

Is There a Turkish Islam? The Emergence of Convergence and Consensus

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Abstract

This paper attempts to demonstrate that it is not only the universal principles of Islam that ground our everyday actions, but also the practical and immediate issues which we confront. Although Islam provides a universal set of principles to make life meaningful, I shall argue that these principles are vernacularized and localized in specific narratives. By offering seven diverse zones of Islam, I seek to bring this critical and dynamic distance into the forefront to understand that there is no universal model or a single highway to salvation but, instead, there are multiple ways of being and becoming a Muslim. In the first part of the paper, I seek to disaggregate the concept of 'Islamic or Muslim world' by identifying seven diverse competing and conflicting 'zones' of political Islam, each characterized by their conversion pattern, colonial legacy, type of nationalism and by the state-society relations and political economy that factor into these evolving separate zones. At the same time and under certain political conditions, one also sees the emergence of consensus and similar 'public opinion' across zones on various issues. After identifying the features of three of the seven zones (Arab, Persian and Turkish), the paper focuses on Sufism, the frontier legacy of the Ottoman state, and on the tax-based economy and the expanding political opportunity spaces, to account for the construction of Islamic knowledge and practices in the Turkish zone.

We are not here as Turkish Muslims to put ourselves in the service of Islam, but to put Islam in the service of life. (Fethullah Gülen)

Introduction

What factors account for Islam's diversity worldwide? What leads to the specific 'zones' of Islam? Is there a distinct Turkish Islam? What explains the political mobilization of Islamic groups? What has been the impact of colonialism and modernity on the different 'zones' of Islam? Before elaborating on these questions, it is only appropriate to clarify some key terminology.

Religion is an integral part of human societies and is an expression of mankind's almost visceral urge to search for meaning. Furthermore, religion can provide individuals with a sense of identity, a blueprint to lead their lives, a sense of security, and, for many, a box of tools to resist oppressive social and political conditions. Whatever other confusions it may have brought, modernity, especially in its globalized version, has enriched the public sphere and facilitated the debate over identity, morality, and justice. Processes of globalization are shaping every aspect of Muslim life. I define globalization as 'a set of socio-political processes that have been accelerated as a result of new technological innovation and economic forces'. Two structural aspects of globalization, as seen today, are the market economy as represented by neo-liberal economic policies,

and the new digital communication technology. These are what may be called the 'hard' aspects of globalization. I also identify the infiltration of the universal values of human rights and the aspirations of communities for democracy as representing the 'soft aspects' of globalization. Globalization and religious traditions also intersect. Globalization has put in the spotlight the three issues of justice, identity, and ethics, and religious traditions are powerful resources used to address these issues.

Regardless of the form of reaction, and in the same way as with other religious traditions, Islam, as a rich and strong tradition in many diverse societies, empowers Muslims to cope with three major dimensions of globalization: social justice (distribution), identity, and the ethics of engagement. Justice and identity are the two engines of the new Islamic social movements, which along with morality create new public spaces in which new identities and lifestyles can emerge.

Due to a combination of historical and social conditions, market forces and new technology, new global discourses of democracy and human rights have different impacts in different parts of the world. The main impacts of globalization have been the two contradictory processes of homogenization and fragmentation. At present, in most of the Arab and Muslim world, the fragmentation aspect is more dominant than homogenization or cooperation. Nonetheless, it would be legitimate to argue that globalization has created two competing visions of Islam. At the extreme end of the spectrum is the liberal and market friendly Islam, dominant in Turkey and Malaysia, and at the other is the 'ghetto Islam' of some parts of Pakistan and some Arab countries.¹ Muslim reaction to these processes is very much shaped by idiosyncratic local histories and socio-political conditions.

The Zones of Islam

Unlike Samuel Huntington, I do not think that there is a homogenous religious or civilizational entity termed 'Islam'. Instead I believe that there are at least seven diverse competing and conflicting zones of political Islam. Conversion patterns, colonial legacy, types of nationalism, and political economy all factor into these evolving separate zones.² Yet, under certain political conditions, one also sees the emergence of consensus and similar 'public opinion' across zones on various issues. For instance, the Arab–Israeli conflict and Bosnia helped to form a shared position under the rubric of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, but not the conflicts involving indigenous Muslim populations in Nagorno-Karabakh, Kashmir, or Cyprus. Each zone's understanding of the political role of Islam no doubt varies in terms of numerous socio-political groups employing Islamic idioms and identity claims within their respective zones, while themselves being influenced at the regional level by national culture and diverse historical and economic factors. None of these zones works in isolation and there is a constant fertilization of ideas, practices, and skills across zones, and a flow of ideas, skills, and ways of framing issues by intellectuals. In addition, the production of religious knowledge and the use of Islam in everyday life in each zone, are conditioned by its history and socio-political environment. Such a heuristic approach is essential to understanding the various contingent manifestations of political Islam while evaluating the evolution of political Islam in specific zones, such as Turkey, and its relation to the non-Islamic Western world.

Across the seven zones of Islam, it is clear that there has been a rediscovery of Islamic identity. This has generally taken place along the unexpected path of nationalism, which, in earlier studies, was regarded as antithetical to Islamic identity. Since the

1990s, almost all zones have experienced the transformation of nationalism into forms of 'Islamic patriotism'. On the one hand, there is an evolving transnational Muslim consciousness as a result of the persecution of Muslim communities in different parts of the world, brought to Muslim households through the rapidly expanding communication networks of television and Internet. These same images have also facilitated the formation of an assertive ethnic nationalism. There are also attempts to redefine Islam in national terms in order to consolidate the nation-state and national identity. Thus Islam has been an important facet of all Arab, Persian, Turkish, South Asian and Malay-Indonesian nationalisms, and it has also been mobilized for transnational causes such as in Bosnia or Palestine. In other words, the revival of nationalism in these zones has also led to the revival of Islamic symbols, practices, and institutions that had previously been an integral part of the social fabric of these countries.

In other words, it is not only the universal principles of Islam that ground our everyday actions, but also the practical and immediate issues which Muslims confront.³ Although Islam provides a universal set of principles to make life meaningful, these principles are vernacularized and localized in specific narratives. One has to observe the critical distance between the universal principles of Islam (rather than a utopian model of Medina) and local narratives through which believers seek to preserve and perpetuate these principles.⁴ By offering these zones, I seek to bring this critical and dynamic distance between the ethical principles of Islam and the local narratives into the forefront in order to understand that there is no universal model or a single highway to salvation but, instead, there are multiple ways of being and becoming a Muslim.

I will disaggregate the Islamic world into seven separate zones and identify the major historical and social factors which shape these zones. These seven diverse ethno-cultural zones are Arab, Persian (Shi'i), Turkish, South Asian (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan),⁵ Malay-Indonesian,⁶ African⁷ and Minority (Diaspora) zones.⁸ Each zone's understanding of Islam is primarily informed by its own national culture and by diverse historical and economic factors. In this paper, I will deal briefly with the first two zones and dwell mostly on the Turkish zone of Islam.⁹

The Arab Zone

The Arab zone represents the origin and the past of Islam.¹⁰ At the same time, the Arabic language and identity tend to blur ethnicity and religion. More than non-Arabs, Arab Muslims, I believe, mix what is religious and what is cultural in the evolution of Islamic theology and institutions. The understanding of Arab Islam in this zone is influenced by colonialism, national liberation movements, the Arab-Israeli conflict, oil, and the structure of the rentier state—a state that is dependent on externally generated revenues and rents such as the income derived from oil.¹¹ One of the most damaging factors in political development in this zone has been the impact of oil wealth and the fostering of overbearing authoritarian state structures with little need for taxation or accountability to their civil societies. This is the case even with large states like Egypt and Syria who are not major petroleum producers but still rely on such 'rents' for a major source of their state revenue. In this zone the state is more oppressive and more powerful than the societal groups of which it is composed. Due to its economic power, the state structure centralized religious education and created an ineffective religious bureaucracy of the *ulema*. Thus, in almost all Arab countries it created a state-*ulema*, i.e. the state shapes the *ulema* and the *ulema* identifies its interests with the interests of the state rather than those of society.

