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Understanding Political Science: Modernity and Method

Volume I

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

Andrew Glen Davison

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

October 1995

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GRADUATE SCHOOL

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Acknowledgments

Support for the writing of this dissertation was provided by the Department of Political Science of The University of Minnesota, two Fulbright dissertation research grants administered by The Commission For Educational Exchange Between The United States And Turkey, and the Department of Political Science and International Relations of Boğaziçi University in Istanbul. I am grateful for the assistance of all of the very kind people from these institutions who have helped me in one way or another complete this work.

I would like to thank my professors, Terence Ball, Mary Dietz, Raymond Duvall, David Ingersoll, Ersin Kalaycioğlu, John Losee, Mark Miller, Marian Palley, Taha Parla, Michael Root, Yurdanur Salman, Martin Sampson, Binnaz Toprak, Zafer Toprak, and Joel Weinsheimer; and my friends, Bruce Baum, Dana Chabot, Nejat Dinç, Süreyya Ersoy, Steven Gerenscer, Kemal Kirişçi, William Lynn, Paul Soper, Ronald Steiner, Nilgün Uygun, and Greg White for their intellectual energies and support. My advisor James Farr deserves a special, heartfelt thanks for his invaluable concern and advice over the last several years. I would also like to acknowledge the unfailing support and encouragement I have received from Richard Matthews, my undergraduate teacher and advisor.

I am also grateful to my father and mother, Maxwell and Barbara Davison, my brothers, Mark and Douglas, and my sister-in-law, Ellen, who have all been wonderfully supportive of my choice to pursue this path. I dedicate this dissertation to Judith Marie Swatosh whose loving support and understanding through the most intense and demanding years of graduate school helped to make my completion of this work possible.

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the indispensability of a hermeneutic approach towards explaining politics in modernity. By indispensable, I mean to say that an account of the concepts, meanings, and understandings constitutive of political life is an unqualified, necessary condition of any claim to have explained it. I detail in theoretical terms what an account should look like with regard to various dimensions of politics (actions, relations, practices, and institutions), and how hermeneutics can contribute to broader critical, comparative interests in the study of modernity. By counseling us to think in terms of alternative and contested rather than singular and incontestable outcomes, the hermeneutic orientation forces us to broaden our conceptual and historical expectations about possibilities in the politics of modernity.

Dissatisfied as many are by an argument from abstract theory alone, I make my case by illustrating a hermeneutic disposition in the study of aspects of modern politics that are constituted by a matrix of meanings somewhere in the range of "the secular" and "the religious." I offer both a history of non-hermeneutic political science's engagement with a particular context of study and alternative accounts of particular aspects within that context to show how hermeneutic political inquiry advances the project of political explanation. The illustrative studies are drawn from the world-historically-significant case of secularization and modernization in contemporary Turkey. I show how non-hermeneutic orientations in Anglophone political science have shaped the interpretation of two central components of secular-laicist political thought and practice in Turkey in ways that fail to explain them compellingly. In alternative and self-

consciously hermeneutic accounts, I go on to illustrate the difference that adopting a hermeneutic posture towards political inquiry can make.

This multi-layered project has relevance to studies in political science history; comparative inquiry into modern, secular political thought and practice; debates about secularization in Turkey; and, primarily, attempts to promote a viable interpretive mode of political explanation in political science.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

As the second millennium draws to its close, in one way or another the ground is shaking under *everyone's* feet, . . . We are not talking about family debates between the ideologies of the nineteenth century West. Our drama -- whatever the parts we have in it -- is today being played out in a theater with which we are unfamiliar, on a stage we cannot recognize, and amid the unpredicted and unexpected, and insufficiently understood, changes of scenery.

E. J. Hobsbawm (1992, 58)

The human attempt to understand politics may make little cognitive headway;
but it is going to go on.

John Dunn (1990c, 3)

In this dissertation I make three general claims with explicit reference to Anglophone political science. The first is that certain prejudices about the secular character and direction of modern political history have hindered the interpretation of secular and theopolitical phenomena in modernity.¹ The second is that these prejudices have been sustained and supported by non-interpretive methodological commitments which have as their distinguishing characteristic a failure to account for the shared and contested concepts that constitute political life. From an interpretive perspective, "constitute" means "to make something what it is." Hence, the failure to account for the constitutive languages of politics within a context under study is a failure to account for that

¹ When I speak of "secular and theopolitical phenomena," I am speaking of secular-political as well as theopolitical phenomena. By "theopolitical" I mean religiously conceived participations in politics. Some use the term "religio-political." Where necessary, I will qualify my use of the terms as I proceed.

which makes politics in that context what it is.² Following this, the third claim is that a self-consciously interpretive approach to the study of modernity enables us to explain both secular and theopolitical phenomena as well as the alternative modernities they express more persuasively than non-interpretive approaches. Each claim is explicated at length and then illustrated in two specific fields of inquiry. Both are drawn from the study of modern Turkish politics, and both are complexly constituted by secular and theopolitical aspects of meaning. Hence, they serve to illustrate the major theoretical claims of this work as well as to demonstrate the indispensability of an interpretive approach to the study of modernity.

My discussion begins by outlining Hans-Georg Gadamer's understanding of the role and nature of "prejudice" -- or "prejudgment" -- in interpretation. The first chapter then critically engages the meaning of "modernity" and the substantive character of the particular "secular-modern" prejudice I seek to open-up. Since, as Gadamer argues, prejudice always and necessarily guides interpretation -- mostly in unconscious ways -- we ought not aim to shed our prejudices; rather, we should reevaluate aspects of them which we have come to see as hindering (as opposed to illuminating), and attempt to improve our understanding by putting, as it were, new prejudices at play. Operating within the Gadamerian frame, my claim in the first chapter is that we need to rethink the basic character of our substantive expectations regarding the variously secular or non-secular outcomes of modern political history. In so doing, we may reconstitute

² In distinguishing between interpretive and non-interpretive approaches to political explanation, I am not denying that non-interpretive approaches require interpretation. I am, rather, cutting a distinction between hermeneutic and non-hermeneutic understandings of the practice (and possibilities) of political explanation. See Chapter Two.

aspects of the language of study within which we endlessly interpret modern politics.

I will discuss Gadamer's notion of a prejudice in detail at the end of this introduction. It is important, however, to make one aspect of it clear from the start. For Gadamer, the recognition of prejudice, the discrimination between those prejudices which illuminate and those which hinder understanding, and the adoption of new prejudice all occur *in the context of understanding*, not outside of it. This hermeneutic fact has two important implications. The first is that we cannot step into a prejudice-free zone, so to speak, and say to ourselves, for example, "foreground this prejudice, and critically examine that one." We *can* foreground and we *can* examine, but these are not objective maneuvers, outside of the context of understanding and free from prejudgment. They are and must be understood to be within the hermeneutic circle, not above or beyond it. Similarly, there is no prejudice-free discourse to assume in order to critically adjudicate which prejudices hinder understanding and which illuminate it. Such determinations come to us only when our prejudgments are put to play in the context of understanding. We become conscious of them when they are provoked *in our attempt to understand*. This is, in part, how understanding happens.

The second implication follows from this and relates directly to the status of this dissertation as a critical enterprise. Because all interpretation is guided by prejudices, my account of the what I will abbreviate as a particular kind of "secular modern" prejudice is not to be conceived of as an objective one. I have jettisoned a frame within which objectivity about these matters is even desirable. Rather than an objective statement, my account is

more fruitfully conceived of as a contribution to, and interpretation within, an ongoing dialogue precisely about the character of secularism and modernity, a dialogue that has been provoked by the apparent revival of theopolitics in the late twentieth century. As my discussion will show, this dialogue is my context of understanding in which my own prejudices, most of which remain outside my own purview, come into play. My claims and judgements have emerged as part of broad discussions within the social sciences concerned with two particular issues: first, the secular and non-secular conceptual and practical possibilities of modern politics and second, the methodological identity of the discipline entrusted to explain those politics. As such, this dissertation stands above neither these discussions nor the phenomena which gave rise to them. Its claims are shaped by both the discussions and the events, and it participates in them. This is important to state at the outset because any attempt to conceive of a problem for investigation in such terms as prejudice, discrimination, and judgement risks being read as an attempt to make an objective (i.e. without prejudice) evaluation of the facts; it might be read as a striving to step outside of the hermeneutic circle to pronounce the *final* judgement. This is a danger in any sort of critical enterprise, but as Gadamer's hermeneutics so impressively demonstrates, we make even our strongest judgments within conversations, not outside of them.

Problems arise only if the conversation goes unrecognized, if, that is, interpretation is viewed as a subject-object confrontation in which the participants fail to see that they are in fact interlocutors. They might believe, for instance, that one is the interpreter and the other the interpreted, one is the questioner/listener and the other the speaker, or one

is the expert and the other the non-expert. As I argue below, such differentials underlie one reason why (non-interpretive) political scientists so often fall short in their attempt to explain the political lives of others. They fail to engage in open-ended conversations (or metaphorically similar modes of historical research), critical in an interpretive sense, with those whose political actions, practices and institutions they claim to understand. As I hope this dissertation illustrates, to suspend the dialogue -- to stop making judgments, correcting misimpressions, declaring validity, and so on -- is to put understanding off, indeed, it is to risk never truly understanding anything of substance in human affairs.

The conceptually-oriented discussion of chapter one is therefore followed by a detailed exposition of the basic objectives and assumptions of interpretive political inquiry. I draw on The writings of Charles Taylor, Alasdair MacIntyre, Quentin Skinner and John Dunn on the topic of political interpretation to guide this exposition. Despite being widely recognized as an alternative approach to the study of politics throughout political science, the interpretive approach is still widely misconceived. In part as a response to this situation and in part for the purposes of my argument here, I articulate the interpretive approach to political explanation and defend what I call the “interpretive unity” of political inquiry. The central thesis of interpretive political science is that political acts, relationships, practices, and institutions are expressive of shared and contested, subjective and inter-subjective, concepts and understandings within the language of a political culture (itself multiply constituted). As such, in order to explain politics within a given context, one must provide an account of the concepts that constitute that politics. The interpretive unity of political explanation

derives from the fact that both obvious linguistic political phenomena (like speeches) and ostensibly non-linguistic political phenomena (like migration) are fundamentally conceptually constituted and cannot be adequately explained without providing an account of those concepts. But to accept this point is to accept several important implications for the character of explanation in political science. To date, it appears as if most political scientists are willing to grant the central thesis without fully grasping its implications for their project as a whole. The context, therefore, is ripe for a restatement of these implications and a demonstration of the indispensability of interpretive political science.

I then go on to tie my suggestions in this regard directly to the substantive issues raised in the first chapter. The general point I seek to make throughout is that the link between our substantive historical expectations and our methodological commitments is an intimate one. Thus, proceeding from hermeneutic premises about the nature of interpretation and politics, we ought to make a dual shift: both in our historical understanding, by reconsidering our specific substantive historical judgments about the nature and character of modern political history, and in our orientation towards political explanation, by adopting an interpretive posture. Doing so, I argue, will insure more compelling explanations because our study of political life will be more consistent with who we -- both the interpreters and the interpreted -- are as human beings; we will be fulfilling our responsibilities in a way that makes good sense in the study of political life.

The general claims made in the initial chapters are illustrated in a specific field of study -- the interpretation of secular politics in the modern

Turkish Republic. Taking place on the geographic edge between “East” and “West,” the historical dialogue over the meanings and ends of “secularization” and “modernization” in Turkey has had world historical significance -- for both Turks and for interpreters of Turkey’s laicist and modernization-oriented politics.³ I offer detailed accounts of the history of interpreting two central and related aspects of modern Turkish politics within Anglophone political science, and I argue that these interpretations express a shared commitment to the unduly narrow secular modern prejudices discussed in the first chapter. As such, from a self-consciously interpretive point of view, they tend to express more about the meaning and identity -- both substantive-theoretical *and* methodological⁴ -- of the history of political science than they do about those contexts which they were intended to capture. If our explanations are to be more complete, they should, from an interpretive perspective, offer more fully compelling accounts of both horizons.

The two aspects of modern Turkish politics which I will consider are: first, the political ideas of Ziya Gökalp, the Young Turk nationalist thinker who believed that Turkey’s modern turn could be reconciled with Islam; and second, the practices, relations, and institutions associated with the original conception of laicist politics in Turkey. I address these two dimensions of analysis in part to illustrate my thesis about the interpretive unity of political science, but mostly to explore the interpretive issues I raise in two

³ See end of chapter two and subsequent chapters on Turkey.

⁴ It is important to stress that while I distinguish between these two dimensions of any explanatory posture, the substantive and methodological are *always* fundamentally related. Here, however, I seek to identify relevant distinctions between specifically identified concepts and specifically identified methodological assumptions. I do not mean to imply any theory/method dichotomy. It is important to examine the specific ways in which specific concepts and specific methods relate.

contexts which are both complexly constituted by secular/modern and religious/traditional aspects of meaning in a context of deep significance to the modernization and secularization politics of the twentieth century. After providing an account of a history of explanatory attempts in the literature of Anglophone political science research on Turkey that fall short in their explanatory objectives due, as I will argue, to the joint influence of a certain kind of secular modern prejudice and a non-interpretive posture toward political inquiry, I offer alternative and self-consciously interpretative explanations of these aspects of study within this field.

Gökalp's contribution to the "secularization problematic" in contemporary Turkish history cannot be understated. One of his interpreters has referred to him as "the only systematic thinker Turkey has produced in the twentieth century" (Parla 1985, 1). Part of his significance derives from the fact that he wrestled considerably with articulating a theoretical foundation for secular, modern politics as the multi-ethnic and multi-religious Ottoman empire was replaced by a Turkish nationalist and largely Muslim nation-state. As such, a study of the identity of his ideas is part and parcel of a study of the character of the practices, relationships, and institutions associated with secularism and modernity in Muslim contexts in general, and in Turkey in particular.

These practices, which have roots in Ottoman efforts at bureaucratic rationalization and reform in the nineteenth century, accelerated under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) during the 1920's. Atatürk promoted a nationalist version of positivist-scientific values as part of the socio-cultural policy of the ruling Republican People's Party. Consequently, the once prominent Islamic component of Ottoman politics and society was

marginalized as the central elite undertook what they, and most of their interpreters in Anglophone social science, took to be the construction of a Republican, nationalist, populist, “secular” polity and state. (As I will argue in Chapter Four, the original conception of the politics associated with “secularism” in Turkey is better captured with the concept laicism than it is with the concept secularism.) Multiparty democracy after the second world war enabled aspects of Islamic discourse to re-enter politics within the framework of the laicist state, as rival candidates campaigned to represent religiously-oriented constituent interests. The Islamic content of Turkish politics was extended further after 1980, when coup leaders and governing party officials articulated a populist, “Turkish Islamic Synthesis” to ensure stability and to challenge the left. Since 1983, multiparty (and military) institutions continue to structure politics so that laicist and religio-political aspects of Turkish political culture can be jointly expressed. Reconciliation of modernism and Islam within Turkey’s state, however, continues to generate intense public debate about the meanings and practical ends of both secularism and laicism. The debates over the original conception of laicism in Turkey as well as over the nature of the modern secular state in an Islamic context are what give meaning to this ongoing dialogue in Turkey.

The significance of this dialogue extends well beyond Turkey’s borders and is a matter of interest in Comparative Political studies of Southeastern Europe and the Middle East, and in policy-circles more broadly. For many years, Turkey has sought full integration with the European Community, whose members appear to be cautious due to Turkey’s Muslim character. Yet it is precisely this so-called “cultural fact” that enables the U.S. and Turkey to promote it as the “secular, democratic, and market-

oriented model”, an apparent bulwark against “Islamic Fundamentalism”, for the Muslim countries of the former USSR (Wright 1992, 141; Lewis 1987, xi 1992; Gombart 1992a, 1992b; Demirel 1992a, 1992b; Unnamed 1992; compare Allen 1935, 62; Barchard 1985, 3; Karpat 1959, xi, 63, 143,442, 452). For similar reasons, political scientists and economists in North Africa and the Middle East believe they have much to learn from Turkey’s experience (“The Turkish miracle”). A self-consciously interpretive account of Turkey’s “secular model” has current relevance in all of these domains of intellectual and political interest.

