4 Turkey and Europe

Religion, nationalism and international relations

Jeffrey Haynes

The aim of this chapter is to examine the issue of religious nationalism in Turkey's international relations in the context of the country's bid to join the European Union (EU). We begin with a brief of the development of secularisation in Europe as a fundamental aspect of modernisation, a trajectory widely believed to lead to an end state – modernity – which was premised on the dual demise of religion: as a significant public actor and its inexorable privatisation. The assumption was that modernisation and its outcome, modernity, were both unavoidable and inevitable. Moreover, patterns and outcomes associated with modernisation and modernity were thought to produce predictable patterns of uniformity and standardisation not only in Europe but also in the rest of the world. In other words, Europe's experience was assumed to be globally applicable, a universal template for religion's public marginalisation, whereby other cultures, countries and regions would *necessarily* replicate Europe's specific cultural and historical experiences.

The wider context is to note that, prior to the 1978–9 Iranian revolution, religion was widely seen as rather insignificant in international relations. This view derived in part from the prominence of secular international security issues during the Cold War. Underpinning such a view were two widely accepted assumptions in European and North American – that is, 'Western' – social science: (1) rationality and secularity go hand in hand, and (2) 'modern' political, economic and social systems are found in societies that have modernised, through a process of secularisation, which publicly marginalises or 'privatises' religion.

To understand the process of modernisation in Europe it is useful to start by reminding ourselves of Europe's particular experiences in nation- and state-building, and the role of religion in those processes. Prior to the eighteenth century and the subsequent formation and development of the modern international state system, religion was a key ideology that often stimulated and sustained conflict between various societal groups. However, following the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 and the development of centralised states first in (Western) Europe and then by European colonisation to most of the rest of the world, religion took a back seat as an organising ideology both domestically and internationally.

Now, however, it is often observed that there is a widespread resurgence of religion.[1] One of the strands of this was that after the Cold War ended there were many more examples of international conflicts characterised by cultural/ civilisational issues, with religion very often a key component. Many observers point to the Iranian revolution as a key example in this regard, more generally marking the reappearance of religion as a significant political actor. More generally, the last two or three decades have seen an increased political involvement of Muslim political actors in international relations. For example, there is the widespread phenomenon of political Islam in the Middle East, West Asia, the Horn of Africa and elsewhere. 'Christian' Europe long appeared to be an exception to the trend of religious resurgence, with most European countries – especially in the western segment of the region – continuing to be characterised by secularisation and, in some cases, secularity. However, the importance of religion – in democratisation in Poland in the late 1980s, the rise of 'Muslim politics' in Britain, France, the Netherlands and elsewhere in the 1990s, and the religious component of Turkey's continuing bid to join the EU – has highlighted that, 'even' in Europe, religion was a component of continuing political and social issues both within and between countries.

Secularisation, secularism and modernisation

The secularisation thesis – with its perceived end stage, secularism – was a core assumption of Western social sciences in the decades immediately following the Second World War. It animated two highly significant sets of ideas: modernisation theory from the 1950s and early 1960s, and dependency theory from the late 1960s and early 1970s. Both schools of thought maintained – or rather implicitly accepted the conventional wisdom, then at its most unchallenged – that the course of both international relations and of integrated nation-states necessarily lay squarely in secular participatory politics. In an example of theory guiding 'real world' politics, many political leaders – especially in the developing world, vast areas of which were emerging from colonial rule in the decades after the end of the Second World War – worked from a key premise. It was that – sometimes irrespective of their own religious beliefs and cultural affiliations – they must for ideological reasons *necessarily* remain neutral in respect of entanglements stemming from particularist religious and cultural claims *if* they wanted to build successful nation-states and conduct flourishing international relations. Not to do so would serve both to encourage dogmatism and to reduce tolerance ('Isn't this what the post-Westphalian history of Europe tells us?', they queried) and as a result be antipathetic to the development of viable nation-states, democracy and the smooth running of the (secular) international system. Secular nationalism *à la* Europe was thought not only to be universally applicable and morally right but also to be a natural outcome of modernisation. In sum, as a consequence of the global advance of Europe's secular, centralised states from the seventeenth century by means of colonialism and an international system from which religion was from the eighteenth century expunged – because of its demonstrable 'bad influence', reflected in numerous religious wars between Christians, on the one hand, and between Muslims and Christians, on the other – religion was relegated to the category of a potentially dangerous but actually rather minor issue that

must not be allowed to intrude on the search for domestic national unity and international political stability and progress.