Furthermore, the state very much sees the current processes of globalization as ambiguous or hostile and seeks to control the flow of information by censoring and limiting access to the Internet and by controlling the institutions of civil society. Since most jobs are carried out by contracted foreign workers, the Arab states did not invest in technical or professional education for their own nationals, as they could hire large numbers of skilled and even unskilled foreign workers. Moreover, the oil economy has undermined work ethics in the Arab zone. The people participate in politics only when oil prices drop, funds are diverted to government projects, such as defense, or when the state cuts subsidies.

The Persian Zone

The Persian zone is heir to a highly developed civilization that reinterpreted Islam for its own societal model. Under Safavid rule in the sixteenth century, Iran became a Shi'i country; hence the Shi'i interpretation of Islam marks the Persian zone of Islam. In addition to Shi'i interpretation, the dominant urban culture, agrarian environment, the penetration of Britain and Russia in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries followed by the United States during and after the Second World War, and an abundance of oil constitute the socio-political basis of the politicization of the Persian understanding of Islam. Oil gave rise to rentier statehood and to corruption in government, first with the governing class and then with the radical religious class that seized control after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. It is an area that has adapted Islam to fit its needs rather than adapted itself to fit the Arab model of Islam, and continues to adapt and redefine Islam in order to cope with internal and external societal pressures.

Despite the pervading Arab influences of Islam, the Persian zone has managed to retain much of its own culture for a number of reasons. First, Iran, the heart of the Persian zone, already contained its own well-established and distinct culture well before the introduction of Islam. Before Islam was introduced, the dominant societal and state religion had been Zoroastrianism (but importantly, other religions like Judaism and Christianity were widely tolerated). Once Islam was introduced, first through military conquest and later through cultural diffusion, the Persians adapted it to their own distinct culture and way of life.

The Safavid empire centralized the government by reaffirming the religious authority of the monarchy. The Safavid were originally a Turkic Sufi Islamic movement having transformed their assertive identity turned Shiism into the state ideology. The movement absorbed many Zoroastrian ideas such as the view of history as a struggle between 'good' and 'evil', the moral dimension of human existence, the after-life, and the duality of human existence. Moreover, Shi'i tradition is very much punctuated and builds upon the social memory of the Karbala' incident in which the persecution of Hussein, the son of 'Ali and Fatima, and his clan, created a belief that there will not be justice in this world. After the fall of the Safavid empire, the Qajar dynasty ruled Iran until the Pahlavi family seized the power in the 1920s. The Qajar dynasty was never consolidated because they had a weak administration and army, so that the various provinces had a large degree of autonomy and were fragmented. Yet, it had a highly centralized and shared culture of Islam that was produced and perpetuated by a powerful network of hierarchical clergy outside the control of the state, which could and did oppose the state at various times.

The second major factor in the idiosyncratic nature of Persian Islam has been the shaping of the Persian world by the colonial powers. The European powers never took

direct control of Iran and Iran has perhaps been one of the few Middle Eastern states, along with Yemen and Saudi Arabia, that was never under formal colonization. Instead they allied themselves with the existing monarchy and created their own spheres of influence. In addition to the struggles for resources, a pattern of imitative modernization was pursued by the monarchy, which led to further isolation of the ordinary people from the state and created an ambiguous status for Iranian Islamic culture in the twentieth century.

At various times, Islamic religious scholars (*ulema*) rose against the Shah and the foreigners to defend the faith and Iranian national interests. Thus, Iranian *national* interests were framed by and promoted in Islamic terminology. A major division was created when rulers tried to undermine the financial sources of the religious scholars through reforms of the *waqf* and the courts, under Nasiruddin Shah (1848–1896). A major conflict took place in 1891 when the shah granted very lucrative tobacco concessions to the British. The *ulema* supported and assisted the merchants, who led the revolt, and Nasiruddin Shah was forced to withdraw the concessions. The British press accordingly presented Nasiruddin Shah as an ‘enlightened’ shah and the clergy as ‘fanatical’. Thus, anti-colonial sentiment started in Iran and spread throughout the Middle East with the help of Jamal al-Din Afghani, who died in 1896 in Turkey. The Iranian anti-colonial movement resulted in the promulgation of the 1906 constitution—also referred to as the ‘1906 Constitutional Revolution’.

The 1906 constitution created a limited constitutional monarchy and empowered the clergy. Until World War II, Iran saw a rising conflict between the monarchy (supported by the British) and the clergy and the merchant class. In 1941, Reza Shah was ousted by the allies as a Nazi sympathizer and his 21-year-old son was placed on the throne. Oil was becoming important and Britain and the United States were demanding additional oil concessions. This was seen by many as a new form of colonialism and resulted in public rejection and resentment. Muhammad Mosaddeq (1882–1967), the leader of the nationalists in the *Majlis* (Parliament), asked the Shah to withdraw the oil concessions and at the same time he organized the ‘National Front’. On 1 May 1951, after his election as prime minister, Mosaddeq had the parliament adopt a law nationalizing the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and forced the British experts to leave the country. When he failed to get the support of some conservative parties, he resigned. A series of crises led to the flight of the Shah in August 1953. Soon after, with the aid of the CIA, the Mosaddeq government was overthrown, leading to the return of the Shah from his short European exile, in addition to the arrest and prosecution of Mosaddeq.

The European powers never took direct control of Iran. Instead they allied themselves with the existing monarchy and created their own sphere of influence. This further undermined faith in the monarchy and increased opposition to colonialism. In addition to the struggle over resources, politics and outside interferences continued to create ambiguity for Iranian Islamic culture during the Cold War. Many were angered that the Shah not only courted the favor of the US, Israel and Britain, but also relied substantially on *Savak*, his US-trained secret police. The rise of what was perceived as a material ‘junk’ culture based on a love of machines and of the West further angered many traditionalists. The rise of a new urban poor and peasants uprooted through industrialization and insufficient land reforms, in addition to the frustrations and pent-up demands of the educated and large middle class, formed the basis of a unified front under an Islamic banner and leadership (that of Ayatollah Khomeini) that would ultimately take to the streets and bring about the fall of the Shah in 1979.

The Turkish Zone

We should accept the fact that there is a specific way of being Muslim which reflects the Turkish understanding and practices in those region [which] stretch from Central Asia to the Balkans.¹²

Ahmet Ocak refers to this as the Turkish Islam (*Türk Müslümanlığı*), and different from the Persian and Arab Islam due to ‘its production of cultural norms and modes of thinking’ as related to religion, faith, personal life, ritual practices, and religious holidays—covering a whole spectrum from ‘social mores to personal mores’ and the interpretations of Islamic principles.¹³

Although *Türk Müslümanlığı* refers to the production of religious knowledge by believers within the local context and concerns, I have translated this as Turkish Islam since ‘Muslimhood’ or ‘Muslimness’ does not capture the vernacularized version of Islam. Some Turkish writers use *Türk İslamı* but this has an ethnic subtext and also could imply a rejection of the universality of Islam. By Turkish Islam, I do not mean the Kemalist project of the nationalization of religion or the rejection of the universality of the message of the Qur’an and the *hadith* literature, but the reproduction of religious knowledge in ‘everyday life’ by those who are raised in a Turkish milieu. Again, Turkish Islam is not about attitudes towards Islamic doctrines but about *İslamiyat* (Islami-cate)—putting the universal principles of Islam to work in terms of building institutions, ideas, practices, arts, and vernacularized morality. It is a particular way of crafting and creating one’s own way of being Muslim. Thus, Turkish, Persian or Arab Islam imply religio-social modes of reasoning that are conditioned by time and space in a given society.

