own rights and against their abuse of the rights of others. These principles which are established on the basis of consensus take the priority over religious practices if

and when there is a conflict. These maintain that the state does not particularly favor one viewpoint over the other.

Secularism as a political principle is a rather different thing than secularization. Secularization is the process whereby secular, that is non-religious, things are made more prominent within society. Secularization is not necessarily connected to secularism. A state can be firmly rooted in secularism and yet allow for a rather religious society. The idea that religion matters in politics and that it continues to be influential comes in contrast to the philosophical predictions that laid the groundwork of modernization theory. Many of these philosophers predicted that as societies became more modern religion would become less salient. The reality is that religion continues to be a meaningful part of identity and a meaningful part of communal life. Thus discussions concerning the place of religion within modern societies are a topic of significant worth.

The place of religion in Turkish society is an especially meaningful case study. The Turkish Republic is a country with a population of more than 70 million, the vast majority of whom identify as Muslim, and it is a state that has professed a strong commitment to secularism and also democracy. The place of religion has been a central issue since the founding of the Turkish Republic which came out of the ashes of the Ottoman Empire. An empire whose Sultan had been the head of the Muslim community since the early 16th century, and Islam and a long history of being intertwined with the workings of the state. As part of the reform process to create a modern and secular Turkish state, an assertive secularism was adopted that not only separated religion from the state but also gave the state control over religion. Thus

throughout the Turkish Republic the place of religion in the state and society has been an intensely debated and polarizing issue.

It is argued that in the current context and as a part of the process of strengthening democracy it is necessary to revisit not just the practices of how religion is treated but the underlying conceptualization of what secularism is. The proposed model offered here is an attempt at showing how secularism could be conceived in a way which better suits the current condition in which there are a variety of both religious and non-religious individuals and both Sunni majority and minority communities of faith. An assertive secularism that forces a singular conception of religion and its place in society is not compatible with a commitment to liberal democracy.

The understanding of secularism is only a part of the bigger project of consolidated democratization. In order to embrace a different conception of secularism there is a need for an articulation of the fundamental values of the state, to which all citizens are party to, and which are placed in a lexical ordering prior to other activities. These values are ideally enshrined in a constitution which provides both the values and the structural framework for good governance and rule of law. The place of religion in the state is not a small issue but has implications across a wide-range of domestic issues and foreign affairs.

A reconsidering of the place of religion within the secular republic of Turkey is necessary to articulate an interpretation of secularism which is in line with its commitment to a robust consolidated democracy which provides for the rights of all of its citizens. In this way both those who are religious, whether Muslim, Christian, or otherwise, and those who are non-Religious can pursue a meaningful life with their

rights and freedoms secure and contribute to the continued progress of a strong and

democratic Turkey.

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