

Ahmet T. Kuru and Alfred Stepan, Eds. *Democracy, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012. \$ 27.50 (paperback)

### Democracy, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey

This collection of essays edited by Ahmet T. Kuru and Alfred Stepan attempts to understand and explain the changes and continuities in the political and ideological structures of Turkey. Written in the context of the late 2000s, the articles in this volume address a wide range of issues about Turkey from the Ottoman legacy to Kemalism and from the role of Turkish military to Turkey's relations with the European Union.

The book can roughly be divided into three sections. The first three articles provide a historical background to the current debates in Turkey by bringing a comparative perspective to the Ottoman and Kemalist approaches to pluralism and toleration. The second set of three articles aims to explain the current political and ideological transformation in Turkey, and more specifically, the Justice and Development Party's (AKP) role in the shuffling of Turkey's established system. Finally, the last two articles situate the recent changes within the larger context of Turkey's international relations, mainly with the European Union and the Middle East.

Karen Barkey, in "Rethinking Ottoman Management of Diversity," focuses on the Ottoman *millet* system and attempts to draw lessons of toleration for modern Turkey. Barkey depicts the *millet* system as "an organizational form of indirect rule of diversity" (p. 15). She argues that modern Turkey, after going through assimilationist and homogenizing nation-building processes, lacks the Ottoman toleration and acceptance of diversity. Barkey criticizes the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Diyanet) and the AKP for not extending the democratic rights and freedoms to religious and ethnic minorities in Turkey, namely Alevis and Kurds. While this analysis successfully compares modern Turkish politics to the Ottoman *millet* system, the jump from the Ottoman model to current Turkish politics plays down the effects of the major founding political ideology that influenced the last eighty years of Turkish social and political life. The following two articles successfully address Kemalism and its effects on Turkish state and society.

Şükrü Hanioglu, in his well-structured analysis of "The Historical Roots of Kemalism," puts the Kemalist ideology and its right- and left-wing interpretations into a broader historical perspective. The author focuses on three major tenets of Kemalism: scientism, Westernization, and Turkish nationalism. Hanioglu successfully points out that the roots of Kemalist ideology can be found in the late Ottoman intellectual debates. These three tenets led the early Republican leadership to accept a single (European) modernity and deny a separation of culture and civilization. Strict adoption of the French model of secularism, beyond separating state and religion, aimed to reduce religion to a private affair.

Ergun Özbudun's article "Turkey-Plural Society and Monolithic State" effectively complements the preceding chapters by addressing the founding philosophy of the Turkish Republic and the pluralistic characteristics of Turkish society. He

echoes Barkey's critique that pluralism within Turkish society is not reflected in the Turkish political structure and argues, in agreement with Hanioglu, that certain characteristics of the founding republican philosophy are incompatible with pluralistic political structure. Özbudun brings a significant perspective to the issue by tracing the development of associational life since the late Ottoman period through major cycles of change and successfully illustrates the rise of democratic agency within a pluralistic society.

These three chapters provide a solid historical background to the contemporary issues in Turkish democracy and secularism. From *millet* system to the Kemalist ideology, the political representation of pluralistic society in Turkey has undergone significant shifts. While the *millet* system provided religious communities a high level of official representation, the Ottoman polity faced difficulties in accommodating later ethnic demands for political rights and freedoms. It also did not address the needs of all the Muslim minority groups. Later, Kemalism, in an effort to achieve a homogeneous Turkish nation-state, effectively suppressed all political representation by any religious or ethnic community. Transition to a multi-party system with competitive elections seemingly provided an opportunity for associational representation. These articles indicate that a truly egalitarian political representation of Turkish diversity may develop as a result of further democratization of political structure.

In the following chapter, "Laicite as an 'Ideal Type' and a Continuum," Kuru and Stepan examine secularism from a comparative perspective. The Senegalese case of secularism, for example, refutes the essentialist argument that in a predominantly Muslim country the only alternative is assertive secularism. The French comparison indicates that assertive secularism suppresses not only Islam but other religions as well. In comparison, the Turkish case appears to be most assertive and most controlling of religion in public sphere.

In "A New Politics of Engagement," Ümit Cizre discusses the role of the Turkish military and argues that recent political shifts forced the state establishment to develop a society-centered discourse. Cizre successfully addresses the paradoxical relationship between the Turkish society and military.

Ergun Özbudun, in his second article in this volume titled "The Turkish Constitutional Court and Political Crisis," points out in detail the undemocratic, statist, and militaristic aspects of the 1982 Constitution. Launched in the aftermath of the 1980 coup by the National Security Council regime, the 1982 Constitution aims to protect "the state" instead of Turkey's citizens. The Constitution accomplishes this goal by closely echoing the founding philosophy of the Republic, acquiring strong protectionist stances in banning political parties, prohibiting certain languages, imposing statism and assertive secularism, and maintaining tutelary mechanisms in the agencies of the office of the Presidency, the National Security Council, and the Constitutional Court. Özbudun, with great insight, discusses the role of the Constitutional Court in protecting the statist regime, and its increasingly oppositional role against the AKP government. The constitutional amendments adopted by the 2010 referendum finally limited the tutelary role of the Constitutional Court.