Although most Turkish scholars agree on the particularized and localized version of Islam in Turkey, they disagree about how to frame this local Islam.¹⁴ Some scholars prefer to frame it as ‘Turkish Islam’ or ‘Islam of Turkey’ versus ‘Turkish Muslims’ and ‘Turkey’s Muslims’.¹⁵ Nur Vergin, a leading sociologist of Turkey, argues that for historical reasons the Muslims of Turkey have developed a more territorialized version of Islam which easily blurs with local conditions.¹⁶ Mehmet Aydın, a professor of theology and now a Minister of State in Turkey, believes that it is possible to develop and promote ‘Turkish Islam’ if intellectuals develop new approaches to Islam by incorporating the wisdom of Sufism with the historical experiences of modern Turkey. This new approach has intellectual and institutional foundations in Turkey, and aims to reinterpret the Qur’an with the goal of understanding the contemporary world. In short, Aydın sees the possibility of novelty in Turkey.¹⁷

The story of Turkish Islam is an example of the localization of a universal teaching through the works of the Sufi orders. As a result of this localization, one can identify several key social, political and economic factors that were and continue to be instrumental in the formation of Turkish Islam’s distinct understanding of Islamic identity and its niche in the Muslim world by presenting a more successful model of religio-political synthesis. There are two intellectual roots of Turkish Islam: Ahmet Yesevi¹⁸ (the main intellectual source of heterodox Islam) and Mansur Maturidi (orthodox Islam).¹⁹ These two individuals played key roles in the localization of universal faith and also in the universalization of local Turkish understandings of religion through Islam.²⁰ The relations between the orthodox (*ulema*-centered and some Sufi orders) Islam and the heterodox Sufi Islam were punctuated by rivalry and antagonism. The Turkish conceptualization of religion achieved its completeness in the poems of Yunus Emre.²¹ Due to its religious and philosophic approaches combined with a mystical character, Sufi Islam

prevented Turkish culture from losing out within the Islamic religion, and provided an opportunity to formulate its own zone of 'Turkish Islam'. In other words, by absorbing Islam into Turkish culture the Sufi networks created Turkish Islam.

Sufism

Although Arab invaders brought Islam to the region in the eighth century, the conversion patterns and socio-cultural structure created a specifically vernacular Turkic Islam. The Turks were nomadic people who practiced Shamanism as their dominant faith. *Saman* and *Kam*, as legendary religious-charismatic leaders in Shamanism, converted to Islam and became Sufi dervishes, known as 'baba' and 'ata'.²² These individuals personified the old religion and became the agents of Islamization in Central Asia.²³ The new faith was internalized through vernacular narratives and the syncretization of older traditions. Islam, as a new faith, was regarded as a part of native culture due to its ability to enhance and build upon important facets of the old shamanism.²⁴ This symbiosis between different cultures and religions in the region helped to produce four major Sufi orders: *Yeseviyye*, *Bektasiyye*, *Mevleviyye*, and *Nakşibendiyye*. Ahmet Yesevi, Sarı Saltuk, Hacı Bektaş Veli, and Bahattin Nakşibend constitute the major intellectual cornerstones of Sufi Islam in Turkey.

The first factor, therefore, that defines the Turkish understanding of Islam and makes it unique is the enduring tradition of Sufism that formed its foundation and has managed to remain a dominant force despite various efforts towards its subjugation or elimination.²⁵ The Turkish zone, which incorporates people from various cultures, began as a diverse amalgamation of nomadic tribal Shamanism and Central Asian Buddhism.²⁶ Turkey's Sufism has adopted a nonliteral and inclusive reading of religion. Famous Sufis such as Jallaluddin Rumi, Yunus Emre and Hacı Bektaş Veli²⁷ would often declare that they were beyond Islam in the belief that traditions rather than doctrine define a religion.²⁸ Turkish understanding of Islam is very much punctuated by the tolerance of Rumi, love of Yunus and reasonability of Hacı Bektaş Veli.

Upon reaching Anatolia, the Turkic nomadic hordes organized into small groups of warriors called *ghazis* and under the leadership of Sufi *babas* started to transform the landscape of Anatolia. Some of the *ghazis* became sedentary and eventually internalized a more Orthodox version of Islam. There is a close and mutually reinforcing relationship between the processes of sedentarization and Islamization. Some of the nomads resisted the sedentary lifestyle, and being aware of diverse religious traditions, and while maintaining aspects of their own Shamanism, they synthesized diverse beliefs with the framework of Islam, ultimately formulating the Alevi doctrine of Turkish Islam.²⁹

According to Ülken, a leading scholar of Turko-Islamic intellectual history, Turkish Sufism differentiates itself from Persian Sufism by stressing 'morality' over anthropomorphic (human-centered) understanding of religion.³⁰ One sees the traces of the perennial conception of religion as a common human journey to understand and celebrate human diversity. The case of Turkish Islam is striking in its method of visiting mosques, almsgiving and feasts, which appears to have more in common with Balkan Christianity than with Saudi Wahhabism and Iranian Shiism. Turkish Islam is a form of Sufi Islam with dense networks that transmit the flow of ideas, practices and leaders, helping to link local and universal versions of Islam. In Sufi Islam, there is a self within the self. Muslims are encouraged to encounter and discipline this 'other' within the self through pious engagement. This requires '*jihad al-akbar*' (the bigger struggle—control of one's desires and passions). Thus, there is no need for the external 'other' self to

construct an identity. Sufi understanding of Islamic identity is without the 'other'. Sufism, with its inner philosophy, has enjoyed a strong identity independent of others and does not define itself by its differences from others but rather by the similarity between all of God's creatures.

Out of necessity, the early Turkish Muslims accepted and embraced the pre-Islamic traditions and combined them with their own in a form of Sufi mysticism. Less prominent were the strict Islamic law (*Sharia*) and concept of waging violent external *jihād* against nonbelievers. Instead, as Islam was diffused into the Turkic world through Persian Sufi influences, it sought to establish a commonality of belief with the indigenous religious practices. Despite a myriad of attempts to curb it, Sufism has survived in the Turkish zone as an underlying institution of revival and alternative thinking throughout the centuries. It flourished during the Seljuq period and subsequently played a formative role in the creation of Turko-Ottoman culture. Despite Kemalist attempts to eliminate the ideas and practices of Sufism, it survived through a number of major transformations.

Indeed, Sufi networks, according to Serif Mardin, were the transmission belt between the high court culture and the heterodox popular culture of Ottoman society. They also formed an oppositional identity along with networks against the oppression of the state. Sufi networks, such as the Nakşibendi Sufi order have provided an outlet for Islamic religious expression and in doing so have managed to block the radicalization of religion that might otherwise have been present. Sufism became the shield for society, the core of 'civil Islam'. Sufi networks were active in community building through education, and social services. They functioned as the moral centers of society to teach right and wrong and helped to institutionalize Islam as the grammar for society to define the meaning of the good life. Through this tradition a code of ethics was constructed from Sufi and Bektaşî/Alevî ideals, which defined many normative traditions still present in Turkish society. Government oppression during the 1920s and 1930s forced the Sufi orders to shift from a *tekke*- (Sufi lodge) centric to a text-centric understanding of Islam. As a result, in Turkey, print Islam or textual Islam is the dominant mode.

Frontier Islam

Turkish Islam is in constant evolution as a result of the tension between heterodox and orthodox interpretations of Islam. Moreover, due to the Ottoman expansionist policy, which was justified on the basis of Islam, the idea of the frontier also highlighted the search for security and stable political authority. This search for political stability and security helped to create a state-centric culture (and religion). Thus, Turkish Islam sees the existence and preservation of the state as a vital instrument for the existence of Islam and the Muslim community. The *ulema* became the servants of the state, becoming bureaucratized and holding positions as judges, teachers, and prayer leaders. In the Ottoman Empire (and also in Republican Turkey), the state and *ulema* have been in a symbiotic relationship because of the need for legitimacy of the state and resources. (However, the heterodox Sufi orders have an ambiguous and confrontational relation with the state.) Although there is no formal clergy in Sunni Islam, the Ottoman *ulema* functioned as a class with its own distinct sense of identity and common interest and remained loyal to the state as long as they were benefiting from such loyalty. State-centrism was highlighted as a result of the consolidation of the central authority and the colonial penetration in the nineteenth century. It was not difficult for Turkish Islam to ally itself closely with nationalism as long as the goal was to protect the state. Because

of these frontier conditions, security and state power shaped Turkish political culture. Unlike many other predominantly Muslim states, the Turkish state does not promote Muslim ideals, nor is it controlled by an autonomous religious authority. Historically, the Turkish solution to potential competition with religious power has been to incorporate, federalize, and control every facet of religious life. For example, in Iran, the independently funded *ulema* exercise a good measure of control over the state. In Turkey, the *ulema* were immediately incorporated as part of a state agency. All funds come from the government, and the government exercises complete control as a result. In modern Turkey today, the state has consistently implemented the philosophy of cooptation in order to maintain control.