In recent decades, however, theoretical space has opened up for a wide-ranging reconsideration of modernity, now increasingly perceived in more empirically and metaphysically open terms than when it was synonymous with realistic and European-style modernity alone. As a consequence, much is now written and discussed about the complex issue of 'multiple modernities', brought to the fore and examined in recent work of, *inter alia*, Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, David Martin and Charles Taylor.[2] The essential idea behind the 'multiple modernities' thesis is that 'modernity' and its characteristics and effects can be received, developed and expressed in significantly different ways in different parts of the world. That is, although modernisation is still observed to operate through powerful historical changes and contemporary mechanisms around the globe, currently propelled above all by the multiple processes of globalisation,[3] the original understanding of both uniformity and standardisation, including the related secularisation thesis, is now substantially questioned. It is widely agreed that different societies and cultures – such as those of Iran, Japan, Singapore, South Africa and, perhaps, Turkey – can all be understood as being 'modern' while having different cultural, social, political and religious characteristics from secular Europe.[4] In short, the notion of 'multiple modernities' refers to the view that 'modernity', once understood almost solely as existing and developing in the Western cultural and historical context, actually can be expressed in various ways, leading to various articulations of modern society, with societies around the world developing their own often singular experiences of and responses to their individual histories and cultural foundations, informed by the impact of multifaceted processes of globalisation.

Europe, religion and international relations

Following the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 and the subsequent development of the modern international system, religion lost its earlier international political significance. Earlier, both Islam and Christianity had been key political actors. Islam expanded from its Arabian heartland in westerly, easterly, southerly and northerly directions for nearly a millennium. As a consequence, vast territories in Africa and Asia and smaller areas of Europe (parts of the Balkans and much of the Iberian Peninsula) came under Muslim control. However, unable to deal with the consequences of increasingly centralised Christian polities in Western Europe – with their superior firepower and organisational skills – Islam found itself on the back foot. The consequence was a significant reduction in the faith's influence in Europe. Yet, despite this setback, Islam developed into a holistic religious, social and cultural system, over time becoming a global religion by the spread of transnational religious communities.

The recent resurgence of religion noted on all levels of social activity – including international relations/International Relations[5] – calls into question the stubbornness of Western social sciences, apparently unwilling (and unable) to treat religions as important social factors on their own terms, on a par with secular

discourses. Four approaches to international relations – realism, liberal internationalism, neo-Marxism and constructivism – are briefly reviewed next, in order to assess how each understands the issue of religion in international relations. The conclusion of the short survey is that none of the four perceives religion to be a consistently important component of contemporary international relations.

First, the realist perspective contends that the state is *always* the most important factor in international relations because there is no higher authority; international organisations are regarded as always subservient to the state. The global system is a global *states* system grounded in competition, conflict and cooperation. States must rely upon their own resources to achieve the power they need to thrive, even if they are prepared, as most are, to collaborate with others to achieve general goals. Serious conflict is not the usual status of the international system because peace is maintained through local and global balances of power. Realism emphasises how hegemonic powers, such as the United States, have an important role in establishing and maintaining order in the international system, and stresses that the structure of power in the international system shapes the character of the political order.[6] In short, realist analyses places great stress on the significance of military power, because states must ultimately rely on their own efforts to achieve their goals. It ignores or seriously downplays the role of religion, not least because very few – if any – states proclaim that their foreign policies are driven by religious factors.

Second, the liberal internationalist paradigm begins from the premise that the state is no longer automatically the primary actor in world politics.[7] The growth of transnational relations points to the significance of non-state actors, especially transnational corporations and international organisations of various kinds – including cross-border religious groups, such as al-Qaeda – which can be independent of any individual state's or group of states' control.[8] Indeed, the state itself is not regarded as a unitary actor. Rather, it consists of a body of bureaucratic organisations and institutions. The global system is perceived as an aggregate of different issue areas, such as trade, finance, energy, human rights, democracy and ecology, in which domestic and international policy processes merge. The management of global interdependencies is carried out through processes of bargaining, negotiation and consensus-seeking. Order is maintained not by a balance of power, as realists contend, but by the consensual acceptance of common values, norms and international law. In other words, global order is maintained because states have a vested interest in so doing, whereas the global political process does not involve states alone but also includes a variety of non-state actors. Despite the fact that the liberal internationalist perspective recognises that religious actors can be important transnationally, their importance is seen in terms of particular issues – for example, human rights – rather than more generally.