My accounts are informed by textual analyses of mainly political science research on Turkey through 1993. I say “mainly” because the disciplinary boundaries between history, political science, sociology, and the other human sciences are inexact and always shifting. The best researchers in all of these disciplines read across these boundaries. Many essays written strictly within the discipline of history, for example, are fundamental to political science research, and vice versa. I have found this certainly to be the case in the study of Turkey. Following the multi-disciplinary, intellectual lineage of the texts of political science has enabled me to develop a richer appreciation for the meanings “Turkey” has in political science. It does not, however, seriously alter my first two general claims, which are about the historical frames and methods in political science. In addition to this cross-disciplinary textual analysis, the accounts of Gökalp and *laiklik* are informed by research conducted in Turkey during 1993-1994.⁵

⁵ Supported by two Fulbright dissertation research grants and administered by the Commission for Educational Exchange between the United States in Turkey (Ankara, Turkey).

I conclude by summarizing my arguments from the previous chapters, explaining what I take to be the contribution of this dissertation to political inquiry, and outlining areas of future research opened up by this work. I also make several suggestions about the intellectual historiography of political science and about the (interpretive) responsibilities of political scientists *in* modernity. In general, this multi-layered project has relevance to a number of specific research programs of contemporary interest. I see it as a contribution to studies in political science history, theoretical and historical inquiry into the character of modern -- particularly secular -- politics and existing alternative modernities, attempts to sustain a viable and independent mode of interpretive political explanation in political science, and ongoing debates within comparative political studies about the character of Turkey's "secular model."

Political science history

The relevance of writing disciplinary histories of political science has been stressed in recent American political science literature (Almond 1990; Baer, Jewell, Seligman 1991; Ball 1987c, 1993; Collini, Winch, Burrow 1983; Crotty 1991; Dryzek and Leonard 1988; Easton, Gunnell, Graziano 1991; Farr 1988a, 1988b, 1990; Farr and Seidelman 1993; Finifter 1983; Gunnell 1991; Ricci 1984; Ross 1991; Seidelman 1985). Dryzek and Leonard suggest that such histories are "ineliminable" features of the identity of political science (1988, 1245). They encourage us "to parse disciplinary histories for positive and negative lessons" of both a methodological and theoretical nature (1245).

Farr adds to these “internal” dimensions a practical interest. He suggests that the public functions of political scientists as civic educators and policy advisors raise questions of both local and global responsibility for which an historical awareness is essential (1988b, 66; 1990, 58-91). In this work, I join these historiographical projects in believing that political science has a lot to learn from, and contribute to, its history.

Since existing disciplinary histories have been undertaken with many different aims, interests, and presuppositions,⁶ it is important to clarify my specific historical aims in this project. I am interested in offering an account of political science’s engagement with a specific context of inquiry in order to illuminate the three general claims of this dissertation. Separate from these claims, however, I believe that studies in the history of political science can be fruitfully extended by exploring the work of individual political scientists in specific explanatory contexts. Usually, the “great essays” in the discipline’s history (e.g., APSA presidential addresses, classic paradigm-setting articles, etc.) are given credit for expressing the identity of the discipline. I seek to extend our thinking about political science’s history by engaging the history of its engagements in specific contexts. Thus, my “extension” of the historical interest is to look at what I take to be political science explanation “in practice.”

Four general questions guide this interest. First, what meanings do specific contexts have for political scientists who explain politics in them

⁶ “[P]olitical scientists sometimes hail the progress and the promise of the discipline, usually as regards one tradition, program, or group within it. At other times, they applaud the discipline for its pluralism and openness, either within the liberal arts or in the service of a wider public. At still other times, they diagnose the crises of the discipline as instances of intellectual purposelessness, methodological fragmentation, professional overspecialization, or political irrelevance” (Farr and Seidelman 1993, 1; cp. Farr 1988, 1176).

(are they models of market reform? illustrations of stable, institutional development? overlooked?)? Second, within what conceptual frames (historical narratives, theoretical statements, assumptions) are specific contexts of inquiry interpreted, and what is the “meaning content” of both these conceptual frames and the interpretations? Third, what is the relationship between these interpretations and our methodological assumptions about political explanation? Finally, what are the links between the meanings of a specific context within political science and the meanings of that context outside of political science, in spaces within which Anglophone political science fulfills its practical responsibilities? That is, are there any links between the meaning a specific area of inquiry has within the context of political explanation and the meanings it has in public arenas such as policy-making and analysis?

The idea of “prejudice”

[“The hermeneutically trained mind”] will make conscious the prejudices governing our understanding, so that the text, as another’s meaning, can be isolated and valued on its own. Foregrounding (*Abheben*) a prejudice clearly requires suspending its validity for us. For as long as our mind is influenced by a prejudice, we do not consider it a judgment. How then can we foreground it? It is impossible to make ourselves aware of a prejudice while it is constantly operating unnoticed, but only when it is, so to speak, provoked. The encounter with a traditional text can provide this provocation.⁷ For what leads to understanding must be something that has already asserted itself in its own separate validity. Understanding begins, as we have already said above, when something addresses us. This is the first condition of hermeneutics. We now know what this requires, namely the fundamental suspension of our own prejudices. But all

⁷ By “traditional” text, Gadamer means a text understood as authoritative over time (we might say a “classic”). A critical evaluation of our prejudices does not take place at any old time. Notice, however, how his statement does not limit the occurrence of a provocation to this context.

suspension of judgments and hence, a fortiori, of prejudices, has the logical structure of a *question*.

The essence of the *question* is to open up possibilities and keep them open. If a prejudice becomes questionable in view of what another person or text says to us, this does not mean that it is simply set aside and the text or the other person accepted as valid in its place. Rather, historical objectivism shows its naiveté in accepting this disregarding of ourselves as what actually happens. In fact our own prejudice is properly brought into play by being put at risk. Only by being given full play is it able to experience the other's claim to truth and make it possible for him to have full play himself. (Gadamer 1989, 299)

The use of the concept "prejudice" to identify my interpretive concern signifies the relevance of Gadamer's hermeneutics to the conception of this work. It also entails an explicit rejection of the terminology, more common in the vernacular of social science, of "bias" and "values." These terms find expression usually within a frame which characterizes the influence of pre-conceptions and pre-judgments on interpretation as entirely negative. When scientists -- natural or social -- speak of biases and values, the implication is usually that it is desirable to be free from this or that bias, or value-neutral either in general or with respect to certain values, when engaged in scientific explanation. Undergirding these views is the belief that it is possible to exercise control over our pre-understanding in fully conscious ways such that some of it be set aside while the rest of it remains "objective." On this view, all of the interpreter's personal, familial, cultural, and social history may be set aside. History belongs to the scientist who can bracket it and then proceed to "know" history free from its influence.

By contrast, to Gadamer, the interpreter belongs to history and can never be free from it. As such, the "prejudices" which are shaped in that

history, and which largely reside outside the understanding subject's full control, are not properly understood as hindrances to understanding. Rather, they are the pre-condition, the basis for all understanding; they always and necessarily initially guide interpretations, for they "constitute . . . the legitimate guiding for genuine understanding" (1987, 137).

Prejudices are at work in all understanding -- illuminating, hiding, promoting, concealing, and so on. Moreover, the ways in which they are at work are never fully knowable by us. We are human beings, not gods. The prejudices involved in understanding are manifestations of our own historicity, of our belonging to traditions which are always larger than the individuals who give them their meaning. The hermeneutic view is that, belonging to history, we cannot -- and need not -- set it (ourselves) aside. We do not stand outside of it, we stand and participate within it. The concept "prejudice," therefore, implies the tradition and historical-embeddedness of the pre-judgments that inform and are hence necessary to understanding.⁸

Gadamer views the claim that prejudice is an obstacle to understanding and should be overcome as a pernicious corruption in Enlightenment thought, ironically over the term "prejudice" itself. It perpetuates the false view that we can exercise control over history and the process of understanding it through method. "We can know better: this is the maxim with which the modern enlightenment approaches tradition and which ultimately leads it to undertake historical research. It takes tradition as an object of critique . . ." (1989, 272). By stressing the historicity of pre-judgments, Gadamer seeks to shatter this illusion. He argues that our consciousness of history is always an effected historical consciousness. It is

⁸ Gadamer is interested in the thesis that history and truth ultimately exceed all self-conscious understanding (Weinsheimer 1985, 200).

“the consciousness that consciousness is affected by history” (Weinsheimer 1985, 199; Gadamer 1989, xxxiv). Every act of understanding is, therefore, an act within history, within a tradition, and within the hermeneutic situation which aims at what Gadamer calls a fusion of horizons. Insofar as understanding involves projecting our historical horizon and receiving another one, neither do we leap from ours and enter the other’s nor do we totally assimilate the other within ours. Rather, understanding involves bringing out the relationships and tensions between horizons which, in that process, maintain their difference as they are both altered by the fusion.

Every encounter with tradition that takes place within historical consciousness involves the experience of a tension between the text and the present. The hermeneutic task consists in not covering up this tension by attempting a naive assimilation of the two but in consciously bringing it out. This is why it is part of the hermeneutic approach to project a historical horizon that is different from the horizon of the present. Historical consciousness is aware of its own otherness and hence foregrounds the horizon of the past from its own. (Gadamer 1989, 306; compare Weinsheimer 1991, 84-86)

The fusion of horizons is what lies behind Gadamer’s claim that, “real historical thinking must take account of its own historicity” (Gadamer 1989, 299). Not to do so is to fall into the trap of objectivism, thinking that we can think historically without seeing our internal relation with history itself. For Gadamer, we cannot stand above history and set it aside; consciousness is an historical effect and thus so too is our understanding of others. Thus, Gadamer rejects the view that we can set ourselves aside, suspend all of our pre-judgments, and proceed to understand.

Because most prejudices remain outside of our purview, we need to ask, then, how do some become conscious? According to Gadamer, prejudices are made conscious (foregrounded) when they are provoked in the process of

interpretation itself (as stressed and quoted above). We “raise to a conscious level the prejudices which govern understanding” (1987, 137) within, not before or apart from, the process of understanding. When prejudice is provoked, it is never all prejudices, but only those which have been addressed by the text or “text-analogue” (Ricoeur) which we seek to understand. There is no way, therefore, to determine outside of the very process of interpretation what prejudices one must evaluate. When they are provoked, we become aware of the need to distinguish those which “blind” (or hinder) our understanding from those which “illuminate” it.

Of all prejudices, those which blind are those which we come to see as a “cause of misunderstanding; and these it is the certainly the duty of conscientious understanding to avoid” (Weinsheimer 1985, 180). In doing so, however, we are not momentarily stepping outside of the hermeneutic situation (Gadamer 300ff.). Like the foregrounding, the separation between blinding and illuminating prejudices also takes place within the process of understanding (Gadamer 1989, 295-6). The process is one which occurs in history, not above it. It is therefore both an opening up and a re-situating within a historical frame whose contours we cannot fully describe.

What I seek to do in this dissertation is account for certain secular and modern prejudices in political science research that have been provoked by the apparent resurgence of theopolitical phenomena at the end of the twentieth century. The very conception of this project is made possible by a widely shared recognition that these particular prejudices have led to misunderstanding; as such, they have hindered our attempts to explain and understand the politics of others. I build off this recognition not to jettison

these prejudices, as some recent commentators suggest,⁹ but to reflectively reconsider them. We need, that is, to reconstitute those aspects of our secular and modern prejudices of which we can be conscious in such a way as to open ourselves up to understanding alternative secular and theopolitical possibilities in modernity. The task of interpreting alternative modernities remains crucial today. We need to do what we can to avoid the kind of misunderstandings that appear in studies governed by these prejudices without foolishly thinking that we can step outside of the history in which these misunderstandings were shaped. Furthermore, we need to do this in such a way that fully recognizes the openness of modern secular and theopolitical possibilities.

In addition, I contest the view that we will address *all* of the problems involved in misunderstanding modern secular and theopolitics simply by reevaluating our basic substantive and methodological commitments.¹⁰ In contrast, I argue that the problems that have been identified as a result of being provoked in recent history are jointly founded on blinding methodological commitments as well as blinding theoretical prejudices which come to play in our engagement with the study of modern politics. Thus, in order to reflect fully on the reasons for misunderstanding, we must reflect on the methodological as well as the theoretical bases of modern political inquiry. Commitments to non- or viciously anti-interpretive understandings of political inquiry must be reevaluated in tandem with a reevaluation of our substantive historical expectations. The methodological commitments do not appear as a prejudice to those whose faith in them is

⁹ "It is difficult to dispute the observation that for too long biases, predispositions, and enthusiasms have served instead of theory or even classification to guide research on the politics of the Middle East" (Anderson 1990, 73).

¹⁰ See Chapter Two for a fuller discussion.

secure, but they do in fact have a lot to do with our continual failure to understand the political lives of others. In the context of inquiry which concerns us here, the non-interpretive methodological commitments of political science continue to effectively sustain and support the problematic secular modern prejudices I unpack in the first chapter. Thus, unless we foreground and avoid certain substantive prejudices and make an interpretive turn, we will, I fear, continue to misunderstand the complex dynamics within and between secular and theopolitical phenomena in modernity.

My reevaluation of the problems we face thus seeks to place Gadamer's concept of prejudice at the center. Still, it must be pointed out at the outset that my own interest in political explanation is different from Gadamer's interest in philosophical hermeneutics. While I believe that the foundational assumptions of my view of interpretive inquiry are wholly compatible with Gadamer's view of the basic nature of understanding, my own determination to improve our understanding of politics marks an immediate point of departure. The reasons I think that my view of political explanation is compatible with Gadamer's hermeneutics are discussed in chapter two. What separates us, however, must be stated explicitly here.

In his "Foreword to Second Edition" of *Truth and Method*, Gadamer stresses what he calls his "real concern:" "My real concern was and is philosophic: not what we do and what we ought to do, but what happens to us over and above our wanting and doing" (Gadamer 1990, xxviii). Gadamer's concern, in short, is what happens in all understanding.

But what should be clear by now is that in this dissertation, I am precisely interested in what we do and what we ought to do in understanding

politics, especially, in this work, Turkish politics. To Gadamer, “the methods of the human sciences are not at issue here” (xxviii). To me, they are. To Gadamer, “it is enough to say we understand in a different way” (1989, 297). To me, operating, so to speak, in the context of political explanation (where hermeneutics can be deadly as well as playful (Ball 1987a)), we must say as well that an alternative understanding while alternative, is utterly unconvincing. But each step I take away from Gadamer’s primary concern, I believe, is fully informed by that concern.

CHAPTER TWO

Interpreting Alternative Modernities

When one's feet are at Jerusalem, it is legitimate to emphasize that religious and literate societies are never wholly 'traditional'.

J. G. A. Pocock (1987)

All philosophies of history proceed with the tale until they arrive at the happy ending to which our (modern) age is supposed to be destined. This is a highly unmodern idea. Among others, the novelty of our age consists of the openness of our horizon and the plurality of interpretations of both the present and the past. This openness allows for multiple projects. The multiplicity of projects is promising but at the same time threatening. The point is not that we are ignorant of the end of our story (a feature which we share with every human group and age), but that we are as yet ignorant as to whether our project will be viable in the long run. We have just begun to work in and on modernity.

Agnes Heller (1991)

The resurgence of theopolitics at the end of the twentieth century has provoked wide-spread reconsideration of a shared belief within modern political studies, namely that the outcomes of modern political history will be "secular." The reconsiderations, however, elicited no consensus on how we might proceed and what our understanding of modernity should be. What does a recognition that we live in "modernity" require of us in terms of understanding the relationship between religion and politics? I grapple with this question in this chapter.