Until recent times, Sufi networks and the Directorate of Religious Affairs (DRA) had prevented the penetration of 'foreign Islam' from Egypt and Pakistan. 'Foreign Islam' means forms of political Islam that have been constructed in response to conditions in those societies. Thus, the fragmentation of religious authority has not been as it was in other parts of the Muslim world. In the Arab and Persian zones of Islam, the Islamist intellectuals targeted the youth and successfully challenged the authority of the *ulema*. This never happened in Turkey. Because of the DRA and the role of the Sufi orders, Turkish Islam has produced no prominent Islamist radicals such as Hasan al-Banna, Syed Qutb, Abul Ala Mawdudi, or Ali Shari'ati. Turkey's Muslim intellectuals are not from among the *ulema*, engineers, nor medical doctors as is often the case in Muslim countries like Egypt and Pakistan, they are mostly writers, poets, and artists. Thus, while bringing novel Islamic perspectives, they formed an integral part of Turkey's expanding literary public spaces. These writers are not didactic in their writings but rather narrative in style and eclectic in terms of their sources and their openness to diverse viewpoints.³¹

The 'Melting Pot' and Islam as an Ethnic Identity

The dervishes of Iranian Khurasan, known as *alp erenler*, moved to Anatolia and established a number of lodges. From the beginning of the fourteenth century these heterodox Sufi groups became the instruments of Turkification and 'ethnos builders'. They 'spread Islam among the recently immigrated Turkish tribesmen and, at a later stage, among the Christian population of Anatolia' and the Balkans as well.³² Bektashiyya was one of the containers of the Turkish language and culture during the Ottoman period. The periods of Ottoman expansion resulted in a constant evolution of ideals. The expansionist Ottoman state was forced to embrace and co-exist with Christian and other groups. Orthodox and heterodox Islam were forced to confront their differences and rehash their beliefs in order to survive in harmony with one another. This tradition of diversity allowed for a more inclusive societal model such as the *millet* system, a type of religious federalism. The Turkish zone of Islam, therefore, is a melting pot, incorporating various ethnic and religious groups including Kurds, Croats, Asiatic tribes, Buddhists, Christians, Bektashi/Alevi, and others. Through years of interaction, relations have somewhat softened between groups, and Islam emerges as a unifying force rather than a source of division.

Islam in Turkey served as a 'melting pot' to integrate the diverse ethnic groups. During the war of independence, Islam served to bring the diverse groups together against the occupying forces. It was an identity of resistance against the occupation forces. Due to Islam's constitutive role in the construction of Turkish identity, the state never succeeded in disengaging Islam from debates over the politics of identity. This symbiotic relationship between Islam and Turkish nationalism made Islam the

foundation of Turkish identity. When Islam was suppressed and forced out of the public sphere during the first three decades of Kemalist secularization program, nationalism became the only habitat where many Muslim intellectuals could take refuge. This nationalist refashioning of Islamic ideology left a number of traces on Islamic movements by nationalizing it, utilizing it for anti-communist activities, and even internalizing some aspects of Kemalism. Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, Nurettin Topcu and Sezai Karakoç all promoted the idea of Turkish Islam. Islamic and Turkish identities have become mutually constitutive in the writings of these authors. Even Said Nursi focused on the positive nationalism of Islamo-Turkism as long as that nationalism could be used in the service of Islam.

Lack of a Colonial Legacy

As a former imperial power in the Ottoman era, Turkey was never colonized. For Turkey, therefore, Europe never became the ‘other’ in the construction of its identity. In the construction of post-imperial Turkish identity, however, the ‘other’ has always been ‘Imperial and communist’ Russia. The Muslims of Turkey supported Turkey’s entry into NATO and other European institutions as a safety precaution against Russian expansionism, and the Cold War further consolidated Turkey’s positive identification with Europe. When the communist movement became powerful in the 1960s and 1970s, the state used the Islamic groups as an antidote to leftist ideologies and activism. In the post-Cold War era, a clash between secular identity and Islamist identity has evolved. Nevertheless both Islamists and secularists are in favor of Turkish membership of the European Union (EU). Turkish labor experiences in the West were far better than those of Turks visiting the Arab zone. Turks seeking work in Arab nations were exploited and marginalized—largely because in the eyes of the Arabs, Turkey is the ‘other’, since the Ottoman Empire colonized nearly all of the Middle East, except Iran. Thus, Turks saw themselves as having more in common with Christian Greeks and Western Europeans, rather than with some of their fellow Muslims in the Middle East.

The war of independence (1919–1923) was short and swift in Turkey. It was carried out not by local militias but rather by a regular army. Thus, the violence surrounding national independence did not set a pattern of opposition as it did in Algeria. There was no deep sense of siege among the Turks. The 1974 Cyprus ‘operation’ further consolidated the self-confidence of the Turks as the wars destroyed Arab or Persian self-image. The occupation of northern Cyprus was a very important moment in the articulation of Turkish identity and in the consolidation of the military in Turkey. The sense of loss over the social and cultural environment, or common conspiracy theories, is not dominant in Turkey. Many Turks believe that they control their own social and political environments.

Non-Rentier Economy and Civil Society

Turkey has no oil reserves that would make an attractive resource for external conquest or internal societal strife. Instead, the country enjoys a tax-based economy with a large middle class and civil society, which allows many close connections between politics and economy. The opening and closing of economic opportunity spaces shape the character and evolution of Islamic demands and activism. Market conditions and the formation of the middle class are essential for the formation of a civil society, and these

factors are also necessary for the evolution of a liberal and pluralist version of Islam. This is aided by the fact that Turkish Islam, rooted in Sufism, particularly the Nakşibendi Sufi orders, and punctuated by the previous frontier nature of Turkey, is pluralistic and liberal.

Opportunity Spaces

Both moderation and religious radicalism are very much determined by the expansion and shrinking of opportunity spaces in a given society. The erosion of the Kemalist system is an outcome of the expansion of political and economic opportunity spaces. There have been three waves of Islamic movements in Turkey, each wave punctuated by the dynamics of opportunity spaces. One can also equate the expansion of political opportunity space (democratization) with the evolution and maturation of Islamic movements in Turkey. By opportunity spaces, I mean *fora* of social interactions that create new possibilities for augmenting networks of shared meaning and associational life. Such arenas include civic and political forums, electronic and print media and cyberspace, and the market. Opportunity spaces are not simply mobilizing structures because they adhere through social interactions and expressive space rather than formal or informal organizational structures. The key opportunity space is the market, since economic prosperity allows one to become plugged in to broader cultural and political processes of social change. Prosperity gives one the opportunity to pick and choose in defining personal identity; to resist the policies of the state or the market; and to change the meaning of everyday life. Opportunity spaces undermine state-based or society-based attempts to generate a hegemonic ideology and mixed private and public spheres. These spaces free diverse voices and transform religiously shaped stocks of knowledge into a project (i.e. a set of abstract slogans to transform society) and shared rules of cooperation and competition. In these spaces, not only are individual and collective actions blurred, but also the boundary between the public and private is constantly redrawn. Islamic social movements represent the ‘coming out’ of private Muslim identity in the public spaces. It is not only a struggle for recognition of identity but also one of ‘going public’ through private identities. In these public spaces, identities and lifestyles are performed, contested and implemented.

The draconian period of Kemalism (1924–1950) was the period in which the Kemalist goals of secularism and nation building dominated. To counter state oppression and the top-down forced transformation of institutions, practices, and vernacular language, the Nakşibendi Sufi order became the vehicle of counter mobilization, waging a confrontational political campaign against Kemalist homogenization. However, some other religious movements, such as the Nur movement, inwardly sought refuge in the ‘holistic’ nature of Islam to counter cognitive homogenization. During this period, most Muslim intellectuals resisted any form of novelty and modernist interpretations of Islam. Some tried to find roles for Islam and Islamism by allying themselves with nationalism through referring to the concepts of *vatan*, *millet* and state. During the Cold War, one sees the dual transformation of Islamism into both Turkish nationalism and social conservatism. Islamic activism became one of the principal enemies of the Kemalist state and the target of exclusionary policies. The ruling Kemalist core, the army, continues to suspect Islam of being an anti-Kemalist ideology.