Third, the neo-Marxist views political processes at the global level primarily as expressions of underlying class conflicts on a global scale; and religion is not seen as an important facet of class issues.[9] Neo-Marxists differ from realists in not conceiving of global order as based upon the structure of military power, nor as sustained by networks of interdependence as liberal internationalists do. One of

the dominant characteristics of the global order for neo-Marxists is the structural differentiation of the world into core, peripheral and semi-peripheral centres of economic power. Whereas, traditionally this was regarded as the division between the 'North', the 'South' and the communist Eastern bloc, the emergence from the 1970s of the East Asian (Newly) Industrialising Countries and the demise of the communist bloc in the early 1990s comprehensively undermined this simple (and increasingly simplistic) three-way international economic division. In short, for neo-Marxists, global order is preserved through the power of the leading capitalist states, by international agencies, such as the United Nations, by transnational corporations, and by international regimes, which together serve to legitimise a global diffusion of a dominant ideology of liberalism and Western-type modernisation.

Finally, constructivism is an approach to international relations that is not restricted to one form, view or paradigm.[10] Instead, constructivist approaches perceive that what they have in common is the aim of understanding the behaviour of agents, states and non-state actors alike, in social and cultural contexts. For constructivists, political decision-making is understood in both ideational and material terms. Theoretically, then, constructivists might be expected to consider, to a greater degree than realists, liberal internationalists and neo-Marxists, factors such as culture, history and religion. This is because they have a say in helping craft significant players in international relations, including, but not restricted to, states. In short, constructivism, with its central role for identity, norms and culture, provides a potentially favourable theoretical environment in which to bring religion into international relations theory.

We can see the value of constructivism when we turn to the specific issue of religion in Europe's contemporary international relations. However, as Peter Katzenstein notes, scholars usually examine *secular* Europeanization, including the EU's impact on key areas, including national administrative practice, monetary affairs, human rights, democracy and environmental policy.[11] In such examples, the influence of the EU on individual member states is clear, although outcomes vary from country to country, moderated by specific domestic factors. In short, over time, during the process of expansion from six to the current twenty-seven-member EU, the main scholarly concern has been exploration of the effects of multiple secular issues on the EU's growth and development.

Now, however, according to Katzenstein, 'European enlargement is infusing renewed religious vitality into Europe's political and social life, thus chipping away at its exceptional secularism'.[12] There are three reasons why this development is noteworthy. First, this religious vitality has helped to revitalise recognition of the politically relevant Christian – especially Catholic – roots of European integration after the Second World War. Second, the revival of long-dormant religious differences could be a major factor in a politicisation of religion in Europe, a development which would certainly impede – if not derail – progress towards Europeanisation. Third, the renewed confidence of religion will demand a new – palpably more equal – relationship with secularism.

The rest of this chapter examines the following issues – religious vitality, religious differences and the growing salience of religion – in relation to a

specific subject: religious nationalism in Turkey, in the context of the country's controversial application to join the EU. For some European governments and citizens, the fear is that Turkey's membership would not only result in an 'unacceptable dilution' of the EU's claimed 'Christian' cultural characteristics but also lay Europe open to increased infiltration from both Islamicisation and Islamist extremism. This issue is an example of what Katzenstein identifies as a cultural element within Europeanisation, which explores the Union's effect on national identity and people's sense of community.[13] Examining this topic is useful in helping explore the politics and political contestation of the multiple modernities now shaping the future of the EU. One dimension of this is the issue of religious nationalism, a controversial topic in Turkey.

Religious nationalism

Religion and nationalism may interact with consequences for international relations in three main ways. First, there is *religious nationalism*, in which religion and nationalism are inseparable, as in Iran or Saudi Arabia. Second, religion plays a less dominant role, where it 'merely assist[s] the more prominent nationalist movement as a cohesive element',[14] as in Israel or among the Palestinians. Third, there are many examples of primarily ethnic and/or cultural nationalism, especially in the developing world, which typically have a significant religious dimension, as in Sri Lanka or Pakistan. Overall, David Little notes that many contemporary nation-building projects are 'deeply infused with religion':

> Whether the issue is building, restructuring or maintaining a nation, the process is, all over the world, deeply infused with religion. How else are we to understand Northern Ireland, Israel, Lebanon, the Sudan, Sri Lanka, or Iran? Or, more immediately, how else are we to understand former Eastern European satellites like Poland or Bulgaria, or the so-called 'Soviet Nationalities,' such as the Ukraine, Lithuania, or Azerbaijan and Armenia? Nor, for that matter, are the developed countries altogether exempt from the effects of religious nationalism. The influence of the Moral Majority and related movements on American public life during the 1980s left no doubt about that.[15]