I argue, in essence, that the possibilities for modernity and secularism are multiple, and that in order to understand these possibilities, we must reflectively reevaluate aspects of our interpretive pre-judgements of which we have become aware. To this end, I delineate how certain hindering secular-modern prejudices have been provoked by the assertion of explicitly theopolitical radicalism in modern politics, and I identify specific problematic

teleological, “secular,” and “modern” dimensions of these prejudices. I go on to consider how modernity and political possibilities therein might be better judged and conclude by articulating several reasons why we must change our expectations about modernity -- especially as they relate to the relationship between religion and politics -- if we are to understand it.

To be sure, changing expectations is no small task. The modern social sciences were founded with “high expectations for modernity” (Ross 1991, 7), and it is precisely these expectations we must open-up if we are to understand our situation. This project entails reconceiving, rather than rejecting, secularism and modernity as contested and historically variable concepts. This approach, when accompanied by the interpretive methodological shift I argue for in the next chapter, will open us up to seeing the history of modern politics differently as well as to a deeper appreciation of the role of hermeneutic political inquiry in it.

The Problem with Modern Social Scientists on Modernity

In the aftermath of the Iranian revolution, prominent Western scholars of Iranian politics reflected on the fact that their pre-revolution accounts of Iranian politics exhibited a discernable tendency either to ignore or to downplay the political significance of those political actors who became, ultimately, the victors in the revolution. Fred Halliday, for instance, called attention to this fact while retrospectively discussing the merits and shortcomings of his 1979 study on capitalist development in Iran, *Iran: Dictatorship and Development*. Halliday noted that “there were several deficiencies in the book that subsequent events were to bring out” (1987, 31). Among these, he ranked high his “failure to appreciate” the durability

“survival”) and political potential (“significant oppositional role”) of the “pre-capitalist sectors (e.g., the bazaar merchants) and ideologies” (31). Closely related to this deficiency was another: “[I]n its discussion of the traditions and significance of political forces in Iran, the book placed too much emphasis on the secular opposition of the late 1940s and early 1950s, and underestimated the clerical forces of 1963. I knew of Khomeini from Iranian associates, but shared with many of them the view that he was a man of the past” (31).¹ Surprised, then, by the endurance and political relevance of the “pre-capitalist sectors,” their “ideologies,” and their support for the political alternative represented by Ayatollah Ruhollah Musavi Khomeini, Halliday realized that he had previously read all of these out of the present and into the past.

Halliday was not alone in reflecting on what he took to be “relics” from the past in the politics of the present. A similar conception of the new power holders and their primary constituency informed some of the post-revolutionary reflections of James Bill, another renowned authority on Iranian politics.

Bill argued that popular support for the Islamic opposition forces coalesced during the seventies when “the Iranian people took refuge in religion and flocked to the mujtahids for social and political shelter” (1982, 27). But, Bill argued, the capacities necessary to attract support and seize power are different from those necessary to govern in “the modern world”

¹ 1963 was the year the Shah launched the White Revolution, opposed by the radical (i.e. not all) clerics who had been recently reorganized under the leadership of Ayatollah Ruhollah Musavi Khomeini, following the death of Ayatollah Abol-Qasim Kashani in 1962. Khomeini’s criticisms of the modernizing policies of the Pahlavi regimes date back to 1943 (Abrahamian (1989)). Khomeini was arrested in September of that year, and forcibly exiled in 1964. The significance of Khomeini’s ascendance in the politics of the Shi`ite hierarchy is discussed best by Nikki Keddi (1981) and Said Amir Arjomand (1986, 1988).

(47). In his “prognosis” for the future, Bill wrote that in order for “Iran to come to terms with the modern world . . . the mullahs and mujtahids will have to return to their accustomed roles as guides and guardians,” where “the more flexible and better educated among them [such as the “moderate” Islamic populists] will serve as the consciences of the new secular leadership, whatever form that leadership may take” (47). The leaders of the Khomeini-led “mullacracy,” as he called them, “lacked the skills and experience to operate effectively the modern economic, administrative, and technological institutions that were in place” (46-47). In addition, “[b]y carrying all of their traditional baggage of the past with them into the hallways of power within a social edifice that must exist in the present and confront the future, the Shi’a political extremists provided themselves with an impossible task” (47).

Bill’s analysis expresses a view of the relationship between the past and the present similar to the one that governed Halliday’s investigation. It is best surmised as: Authentic participation in the politics of the present means “leaving one’s traditional baggage in the past.” And, for us, a crucial question arises. What is it about our thinking that drives us to interpret religiously and culturally different, yet politically efficacious, modes of expression and practice as part of the past and not of the present?

This habit of thought has not escaped the attention of many contemporary thinkers concerned with grasping the relationship between religion and politics in the modern world. Some political scientists, for instance, have lamented the fact that, as one scholar of Middle East politics put it, “for too long biases, predispositions, and enthusiasms have served instead of theory or even classification to guide research on the politics of the Middle East” (Anderson 1990, 73). Such comments suggest that our predispositions

only get in the way of making others intelligible, and, consequently we need to devise more sophisticated ways of restraining their influence. The amaranthine search for a general theory/language of explanation is thus renewed. (An amaranth is an imaginary flower that never fades.)

Others commentators, including many outside of political science, have engaged in extensive, critical considerations on the nature of these so-called biases in order to develop an understanding of their character and the character of their influence in the context of interpreting others. While these discussions are rarely framed in explicitly Gadamerian terms, I think that they can be partly conceived as such. In particular, I think that they constitute a set of reflections on the nature of a certain form of secular modern prejudice that has been provoked by theopolitical events in the late twentieth century.²

These considerations take several different forms and address several different aspects of a relatively complex interpretive situation. Nonetheless, they may be organized along three general axes. The first concerns the role of teleological expectations in the explanation of apparently “traditional” social phenomena. The second concerns the so-called “secular” commitments of modern social science, and the third, its stated “modern” or “modernist” elements. There is a wide set of literature on each topic; an examination of selected, but representative, criticisms of these various dimensions illuminates important aspects of the conceptual frame within which modern politics is continually interpreted. This is not to imply that these criticisms get to the heart of the puzzle I have presented here. They help to explain some of the reasons why interpreters like Halliday and Bill assign a lesser significance to

² Hereafter, my references to a “secular modern” prejudice are intended only to cover the particular form of it I unpack and criticize here. As I will discuss in detail below, I do not think of secular-modernism in, or the conceptual and historical possibilities within it, in monolithic terms.

theopolitical actors of the present by consigning them to the past, but the criticisms do so, I will argue, at the risk of unnecessarily fixing the meanings of the important concepts “secular” and “modern” in ways inconsistent with an explanatory disposition of a self-consciously interpretive view of them.

Those commentators who draw attention to the untoward explanatory influence of “teleological temporalities,” as the historical sociologist William Sewell calls them, criticize the tendency of modern social scientists to view history as the temporal unfolding or working out of a law-like, inherent, inexorable, logic of development (Sewell 1991; Tilly 1984; Randall and Theobald 1985; Popper 1962, 1986; Berlin 1955).³ Sewell espies this tendency in what he calls “the common practice of labelling political or social movements as backward-looking or forward-looking”. He writes that, “The simple act of labelling movements in this way contains an implicit teleological explanation of their histories. Likewise, the term ‘modern’ often serves as a label for those processes or agents that are deemed by the analyst to be doing the work of the future in some present, while ‘traditional’ labels those equally current forced in the present that the analyst regards as doing the work of the past” (Sewell 1991, 5). It is Sewell’s contention that these teleological frames, along with the habit of “labelling” that they condition, get in the way of understanding history.

The belief that authentic politics in the modern present require a secular supercession of “past” forms of theopolitical expression is deeply rooted in the history of Anglophone political science as well (see esp. Farr 1986; Cp. Ross 1991, Pocock 1987, 52; Hawthorne 1976). It has received its most systematic expression in the highly influential liberal and Marxist

³ There are many different kinds of “teleological” expectations. I am focusing in on one kind here.

understandings of modernity and political development. According to these interpretations of political and historical change, certain phenomena -- classified generally as "traditional" (and usually assumed to be historically inert) -- pass through what Henry Maine in earlier days referred to as the "true lines" of historical "movement" and become "modern" (quoted in Collini, Winch, Burrow, 1983, 218). In that process, those things "of the past" either fade away or are relegated to private matters in the modern state (see, e.g., Daalder 1988). In turn, this state aims to promote and operate on variously conceived "secular" rationalities. "Secular" and "modern" futures, that is, have been explicitly juxtaposed to traditional-religious ones. In fact, with Sewell, it is possible to point to a lingering problem of teleology in political science as well, especially with regard to thinking about theopolitical phenomena.

Two recent examples of this lingering teleological tendency are evident in the works of Lawrence C. Mayer (1989) and Samuel P. Huntington (1987), two of the foremost theorists of comparative political inquiry. Mayer follows a long line of thinking in comparative inquiry, evident in Bill's remarks quoted above, which suggests that, "one of the cultural requisites associated with successful government in the modern world is a widespread sense of competence, a perception that problems can be effectively resolved through appropriate civic action or social policy" (212). Mayer suggests that this condition for modernized politics has an important consequence for religions of the "non-Western" world: "[T]he religious systems that dominate the non-Western world are particularly dysfunctional for modernization. Both Buddhism and Islam teach a fatalistic view of the world, that man cannot significantly alter his own destiny" (212).

Mayer is careful not to identify Christianity explicitly, since it is Christianity (especially in its Protestant form) from which his “Western” and apparently secular-activist cultural precondition for modern politics is ultimately derived (via Weber, through Lerner, among others). The religious systems of the non-Western world are thus collectively put on one side of the historical divide and all else on the other. But Mayer is not simply talking about non-Western religions. He asserts: “Since religious faith, almost in its essence, embodies final, absolute principles, the inability to create autonomous secular institutions would weaken the ability of that system to generate meaningful social change” (213). This statement is probably correct relative to “secular institutions,” but it has become far from clear that religious institutions cannot generate meaningful social change for those who participate in them. Nonetheless, for Mayer, it is “religion” as such, which “seems to have retained a far greater hold on the lives of the masses in the less developed nations of the African, Asian, and Latin parts of the world than is the case in the industrialized West,” and therefore is “a fact that can account for some of the slow rate of modernization.” Modernization *requires* that “religion” -- not simply culturally different religions, but religion itself -- assume its historically proper place. The non-Western-ness to which Mayer refers is essential only in the sense that non-Western religions have not done what, on his account, “religion” in the West has done -- namely, given up its claim on public affairs and successfully become a matter of the private-realm. This is religion’s proper historical end in the politics of the present.

Importantly, similar teleological assumptions are not always captured in the language of “religion,” as some of Huntington’s reflections on

“development” theory suggest.⁴ Huntington argues that different patterns of economic and political development may be explained by what he calls “culture” differences: “In contrast to the Western model [of sustained economic growth, equity, democracy, stability, and autonomy], another culture’s image of the good society may be of a society that is simple, austere, hierarchical, authoritarian, disciplined, and martial. The image of the developed Western society . . . thus may not constitute a meaningful model or reference group for a modern Islamic, African, Confucian, or Hindu society” (1989, 25). Huntington appears to be trying to accommodate the critique of teleology by suggesting:

Maybe the time has come to stop trying to change these societies and to change the model, to develop models of a modern Islamic, Confucian, or Hindu society that would be more relevant to countries where those cultures prevail. . . . The need is to generalize from the East Asian experience and derive from that experience a developmental model of a society that is authoritarian, stable, economically dynamic, and equitable in its income distribution. The South American model might be one of class stratification, inequality, moderate growth, political conflict, economic penetration, and alternating democratic and authoritarian regimes. (25-26)

Huntington’s concern for historical experience is to be welcomed,⁵ but what he actually does is not jettison teleology as much as substitute new “culture”-specific teleologies. The future development of different “societies” is not opened to *various* possibilities, contingent on external as well as internal factors (economic and political as well as “cultural”). Rather, it is defined by

⁴ I discuss Huntington’s 1987 articulation of several themes to which he has recently returned and popularized in such places as the opinion page of *The New York Times*. See also “The Clash of Civilizations,” *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1993).

⁵ Huntington’s essay in fact opens up a door that has long been shut to historically sensitive inquirers when he argues that comparative studies of culture have something to contribute to the comparative study of world politics, though, I should point out that his very definition of “culture” -- “the subjective attitudes, beliefs, and values prevalent among different groups of society” -- is problematic from an interpretive approach -- see the next chapter on interpretive inquiry.

an apparently reified conception of “their own culture.” Huntington’s suggestion that we fashion new generalizable models of development for these broadly conceived non-Western societies simply reproduces aspects of what was once “tradition” as telos.

Beyond this interpretive move, however, it is important to point out that Huntington’s view of culture is determined by his understanding of especially non-Western religions. To show how this is so, I have reproduced a chart Huntington uses to illustrate the variety of “cultures” (and hence, perhaps, the variety of models of “development”) that may exist in the world today:

| <u>Culture</u> | <u>Principal religion</u> | <u>Region/countries</u> |
|----------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Nordic | Protestantism | Northwest Europe, British settler countries |
| Latin | Catholicism | Southern Europe |
| Arab | Islam | North Africa, Middle East |
| Slavic | Orthodox | Eastern Europe, Soviet Union |
| Indian | Hinduism | India |
| Sinic | Confucianism | China, Taiwan, Korea, Singapore, Vietnam |
| Japan | Confucianism, Buddhism/Shinto | Japan |
| Malay | Islam/Buddhism/Catholicism | Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines |
| African | Christianity/Paganism | Africa south of the Sahara |

Huntington 1987, 24

There are obviously many difficulties in these categories. They neither exhaust all possibilities nor accommodate politically significant heterogeneity. There is, however, another, deeper problem at work here that concerns us.

Recall that when Huntington characterizes the different patterns of development he uses the concept “culture,” not “religion.” Yet, in his

references to the particular “societies” about which he is thinking, he uses what *by his own frame* are “religious” concepts. For example, in his crucial statement about the need to develop new, culture-specific models, he speaks of “Islamic, Confucian, or Hindu society.” Consulting the table we can see that he must be speaking about (what he calls) Arab, Malay, Sinic, Japanese, and Indian “cultures.” But he does not once explicitly refer to either “Arab” or “Indian” “culture” as such. They always appear in their “religious” forms as either “Islamic” or “Hindu” (which, are both great oversimplifications of all of the categories).⁶ These characterizations may be ones that members of these societies themselves “hold.” And, it is true that such conceptual parsimony allows him to avoid some repetition and specificity. Perhaps Huntington interchanges culture and religion in the interest of generality. Whatever the reason, however, by doing so in the context of identifying new culturally relative and teleologically different paths of development -- what he discusses more recently in “civilizational” terms (Huntington 1993) -- Huntington ends up articulating what Mayer has done in only slightly different terms: Non-Western religions are particularly dysfunctional for economic growth, equity, stability, democracy, and autonomy. Religion, in short, is dysfunctional for sustained “modernization,” and the explanatory language of culture (or civilization), in this case, conceals that premise.⁷

I have dealt with the issue of teleology at some length in order to illustrate its continuing role in political studies of modernity. My argument is

⁶ He varies on the other “culture” categories, with the exception of the Latin or Nordic which is not surprising since they are the essential criteria for the whole teleological schema.

⁷ What is important is Huntington’s own conceptual looseness within a discussion which he characterizes as one about “culture” and not “principal religion”. Huntington’s argument would be much different if he called on political scientists to take “religion” seriously.

not intended to suggest that any religion or culture is easily made compatible with some models of "democracy" (Held 1987) or other highly valued practices and institutions. That would simply reverse the error I point to here. My purpose is to identify the teleological assumptions that persist in comparative inquiry with explicit reference to the place of religion -- especially culturally different religions -- in modern politics. As I proceed in this work, I will point out the complexity that is ignored in these pictures, and why it cannot be if we are to understand the politics of modernity. Huntington's attempt to bring culture (and ascriptive criteria more generally) back into comparative inquiry does not get to the heart of the theoretical or methodological problems it is the purpose of this chapter to investigate. The rather simple recognition that culture or religion should now be considered a "variable" in our explanations does not lead us to rethink our expectations about the character of "modernity" or the nature of the relationships between religion and politics in the modern world, as we ought.