After 1950, with the expansion of political space, i.e. the introduction of the multi-party system, the Islamic movements also shifted from rebellious resistance and

withdrawal mode to participation and ultimately to integration into the system, which resulted in the modification of their goals and means. A competitive multi-party system and the gradual opening up of economic spaces brought Muslim voices to the forefront of the public sphere and helped societal groups to realize the significance of democracy.³³ At the same time, with the rise of the leftist challenges to the state, the state co-opted Islamic groups as an antidote to the communist threat.

The liberalization and the expansion of the public sphere in Turkey were punctuated by Prime Minister Turgut Özal's neo-liberal economic policies between 1983 and 1993. One of the major impacts of this period was the pluralization of Islamic movements in Turkey. With Özal's economic and political liberalizing reforms, Turkish civil society was able to radically recast socio-political discourse outside the framework of official Kemalist ideology, which led to the emergence of a new public sphere. The advent of new communication networks in the 1990s further contributed to the weakening of the overpowering role of the state. This helped Turkish citizens to reconstruct discursive frames of identity. Özal tried to use the Ottoman-Islamic discourse of Turkish identity to overcome the marginalization of the great bulk of the population and build bridges between state and society.

The Kemalist transformation, in general, and the neo-liberal economic policies of Özal in the 1980s, in particular, created conditions conducive to the emergence of a more tolerant and pluralist Islam. The revolutionary change with regard to the public sphere took place when Özal's economic policies created a link between the public sphere and the market. The emergence of a new bourgeoisie, along with new global consumption patterns, led to the proliferation of independent TV, radio, and newspaper outlets which in turn blurred the boundary between local and transnational.³⁴ These new opportunity spaces required Islamic groups to engage with other groups on diverse issues. As a result of political and economic liberalization in Turkey, an Islamic public sphere was formed as a counter or an alternative public to the state regimented public by utilizing the global discourse of human rights and democracy. In these new public spheres where liberal Islam is formulated, Islam was reconstituted to meet the needs of a free market economy, democracy, globalization, and the discourse of human rights. This shows that the formation of a new economic class played a key role in the reconstitution of Islamic culture and morality.

In short, with the new Özalian reforms, the public sphere was gradually freed from the ideological dominance of the state and a competitive market of ideas and identities came into being. The new Islamist intellectuals, communication networks, and pro-Islamist *bourgeoisie* played a key role in the emancipation of the public sphere from the control of the state. According to Ali Bardakoğlu, the head of the DRA, 'Islamic debate in Turkey is very much conditioned by democratic culture and institutions. Political and intellectual competition are the two modern factors that shape our understanding of the role of religion and also religion's role in the constitution of morality'.³⁵ Moreover, the constitutional system and its restrictions, even the banning of religious parties, played an important role. Although religious education is controlled by the state, there were still some alternative centers of religious education such as the Süleymancı dormitories and the Qur'anic schools.³⁶

This growing salience of Islam in the public sphere in Turkey is an outcome of the formation of a new Islam-conscious *bourgeoisie* and the new financial networks formed between Turkey and the diaspora communities—especially that of the Turkish diaspora in Germany and other EU countries. One of the major outcomes of new opportunity spaces has been the re-'zoning' of social life according to the needs of modernity. New

opportunity spaces in politics, culture and economy have empowered identity groups to bring their private identities to the public to redefine the boundaries between the state and society. In these new opportunity spaces, new lifestyles, identities and code of conduct are formed. Market conditions require competition and differentiation. This competition is the engine of different imaginations of Islam. On the basis of new market forces, new manners and consumer patterns have been formed.

The Europeanization of Turkish Islam

Today the only unifying consensus of Turkey's diverse ethnic and religious groups is membership in the EU. Since the elections of 2002, the religious section of Turkish society has become more adamant than the secular sector in its defense of the project of Europeanization. How can we explain this new emerging consensus in Turkey? This process reached a climax in December 1999 when the EU Council declared that Turkey is 'destined to join the Union on the basis of the same criteria as applied to the other candidate States'.³⁷ This decision was as important as the Tanzimat Reforms of 1839 in terms of Turkey's struggle to become a full member of European society. The EU is expected to work with Ankara for Turkey's adherence to the Copenhagen criteria—the *sine quo non* of meeting the socioeconomic and political conditions which will promote the norms of liberal-democratic society.³⁸

The decision of the EU Commission to grant 'candidate' status to Ankara has already structured the debate over identity and foreign policy. The target of 'becoming' European has radically and surprisingly transformed the domestic political debate in Turkey. While still officially committed to the Republican dream of becoming a part of Europe, the Kemalist elite and in particular the hard-line generals have for some time been drawing a line against adopting the substantive democratic and liberal norms of Western societies. Thus, it was not the Kemalist establishment, but rather the movement of Islamic revival which gradually became the major supporter of Turkey's entry into the EU. Although the membership would result in the erosion of the military power in the political system, the military cannot openly say 'no' to the EU because that would be to deny the Kemalist goal of becoming European.³⁹ However, the Kemalist theology has posed a major obstacle to Turkey's membership. It has repeatedly indicated that becoming European would be unacceptable if this would require the Kemalist establishment to give up its authoritarian control and share power with its despised domestic foes, including granting substantial rights to the Kurdish minority, which in their eyes could lead to self-determination and secession.

'The February 28 coup' was critical in the complete transformation of the Turkish Muslim political movement's adoption of the proposal for Turkey's integration into the EU.⁴⁰ They quickly understood that the process of 'Europeanization' was central to finally securing democracy and human rights in Turkey. The 'soft-coup' was known as the 'February 28 process' because it was not only limited to the removal of the Welfare Party-led government but also was a process of monitoring, controlling, and criminalizing all Islamic activity as a security threat and institutionalizing a permanent legal framework for ostracizing devout and/or active Turkish Muslims from commercial, educational, and political spheres. This pro-Europe orientation among mainstream Islamic groups also came to be shared by many supporters of Kurdish rights and liberal-democratic Turks in general. It is perhaps the most important and promising indicator of an emerging shared consensus over Turkish identity and orientation. This

cognitive shift among Turkey's embattled Islamic groups indicates that integration with Europe is the only way to guarantee human rights for all and consolidate democracy.⁴¹

However, as these Islamic groups plugged into opportunity spaces and started to benefit from the expanding market and legal protection, their identities and worldviews began to transform. The sources of the cognitive shift in Turkey are the new socioeconomic conditions of opportunity spaces. Many Muslim groups see the EU as an opportunity to undermine the rigid state structure and facilitate decentralization. Among other things, for the first time in Turkey, Muslims formed their own human rights association, known as *Mazlumder*, to defend the rights of excluded groups. In other words, 'the right to be different' is utilized by the Islamists to promote their goals, but the same rights are also used by other groups. So, one sees the gradual internalization of the rights-discourse in Turkey. Although this tactical Europeanization and the use of the rights-discourse are an outcome of economic benefits and also of pressures from the state, one sees the internalization of the tactical position. Being European is redefined in terms of rights, democracy, and the market economy, rather than in terms of mere matters of dress-code or the Western Christian heritage.

The Turkish Model: Kemalism or Turkish Islam?

A closer examination of the 'Turkish model' indicates that there are at least two different and competing definitions.⁴² By model, I mean patterns of interaction between the state and society imitated or emulated in order to build a new society or polity. At the state level, Kemalism, as a top-down secularist model, along with its tightly controlled religious bureaucracy, is regarded as a model which should be replicated in different Muslim countries.⁴³ After the end of the Cold War, the US desired the new independent Central Asian states to follow the secular Turkish model. At the societal level, there is another model, the 'Islamic Turkish model', in peace with democracy, modernity and the market economy but not with the state ideology of laicism. As a result of the expansion of the opportunity spaces, the Turkish society, with its diverse Sufi groups, tried to 'go public' by carving its own space in the public sphere and the economy as well as in politics. With this evolutionary and moderating pattern, Turkish Islam could be regarded as a model for future reconciliation between Islam and civil society, producing a society where economic and intellectual dynamism creates a modernist vision of Islam. However, the modern history of Turkey is also the story of the confrontation between Kemalist secularism and societal Islam. Thus, when people talk about Turkey as a model for other Muslim countries, one has to ask the question: 'Which Turkish model?' Indeed, one has to realize the diverse aspects of the Turkish state and society and also the ongoing conflict between the two.