Efforts to build a nation-state either utilising secular methods or, as in Israel, combining both secular and religion-inspired doctrines, are made more problematic when, as with the mainly Muslim Palestinians and the Jewish Israelis, there are fundamental disputes about which group has the definitive right to control territory and build a nation-state. Thus, it is not only the case that religious nationalism occurs when the population of a territory is relatively religiously homogeneous. It can also emerge when territory is contested: a threat to a religious group's identity and well-being from a rival can spur contesting religious nationalisms. For example in early 2008, the declaration of independence by 90 per cent Muslim Kosovo from mainly Christian Serbia (78 per cent of Serbs profess allegiance to the Serbian Orthodox Church) led to an increase in religious-nationalist sentiments

on both sides – and this after nearly a century of aggressively secularising nationalist ideology following Yugoslavia's establishment in 1918.

A further kind of religious nationalism can be manifested when a religious or cultural group is situated in a territory that it believes is surrounded by a different – and hostile – religious denomination. The result is that the perceived or actual threat from the latter can foster religious nationalism and can aid in mobilising a movement or political party informed by religious fundamentalist ideas. In India, a contemporary form of Hindu nationalism is focused in both a political party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and a national movement, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

Finally, religious nationalists do not necessarily wish to see a nation *within* a defined state. Sometimes they have transnational goals. For example, Islamism (or, pejoratively, 'Islamic fundamentalism') stands out by virtue of its extent and the depth of its cross-border hold on many followers. For Mark Juergensmeyer, the aim of Islamists is to do away with the secular state, because it is seen not only as dysfunctional but also as 'morally and spiritually bankrupt'.[16] The aim is to replace it with what he calls an 'anti-modernist' government, whose rule would be based on religious principles. He contends that this form of 'religious nationalism' is the principal ideological motivation of an array of Islamist movements and governments in various countries, including Algeria, Egypt, India, Iran, Palestine and Sri Lanka.

Turkey: religion, nationalism and the European Union

Some European countries have shown significant elite and popular reservations regarding the prospect of Turkey joining the EU. What of Turks' views of the EU and, more generally, of the 'West'? To what extent is their view of the world influenced by nationalism? Is their worldview significantly affected by their religious faith (more than 90 per cent of Turks are Muslim)? Can we point to a religious nationalism informing Turkey's view of the EU? Before seeking to answer these questions, we need to start by noting that there is a lack of clarity regarding how Turkey, a nation of around 80 million people, actually views the prospect of joining the EU. A 2007 opinion survey found that:

> negative views . . . appear to be growing among Turks with respect to the European Union and to Westerners in general. Such negativity toward the EU is likely associated with disillusionment over Turkey's stalled bid to join the union.

This survey also reported that 'the favorability rating for the EU dropped from 58 per cent in 2004 to 27 per cent in 2007'.[17] On the other hand, a more recent poll – conducted in Turkey in early 2011 – indicates that 50 per cent of respondents believed Turkey should join the EU.[18] This might be a sign that, although not all Turks are particularly enamoured of the EU, many recognise that joining the Union would probably help bolster Turkey's economic growth, which dipped in 2009 before recovering in 2010.[19] On the other hand, Ayhan Uğur, rector of

Istanbul's Bilgi University, argues that Turks' relative openness to 'the West' is because Turkey never experienced 'colonialism, unlike some in the Middle East or India'.[20] What this indicates is that Turks' views of the EU and the West are not necessarily due to 'religious' or 'national' perspectives but may also reflect economic and historical factors.

On the other hand, when asked about 'Westerners', Turks present the most negative views from among ten Muslim publics (including Muslim minorities in four European countries: Britain, France, Germany and Spain). Such Muslims were asked whether they associate people in the West – that is, the USA and European nations – mainly with negative or positive characteristics (including, on the one hand, 'arrogant', 'greedy', 'immoral', 'selfish' and 'violent', and, on the other hand, 'generous' and 'honest'). The findings are shown in Table 4.1.[21]