To this end, we are aided by recent critiques of the tendency to devalue theopolitics that focus less on teleology than on the so-called "secular" identity of political science. Many commentators have recently argued that the "failure" to grasp the political significance of theopolitical phenomena in the present is a natural consequence of "secular" criteria of relevance in social science inquiry. These criteria, it is argued, incline inquirers to devalue the ongoing role of faith-in-history (and political life more generally) and thus handicap the project of political explanation in theopolitical or partly religiously-conceived contexts. It would be impossible to cover all dimensions of this thesis here, but it is possible to highlight several aspects of it relevant to the concerns already raised.

The first aspect of this critique may be referred to as a basic ontological devaluation of the non-secular by “the secularist’ outlook. Daya Krishna (1991) speaks of this when he criticizes the “ontological sensualism” of the “secular” world view that treats as “real” and “meaningful” only that which “is revealed and grasped and felt *by the senses through the senses, and for the senses*” (Krishna 1991, 548). In his view, as in the view of Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1991), secular social science exhibits a clear tendency to treat “religion” and the human curiosity about the “transcendent” as “eliminable in principle” from all other human pursuits (Krishna 553, Smith 17), or “as addenda that human beings have tacked on here and there . . .”, rather than as “faith and traditions” that forever remain effectual in all human projects -- economics, philosophy, and politics included (Smith 16). It is not that the world of faith that is “odd”, as Smith says secularists would have it. It is the secularist outlook. The point is not “that humanity is *homo religiosus*,” rather, “it is just plain *homo sapiens*.” To adopt the perspective that religion may be cut out of the human whole as if it were some kind of secondary characteristic is to handicap inquiry from the start. Thus it comes as little surprise when secular social scientists fail to attend carefully to the religious dimensions of meaning in political thought and practice in various contexts.

A second angle on the “secular” identity of social science inquiry into the non-secular has been discussed by Michael Hudson and John L. Esposito, two social scientists whose work deals with interpreting politics in primarily Islamic social contexts. Like Krishna and Smith, they criticize “secular presuppositions” that fail to see the dynamism within religious traditions (Esposito 1990, 3). In their view, however, it is not solely an ontological problem. It is a problem in theory and methodology. They suggest that the

tendency to accept the “mythology” that “Islam and political development are incompatible” and to treat the “persistence or revival of religion in politics as regressive” or as “throwbacks or deviations” results directly from the intellectual “traditions” (Hudson) “disciplines and methodologies” (Esposito) of Western social science for which the secular point of view is a criterion of social and political development. Hudson succinctly puts the issue in the following terms: “To put the matter crudely, by Western standards political development is inversely related to religion in politics because secularism is a fundamental criterion of political development” (Hudson 3). Esposito echoes this view, arguing that “secular presuppositions” -- such as “acceptance of the ‘enlightened’ notion of separation of church and state (or religion and politics) -- constitute “a major obstacle to our understanding” Islamic politics (Esposito 1).

Both Hudson and Esposito, therefore, establish an intimate connection between what Hudson calls “Western social science”, on the one hand, and a certain, interpretatively inhibiting secular set of assumptions and approaches, on the other. Hudson locates both in what he refers to as the “nineteenth century, positivist, relativist, and empiricist tradition.” Consistent with the explanatory aims of this tradition, he argues, Western social science relegates ethical issues “to a lower order of priority in favor of the search for trends and even laws of behavior” (2). (This matter will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.) For Hudson secularism functions as the handmaiden of this purported value-free project. It provides the view that politics and the study of it across contexts must transcend the variabilities associated with values like religion. Thus, “secularism” is implicated when the project of political explanation fails at the shores of

contexts where religious ideas and practice are inextricably tied to efficacious understandings and institutions associated with political development.

Secularism is the pivotal support, and constraint, for research perspectives that poorly equip social scientists in their quest to explain, for example, unapologetically “ethical, normative” perspectives on political development found in contemporary Islamic political thought. On Hudson’s account, Westerns social scientists like Halliday and Bill are led by virtue of their intellectual heritage to either overlook or diminish the relevance of religion in modern political thought, practice and explanation.

There are more variations within these critiques of the “secular” identity of modern social science, but the upshot is clear. What Smith terms “the secular *Weltanschauung*” (Smith 16) is an obstacle to understanding politics in the modern world. Almost “by definition,” according to these observers, secularism excludes either “a theocracy or even a polity in which religious identity or actors play a significant role” (Hudson 2-3). Where politics is concerned, on these accounts, secularism treats religion as a phenomenon of the past, not of the present.

Still, while the critique of a kind of secular ontology found in the first perspective has the merit of a rich appreciation for the ongoing place of the “non-secular” in life, it is not entirely clear that all forms of the “secularism” Krishna and Smith criticize deny the significance of faith and tradition in all arenas of human life. If we were to use Bill and Halliday as exemplars of the “secularist” approach, we might point out how both note a place for religion in social life. Bill, it will be recalled, suggests that religious leaders have a proper place as “guides and guardians,” and may even “serve as the consciences” of “secular” leaders. Similarly, Halliday notes that “all religions

contain some ideas that are in favor of progressive ideals" (34). Such ideals have a place "in support of" political objectives. But, like Bill, he asseverates that "where religion has perhaps its greatest appeal is in the sphere of ethics and the major existential issues confronting each individual, not least death" (34). Both agree that religion and politics must be separated. It is true that the problem of separating religion from life addressed by Smith and Krishna is not entirely overcome in these statements, but it is also not clear that it is "secularism" or "secular" thought alone that explains our puzzle. Why must religion be "removed" from politics (a question seemingly elementary to Mayer, Huntington, Bill, and Halliday, but elusive to Smith and Krishna)?⁸ And, is there any relationship between the answer to this question and the tendency to temporalize the difference between theopolitics and "secular and rational" politics (to employ the terms used by Halliday and Bill)?

Hudson's critique addresses this point more directly. Even if he accepts "Western social science's" claim to value-free inquiry too readily (as opposed to identifying its own normative force), his critique has the merit of deepening our understanding of both the "secular" and the teleological dynamics at work when theopolitical phenomena of the present are consigned to the past. According to the critical commentary reviewed thus far, the secularist expectations of certain kinds of Western political thought in conjunction with a teleology that places "ethical, normative issues" either in the historical dustbin or in the "private sphere" has led political inquirers to overlook and diminish the relevance of religion in modern politics and governance.

⁸ Halliday: "The struggle of European liberals and revolutionaries from the Middle Ages onwards against clericalism and the Christian religion were necessary to remove religion and the invocation of supernatural authority from political life, and the same applies to Islam, Judaism, or Hinduism" (34).

By contrast, other recent commentators argue that it is the “modernism” of political inquiry -- rather than its “secularism” -- that conditions this perspective. As is well known, the modern identity of the social sciences has been hotly debated in recent years. And, like the critiques of secularism, the critiques of modernism are vast. Still, several aspects of them speak directly to dynamic at work when theopolitical phenomena in the present are read into the past. I will look at two of them.

The first suggests that modernism judges tradition to be part of the past whose basic function in the present is to serve, in Tilo Schabert’s useful phrase, as an “object of critique to sharpen contemporary consciousness.” In a study on the history of the “modernity,” Schabert argues that modernism exhibits an “aimless dynamism” in its relationship to what it takes as the past. In his view, when Enlightenment thought exalted human scientific inquiry over all “traditional” understandings of the world, the “modern form of consciousness” constructed a “truth gap” between “modernity and the “past.” This gap created two imperatives in modern thought:

The most recent state of scientific development was also supposed to be always the highest, and consequently to legitimate the rejection of older findings of scientific endeavor as mere preliminaries. Consistently, the second imperative urged the maintenance of the epistemological difference between a present maximum degree of insight and earlier confusion of false opinions. A relapse into the seeming ignorance of earlier times could, however, at best be avoided by methodically barring any return to pre-modern stores of knowledge. . . . The imperative reading ‘Thou as a “modern” shalt be superior to all that is past’ (Condorcet), thus led to the ban on crossing the ‘barrier’ between present and past. It excluded any attempt at recourse to pre-modern thinking *a priori*. The ignorance alleged to have prevailed in earlier times and now to be overcome must in no way be allowed to spread again. (17-18)

In turn, these imperatives produced a distinctly modern standard: “any action is held to be justified if it replaces something ‘older’ by something newer”

(18). “‘Older’ doctrines, ideas, or theories do not count as models to be striven after. Instead, they are the object of criticism through which the contemporary consciousness sharpens itself” (18). Modernism sets itself to relate to any public assertion of the “traditional” as the intervention of an anachronistic predecessor. To Schabert, this is an “experiment that intrinsically cannot succeed.” It posits the groundless view that the “‘newer’ is always the ‘better’ and that nothing is ‘better’ than whatever is ‘newest’” (cp. Lawrence 1989. 228). Anything of the past must remain there and be replaced by something else in the present that will be replaced in the future.

An extension of this thesis is the claim that modernism lacks a sense of historical limitation. Jeffrey C. Isaac argues along these lines, invoking “the barbarous history of the twentieth century” as evidence for modernism’s aimlessness that leads it to trample excessively upon meaningful traditions which have value in the present. Seeking a critical alternative to the modern, Isaac suggests what he calls a “post-modern” sensibility: “Only with the aid of some pre-existing solid materials can we seek to reshape our world for the better” (121). This sensibility makes room for “new social movements”, including importantly, “the post-modern search for authentic religious community” (120). Isaac is careful, however, to distinguish this search from “pre-modern religious orthodoxies.” Unlike the latter, the former’s refusal to relegate traditions to the past is accompanied by a reinterpretation of them drawing on “the critical ideals and universalist principles of modernity.” The key is that unlike modernism, which treats particular religious identities “as mere illusions or impediments, anachronisms to be swept away before the

altar of progress,” the post-modern sensibility treats them as “guides to living in the world, *both publicly and privately*” (emphasis added).⁹

Significantly, in the critiques offered by Schabert and Isaac, it is not that the non-modern is missing from the modern frame; it is rather that there is nothing left for the non-modern to do except to get with the flow, to become modern, and to leave static traditional-religious identities in the past or in non-public spheres of life. From their perspective, therefore, it is thus fairly easy to see how some modernists would interpret theopolitics in the present. They would, as perhaps Bill and Halliday have done, either ignore or neglect their relevance in the politics of the present, thinking of them instead as part of the past.

A second cut on the modernist identity of political inquiry suggests that it is not simply that modernism fails to accommodate tradition. Rather it is that modernism distorts traditions like religion in order to secure its hegemony over them. Two contemporary theorists who have posited versions of this thesis are Susan Harding (1991) and Talal Asad (1992).

Harding argues that the modern apparatus of thought -- not limited to academic inquiry but evident in media and policy circles as well -- represents theopolitical “others” as of the past in part to secure its modern authority over them (Compare, Kaplan 1992; Lawrence 1989; Marty 1992; Marty 1991-1993).

⁹ Isaac's interlocutor, Marshall Berman, responds to this by taking advantage of the opportunity to point out to Isaac that modernism does not ignore limits but believes that “we are forced to continually remake the world in order to maintain these limits, to keep them from turning into empty forms, to preserve their human meaning” (Berman 1990b, 123). Thus it is easy for him to read Isaac's postmodernism within the frame of modernist Judaism: “this modernist Judaism supercedes an earlier mode which believed that we would have to renounce our Jewishness in order to become authentically modern”. Finally, he does not fault the Enlightenment with twentieth century barbarism: such violence is transhistorical. “If the peoples of the world learn to live with each other rather than blow each other up, it will be because we have caught up with that old Enlightenment modernism just in time” (123).

She maintains that the representation of politically active, Bible-believing Protestants in the United States as backward, ignorant, anti-scientific Fundamentalists, is an instance in the operation of what she calls "modern discursive practices." These practices simultaneously identify and delegitimize competing, so-called non-modern practices in order to secure modernist hegemony over them. The very conceptualization of the options to modernism in terms of vulgar and extreme dualities is an exercise of power within the discourse of modernism. The "fundamentalist" emerges as "an historical object, a cultural other, apart from, even antithetical to, 'modernity'." Modernity is always "the positive term in an escalating string of oppositions between supernatural belief and unbelief, literal and critical, backward and progressive, bigoted and tolerant." Such representation enables modernism to secure its own historical legitimacy and its understanding of history as a "neutral norm" (374), superior to all others. Furthermore, appearing usually in an objectivist discourse of dispassionate, expert analysis, the representation effaces the exercise of power and domination that is central to it. The representation of the theopolitical other in opposition to the modern is an exercise of power because it functions to hide their internal relation. Fundamentalism, Harding avers, is an "invention" of modernist discourse. It is part of modernism's history. Outside of its modernist deployment, the fundamentalist, as distinct from the "Bible-believer," has no life of its own. "Bible-belief is not an invention of modern discourses, but fundamentalism is. Fundamentalism is a part of modernism's history, not outside of it alien and anachronistic. It is not a dead or dying phenomenon, not an essentialized, oddly enduring, thing stuck in the past . . ." (392).

Asad's analysis assumes a similar conception of power. He suggests, however, that the "historical narratives of modernity" which distort "links" between "religion," "public knowledge, moral identity, and political process" (3) are "central to the project of the modern nation-state." Moreover, he sees a dimension of state power at work precisely in the story of secularization. To him, the widely shared modern belief that history will culminate in an inevitable emancipation from superstition accomplished by the structural "separation of religion from the state, and from science" is a "simple story." This story, he argues, is necessary to "the strategic and administrative disciplines" of the modern state because it assigns "limits" "to religion" (by rationalizing its separation from public life). And it does so in order to secure itself against division and religiously-induced instability. The state accomplishes this by molding the structure of civil society and the identity of privately-oriented citizen-subjects according to the belief that "'religion' is everywhere and always the same" and therefore must be practiced only in the private sphere. The "scope, intensity and continuity [of this disciplining] exceed anything that religious reformers in pre-modern times could aspire to" (11).

Thus, from Harding's and Asad's points of view, the consignment of theopolitical phenomena of the present to the past represents an exercise of power, intrinsic to modernist discourse and effected by the modern state, in which modernist teleologies are secured by writing its competitors out of the legitimate history of politics in the modern world. Modernists represent theopolitical expression as universally outmoded in order to legitimize its marginalization or removal from public life in the present. Why do Halliday and Bill represent radical Islamism in Iran as of the "past"? Because, on these

accounts of modernism, “the past” is invented by modern discourse to conceal what it effectively produces: the modernist interest in controlling and subduing recalcitrant others. A powerplay exists in the concepts themselves which the modernists -- who either believe that discourse is power-free or simply use the story to conceal their designs -- fail to detect. Modernism invents its past to secure its authority, perpetuate its history, its view of progress, its interpretation of the present, its funding agencies, etc. As a result, modernism secures its belief that it is not “we” who need to change: they do, they need to get up to pace, to go faster, to get with it, to change, to see the need to render to Caesar, etc. (But, of course, “You can’t reason with them” (Harding)). To paraphrase Harding, theopolitical expression is not an invention of modernist discourse, but “the past” is. The “past” is part of modernism’s history, not external to it. This “past” (the theopolitical contestants of secular modernity) does not precede modern history, but participates with it in the history of the present. And, the fact that modern inquirers fail to see this is related directly to the influence of modernism as a discourse of power.