After the Middle East Initiative of the White House, Turkey's new Justice and Development Party (JDP) government welcomed the idea of presenting Turkey as a model *for or of* the Muslim countries. For instance, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan, in an interview in *Yeni Safak*, said that 'Turkey will not be a walk-on in the Greater Middle East Initiative. Turkey is a model for the Middle East since it is a country in which Islamic culture and democratic culture peacefully co-exist. In order to overcome the hegemonic presentation of Islamic identity or its presentation as an alternative identity, we have to think not only in terms of the Middle East but also of the Caucasus and Central Asia as well'.⁴⁴ When we examine the policies of the JDP, one could argue that it has been allowed to govern the country after shedding its Islamism. The leaders of the JDP are firm on the idea that neither they nor the JDP is 'Islamist or Islamic',

and they react against any suggestion of being an Islamic or a Muslim democrat party. To overcome its lack of political identity and claims to the effect that it is 'Islamist', the JDP has defined itself as a 'conservative democracy'. In other words, there is no compromise or new model between secularism of the state and Muslim identity-based parties in Turkey. Hence the current *modus vivendi* between Islamic social movements and the state in Turkey is based on the 'giving up' or 'delaying' of 'Islamic' demands on society such as the headscarf and religious education. In return for giving up Muslim demands, the JDP is allowed to govern. This *modus vivendi* between the state and the JDP is also based on external sources of support from the EU or the US to counter the power of the state. For instance, the JDP is seeking to overcome the opposition of the state bureaucracy by stressing the Copenhagen criteria and developing closer ties with the US after the March 2003 motion in the Parliament supporting sending Turkish troops to Iraq.

Conclusion

For historical and contemporary reasons, Turkey cannot easily present a model for other countries, and in fact most Muslims are not looking for a model of 'Islamic panacea' detached from their own societies. What the US and many Turks should realize is that Islamic movements elsewhere are not looking for models to imitate but rather they are searching for a set of shared functional principles to humanize the public sphere and political power to create the social circumstances in which religion is not excluded.⁴⁵ Of course, there are major debates over the definition and meaning of 'modern life'. Many Muslims misunderstand modernity, confusing it with consumerism and with becoming a part of larger economic forces without making the necessary conceptual changes. Human rights and respect for alternative lifestyles are not part of the Islamic project of modernity. Indeed, Islamists want to practice and defend their particular lifestyle in terms of their right to be different, although they would deny the same rights to gays, lesbians, secularists, or other unpopular groups. For Turkey's Islamists, such as the Welfare Party, their understanding of 'modernity' is confined to providing better 'social services'. For instance, with the JDP's victory in major cities, Islamist mayors transformed the city in terms of modernizing the infrastructure, by 'modernizing the city' in terms of building new parks, walkways, small bridges, new buildings, and planting new trees.

Let me conclude by returning to the question posed at the beginning of this essay: is there a Turkish Islam? Yes, I believe there is. Given the power of the context and human agency, the vernacularization of Islam is an inevitable process. Yet, this Turkish Islam is as problematic as Persian or Arab Islam in terms of the upward gap between belief and behavior. Turkish Islam is essentially a ritualized Islam that has very limited impact on one's moral conduct. There is a major gap between believing and behaving in Turkish Islam. According to the research by Ali Carkoğlu and Binnaz Toprak, 86% of Turkish citizens regard themselves as 'believers'; 84% regularly participate in *Jumuah* rituals (Friday prayers); and 46% pray five times a day.⁴⁶ This belief system, one could argue, hardly reflects their conduct in the market, politics, or even in everyday life. Turkey ranks very high in corruption, nepotism, and even the torture of opposition and minority groups. Thus, as in Turkey, the tragedy of Islam in many Muslim countries is that it is totally reduced to ritualistic activities and divorced from the moral aspects of everyday life. In 1951, an American scholar of religion made the following conclusion: 'whereas the Arab dream is of restoration, the modern Turks consciously talk

of novelty (*teceddüt*, later *yenilik*)'.⁴⁷ In 2004, this expected 'novelty' remains a dream rather than any reflection of reality. Turkish divinity faculties, with 2000 academic positions, have miserably failed to offer any critical approach to Islam.⁴⁸ Especially since the 1950s, both Islamic intellectuals and religious scholars have only consumed the ideas of the previous generations and have made very little contribution to a wider understanding of Islam in Turkish society.

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NOTES

1. Two major contradictory processes are taking place today in the Islamic world: homogenization and fragmentation (localization) of the global values of democracy, nationalism, and Islam. The al-Qaida network, which is not a social movement, is a new phenomenon in Islam. One needs to treat it in the larger processes of globalization. It is not a national liberation movement such as that of the Chechens, the Moros in the Philippines or Hamas in Palestine. The key characteristics of al-Qaida are that it is global, not national, and is not associated with any particular territorial base. Its members are global ideational entrepreneurs living in diverse countries, speaking diverse languages, and able to transfer money and knowledge via global networks. Thus, it is a network society, with each network being separate.
2. Although Seyyid Hussein Nasr also examines the Muslim world in terms of several 'cultural zones', the way in which I draw and utilize these zones to examine political forces is very different from Nasr in *The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity*, San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2002, pp. 87–100.
3. John Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 1–31.
4. Ali Bardakoğlu, the head of the Directorate of Religious Affairs in Turkey, offers a more localized version of Islam without rejecting the universal principles of Islam. He rejects the claim that there is 'the real and single Islam'. He problematizes this position and calls the scholars of Islam to take cultural and intellectual diversity into account. For Bardakoğlu, religious knowledge and religiously informed life encompass diverse periods and regional differences. For him, there is no 'single and real Islam'. Bardakoğlu argues that: 'It is important to study religion as lived and living human experience'. 'İlahiyatçıların DİN Söylemi' ('Religious Discourse of Turkish Theologians'), *İslamiyet*, Vol. 4, No. 4, 2001, p. 67.
5. Islam in Indo-Pakistani zone has evolved over a period of 13 centuries and it never freed itself from the influence of the indigenous population of the subcontinent. This interaction either resulted in adaptation of Hindu rites and customs or rejecting them and regularly experiencing the process of turning back to the 'pristine Islam' of Arabia. Due to presence of overwhelming Hindu population, Islam became more pluralistic and assimilated itself to local cultures. This trend toward assimilation prompted a regular religious revival among the *ulema* to turn back to pristine Islam. For instance, the Imam Rabbani and Deobandi school movement led by the *ulema* with the goal of resisting against *bid'a* (innovation) and getting rid of un-Islamic practices. The Deobandi movement was very practical and modernist by stressing the role of reason, Muslim values of equality, social justice, and asceticism, and responsibility. Second, Islamization of the subcontinent also brought Persian and Turkish cultures along with a political structure. Islam played an important

role in the evolution of Urdu language. Yet, the boundaries between Muslims and Hindus remained very flexible until the British colonial rule. Third, the *ulema* and some Sufi orders such as the Nakšibendiya were opposed to indigenization of Islam. The gap between the *ulema* and the masses was bridged by the activities of the Sufi orders. Fourth, as a result of the colonial legacy, the flexible boundaries became fixed and diverse Hindu practices and rituals were coalesced to create one Hinduism in opposition to Islam. This colonial construct of the Hindu–Muslim dichotomy resulted in the two-nation theory. Religion as a way of life turned into a foundation for nationalism and eventually resulted in the establishment of Pakistan. Finally, the Deobandi faith movement and the Aligarh education movement shaped the future of Islam in the subcontinent. In short, the West never became ‘the other’ of the formation of the Pakistani or Muslim identity; rather either Hindu identity or internal groups functioned as ‘the other’.