Table 4.1 indicates that the mean for Turkey is 5.2, reflecting a higher level of negativity than found in the other four Muslim-majority countries surveyed (Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan and Pakistan), as well as among Muslim minority populations in Nigeria, Britain, Germany, France and Spain. It is notable that German Muslims, who are predominantly of Turkish background, score much lower (3.2) on the index than Turks residing in Turkey. This appears to indicate that negativity towards Westerners is not particular to Turks per se but rather appears to be geographically specific, limited to Turks living in Turkey. The percentage of Turks with a very or somewhat favourable opinion of Christians, Muslims and Jews, is indicated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 indicates that, among Turks living in Turkey, large and increasing majorities hold unfavourable views of Christians and Jews. Between 2004 and

Table 4.1 Muslims' 'average negativity to Westerners'

Country	Mean
Turkey	5.2
Indonesia	5.1
Jordan	4.8
Egypt	4.7
Pakistan	4.4
Nigerian Muslims	4.4
British Muslims	4.2
German Muslims (mainly of Turkish origin)	3.2
French Muslims	2.7
Spanish Muslims	2.7

Source: Pew Global Attitudes Project Report, 'The Great Divide: How Westerners and Muslims View Each Other', 22 June 2006, available at http://pewresearch.org/reports/?ReportID=28 (accessed 22 March 2009).

Note
Muslim average negativity would equal 7 if all those surveyed indicated that all seven negative characteristics applied to Westerners.

Table 4.2 Turks living in Turkey: views of Christians, Muslims and Jews

Year	Turks' favourable views of Christians %	Turks' favourable views of Muslims %	Turks' favourable views of Jews %
2004	31	88	27
2005	21	83	18
2006	16	88	15

Source: Pew Global Attitudes Project Report, 'The Great Divide'.

2006, favourable perceptions of Christians declined by 15 percentage points, falling from 31 per cent to 16 per cent. In addition, in a similar decline, favourability towards Jews dropped 12 points, from 27 per cent to 15 per cent.

Note, however, that Turkish dislike of outsiders extends beyond views of the West. For example, according to the same 2006 Pew poll, Turks also express lukewarm attitudes towards Arabs. Whereas Muslims among other non-Arab publics overwhelmingly say they have a positive view of Arabs, only 46 per cent of Turks express a positive opinion, among the lowest of the ten Muslim publics surveyed; only German Muslims (who, as noted above, are predominately of Turkish origin) were less positive towards Arabs. In addition, when asked whether they sympathize more with Israel or the Palestinians, fewer Turks expressed sympathies with Palestinians (64 per cent) than did other peoples in the Middle East.[22]

Clearly, then, some Turks' antipathy towards the West should not be seen in isolation; many Turks also have reservations about other non-Turks, including Christians, Jews and Arabs. It is unclear why this is the case, although it may reflect a developed sense of Turkish nationalism. However, it is unlikely to be religious differences that separate some Turks from Europeans, given that many Turks also dislike Arabs, most of whom are fellow Muslims. Instead, it is probably linked to a more general distrust of foreigners.

There are in addition indications that there is growing polarisation between secular nationalists and Islamists in Turkey, a state of affairs reflected in recent political developments. Over the last few years, Turkey has experienced notable and continuing internal political conflicts focusing on the problematic relationship between, on the one hand, the country's secular establishment, with its large and powerful presence in the military and, on the other, supporters of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), which many secular nationalists regard as a closet Islamist party, secretly plotting aiming to impose *Sharia* law. It is, however, important to draw a distinction between political Islamists – people who wish to see some form of Islamic state in Turkey – and the AKP and its supporters. The ideological home of the Islamists is not the AKP, whose leaders deny both that the party is an Islamist party and the charge of wishing to impose *Sharia* law, but the tiny Felicity Party, which in the 2002 elections gained just 785,489 votes (2.49 per cent), followed in the most recent elections in July 2007 by 820,289 votes (2.34 per cent). The Felicity Party has no seats in parliament and minimal political influence.[23]

On the other hand, despite a strong tradition and decades of secularisation in Turkey, Islam remains central to the identity of most Turks. Indeed, religious identification seems to be on the rise. Roughly half of Turkish Muslims (51 per cent) surveyed in 2006 said they thought of themselves first as Muslim rather than Turkish, whereas 19 per cent identified primarily with their nationality and 30 per cent volunteered that they thought of themselves as both. This represents a significant change from just one year earlier, when only 43 per cent of Turks identified themselves primarily as Muslim. In addition, the percentage of Turks claiming a very or somewhat favourable opinion of Muslims has changed minimally in recent years: 88 per cent in 2004, 83 per cent in 2005 and 88 per cent in 2006. The percentage of Turks saying that they were very favourable towards Muslims increased from 66 per cent in 2004 to 74 per cent in 2006.[24]