It is not clear whether either Halliday or Bill see their conceptions of radical Islamist politics in Iran as manifestations of a modern discourse of power. Yet, they both believe that history makes clear that religion is unsuited for the task of modern governance, and both of their analyses seem to legitimize the removal of religion permanently from politics by an exercise of power. Whether or not this is desirable from a political perspective is a separate question. The important one for us here is: do the analyses of Halliday and Bill identify the concepts they employ as central to the politics they favor? Are those concepts and analyses offered as an exercise of power, or are

they assumed to be detached from politics, statements about the Others, not statements about their own historical interests and concerns? These are important questions raised by the critiques of Harding and Asad, but they cannot be answered adequately in passing. In subsequent chapters, I make some suggestions in this regard concerning the interpretive interests of Anglophone interpreters of Turkey's political dynamics around the secular and non-secular poles of political power.

From these various perspectives on the influence of "secular" and "modern" dispositions of social science research on understanding the place of religion in modern politics, we might draw the conclusion that the "secular" and "modern" identities of political inquiry have had an untoward influence on attempts to understand modern politics generally and the significance of theopolitics in particular. "Secular and modern" assumptions about the nature and character of public life, identity, history, and other features of the human landscape appear too singular, too limiting, in their characterization of the possible relationships between religion (or faith) and public life in modern politics. "Secularism" demotes religion from a prominent place in politics while "modernism" relegates all that is "of the past" to a similar status.

It seems to me, however, that while these criticisms identify important shortcomings related to contemporary secular and modern understandings, the general indictment of "secularism" and "modernity" unnecessarily fixes the meanings of these concepts as altogether problematic. The problems associated with this conceptual reification become apparent when both are viewed historically and within a self-consciously interpretative frame. Within this frame, both concepts express not just one problematic meaning, but

rather an open field of contested meanings. The need to elevate some of the meanings that have been trod over in recent warranted but perhaps overly generalized critiques is underscored by Dorothy Ross's observation that the future of "modernity" remains a fundamental concern in the social sciences (1991, 7). If this is so, and if there is a strong current against a particular understanding of the "secular and modern" identity of political inquiry, we need to ask: "how is political explanation going to get on?" The central importance of our expectations about the content of modern political history, with specific attention given to the range of possible relationships between politics and religion (broadly conceived), underscores the need to reconsider the meanings of "secular" and "modern" that inform our conscious pre-judgements within which we interpret modern politics.

Historicizing Modern Temporal Consciousness

I have proposed using the word 'modernity' to define the consciousness rather than the condition of being 'modern': as a concept, or what I believe is called a signifier, which people have used from time to time with a variety of effects. If it is a signifier, it is also an excluder; we call something (perhaps ourselves) modern in order to distance that of which we speak from some antecedent state of affairs. The antecedent is most unlikely to be of neutral effect in defining either what is to be called 'modern' or the 'modernity' attributed to it; and in understanding the uses of this whole family of words, it is usually important to understand what is being excluded from the 'modern', to what past it is being relegated, and what structures of past and history are being imposed upon experience.

Pocock (1987, 48)

In light of this need, I want to reconceive modernity, as distinct from being "modern", based on two general claims:

1. Multiple modernities do in fact exist (in past and present), are meaningful in the lives of many people who participate in the politics of modernity, and must be understood as such. We need to understand modernity differently and seek to understand others as they understand themselves rather than rush them out of modernity, even if they might appear to exit (philosophically and ideologically) on their own. Modern or not, they participate in the politics of

modernity, and their significance in that context should not be devalued under any set of criteria.

2. Secularism, despite its recent bruises, remains a vital political project in the world today (just as religiously-conceived politics do). This political project, however, is not amenable to generalization. Rather, it is constituted variously by ongoing attempts in our changing world to define and structure the relationships between, on the one hand, religious ideas (or faith-in-context) institutions, and practices, and, on the other, "politics." Moreover, the politics of modernity continue to be centered around these poles, and a judgement about the character of the history of modernity which enables us to salvage a concept of secularism in political inquiry is fundamental to understanding the political world in which we live.

My interpretive work here will focus primarily on the meaning of "modern" and "modernity". I want to begin by trying to avoid giving modernity any explicit content except for saying that modernists, post-modernists, pre-modernists and traditionalists alike participate in it. An important distinction needs to be made. There is a difference between being "modern" and trying to grasp the dynamics and significance of modernity.

We are accustomed to thinking about modernity as those of the "modern" consciousness do: we think of it as an epoch that marks a transition between a broadly conceived pre-modern era and now. The nature of the transition seems to vary depending upon context: perhaps it is the use of technology derived from understandings gained in the advanced physical and natural sciences; perhaps it is urbanization that uproots previously stable and isolated communities and casts them into a new future; perhaps it is the acquisition of greater civil rights and liberties; perhaps it is the change in authority relations that occurs when "legal-rational" relations replace "patriarchal" or "patrimonial" (Weber's ideal-types) ones. Whatever the root cause of the transition itself, the fact is that we think of "modern" and consequently modernity as a period of certain distinction in human history, a period which marks the end of the old and the beginning of the new.

Thinking of modernity in these terms, however, is not how all of the participants in the politics of modernity understand it. It is also not consistent with how all “moderns” have historically understood themselves. These insights emerge if we think of both concepts as historically contested and variously constituted ones. What makes modern contested is that there exists no single definition or criteria of “modern” upon which all moderns can agree (Gallie 1968, MacIntyre 1972, 1973b, Lukes 1975; Gray 1977; Connolly 1974). Importantly, the basis for the disagreement is not simply “linguistic”. Rather, it is political and historical (Skinner 1978; Tully 1988; Ball 1988, Ball, Farr, Hanson 1989, Farr 1989). The contours of the epoch which “modern” picks out, as well as the relationships with the non- or pre-modern which it establishes, vary across contexts. These contexts are shaped by politics broadly understood as relations of power which set the context for political identity and action, thought and practice.

The variability of the meaning of modern can be observed partly by considering the etymology of the word. “Modern” is by definition an epochal term that connotes a division in time (Foucault 1987; Habermas 1987a; Osborne 1992; Heller 1992). Its root meaning is “just today” or “of today.” The meaning itself marks a division of time from “of yesterday.” The notion of a epochal shift is embedded within the very meaning of “modern”. What is not so clear, however, is how the content of that shift is must be understood. Does “of today” mean that what was “of yesterday” is no more (that is, does the shift entail a “negation or transcendence” of the old by the new (Osborne 1992, 73))? Or, does “of yesterday” remain significant in “of today” (possibly a dialectical transcendence by incorporation, or a persistence)? Is the new forever new

and the old forever old (the new is advanced, progressive)? Or, does the new only mark a moment in a process that will return to the old?

There are, in fact, historically various modern consciousnesses that embrace several different answers to these questions. Previous to our “modern” consciousness, “modern” meant other things. As Habermas has noted, until the Enlightenment “the term ‘modern’ appeared and reappeared exactly during those periods in Europe when the consciousness of a new epoch formed itself through a *renewed relationship* to the ancients -- wherever, moreover, antiquity was considered a model *to be recovered* through some kind of imitation” (emphasis added, 1987, 42). Both he and Schabert tell us that ‘modern’ in this sense, was first used in the fifth century to distinguish the new German Christian present from the Roman past. Schabert suggests that Cassiodorus (485-580), the historian of Theodoric the Great, was the first to distinguish between *antiqui* and *moderni*. This distinction conceived of the ‘modern’ as a renewal of the ancient in order to clarify lines of “uninterrupted continuity”. The modern was not a “break in the cultural traditions of antiquity”; it was “the old reacquired and renewed” (Schabert 1985a, 9). (This “modern”, incidentally, has not disappeared from the world’s stage.)

The “modern” idea of a “secular” past as a predecessor to a religious present (with its own eschatological view of time) no doubt strikes our ‘modern’ ears as odd. But the fact is that ‘modern’ identities are and have been variously constituted and understood in our ancient past. We may even wonder, beyond Schabert and Habermas’s observations, how “time” itself was considered by these old “moderns”. This curiosity emerges in light of S.N.Eisenstadt's work on the pre-Axial civilizations of what we might call “pre-

antiquity.” These pagan cultures, he suggests, did not divide time between past, present, and future as most do today. Rather, they saw it as cyclical, in which “the difference between the major dimensions -- past, present, and future -- were only mildly articulated” (1986, 2; cp. 1990). The Axial Age civilizations -- Ancient Israel, Second Commonwealth Judaism, Christianity, Ancient Greece, Zoroastrian Iran, Early Imperial China, Hinduism and Buddhism, and Islam (the latter extended beyond the Axial Age proper) -- saw a “disjunction” in time that the pre-axials did not. This derived largely from the Axial’s need to reconcile the time of the mundane world, which they viewed as lower, with the time of the transmundane or higher world. This project too is still with us. Could it be that the concept ‘modern’ in the fifth century was in fact not simply an attempt to establish a relation with the pagan past but a critical challenge to the eschatological/progressive view of history posited by Christianity (following its great Axial predecessors)?

These Christian views, argues Pocock, evolved in time to see Jesus as the first modern, and thus to a different meaning of “modern” than Cassiodorus’s. “[Jesus’s] life was held to have marked the supercession, in sacred and therefore in secular history, of both ‘antiquity’ and the ‘old dispensation’: of Greco-Roman politics, letters, and philosophy; and of Jewish law, covenant, and sacrifice” (1987, 48). In time, this historical outlook gave birth to competing traditions within Christianity -- first the *via antiqua* and later, the *via moderna*. The former hoped to reconcile dispensation with ancient philosophy (epitomized in the reflections of Thomas Aquinas) and the latter to preserve the original purity of grace by faith alone. The *via moderna* emerged with William of Ockham, in response to the Pope’s usurpation of the Christian Church. These Christians moderns sought a return to the original

sources of grace. It is interesting that this “modern” view also conceived its relation to the past as one of renewal and recovery, rather than negation and transcendence.

Joining the Christian moderns in this period were alternative understandings of ‘modern’ within pagan discourse which preserved this tie to the past as well. Cassiodorus’s concept of “modern” did not die. Pocock sees it in Renaissance neo-paganism which “invented the medieval” and may have been the first to “perceive a connection between ‘the triumph of barbarism’ and ‘religion’.” The institutionalization of Christianity in the Greek and Latin “ecumen” was said to have resulted in barbarism. This new paganism invented “medieval” to distinguish their project of imitating and emulating the ancients from Christian “vias.” According to Pocock, “contemporaries might describe themselves as ‘moderns’ who had at last the opportunity to imitate, emulate or surpass the ‘ancients’, or they might denounce as ‘moderns’ those who had preceded them or were still failing to do so; in either case, however, imitation was of a pre-dispensation, ‘pagan’ or ‘secular’ antiquity” (49).

There are many interesting implications of these historical insights. Among them is that differently oriented ‘moderns’ coexisted within chronologically shared time (even if they did not see themselves as historically synchronous). This would not be the last time this would occur. Pocock captures the significance of this moment from the perspective of those trying to grasp the meaning of modernity:

Two restorationist self-identified ‘modern’ impulses were at work. A ‘return’ might be undertaken in search of a classical rhetoric and philosophy which had arisen before and without dispensation, or in search of the sources of grace which had been established by the second dispensation and might be found in the mere act of a return to it. . . . The neo-pagan philosopher and the antinomian enthusiast, deeply antipathetic to one another, might find themselves travelling in the same company. The metahistorical frameworks before the mind of late

Latin men were diverse and contradictory, and the meaning of 'modernity' highly problematical (50).

By 1800, the sixteenth century extensions of these two modernities are seen as having given birth to "modernity" as such (Hegel).

The real "break" with time and with the old understanding of "modern" was inspired by the developments within the natural sciences. Schabert charts this aspect of the modern consciousness from its inchoate form in the Renaissance neo-paganism seeking to "surpass" the ancients to its maturity in the Enlightenment thought of the eighteenth century. The former generated a heightened tendency to see history as a progressive distancing from the past. Its birth came when thinkers in the Renaissance (he focuses on Rabelais, Bruno, Bodin, Bacon, and Pascal) suggested that the passage of time meant progress towards truth (*veritas filia temporis*). Impressed with demonstrable advancements in the sciences, they boldly asserted, "we can know more (than the 'ancients')." Bacon put it this way: "we have reason to expect must greater things of our own age . . . than that of antiquity . . ." (13). Similarly, Bodin believed that the ancient "inventors of the arts and sciences" deserved "thanks" for their efforts. But he made it clear that "they also left behind much that is incomplete, which we will finish and pass on to our descendants." "[L]ooking at the matter carefully," he asserted, "no one can doubt that in a comparison between our inventions and discoveries and those of the ancients ours must clearly be given precedence. Thus, among all things Nature there is nothing more wonderful than the magnet and yet the ancients understood nothing of it and its use: they had to confine themselves to the Mediterranean basin, while our contemporaries every year sail around the globe and have settled a new world" (quoted in Schabert, 1985a, 11).

Schabert sees an important transformation in this view at the end of the seventeenth century. The “‘modern’ finally ceased to have anything to do with the ‘ancient’” (15). Moderns now charted an independent course. It is significant that Hobbes and Descartes -- certainly champions of reason in the world -- wrote some of their books in “their native tongues” rather than in Latin. In this way, they demonstrated “that henceforth even the abstract meaning of learned minds could be expressed in the ‘modern’ languages, and the language of the ‘ancients’ consequently given up” (15).

Enlightenment thought extended these tendencies: man replaced God as the producer and creator of existence; secular criteria replaced the moral discourse of Christianity; universal truths, replaced myths; and instrumentalism vis-a-vis nature, replaced design . The enlightenment motto -- by reason we (as self-conscious subjects aware of our responsibility to others) can know and act better (see e.g., Kant (1991))-- gave birth to a new “modern” consciousness. In Schabert’s view, there were alternatives:

To be sure, Bossuet and Vico were again to portray the process of history from the viewpoint of divine *providential*. But they were drowned out by those like Fontenelle or Voltaire who now interpreted history from the viewpoint of their belief in progress, so as to discover a *histoire de l’histoire* immanent in the world. From this epoch-making transition of European thought towards modernity there arose the modern form of consciousness . . . (Schabert 1985a, 16-17)

It is important to see how this understanding of modernity reproduced the epochal distinction embedded in the concept “modern”, but it did so while simultaneously altering the temporal relationship between the modern and the pre-modern. Time became an arrow, or even an upward spiral, and whole societies could be measured according to their place on the arrow. The criteria became relatively simple: those societies taking advantage of the sciences are modernizing and future-oriented, and those not are of the past, living a

potentially torpid life of ignorance. Peter Gay, who preceded Habermas in fending off the anti-modernist, conservative critics of the Enlightenment, has interpreted the Enlightenment, modern disposition in the following way:

In general, the Enlightenment thinkers held that knowledge is better than ignorance -- that if social problems are to be solved they can be solved only through action based on research and analysis rather than through prayer, renunciation, or the patient waiting for God -- that reason is better than fanaticism -- that reason must come to terms with sentiment and act in accord with it -- that barriers to inquiry, whether barriers of religion, tradition, or philosophic dogma, are always pernicious since only rational inquiry can understand reality. (1954, 377)

This understanding of the temporal relation between the traditional past and the Enlightenment present was not, as Schabert hints, uncontested within Enlightenment thought. With an eye on the English and Scottish modernities, in fact, Pocock cautions against constructing an explicit and necessary dichotomy between reason and religion, or belief and research (see also Hawthorne 1976). Again, we see that the history of modernity is more complex than many "modernist" categories allow. The English and Scottish Enlightenment contained competing views of the relationship between 'religion' and modern life.

It is true, Pocock notes, that by 1700 "the wars of religion and the Puritan Revolution had burned into elite consciousness the determination that 'enthusiasm' should by any means necessary be contained within the secular disciplines of culture and society." And it is also true that in this context the "new philosophy" of modern science arose. But the "elite" which rallied around it was by no means entirely "secular."