6. My understanding of South East Asian Islam is very much influenced by an 11 December 2003 workshop in Hawaii. South Asian Islam is syncretic, pluralist and exists very much at the cognitive level, owing its form to a mixture of diverse belief systems. The Malay zone of Islam includes 10 contemporary nation-states and shares a commercial civilization that was influenced by sea-faring way of life of diverse ethnic groups. Conversion pattern was a gradual and bottom-up process through the conduct, ethics of trust and confidence set by the merchants. Islam in this zone was institutionalized in terms of a code of conduct for local sultans, the *ulema*, and village communities. Islam became a source of legitimacy, identity and a moral charter to define the meaning of the good life. The Malay language was used as the *lingua franca* of the region, as was *Jawi*— that is, Malay written in Arabic script. *Pondok pesantren* (boarding schools) were at the center of the production and dissemination of Islamic knowledge. Traders, *ulema* and royal families were at the core of the overlapping extensive networks of Muslim communities. The major ruptures in this evolving Muslim Malay civilization were the experiences of colonization and de-colonization. Dutch colonialism destroyed the networks of Muslim sultanates and created today’s Indonesia, while the Japanese occupation favored Islamic nationalism and Muslim leadership over the Western-educated aristocratic elite. The independence of Indonesia as a nation-state was won by a militant egalitarian and secular form of nationalism. In Malaysia, after independence, the British retained the authority structure and the Sultans maintained their symbolic power. Also after independence, because of Chinese hegemony in the economy, Muslim leaders stressed the notion of ‘developmentalist Islam’, i.e. Islam as an instrument to mobilize human and financial means for economic development. In addition to the impact of pre-Islamic religions, a variety of other factors including the colonial legacies, the hegemonic control of economies by non-Muslim minorities, have shaped the Islamic discourse in the region. Islam in the Malay zone, unlike the Arab and Persian zones, did not become an ideology until the expanding influence of the oil money and establishment of *medrese* system led to the Arabization of Islam in this zone. See, Nakamura Mitsuo *et al.*, *Islam and Civil Society in Southeast Asia*, Singapore: Sasakawa Peace Foundation, 2001.
7. African Islam is shaped by a set of divisions between rural and urban; colonial and modern; and majority and minority. In those African communities where state capacity is too weak to promote law and order and meet the basic needs of the people, Islamic discourse is very much based on the idea of Islamic law (*sharia*) as a solution. African Islam is very much a local Islam, i.e. there is no centralized authority, and it is mixed with local practices and institutions. The mosque is the center of the community and the nexus with the global Islamic issues. Thus, it is not organized as the Catholic Church and does not have much organizational interaction with other Muslim communities either. It is extremely amorphous with nearly no structure. Yet, for most African Muslims, Muslim identity means more than their national or ethnic identity in everyday life. Islam offers a cognitive map for these Muslims to interpret their presence and events. See Charlette and Fred Quinn, *Pride, Faith, and Fear: Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002; Eva Evers Rosander and David Westerlund, eds, *African Islam and Islam in Africa: Encounters Between Sufis and Islamists*, Athens: Ohio University Press, 1997.
8. Syed Z. Abedin was the pioneer in the creation of the study of Muslim minority communities with the establishment of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs and its publications including the *Journal: Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs* (now *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*). See also Syed Z. Abedin and Ziauddin Sardar, eds, *Muslim Minorities in the West*, London: Grey Seal, 1995.
9. For more on Turkish Islam, see M. Hakan Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2003, pp. 273–274; M. Hakan Yavuz and John Esposito, eds, *Turkish Islam and the Secular State*, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004.

10. In my larger works, I divide the Arab world into three regions: North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and the Fertile Crescent, and I examine the role of Islam in these regions. UNDP, *Arab Human Development Report 2002: Creating Opportunities for Future Generations*, New York: United Nations Publication, 2002. For more on the UNDP report, see Sami E. Baroudi, 'The 2002 Arab Development Report: Implications for Democracy', *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2004, pp. 132–141.
11. H. Mahdavy, 'The Patterns and Problems of Economic Development in Rentier States: The Case of Iran', in ed. M. A. Cook, *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.
12. Ahmet Y. Ocak, *Türk Sufiliğine Bakışlar (Approaches to Turkish Sufi Orders)*, Istanbul: İletişim, 1996, p. 79.
13. *Ibid.* Ocak, 'Türk Müslümanlığı: Cözüm bekleyen Tarihsel ve Aktuel Kimlik Problemi' ('Turkish Islam: Historical and Contemporary Identity Problem'), *Türkiye Günlüğü (Turkey's Agenda)*, April 1995, pp. 34–40.
14. Mustafa Aslan, 'Türk Popüler Dindarlığı Üzerine Bir Araştırma: Corum Örneği' ('A Study of Turkish Popular Religiosity: The Case of Corum'), unpublished PhD dissertation, Erciyes University, Kayseri, Turkey, 2002.
15. By utilizing the writings of Yahya Kemal, Said Baser developed the concept of 'Turkish Islam' on the basis of the impact of Yesevi, Hanefi and Maturidi understanding of Islam; Said Baser, *Yahya Kemal'de Türk Müslümanlığı: Yahya Kemal'e göre Türk kimliği ve görüşlerinin kamuoyundaki yansımaları (Turkish Islam in the Writings of Yahya Kemal)*, Istanbul: Seyran, 1998. For a critical view of Turkish Muslimness or Turkish Islam, see *Haftaya Bakış (Weekly Glance)*, 13 September 1998; Hilmi Yavuz, 'Türk Müslümanlığı I-IV' ('Turkish Islam I-IV'), *Zaman*, Vol. 24, 31 January 1999. For additional critical views on Turkish Islam, see Rusen Cakır's interview with Ismail Kara, *Milliyet*, 9 September 1998. Nur Vergin prefers 'Muslimness of Turkey' ('Türkiye Müslümanlığı') over 'Turkish Islam' (see 'Türkiye Müslümanlığı ve sözde "Türk İslamı"' ('Turkish Perceptions of Islam and so-called "Turkish Islam"'), *Yeni Yüzyıl*, 6 September 1998.
16. Nur Vergin, *Türkiye'ye Tanık Olmak (Witnessing Turkey)*, Istanbul: Sabah, 1998, pp. 263–271.
17. Mehmet Aydın, 'Türk Müslümanlığı' ('Turkish Islam'), in *İslam'ın Evrenselliği (Universalism of Islam)*, Istanbul: Ufuk, 2000, pp. 67–74.
18. Ahmet Yesevi (d. 1166), the founder of the Yeseviyye order, became very influential among Kazakh and Kirghiz tribes by reinterpreting Islam to accommodate nomadic lifestyles. He did not seek to negate old customs and traditions but rather used them to disseminate Islamic teaching. His teachings were collected by his followers in a book, known as the *Divan-i Hikmet*, one of the first literary Turkish works on Islam. This work heavily influenced the Anatolian Sufi poet Yunus Emre. Even though Yesevi knew Arabic and Persian, he wrote his work in the vernacular Turkic dialect to communicate with the people of the region. Many Central Asian Turks regard the teachings of Ahmet Yesevi as a part of their shared Turkic tradition. Yeseviyye became the intellectual origin of Kubreviyye, Nakşibendiyye and Bektasiyye in Anatolia. Thus, Yesevi's vernacularized understanding of Islam has been the dominant manifestation of Islam in the Turkic world.
19. Wilfred Madelung, 'The Spread of Maturidism and the Turks', in *Religious Schools and Sects in Medieval Islam*, London: Variorum Reprints, 1985; Maturidi (d. 944) came from Maturit, a district North West of Samarqand, the second largest urban center of Uzbekistan. Maturidi theology can best be understood in contrast to the doctrine of Mu'tazilism and Ash'arism and their views on the role of reason in the development of religious faith. While the Asharite school argues that knowledge of God is derived from revelation through the prophets, Maturidiyyah argues that knowledge of God's existence can be derived through reason alone. These three schools also disagree over the relationship between human freedom and divine omnipotence. Maturidiyyah claims that although humanity has free will God is still all-powerful and in control of history. It is humanity's ability to distinguish between good and evil that means that humanity is responsible for whatever good or evil actions are performed. The third major issue concerned God's attributes. Ash'ariyyah teaches that what the Qur'an says about God's attributes must be accepted as correct even though we do not properly understand the meaning of many of the statements about God. Mustafa Ceric, *Roots of Synthetic Theology in Islam: A Study of the Theology of Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (ca. 235/850–333/944)*, Kuala Lumpur: Istak, 1995. Ahmet Yesevi wrote two books: *Divan-i Hikmet (Book of Wisdom)* and *Malakat-i Erbain (Forty Poems)*; see Fuat Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatının İlk Mutasavvıfları (Early Sufis in Turkish Literature)*, Ankara: D. I. B Yayınevi, 1984, pp. 14–20.