In addition, unlike in the era of Turkey's founder and first president, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (d. 1938), the country now appears to be less inclined to look to Europe or the West more generally for solutions to its political and social problems. However, this is *not* to claim that Turkey is (1) increasingly affected by religiously distinct 'Muslim values' that, alone or fused with a secular nationalism, could threaten the integrity and cultural homogeneity of the EU, should Turkey eventually join, and (2) moving closer to an 'extremist' Muslim world, a form of religious *trans*nationalism, seeking Europe's 'Islamisation'. Instead, there appear to be two simultaneous developments in Turkey which may or may not be related. On the one hand, opinion poll data show a certain distrust of foreigners among some Turks while, on the other hand, increasing numbers of Turks proclaim their allegiance to Islam. How, if at all, are the two trends related? What, if anything, do they tell us about religious nationalism in Turkey?

To shed light on these questions, we next examine findings of another recent opinion poll, conducted in early 2009. It surveyed the views of 6,428 people in forty-one of Turkey's eighty-one provinces. The poll, entitled 'Who Are We?', was conducted by one of Turkey's most respected polling organisations, Konda, on behalf of *Hurriyet*, which is one of the country's biggest-selling newspapers and noted for its secularist outlook. The Konda survey was one of the most representative studies of Turkish society ever undertaken.[25] According to Robert Tait, writing in the British *Guardian* newspaper, the poll found that 'Turks are xenophobic, socially conservative people who rarely read books, relegate women to second-class status and harbour ambivalent views about democracy'.[26] These views echo findings from an earlier study from 2008, entitled 'Being Different in Turkey: Alienation on the Axis of Religion and Conservatism', which surveyed public opinion in twelve Anatolian cities, conducted by Professor Binnaz Toprak of Boğaziçi University for the Open Society Institute (OSI). Toprak's survey supported some of the findings of the Konda survey. She claimed that, as for women, social pressures on 'others: Kurds, Alevis and seculars' in Turkish society was higher than expected.[27]

The 2009 Konda survey identified opinions on three crucial aspects of Turkey's current political and social position: gender equality, how foreigners are regarded and the desirability of democracy. Referring to gender equality, nearly 70 per cent

of respondents in the Konda survey believed that wives required their husband's permission to work outside the home. In addition, over half (57 per cent) believed that a female should never leave home wearing a sleeveless top, and 53 per cent favoured allowing women judges, prosecutors, teachers and other public servants to wear the Islamic headscarf on duty, something to which Turkey's secular establishment would never agree. Finally, four-fifths (80 per cent) thought that a woman and a man must be married in order to live together.

Tarhan Erdem, a well-respected election analyst and columnist for the daily, secular-leaning, *Radikal* newspaper, headed the team that conducted the Konda survey. At a press conference to launch the report in Istanbul in February 2009, Erdem said the research was aimed at understanding continuing social transformation and trying to find out whether Turkey was indeed the country that many of its people thought they knew. Erdem defined gender inequality as the key problem that could be linked to all other societal problems. The poll indicated that widely held attitudes towards women demonstrated a lack of gender equality in Turkey. 'The data shows that women aren't free in their private lives', Erdem claimed.[28] Ahmet Insel, another columnist with *Radikal*, noted that only one-quarter of working-age women in Turkey were part of the formal workforce. 'This is lower than some Arab countries', he said, adding that this was because, in a patriarchal society such as Turkey, even women themselves accepted the social norms that discriminate against women in the business world. According to Insel, 'The patriarchal society should change', as women are not only excluded from the economic sphere but also prevented from exercising absolute control over their bodies and decisions.[29]

Results of the comprehensive Konda study appear to indicate that social progress in Turkey is held back not only by gender inequality but also by a widespread dislike and distrust of foreigners. According to the survey, many Turks believe that foreigners have designs on Turkish territory, aiming to dismember the motherland. A pronounced fear of foreigners is also reflected in the fact that nearly three-quarters (73 per cent) of respondents opposed allowing outsiders to own Turkish land or property. It may be that opposition to foreign property ownership stems mainly from historical memory: preoccupation with the 1919–23 war of independence that established modern Turkey. According to Insel, 'We think the war of independence is still under way, so it's no surprise we are xenophobic. We're still fighting foreigners'.[30] Many Turks appear still to fear that Turkey is constantly under the preying eyes of its neighbours, hoping to carve it up at the first opportunity. This is a phobic remnant of late Ottoman times.