We are accustomed to think of this [new philosophy] as a radical liberation of the powers of the mind to conquer nature and history; but it is equally valid to think of it as conservative, a successful reduction of metaphysics and enthusiasm within the bounds set by experimentalism and empiricism. Anglican, Armenian, and Lutheran clerics joined the

academies and solons in welcoming Newtonian science as the demonstration that the Creator was not immanent in his creation (to hold that he was seemed the ultimate 'enthusiasm'), but stood apart from it, ruling it by laws to which the human intellect might gain access by self-imposed limitations. . . . Much of the Enlightenment is conservative, a demonstration that reason enjoins authority. . . . Clerics were anxious to restore the Word to the Flesh as *philosophes* were to subject the sacred to the secular. (Pocock 1987, 52-53)

Obviously, then, both 'non-secular' and 'secular' participants shared in these modern, world historical moments. ("Theological modernism", which preceded aesthetic modernism (Bull 1992), is an expression of the continuity of this non-secular modernism. The modern cannot be easily collapsed historically with the secular.) Importantly, they were not alone. Others -- such as those who we might describe as "traditionalists" or as "non-" or "pre-moderns" -- and who might have been considered "enthusiasts" at the time -- coexisted and contested the political configurations that were taking shape. In what we generally think about as the birth of modernity and modern politics, alternative, contemporaneous forms of life and politics coexisted, cooperated, and conflicted over the emerging bases of public life. The political significance of each alone cannot be understood outside of the context which they all shared. Even the two more "modern" secular and theological movements which have been significant definers of modernity in our own time attached different meanings to these modern developments.

For the non-theological modernists, the passage of time meant increasing different kinds of control over nature (things once believed only gods could do). Such control, in turn, had consequences for both the understanding and structuring of public life. God, and indeed, all "value judgments" could be removed from public policy considerations. The public would become the exclusive domain of human reason. For the sacred

modernists, this conception of the public “was by no means at odds with [their] demands of a conservative religiosity” (Pocock, 53). Indeed, religion became a very personal matter, and a rightly conceived politics was consistent with this need. Politics, however, was not meaningful from this vantage point because it was “secular” as much as it was how it ought to be from within a “religious” frame (or, better, from within a frame of faith-in-history). Indeed the two were mutually reinforcing: the right kind of religious upbringing could serve the citizen well. The individual “who specialized himself accepted his limitations and the authority of the creator over him, and did not believe [because he believed] that he was the vehicle of immanent spirit” (Pocock 53).¹⁰ One need not divorce God, or faith-in-life, from meaning in everyday political life in order to accept the necessity for a (so-called) modern politics. The importance of God in life has been historically -- in the “West” after Hobbes and Locke -- the basis for such an acceptance.

The historical lineage between neo-pagan, secular Scots and North American political science shows both the scope and limits of our own appreciation of the Enlightenment in modern political science (Farr 1986; Taylor 1985a; Hawthorne 1976). For the general health of the public, political scientists have aimed to discover and to identify generally applicable antidotes, as Adam Smith called them, to the excesses and delusions of enthusiasts of all kinds, including and especially theopolitical ones: “Science” -- especially in its positivist and neo-positivist forms¹¹ -- seems, and perhaps is, too good to be true: it “not only identifies itself as the opposition of ideology,

¹⁰ Pocock traces the development of the modern identity through the increased specialization and functional differentiation in the public sphere, brought about by the rise of the standing army (and the consequent decoupling of the citizen/soldier), the state as a publicly financed gamble on the future.

¹¹ See next chapter for a fuller discussion.

it promises an end of ideology” (Farr 1986, 65). Its various claims on truth, and the divisions among human beings and history implied by its newest revelations, continue their seductive (almost religious) appeal in the self-consciously modern political sciences. But “science” in this form has never told us much about what human beings themselves understand to be true (except perhaps that science has a special claim to truth). With “scientific” truth we have enabled ourselves both to remain unfamiliar with the particularities of human living (especially the concepts that gave and continue to give life -- private and public -- the meanings it has) and to justify that unfamiliarity as part and parcel of the modern project.

From our historical vantage point, and from within a self-consciously hermeneutic frame, this appropriation of the Enlightenment appears fraught with errors. Despite some incremental advances, political scientists continue to believe that understanding can be free from prejudice; continue to consign non-secular, alternative and contemporaneous modes of public living to the past; and continue to reduce politics “essentially” to (so-called) secular matters (e.g., interest aggregation, capital accumulation). Modernization theory -- which came in the 1950s -- and which is both preceded and succeeded by different understandings of modernity, was and remains the crudest (and most brilliant?) expression of each of these premises. Even if we recognized the ongoing contingency of our situation, we could rest in peace knowing that all others would come to see things as we do. Describing the still dominant pluralist frame, Binder has written:

Political freedom is defined as this capacity to change constantly, just as political development is defined as the willingness and enlightenment to want to change continuously. The reason why one should want to change continuously is that the world, nature, all of creation is changing continuously. Not to change continuously is to be submerged in ignorance . . . well-being can only be attained by changing.

Alienation from the world can be overcome only by adopting to a constantly changing world (1986, 7).

The problem is that *not all of those who recognize change as reality, and hence participate in modernity, share the same understanding of 'contingency'* (cp. Binder, 12). Can self-consciously modern researchers reconsider their historical pre-judgements in such a way as to see modernity as a much more hotly contested set of realities, consisting of different modernities as well as traditionally-based, but dynamic, responses to ongoing changes in life?

Reappraising Modernity

Clearly, thinking of modernity solely in terms of a patterned transition from the old to the new obscures the contest over the constitution of public life that it in fact marks.¹² In the context of comparative political inquiry, this has led to the rather careless and uncritical adoption of the view of some of the participants in modernity -- certain "moderns" *and* certain "traditionalists." One need not impose a strict notion of transition to see that modernity is marked generally not by a transcendent transition, but rather by complex alterations, some of which may include certain kinds of transitions, others may not.

Consider, for example, the variety of temporal relations that may obtain between "legal-rational" and "patrimonial" authority relations. Weber intended these "ideal types" to capture heuristically the difference between hierarchical relations within "modern" as opposed to "traditional" contexts. He suggested, for example, that the "spheres of competence" between superior

¹² Of course, this is not limited to the thought of "moderns." It is found in pre-modern and post-modern thought as well.

and subordinate within modern authority relations are governed by impersonal, but intersubjectively knowable, rules; whereas, in traditional authority relations, these spheres are ambiguous and shifting, subject to *ad hoc* definition by those in superior positions. Social scientists continue to gain a great deal of interpretive purchase from both types in historical and political explanation.

Yet, given the clear and stark contrasts between the types, the question arises concerning how to conceive of their temporal relation. For many years, we assumed that the traditional would fade away and be replaced by the modern. This is the core of the “transition-by-replacement” model of modernity. Change occurs in whole packages as homogenously-conceived “societies” pass through heterogenously-conceived, progressive “stages” of development.¹³ In political inquiry, many assumed that changing socio-cultural dynamics would give rise to new modernizing classes that would serve as agents of progressive change (both bureaucratic -- civilian and military -- and entrepreneurial/ bourgeois). They would build modern nation-states which would devote themselves partly to undermining, subverting, and replacing the structures upon which “old” authority relations were built. Along the way, old loyalties and ascriptive character traits necessary to “traditional” structures would be replaced by new loyalties to the new nation-state. The individual, previously imprisoned by the customs of the traditional social world, would be freed to be a participant/citizen in the new modern state. Indeed, what John Stuart Mill called the “struggle between Liberty and

¹³ See Sewell (1991) and Tilly (1984) for critical discussions.

Authority” was to be played out as traditional authority relations were altered by the advent of modern institutions and ideas.¹⁴

This assumption was based in part on the thesis that the traditional societies were incapable of accommodating “rapid change” brought about by the processes we associate with modernization (or capital accumulation and class formation). For quite a while now, this assumption has been debunked.¹⁵ To quote Pocock making a point that he still does not believe we have sufficiently grasped, we have begun to see that what we had considered “tradition” “contained within itself a dialectic far more complex than the word ‘traditional’ can convey” (1987, 56). Indeed, a thoughtful consideration of the variety of structural and cultural dynamics embedded within Weber’s traditional frame shows that any system that nearly approximates the patrimonial ideal type is quite capable of great dynamism (depending on technologies, perhaps, to defend itself). “Neopatrimonialism” can replace old patrimonialism, without any thoroughgoing change in authority relations/expectations.¹⁶ Conversely, legal-rational bureaucracies can encompass patrimonial relations without any thoroughgoing transformation to purposive-rational behavior. In addition, the idea that modern societies are or would be fully dynamic has suffered criticisms. Readers of Weber are familiar with his thesis that a society constituted structurally and culturally

¹⁴ In his examination of the historical subjugation of women, Mill wrote that what “chiefly distinguished modern institutions, modern social ideas, modern life itself, from those of times long past [is] that human beings are no longer born to their place in life, and chained down by an inexorable bond to the place they are born to, but are free to employ their faculties, and such favorable chances as offer, to achieve the lot which may appear to them most desirable” (Chapter One, *The Subjugation of Women*). I am grateful to Bruce Baum for pointing out this passage. Compare Constant (1988) on modern liberty.

¹⁵ See Rustow (1960, 1965, 1967) on “adaptive modernization”. Interestingly, Rustow had read Smith (1963) (Rustow (1960, 381); compare Randall and Theobald (1985), Chs. 1 and 2; Gusfield (1967); Bendix (1967).

¹⁶ See, eg., Clapham (1985).

by legal-rational assumptions faces the danger of becoming an “iron-cage”, wherein freedom from arbitrary rule of the “traditional” type is replaced by the tyranny of rules themselves (no particular person is in charge, but no one is free either; post-modernism is one expression of this sense in modern life).¹⁷

The fact that both systems can accommodate change is an important fact, for our purposes here. Change does not bring about the replacement of the “old” with the “new” but rather a rather complexly constituted array of specifically articulated formations, all experiencing change.¹⁸ It may be that more is preserved than altered (Gadamer). One general label does not capture the complex dynamics at work as “modern” understandings and structures intersect with, interpret, or approach “traditional” ones, or as “traditional” understandings and structures incorporate, interpret, or respond to “modern” ones, vice-versa and so forth (this dynamic, of course now includes “post-modern” ones as well). Whatever the context-specific dynamic, the point that there is no quick replacement is quite clear by now. This is partly the result of the fact that “traditional” structures accommodate change and partly that their constitutive understandings do not fade into history, remaining instead quite efficacious even in their new and changing forms.

Modernity is thus not a replacement of the old by the new. It can't be. It is rather this process of evolving newer relations (some of which include new “fixed” ones), a process whose specific attributes cannot be adequately described *a priori or in general*. Its processes can only be understood in context, given the variety of specifically articulated historical factors that are

¹⁷ Compare Habermas (1968, 1981); Foucault (1980).

¹⁸ The same applies if we were to think in terms of modes of production or social formations: compare Laclau (1971); Anderson (1979); Laclau and Mouffe (1987).

shaping it. Modernity thus understood does not bring about the climax of any particular or grand narrative: it marks the contest among them all in which all of the participants recognize the existence of the contest. They do so in part because one cannot assume (if one ever could) that things will remain the same. In addition, they do so variously: as believers in God or not, defining and contesting time, history, presents, pasts, futures, innovations progress, memory, rationality, institutions, ideologies, authentic politics, science, and relationships to each other and to the cosmos (among other things). They participate, with a shared recognition of the reality of change and the need for one to shape a response to it. Machiavelli may have been the first thinker of the politics of modernity: he realized that the constitution of public life was part human and part fortuna, and that the players in the contest over the character of public life could be believers in God or the Greek virtues as much as they may be believers in liberty or greed (see, e.g., Berlin 1972; Skinner 1978; Wolin 1961; Dietz 1986). They could act within the frameworks of the present or within the frameworks of the past (Ball 1984b).

Participants in modernity, moreover, understand this. This recognition is expressed in the various criteria (or "essential differences" (Heller 1992, 1)) they themselves impose upon the epochal transition that modernity marks: lower/higher; irrational/rational; ignorant/knowledgeable; primitive/civilized; fallen/saved; pre-scientific/scientific; benighted/enlightened; backward (reactionary)/ progressive; closed/open; open/closed; imprisoned/free; material/spiritual; natural/artificial; permanent/contingent; superstitious/clear-headed; etc. (As it turns out, it may be the contest over real power relations itself, rather than any particular ideological or theoretical commitments held by the participants, that best

explains the tendency to consign alternative, contemporaneous political phenomena (theo or not) to the past.) If we think of modernity only in terms of such dichotomies, we create for ourselves the possibility that we will neglect the significance of some in our interest in the other. These evaluative criteria will become criteria of relevance. This is precisely why Fred Halliday and James Bill consider theopolitical phenomena of the present to be traditional baggage of the past. They impose a set of temporally dichotomous historical criteria on chronologically similar phenomena in such a way as to read them as historically nonsynchronous. This evaluation is partly determined, then, by the very meaning of modern as an epochal term.

Furthermore, in Gadamerian terms, this evaluation constitutes their pre-judgement. Halliday's later recognition of the fact that his analysis exhibited certain shortcomings which were themselves guided by this prejudice illustrates the nature of interpretation. The prejudice constituted and guided his interpretation in ways which Halliday was unaware when he offered his earlier account of Iranian politics. But this prejudice was foregrounded when events in Iran, namely the victory of one particular Islamist group during the revolution, provoked it. Now, as we have seen, the content of this prejudice -- a specific kind of secular, modern prejudice -- has been reflected upon consciously from a variety of vantage points. All of these perspectives -- themselves guided by prejudice -- contribute to a process in which we are able to consciously rethink how we approach the study of secular and theopolitical phenomena. If Gadamer is correct, we cannot and should not aim to rethink consciously all of our prejudices, but we can consciously reconsider those which have been provoked. We must do so, otherwise the recognition of prejudice is to no avail. We are in conversation

with those we study. Unless we are changed in that conversation -- unless we understand differently in the course of this engagement -- we have not expanded our possibilities for understanding. We have not, as Gadamer stresses, understood at all. I will have more to say on this in the next chapter. The point I wish to make here is a simple one. The exclusion made possible by the particular kind of secular modern prejudice exhibited Halliday's work need not repeat itself, whether the subject of our concern is another fundamentalist revolution or a new articulation of secularism. We will, of course, always exclude. Whether or not we exclude is not the question here. The question is whether or not we can change, because changing is fundamental to understanding. We must, in short, rethink our judgements about modern political possibilities so that we can account for the multiple modern political actualities.

It is important to stress that the point I am making is not simply that "tradition" is an insufficient characterization of the "past," which now must be reacquired (perhaps as a "cultural" -- read "traditional" variable), so to speak, in order to fully explain the challenges of modern politics. Nor is it that "modernists" are wrong to see the protection of the individual from higher arbitrary authority as a step towards an open society (Popper 1986; Taylor 1992b 52)). (To be modern, it can be said with great enthusiasm, is to herald a new era in which such old ways will be left behind as we fight for the new.) The Iranian revolution illuminated the difference between changing one's thinking about the concept "tradition" and changing one's expectations concerning the path of political history.¹⁹ We might reconceive tradition to have a relevance we never believed it would. We might, that is, extend the

¹⁹ This is one of the enduring contributions of the dialogue in comparative inquiry over the nature of "revolution". See works by Skocpol, Tilly, Arjomand.

scope of our variables. But can we make room, real space, for tradition in our understandings of history? There is an important difference between seeing religious traditionalism, apparently on the rise throughout the world today, as a meaningful human response to changes brought about in the world, and seeing it as a “refuge” (Bill, above) from rapid socio-political change. In both cases, tradition may be recognized as an enduring feature of the political landscape. But the latter expresses an assumption that traditionally meaningful responses are inappropriate. It is the difference between seeing traditions “persist” almost out of place in the modern world and seeing them “exist” as an alternative contemporaneous (Springborg 1986) forms of life in the modern world.