20. O. L. Barkan, 'İstila Devrinin Kolonizator Türk Dervişleri ve Zaviyeler' ('Colonialist Turkish Sufis'), *Vakıflar Dergisi (Journal of Foundations)*, Vol. 2, 1974, pp. 279–304.
21. Abdülbaki Gölpinarli, *Yunus Emre*, Istanbul: Hasmet Matbaası, 1973; Talât S. Halman, ed., *Yunus Emre and his Mystical Poetry*, Bloomington: Turkish Studies, 1981.
22. Osman Türer, 'Türk Dünyasında İslam'ın Yayılması ve Muhafazasında Tasavvuf ve Tarikatler' ('The Role of Sufi Orders in the Spread of Islam'), *Yeni Dergi (New Journal)*, Vol. 15, 1997, pp. 174–181; Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar (Early Sufis in Turkish Literature)*, *op. cit.*
23. Between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the various dynastic Islamic states weakened, Islam became the glue of civil society and social capital. This connection was reproduced with the age of nationalism in the nineteenth century. Sufi orders became the major institutions for the reconciliation between local culture and universal Islamic norms. The orders were also at the center of an ethno-religious revival, known as *Jadidism* in Russia and the Turkic world which would greatly influence Turkish nationalism. To counter the colonial penetration of the elite, the Jadid movement sought to construct a Turkistani identity by reimagining a modernist Islam. The Jadid movement played a key role in the articulation of national identities. In short, Turkistani and local identities were reimagined within this spiritual domain of Islam. Turkic and Islamic identities were used interchangeably and this, in turn, played a constitutive role in the formation of national identities of the new Central Asian states. Therefore, religious networks played an important role in Turkish relations with Central Asia.
24. M. M. Blazer, ed., *Shamanism: Soviet Studies of Traditional Religion in Siberia and Central Asia*, Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1990.
25. Hilmi Ziya Ülken, *Anadolu'nun Dini Sosyal Tarihi (Religio-social History of Anatolia)*, Ankara: Kalan Yayınları, 2003. This book consists of a series of articles, including those of Ülken on pre-Islamic Turkish religions and the process of Islamization in Central Asia and Anatolia; Ülken, *Türk Tefekkürü Tarihi (History of Turkish Ideas)*, Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2004; Ahmet Yasar Ocak, 'Islam in the Ottoman Empire: A Sociological Framework for a New Interpretation', *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, Vol. 8, Nos 1–2, 2003, pp. 183–197.
26. Kalandariyya, one of the earlier heterodox Sufi orders, relied on the Malami doctrine which was inspired by Buddhist ascetics and Christian mystics. A. Golpinarli, *Melamilik ve Melamiler*, Istanbul: unknown publisher, 1931.
27. Hacı Bektas Veli (1248–1337), a mystic and humanist who lived in Central Anatolia, had great impact on the understanding of Islam and the cultures of Anatolia. In the writings of Veli, man is central in terms of purity of feelings and kindness towards each other. He always stresses the power of good deeds in terms of transforming and humanizing human souls. He calls on everyone to 'control their deeds, tongue, and desires' to create a humane environment. Moreover, Veli stresses the role of knowledge (science) and morality to understand the creations—universe and humankind.
28. Ülken, *Türk Tefekkürü*, *op. cit.*, p. 203.
29. Alevis, instead of rigid adherence to the *Sharia*, developed a humanistic understanding of Islam by professing obedience to a set of fundamental moral norms and living according to the inner meaning of Islam rather than its external demands (rituals). Moreover, due to its roots in the oral-cultural tradition, the Alevis internalize, perpetuate and expand this moral code of conduct through narratives, poems, legends, and especially songs. See M. Hakan Yavuz, 'Değişim Sürecindeki Alevi Kimliği: Die alewitische Identität in Veränderungsprozesse' ('Alevi Identity in Change'), *Aleviler: Identität und Geschichte* 1, Hamburg: Deutsche-Orient Institute, 2000, pp. 75–95.
30. Ülken, *Türk Tefekkürü*, *op. cit.*, p. 204.
31. Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity*, *op. cit.*, p. 273.
32. S. Faroqhi, 'Bektashis: A Report on Current Research', in eds A. Popovic and G. Veinstein, *Bektachiyya. Etudes sur l'ordre mystique des Bektachis et les groupes relevant de Hadji Bektach*, Istanbul: ISIS, 1995, pp. 9–28; O. L. Barkan, 'Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bir İskan ve Kolonizasyon Metodu Olarak Sürgünler' ('Deportation: A Method of Settlement and Colonization in the Ottoman Empire'), *Istanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası (Journal of the Faculty of Economics of Istanbul University)*, Vol. 11, Nos 1–4, 1949–1950, pp. 524–568.
33. On the public sphere, see Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994, pp. 40–74.
34. M. Hakan Yavuz and John L. Esposito, eds, *Turkish Islam and the Secular State: The Gülen Movement*, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003, pp. 1–19.

35. As the head of Diyanet, Bardakoğlu argues that ‘the DRA was established with the goal of controlling religion and providing law and order. However, the organization has evolved to become something like a “trade union” to represent the religious needs of the people to the state. It protects the religious freedoms of the people *vis-à-vis* the state. In Europe, the DRA carries religious and national culture. It brings and carries Turkish identity, along with Islam’. Author’s interview with Bardakoğlu, Salt Lake City, Utah, 21 February 2004.
36. Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity*, *op. cit.*, pp. 145–149.
37. See *Presidency Conclusions: Helsinki European Council*, 10–11 December 1999.
38. As stated in Copenhagen European Council in 1993, membership requires that the candidate country has achieved (1) stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities; (2) the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union; and (3) the ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.
39. Hasan Kösebalan, ‘Turkey’s EU Membership: A Clash of Security Cultures’, *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 9, 2002, pp. 130–146.
40. Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity*, *op. cit.*, pp. 239–276. ‘The February 28 coup’—the 1997 military coup is commonly known either as the ‘soft-coup’ or the ‘February 28 process’. It is called a ‘soft-coup’ because the military mobilized the major business associations, media cartels, university rectors and judiciary long subservient to its commands to engineer an anti-Welfare Party drive to force the recently elected Necmettin Erbakan government to resign. Behind this public campaign was the unmistakable message that the recently elected Erbakan government would ‘voluntarily’ resign or be forced out by the generals. The coup posed Islamic identity as a national threat and proposed a number of directives to cleanse the Islamic presence from those public spaces where it had always been present even in the most reactionary period of Kemalist zeal.
41. For a detailed study on the cognitive shift, see Burhanettin Duran, ‘Islamist Intellectuals, Democracy and the Recent Elections in Turkey’, paper presented at the International Conference on Islam and the Electoral Process, Leiden University, *ISIM* (Leiden), 10–12 December 1999.
42. Mehmet S. Aydın, ‘Türkiye model ülke mi?’ (‘Is Turkey a Model Country?’), *Zaman*, 25 March 2002; Aydın argues that Islam is not a protector against outside pressure but rather inner core of Turkish cognitive map and the fundamental question was ‘becoming modern with, without or with little Islam’.
43. James Kitfield, ‘The Turkish Model’, *National Journal*, 1 March 2002, available online at: <www.nationaljournal.com>.
44. *Yeni Safak*, March 15, 2004.
45. Tarik Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
46. Ali Carkoğlu and Binnaz Toprak, *Türkiye’de Din, Toplum ve Siyaset (Politics and Society in Turkey)*, Istanbul: Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation, 2000.
47. W. C. Smith, *Islam in Modern History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957, p. 171. According to Ali Bardakoğlu, the head of the Turkish Directorate of Religious Affairs, ‘in the case of Turkey, religious discourse sets a high standard in terms of the production of religious knowledge by divinity schools and the exemplary role of religion in promoting social peace and everyday life. Turkey could provide leadership in this regard for other Muslim countries as well’. Ali Bardakoglu, ‘İlahiyatçıların Din Söylemi’ (‘Religious Discourse of Turkish Theologians’), *op. cit.*, p. 64.
48. If one ignores his egoistic attitudes, Yasar Nuri Öztürk, a professor at Istanbul Divinity School, is the only one who has opened a new path of reading the Qur’an by rejecting the tradition and presenting his own version of Islam as ‘the Islam of the Qur’an’. Mehmet Aydın and Ali Bardakoğlu also provide a more modernist approach to Islam; Aydın has been influenced by the writings of Fazlur Rahman.