Turning to the topic of democracy, a key issue when it comes to the question of Turkey's compatibility with EU membership, especially in the context of the country's Muslim's culture, nearly nine out of ten respondents (88 per cent) agreed that Turkey should be governed by democracy 'under each and every condition'. On the other hand, nearly half (48 per cent) asserted that the military should intervene 'when necessary'.[31] Tait contends that this finding indicates that Turks 'harbour ambivalent views about democracy'.[32] Erdem claims that this shows, on the one hand, significant popular support for a political role for the military in

some circumstances, indicating that many Turks retained reservations about the efficacy of democracy as 'the only game in town'.[33]

In conclusion, the 2009 Konda survey paints a picture, on the one hand, of a society with conservative views regarding the place of women and foreigners in society. On the other hand, the study also indicated that a huge majority of Turks are committed democrats, a view that should help bolster the country's claim to EU membership.

Conclusion

Turkey is not a one-dimensional, religiously conservative country built on interrelated Islamic and (extreme) nationalist values. Although Turkey is led by a government with its roots in political Islam, it is important to note that the government describes itself as 'conservative democratic'. Indeed, Turkey presents simultaneously several contrasting images. On the one hand, Turkey not only indisputably constitutes an essential part of European heritage, going back to Greco-Roman times and early Christianity (Byzantium), but also strongly cherishes democracy under all but extreme circumstances. On the other hand, many Turks appear not only not to believe in gender equality but also to fear or distrust foreigners. It is difficult, however, to argue that the conservative position of some Turks is attributable to 'Muslim values'. Instead, some Turks' adhesion to unequal gender relations is more explicable by a cultural conservatism that is also found in, for example, the neighbouring country of Greece, with its huge Orthodox Christian majority.[34]

In Turkey, fear or dislike of foreigners does not seem to be linked clearly to 'Muslim values'. Instead, this perception may be rooted in, *inter alia*, cultural memories from the time of the decline of the Ottoman empire in the early twentieth century, when the country faced an existential threat from foreign intervention and potential dismemberment. Overall, viewed through the lens of differing perceptions and understandings, it is clear that current political and social views in Turkey do not depend upon entrenchment of religious worldviews among Turks. Having said this, however, it is almost certainly the case that the AKP's electoral triumphs in 2002 and 2007 – the AKP is often dubbed an 'Islamist party' both inside and outside Turkey, despite consistent denials from the party's leaders – reinforced already existing perceptions among some EU publics and elites. This view focuses on the idea that Turkey is a radical Muslim country lacking strong 'European' credentials, characterised by a religious nationalism making the country an inappropriate member of the EU. However, such a one-dimensional and stereotypical conclusion would by no means correspond to the reality: Turkey is wracked by serious, multiple divisions, such as secular/religious, religious/religious (orthodox Sunni Muslim/non-orthodox Sunni Muslim, e.g., Alevis/Sufis), nationalism/nationalism (Turks/Kurds), urban/rural and rich/poor. Yet, despite these divisions, Turks also exhibit very high levels of consensus on the desirability of democracy except in certain extreme situations, for example a fundamental breakdown of law and order, as occurred in Turkey during the 1970s, when the

country was torn by extreme ideological polarisation and accompanying extremist violence involving the secular right and secular left. In conclusion, Turkey is a country that appears to demonstrate political values that serve to underpin its claims for EU membership.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1 See, for example, Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

2 Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, 'Multiple Modernities', *Daedalus*, 2000, 129 (1), pp. 1–29; David Martin, *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2005); Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

3 Jeffrey Haynes, *Comparative Politics in a Globalizing World* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005).

4 Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, *European Civilization in a Comparative Perspective* (Oslo: Norwegian University Press, 1987).

5 The academic discipline of 'International Relations' (upper case) is the study of 'international relations' (lower case).

6 Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society* (London: Macmillan, 1977).

7 See, for example, Michael Doyle, 'Liberalism and World Politics', *American Political Science Review*, 1986, 80 (4), pp. 1151–69.

8 Jeffrey Haynes, 'Al-Qaeda: Ideology and Action', *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 2005, 8 (2), pp. 177–91.

9 See, for example, David Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

10 See, for example, Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

11 Peter Katzenstein, 'Multiple Modernities as Limits to Secular Europeanization?', in Timothy A. Byrnes and Peter Katzenstein (eds.), *Religion in an Expanding Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 1–31.