My point, therefore, is that various modernist and non-modernist expectations must be seen within a picture of modernity that does not obliterate, and indeed accounts for, the contestation that is essential to it. Thinking of modernity’s past or future in terms of a transition by replacement thus prevents us from seeing that in fact it marks a moment of contestation. Yes, things have changed, and indeed, they might change more according to one’s highest expectations. But the change that has occurred is a change that has occurred within the rather habitually established system of the “old”, which itself is never “fixed.” It is wrong *to expect* transition, both the ongoing unilinear, evolutionary transition that has come to be the mark of the “modern” model (to both its proponents and critics), and even smaller scale ones. It is better to see alteration and contestation. For example, the public liberties of women, still wanting, have largely been won in fights with patriarchy; and yet patriarchy (in various forms) continues to constitute nearly all relations between men and women. Fighting for the modern

liberties of women is not a fight that is over, or may ever be over. The modernity that is said to mark a moment in the universal transformation from one kind of society to another does not happen as a simple transition. There are few grounds to think that such a transition is historically necessary. Modernity marks an awareness that transition and alteration are possible -- and this is an awareness that *all* of the contestants over the constitution of public life share, and to which they direct their attention, institutions, and technologies. (Within this awareness, we must also anticipate new forms of "fixed relations".) The imposition of a grand narrative of transition by replacement on what are really only small and incremental changes away from, and even perhaps in the context of, arbitrary rule simply clouds what is actually taking place. Similarly, to see our conception of "tradition" as the only problem with the modernization schema is to miss how the entire set of historical expectations within which the "traditional" is juxtaposed (frequently to the left -- i.e. temporally prior to) with the "modern" is an inadequate pre-judgement about the nature and character of modern political history.

Simply because participants in modernity do not see that they share a history (or, occupy the same temporal world) does not mean that we ought to think so as well when we try to understand the politics of modernity. To do so is not only to run the risk of closing history, or ending modernity. It is also to succumb selectively and uncritically to the comprehensive validity of the participant's belief. To succumb to this is to close inquiry rather than keep it open, anticipating that we will find not simply what we are looking for but also other possibilities, subtle and nuanced in particular ways, whose significance we can only begin to understand if we are ready to see them. We

have for too long participated in the “modern” tradition of relegating to the past or to irrelevance those things we simply do not agree with or do not find relevant in our projects of the present. (Lately, given the way we are talking, it appears that modernity and secularism might meet this fate as well.) We have thus overlooked how significant they are or may be to our fate in our shared present. Can we conceive of the temporal history of modernity in such a way as to not relegate theopolitical (and/or secular-politics) to the past?

Changing Expectations

The need to rethink the concepts that constitute our understandings of modernity is based on several considerations. I will discuss four of them by way of conclusion here. The first is that there has been a general, and increasingly shared, recognition that modernity is not reducible to one criterion or pattern. This is not to suggest that there are *no* “intelligible” patterns or “chronologies of salience” in modernity (Tilly 1984, 12). It is only to reaffirm the need to see modernity as constituted by various possibilities. The unidimensional exclusivity of our collective judgement about modernity, supported by inadequate historical expectations must now be opened-up.

Two prominent historical and political sociologists have recently added their voice to the reappraisal of “modernity.” S. N. Eisenstadt has stressed the need to acknowledge “different modern civilizations” (1990; 1987; 1986, 15); and Charles Tilly, reflecting upon the social-theoretical “incubus” of nineteenth century thought, argues that change is “not a general process but a catchall name for very different processes varying greatly in their connections with one another” (1984). Eisenstadt’s recent theoretical reflections consistently stress the varied “symbolic” and “institutional”

constellations that now constitute modernity. He speaks of “different modes of incorporation and reinterpretation of the premises of modernity; of different symbolic reactions to it; as well as the development of various modern institutional patterns and dynamics” (1987, 10).

Tilly offers an interesting example. He considers the expectation, derived from social evolutionary thought and shared among historical and political inquirers, that one inevitable outcome of modern history would be progressive “differentiation” of social processes and structures. Tilly agrees that differentiation is “one important process of change, [but] many of the fundamental changes in our era actually entail *dedifferentiation*, and to some of them the question of differentiation is secondary or even irrelevant” (1984, 12). As evidence, he cites processes such as linguistic standardization, mass consumption, and religious diffusion. “Differentiation” as one outcome of political history turns out to be one of many possible “outcomes” of modern history. It is a process applicable to some specific contexts, but in no sense *generally* applicable. As an alternative expectation, Tilly suggests the more broadly conceived notion of “abstract specified processes” as outcomes of political history. This conception has the virtue of opening up our expectations to see various processes -- some of which entail differentiation, others standardization, and others even different formulations -- as emergent “modern” ones.²⁰

This leads us to a second reason why we should reappraise our understandings of modernity. This reason is that if we do not alter our views,

²⁰ As the editors of the new *Journal Thesis Eleven* have recently put it: “Modernization should no longer be seen as a synonym for development with its own preconception cast from the moulds of either Parsonian evolutionism, historical materialism, or Leninist practices. Rather, it is indicative of a multidimensional set of experiences and world-orientations or cultures which often clash with one another in the present, as well as with the past” (*Thesis Eleven* 1992 (33), iii).

we will continue to fail to see and to grasp the particular significance and influence(s) of religiously-conceived participations in modern politics, what I have been calling theopolitical ones. Our collective judgements about "religion" in modern politics must be opened-up. This is one of the more obvious conclusions we might draw from the criticisms reviewed above, and, indeed, it seems to be taking hold in the social sciences today (see, e.g., Lawrence 1989; Wills 1990; Marty 1991). Still, it should be said that many in political science -- which is deeply influenced by the particular secular modernist ideal criticized in these pages -- are reluctant to give up what they take to be solely secular bases for legitimate modern politics.

It is not, however, as if seeing theopolitical phenomena as unexpectedly legitimate aspects of modern politics lies entirely outside modes of thinking in political science. Consider, by way of comparison, the arguments over the historical status of modern nationalism. Social scientists have for quite a long time recognized the "modern" quality of nationalism, whose social corporatist forms were initially unexpected, post-Enlightenment responses to the reality of change (see Schmitter 1974). Walker Connor (1987) and Benedict Anderson (1992) have recently reiterated this point, stressing the need to see nationalism as a "modern" and not "ancient" phenomena. As Shlomo Avineri has argued within the specific context of modern Jewish nationalism:

the forces unleashed by the French Revolution were not only those of liberalism and secularization but of nationalism as well. The modern, secularized and educated Jew, shedding much of his particular characteristics, was nonetheless faced with the difficulty of relating to a non-Jewish society that, for all its general adherence to universalistic principles, was viewing its own identity in terms of national integration and cohesion. The religiously oriented self-perception of gentile society was not replaced by an undifferentiated, universalist fraternity but by a new identity distinguished by nationalism, ethnicity, a common language and past history, either real or imagined. If people ceased to view themselves as Christians and their neighbors as Jews in the religious sense, they began to view themselves as

Frenchmen, Germans, Russians, Poles, Hungarians. . . . The inclusivism of the universalistic principles of the French Revolution was tempered everywhere by the historical exclusivism of much of modern nationalism. (Avineri 1981, 10-11; compare Katz 1987, Lustick 1988)

The religiously-conceived identity questions that are at the root of modern nationalism (frequently and problematically considered “secular”) raise some interesting questions.²¹ For our purposes, Avineri’s point that modernity contains, as it were, “modern nationalism” is similar to the one I wish to make: modernity contains “theopolitics” as well. If we can recognize nationalism as a dynamic in modern politics, certainly we can recognize other responses to the “thrust” of the “modernization” dynamic as participants in modern politics. Differently oriented participants might contest their politics (“Are they protectors of liberty?”, and so forth), but we cannot contest the fact that they are participants in the politics of modernity.

In fact, to continue to ignore the sometimes intimate relation between faith and public life is to ignore the very evolving meanings of politics throughout the world, both in the “East” and in the “West”. Eliot Deutsch has recently charted the connection between “religion” and other identities that “have refused to be ‘enclosed’ by the “framework of ideas” “we associated with modernity” (xiii). Deutsch argues that the “serious” questioning of this framework in the West today does not mean that modernity is over.²² To the contrary, he points to efforts “with varying degrees of success . . . to forge creatively a new modernism appropriate to [cultural] traditions, especially in

²¹ And, I should add that were Avineri sees the persistence of differences based on religious self-perceptions, many others have seen gender, race, and class “contradictions” in Enlightenment thought and practice (see, for a sampling or recent views, the essays in Deutsch (1991)).

²² Thus, we do not necessarily need to eliminate responses like Jeffrey Isaac’s discussed above from the politics of modernity (compare Havel 1992). His own “post-modern” sensibility is a uniquely “Western” view of the relationships between religion and life in modernity.

East Asia and Africa. The emphasis is clearly on getting behind what J. L. Mehta calls the 'single vision' of Western views of modernity." (From the perspective offered here, Deutsch conflates "modernity" with "being modern".) Current history, argues Deutsch, illustrates that all societies have much to contribute to "the meaning of modernity in the West" (xiv).

But if we push this further, we can see with Richard Rorty, that the West itself (and hence the meanings of modernity in "it") is not "a finished off object". Rorty spies a lingering, "distressing tendency to essentialism" in "our recent willingness to talk about 'the West' not as an ongoing, suspenseful adventure in which we are participating but rather a structure which we can step back from, inspect at a distance" (1991, 4). The West, in short, has "not exhausted its possibilities" -- secular and theopolitical -- either (1991, 14).

More concretely, the meaning of the particular relations between "religion" and "politics" appears to be constantly evolving here as well as in other places in the world. In Poland, for example, the prominent opponent of the Communist regimes, Adam Michnik has recently published a book in which he criticizes a "reflexive anti-clericalism that has been the hallmark of the Left in Europe even since Voltaire" (Wolff 1993). Martin Jay, thinking about Lyotard and post-modernism, has observed that, "[i]n the disappointing aftermath of the 1968 events, ... one of the most arresting developments in France was in fact a new appreciation for the legacy of Judaism" (1992, 35). In North America no day goes by without understanding how central questions of religion/faith are to the modern governance. These questions not only involve radical theopolitical activists, but implicate a variety of differently nuanced, religiously-conceived public articulations (see, e.g., Wills 1990). One philosopher of religion in the United States has even offered the fascinating

prognosis that we in North America should expect more, not less, “shamanism, magic and longing for miracles” in the years to come (Barnhart 1990, 31).

If the relevance of “religion” in modern politics is not underscored sufficiently in these contexts, it certainly is in places where the principal religion is Islam. In the lives of people in the “Dar al-Islam” (the “abode” of Islam), faith-in-history is a historical fact of “real” public significance. It is no accident that the extension of our global (political, economic, intellectual) reach to places we generally refer to as the Islamic world has awakened an awareness of the “secular” and “modern” analytical dispositions which tend to govern our inquiries. The growing body of literature emerging from political research in these contexts commonly stresses the need to get beyond the old “secular” and “modern” habits of consigning all articulations of Islam to the past. This literature extends far beyond Maxime Rodinson’s case that Islam, once perceived to be compatible only with pre-capitalist (read pre-modern) economic systems, is in fact compatible with capitalism. Today, Sunni radicals are being compared with Protestant radicals (Goldberg 1991), Shiite ulema with Calvinist preachers (Arjomand 1988), and the Iranian revolution (as distinguished from the Islamicization that followed it) with “the tradition of mass-based revolutions against absolutism, autocracy and upper-class privilege to the English Revolution, the French Revolution, and the Russian Revolution” (Moghadam 1993a, 1993b, 6-7; compare the analyses of Skocpol, Tilly, Arjomand). The research of Saad Eddin Ibrahim (1980) is frequently cited to show that many Islamist activists include students in the sciences and engineering, as well as members of the urban poor or “traditional” economic sectors. This is significant to many because it contrasts with the historical expectations of many social scientists who believed that the scientifically-

educated young would constitute a New Middle Class that would usher in secular-modern futures (Halpern 1963; Richards and Waterbury 1990).

Increasingly, those who comprise this class see their role in science, commerce, and politics through a faith-in-history lens.

The need for a view of modernity that admits a place for Islamically-generated articulations in modern politics is more than just a need to reformulate new "theories" of the middle class, however. We can no longer afford to reduce Islam to one system that has one proper historical place. It is clear that some Muslims, living in, or connected with the experience of, life in contemporary Islamic contexts, will not "comply" with *our* expectations. Sharabi has recently described the fundamentalist insistence on "independent interpretation and scholarship that is not Western derivative" (1990).²³ There is an important convergence between this insistence and assertions in the West seeking to get beyond one fold for modernity. Rorty's comment that the West must necessarily remain open to what are presently unknowable self-definitions comes to mind (cp. Hudson 1980, 2).

An interesting contribution to this dialogue has been made recently by Abdelwahab El-Affendi (1991).²⁴ He confirms Sharabi's observation that Islamists are insisting on an independent alternative to the West, but he does so in a way that acknowledges what most have come to forget both about the West, and about Islam, namely that they are both capable of, and internally consistent with, change. El-Affendi tries to capture this. Consider the following statements. His complex and variously constituted understanding of

²³ Compare Haddad (1982); Voll (1983); and essays by Kurshid Ahmad, Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, Hassan al-Turabi, Javid Iqbal, Ismail R. al-Faruqi, Khalid M. Ishaque, and Kemal A. Faruki in Esposito (1983).

²⁴ A self-described Islamist, El-Affendi and others like him "came to Western universities to study 'ourselves'," in part because "Western scholarship has become the perceived apex of human endeavor in most fields" (1991, 83).

both the West and Islam is something we must position ourselves to understand.

There are those who, á la Khomeini, deliberately seek the role of the iconoclastic outsider. But even Khomeini insisted on being part of this world, though on his own terms. . . . Our decision is: we want to be effective, to influence the world, to change it. And to live in it, to participate in its affairs. But we also do not want to be someone else to do this. . . . We represent a culture that claims its place on merit, and defiantly poses as the guardian of Truth and right. It faces the dominant culture as a challenger and an equal and ultimately hopes to win the contest.

But how are these claims to be interpreted in this age of pluralism (or polytheism, to use Weber's characterization), where everyone is free to worship the god of his choice, and no one is entitled to ask which is the True God. . . . How can we preach our one True God at the festival that is content to celebrate polytheism?

Well, by doing just that: preaching, making our stance perfectly clear. Our problem with "pluralism", though, is that its tolerance comes to an end when its basis is questioned. You are all right around the place if you are a polytheist with a different god, but if you reject all gods, and want out, then you have a problem. We are all for pluralism and the self-critical attitude underlying it. I certainly took great care to present my study in such a self-critical mode. This was not solely because that was the only way I could hope to obtain a Ph.D. from a Western university. It was also because I accept, on principle, Popper's 'evolutionary' conception of knowledge, which treats the acquisition of knowledge as the constant adaptive modification of inborn responses. Self-criticism, according to this view, is the ladder up which one climbs to higher levels of being. Learning from one's mistakes is the key to this process. And I accept that I have benefitted immensely from adopting a self-critical attitude, continuously a self-critical attitude, continuously subjecting my prejudices and preconceptions to rigorous questioning. The exercise was certainly worthwhile, and I feel myself a better person for having subjected myself to its rigors.

I want, moreover, to claim that this was a development *in Islam*, and not a personal shift. Our generation of Muslim activists have progressed *within* our Islamic faith, and not outside or against it; and that is what makes our endeavor significant. We have abandoned nothing of our faith or commitment to Islam, but we have achieved higher levels of self-criticism, which could enable us to contribute positively to the universal human endeavor, and *be part of it* [emphasis added]. But we are part of it as *Muslims*. (1991, 88-89)

We must take careful note of how El-Affendi's identity is complexly constituted of West and East without diminishing his claim to incorporate all within Islam.