12 Ibid., p. 1.

13 Ibid., p. 28.

14 Barbara Reiffer, 'Religion and Nationalism: Understanding the Consequences of a Complex Relationship', *Ethnicities*, 2003, 3 (2), p. 215.

15 David Little, 'Religious Nationalism and Human Rights', in Gerard. F. Powers, Drew Christiansen and Richard T. Hennemeyer (eds.), *Peacemaking: Moral and Policy Challenges for a New World* (Washington, DC: US Catholic Conference, 1994), p. 84.

16 Mark Juergensmeyer, 'Religion in the New Global Order', available at http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/programs/sac/paper%20pdfs/marks%20paper.pdf (accessed 18 April 2006).

17 Brian Grim and Richard Wike, 'Turkey and Its (Many) Discontents: The Turkish Public's Opinions of America Have Hit Rock Bottom – but Turks Do Not Think

Much of Other Nations or Groups Either', Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, Pew Global Attitudes Project, 25 October 2007, available at http://pewresearch.org/pubs/623/turkey (accessed 17 March 2009).

18 Christopher Torchia, 'Turkey Plays Growing Role in the Middle East', 20 February 2011, available at http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20110220/ap_on_re_eu/eu_turkey_s_transformation (accessed 13 May 2011).

19 Steve Bryant, 'Turkish Economic Growth Accelerates to 11.7%, Fastest Pace in Six Years', 30 June 2010, Bloomberg, available at http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010–06–30/turkish-economic-growth-accelerates-to-11–7-fastest-pace-in-six-years.html (accessed 13 May 2011).

20 'Nation's Woes Led by Bias to Women', available at http://www.hurriyet.de/haberler/daily-news/272615/nations-woes-led-by-bias-to-women (accessed 8 June 2011).

21 The two positive characteristics were reverse coded to reflect the opposite. For this analysis, a negativity index that ranges from zero (extremely positive) to 7 (extremely negative) was created using this series of questions. The seven questions used in the negativity index are part of a larger group of questions in which Muslim respondents were read lists of positive and negative traits and, for each one, were asked whether they associated it with Westerners. The questions regarding generosity and honesty, which originally were stated positively, were recoded to indicate the extent to which these positive traits were not associated with Westerners. For more information on the index, see Grim and Wike, 'Turkey and Its (Many) Discontents'.

22 Pew Global Attitudes Project Report, 'The Great Divide: How Westerners and Muslims View Each Other', 22 June 2006, available at http://pewresearch.org/reports/?ReportID=28 (accessed 22 March 2009).

23 Zerrin Torun, 'Election Briefing No. 36: General Elections in Turkey', 22 July 2007, Sussex European Institute, University of Sussex, Lewes, UK, p. 7, available at http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sei/documents/epern-election-briefing-no-36.pdf (accessed 8 June 2011).

24 Pew Global Attitudes Project Report, 'The Great Divide'.

25 Unfortunately, the findings of the poll have not been translated into English at the time of writing (May 2011). As a result, I rely here upon several recent commentaries on the poll published in English in both the United Kingdom and Turkey.

26 Robert Tait, 'Turks Reveal Xenophobic, Conservative Attitudes in Poll', *The Guardian*, 23 February 2009.

27 Nicole Pope, 'Being Different in Turkey', *Today's Zaman*, 23 December 2008, available at http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/yazarDetay.do?haberno=162004 (accessed 22 March 2009).

28 'Survey Says: Turks Are Xenophobic', Ethnic Multicultural Media Academy, available at http://www.emmainteractive.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1862&Itemid=40 (accessed 22 March 2009).

29 'Nation's woes led by bias to women', hurriyetdailynews.com, 20 February 2009, available at http://www.hurriyet.de/haberler/daily-news/272615/nations-woes-led-by-bias-to-women (accessed 22 March 2009).

30 'Turks Reveal Xenophobic, Conservative Attitudes in Poll', Turkish Class Forums, 23 February 2009, available at http://www.turkishclass.com/forumTitle_39160 (accessed 22 March 2009).

31 The powerful armed forces have toppled four elected governments in coups in the past fifty years.

32 Robert Tait, 'Turks Reveal Xenophobic, Conservative Attitudes in Poll', *The Guardian*, 23 February 2009.

33 'Survey Says: Turks Are Xenophobic'.

34 Kathy Tzilivakis, 'Equality Still Failing Women in Greece', *Athens News*, available at http://www.helleniccomserve.com/equality.html (accessed 17 March 2009).