[W]e claim that 'progress' in achieving mutual understanding is not served, but negated, by eliminating the specificity of Islam. For what

would remain, then, to be understood? Mutual understanding could only be achieved if Muslims, *qua* Muslims, were able to speak for themselves in the ongoing debate. And we have been working on that. . . . Islam, in us, has accepted and assimilated the valid criticisms voiced by modern thinkers, and now presents our culture strengthened, and not annihilated, by these criticisms. After most of the ancient ‘Orient’ has melted in the heat of rationalism and industrialization (and with it much of our traditional culture), we are still here: the pure metal cleansed and purified, but not caused to evaporate, by the heat. The pure matter of which we are made, and which defines us, is faith. In this age, of infidelity, we keep this abandoning flag flying, we remain the believers, the community of the faithful, the religious community par excellence. (89)

It is essential to understand this statement as an alternative conception of time effective in the politics of modernity. El-Affendi's understanding of the role of the community of the faithful does not diverge tremendously from Muhammad's seventh century conception of it. Yet this is not all there is to say about the identity of this community, nor is it license to write him and others who share this conception of place and significance off as if they come solely from the past.

In addition, it is significant that El-Affendi's assertion on “the vitality and dynamism of Islam” (89) and Rorty's idea of the West as an “unfinished” “complex of attitudes” are both chronologically and historically synchronous (cp. Matilal 1991, 141). They are responses called up by various historical forces to ongoing, changing contexts in the politics of modernity. As such, they virtually represent the fully contested character of modernity.

To clarify, my argument is not intended to open our understandings so wide that we see every Islamist (or Christian, or Jewish, or Hindu) revivalist leader as “modern.” Such a general cast blurs relevant substantive and philosophical distinctions between the active participants in the contest over modernity. (In this context, however, it is worth noting that a certain conception of “agency” informs El-Affendi's articulation of the Islamist

project.) It is an argument, however, for us to open ourselves up so that we see an Ayatollah Khomeini as a participant in the contest of modernity, and not some traditional relic from the past.²⁵ If we are to understand modern politics, to borrow from one of Quentin Skinner's latest examples, we cannot "exclude in advance the possibility that those who believed in witches may have done so as a result of following out some . . . recognizable chain of reasoning" ("Reply" in Tully 1988, 243). To do so is to "block the path of inquiry" (Cp. Rorty 1992, 59; Putnam 1991, 310).

We will best avoid blocking inquiry by altering our expectations about "modernity" -- opening them up to things previously unexpected -- and then trying to grasp how others define themselves in light of this alteration (the next chapter on interpretive inquiry deals with the latter). Again, even as we see and interpret, we will always miss and exclude; prejudice is always at work. But we must adopt a posture towards those we study which enables us to see, as best as is humanly possible (discussed in the next chapter), the varieties of modernities as well as the varieties of assertions made about the relationships between "religion" and "politics" in alternative, contemporaneous modern contexts.

In this context, the third reason for reappraisal arises. We need to create a space for grasping alternative secular political formulations within our view of modern politics just as we need to create a space for grasping theopolitical formulations therein. Our expectations about what is "secular" must be opened-up. As we have seen, for too long, the path of modernity has

²⁵ For the same reason that it does not make sense to describe *all* "nationalisms" as modern, it does not make sense to designate all theopolitical assertions as modern. But just as all nationalisms participate in modernity, so too do all theopolitical assertions. Calling such assertions "reactionary" and consigning them to the past is an easy and irresponsible way out of modernity (Cp. Putnam 1991, 301).

been circumscribed by an all-too-narrow understanding of the relationship between religion, or, more generally, matters of conscience and politics. Some call this “secularism” and the “secular” standard. As I will go on to argue at length in this dissertation, the criticism is warranted in some articulations of secularism, but we are not at a standstill here, any more than we are regarding “modernity”. What is “secular,” what we mean by “secularism” and its different modes in modernity, and, consequently, the practices, relations, and institutions associated with secularism are historically contested and various.

Like modernity, secularism as an idea and secular institutional relations as practices make no sense apart from the understandings people hold of them. As such, “secularism” is a constantly evolving and reinterpreted tradition in modern politics, just as religiously-conceived participations are. In the same way that the tradition/modern dichotomy has been too narrow to capture the plurality of “traditions” and “modernities” with us today, so too the religion/secular dichotomy is too narrow for understanding the “religions” and “secularisms” with us today. In the process of opening up, we do not need to jettison either religion or secularism, only to consider formulations by others as well as by ourselves. Others are grappling with the project of reconciling faith *and conscience* (religious or otherwise)-in-history with the politics of the modern state, economy and so forth. We need to be open to seeing and to understanding these formulations.

We must not lose sight of this task. It is a fundamental belief underlying this dissertation that a concept of secularism *is crucial* to a fruitful conception politics in our time (“just today”). If it is part of our modern situation to see the contestation/conflict/cooperation that marks modernity, we must see the non-religious and vital secularist traditions as participants as well. If we are to

confront the increasingly awesome questions about the place of religion in modern states, the “size” and “content” of this sphere in different secular contexts must become a concern for comparative inquiry.

As an example of the secularism’s vitality, we may point to the findings of the same scholar whose work is cited to illustrate the powerful significance of theopolitics in the Middle East. Ibrahim (1993) has recently observed small but significant challenges to Islamic politics in local Middle East contexts. His observation appears in the context of a discussion about how Islamists are continually developing “the arts of mobilization and articulation” in competitive electoral politics. Ibrahim takes pause to note that some of these lessons have come from defeat as well as success:

They [the Islamists] have also learned the imperatives of appealing to circles wider than their own if they are to win elections. Egypt’s Muslim Brothers learned that lesson when they lost a reelection contest *in the pharmacists association in 1992, gracefully conceding their first defeat in ten years [emphasis added]*. The case of the pharmacists has shown that the march of Islamists is reversible, not only in professional associations but also in political contexts at large. In Ibrid, Jordan, such a reversal took place two years after Islamists swept elections in 1990. Even the dazzling victory of Algeria’s FIS concealed the fact that FIS lost 1 million votes between the municipal elections of 1990 and the parliamentary elections of December 1991.(Ibrahim 1993, 304)

It is not clear to me if these developments mark a historical “reversal” as Ibrahim’s remarks imply. And, despite the “professional” contexts for these challenges, the identity of the opposition is also not entirely clear. But the evidence does suggest that something else besides, or more complex than, a simple theopolitical advance may be occurring.

More explicit evidence for the vitality of secularly-oriented traditions can be found in Hisham Sharabi’s recent reflections on political thought in the Arab context. Sharabi gives voice to a new secularism in the Arab world: “the current movement of secular cultural criticism in the Arab world

presents itself not as a synthesis of a compromise binding Western type modernity to Arab or Islamic modes of thought, but rather as an oppositional discourse seeking to transcend both Western hegemony and fundamentalist resistance through systematic critique. This 'new critical consciousness' still in its formative stage, seeks, on the one hand, to go beyond mainstream Western scholarship -- which has dominated Arab scholarship and training in most Arab countries since the nineteenth century -- and, on the other hand, to establish its own independent perspective" (1990, 2; Cp. essays in Abdel Malek 1983). Implicit here is that the categories that dominate the "Western social science" secularization frames of "secular-modern" discourse are inadequate to understanding the new articulations of the relationships between culture, broadly conceived, and politics, or religion and politics more specifically. Thus, there is agreement with Hudson, et. al. But there is also more to the dynamics of history than a general critique of "secular" criteria acknowledges.²⁶ We must be open to listening and hearing more about one another in this context (White 1991, 60-8; Cp. Geertz).

By understanding these new formulations, and the multi-historical lineages on which they are based, political inquiry, especially inquiry in political theory and comparative politics, can make distinct contributions to thinking about modern politics. If, however, we continue to rely only on those prejudices which we have come to see as hindering in our inquiries -- or if we try to bracket prejudices in search of a neutral vantage point -- we will have only prejudice in the narrowest sense imaginable. We will fail to grapple with the important dimensions of the most crucial contests in modern political life.

²⁶ Frankly, I think that Hudson and Esposito recognize this: see Hudson (1991) and Esposito (1991) and compare with the theoretical thrust of the essays discussed above.

We will also fail to appreciate what Arendt once called the “dimensions of depth of human existence” (1956, 94) in their historically evolving forms.

Herein lies the fourth reason for reappraisal: we need to think of our historical moment -- shared with alternative, contemporaneous modes and formulations -- in such a way as to appreciate the ‘depth’ of human experience in modern politics. This depth takes various forms, some of which we may wish to actively oppose. But we must not fail to try to grasp this depth if our project of political explanation is to succeed. My general thesis in this work is that what we may now see as blinding pre-judgements supported by anti-interpretive methodological tendencies have consistently kept us from understanding this depth.

I will now go on to identify how the hermeneutic approach to understanding modern politics is essential to this task. In underscoring the need for a self-consciously hermeneutic approach to understanding generally, Charles Taylor sums it all up. He compares what he calls a “purely acultural theory” with a “cultural theory” of modernity. A cultural theory, unlike an acultural one, accounts for others’ “understandings of person, nature, society, and the good” (1992, 92). An acultural theory assumes that understanding modernity does not require such knowledge. Modernity, an acultural theorist might suggest, can be understood as the sum of several process like industrialization, urbanization, literacy, and so on. What Taylor says about the difference between the two serves as an appropriate introduction to the next chapter in which I draw on many of Taylor’s “methodological” reflections:

. . . a purely acultural theory distorts and impoverishes our understanding of ourselves, both through misclassification (the Enlightenment package error), and through too narrow a focus. But its effects on our understanding of other cultures is even more

devastating. The belief that modernity comes from one single universally applicable operation imposes a falsely uniform pattern on the multiple encounters of non-Western cultures with the exigencies of science, technology, and industrializations. As long as we are bemused by the Enlightenment package, we will believe that they all *have* to undergo a certain range of cultural changes, drawn from our experience, e.g., “secularization” or the growth of atomistic forms of self-identification. As long as we leave our own notions of identity unexamined, we will fail to see how theirs differ and how this difference crucially conditions the way in which they integrate the universal features of ‘modernity.’ (Taylor 1992b, 23)

It should be clear that the acultural theory, despite its ostensible objectivity, turns out, from the perspectives of those it seeks to understand, as a “rival orientation”, unconscious of its own partisanship (Taylor 1985g, 132). We can no longer afford to exclude the past from the present, just as we can no longer afford to reduce the “other” to the “same” (White 1990). We must begin to see political and historical relationships where we have usually imposed negation and transcendence (compare, Taylor 1992b, 66).

To sum up the need for reappraisal: modernity does not entail the victory of one form of living or politics over others. Rather it consists of multidimensional responses from a variety of participants whose internal and external understandings and relations are contested and hence sometimes conflictual, sometimes compatible, sometimes transitional, but always only potentially subject to alteration. I believe that this understanding of modernity should be the basis of a “new” pre-judgement, albeit a conscious one, about the possibilities and directions of modern politics. When we venture into the study and accept responsibility for explaining the politics of others, we must be open to the unexpected as opposed to expectant of particular outcomes. We must be prepared to write others into, rather than read them out of, the history of modernity. With modernity, all concepts are open to tension and contestation, including the concept of modernity itself. No essential

concepts exist, only essentially or historically contested ones. We cannot escape from the real, present possibility that the outcomes of political, social, economic, and cultural change are varied, and to borrow a term from O'Donnell and Schmitter, indeterminate (1986). Understanding modernity is hard, and potentially disappointing, work.

In short, exclusive reliance on an acultural theory unfits us for what is perhaps the most important task of social sciences in our day: Understanding the full gamut of alternative modernities that are in the making in different parts of the world. It locks us into an ethnocentric prison, condemned to project our own forms of everyone else, and blissfully unaware of what we are doing. (Taylor 1992b, 93; 1992a)²⁷

In this work, I attempt to contribute to the project of understanding alternative modernities with us today by explaining aspects of modernizing and secularizing thought and practice in the early Turkish Republic. I examine the influence of the secular modern prejudices discussed in this chapter on the understanding of aspects of twentieth-century Turkish political history. Rather than examine their influence on the interpretation of theopolitics, however, I turn my attention to their influence on the interpretation of secular politics. I do this in part to contribute to ongoing projects within political science to enhance our historical awareness of the discipline of political science, and in part to reinterpret particular

²⁷ Note other interesting efforts: Tilly (1984), Tucker (1990), Herrera (1991); Compare, at the philosophical level: Rorty (1991, 1992), White (1990), Bernstein (1991). Hillary Putnam (1991), has written recently: "The clash of traditions and conceptions of the good will certainly continue. If that clash is not accompanied and tempered by the effort to understand the values and conceptions of the good which are not our own and the willingness to compromise, our worst fears will certainly come true. Writing of the very failing I have been discussing, the failure (James calls it a 'blindness') to understand the 'values and meanings' of others, James writes that "No one has insight into all ideals. No one should presume to judge them off-hand. The pretension to dogmatize about them in each other is the root of most human injustices and cruelties, and the trait in human character most likely to make the angels weep" ((1991, 311). White implores: "Our creative bringing into presence in language must be joined with a preserving of the sense of otherness . . ." (1991, 60; CP. Bernstein 1991).

phenomena in light of this reappraisal of the substantive character of modernity. Moreover, I take up this project because I believe that it is time to open up our understanding of the conceptual and practical possibilities of secular politics in modernity by critically examining and explaining so-called secular and modern politics from a self-consciously interpretive perspective. My chapters on Turkey concentrate on this theme; my interpretations attempt to take seriously the pre-judgement I articulate here as well as the assumptions of interpretive political inquiry which I discuss in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

The Interpretive Commitment in Political Science

The *expert*, that figure who so often justifies financial subsidizing of the social sciences by public and private corporations, turns out to be a mythological beast. Like the unicorn, a social existence and social importance is conferred upon him as long as people believe in him. The expert's claim always takes this form: his taxonomic ordering represents the determinativeness of a future not available to ordinary agents. He thus legitimates the treatment of the surface phenomena of social life in one way rather than another by invoking the notion of deeper structures. . . . As the prophet and the priest would on occasion invoke their alleged deep understandings against the social order, so the expert and radical critic can appear in a similar role.

Alasdair MacIntyre 1973a, 339

It is the mark of the trained mind never to expect more precision in the treatment of any subject than the nature of that subject permits.

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* I iii

Since Gadamer's hermeneutics, aspects of which I have discussed in my introduction, "explores how understanding occurs at all -- not how it should be regulated in order to function more rigorously or effectively," it would be unwise to consider his insights as methodological guides for human inquiry (Weinsheimer 1991, x). Indeed, one of Gadamer's principal contributions to discussions in the philosophy of political inquiry is that understanding is not and cannot be wholly governed by method.¹ Although this view is not stated forcefully enough in the writings of theorists of

¹ Gadamer stresses this point against philosophers of understanding who believe it possible to regulate understanding by method, namely, Wilhelm Dilthey, Friedrich Schleiermacher, and Emilio Betti. See selections by the first two in Mueller-Vollmer (1989) and by Betti in Bleicher (1980); Cf. Weinsheimer (1985, 6-7; 1991, chapter 1). In one essay, Gadamer makes the interesting suggestion that what is needed is "a scientific approach that is disciplined by phronesis," where the possibility of a "phronesis that is supposed to be scientifically governed" is decisively rejected.

interpretive political inquiry whose ideas I will explore here, I take it to be an essential part of the interpretive commitment in political science to resist “counterposing one highly sound method to a putatively unsound one” (Dunn 1990b, 184). In interpretive inquiry, good judgement, good sense, and “a certain measure of insight” are “indispensable, ” and these “cannot be communicated by the gathering of brute data, or initiation in modes of formal reasoning, or some combination of these” (Taylor 1985e, 53).²

Nevertheless, most interpretive political theorists and inquirers -- recognizing full well the status of their interpretations as interpretations -- do wish to sustain a notion of adequate and inadequate, correct and mistaken, and, indeed, true and false interpretations of political life. In doing so, they seem to agree with John Dunn who avers that “just because there cannot be a guaranteed method of discovering what is true about some matter does not imply that nothing *is* true about that matter” (Dunn 1978, 174). We need to understand “truth”, therefore, in the context of interpretive claims on political explanation. Sometimes, for example, what is “true” about some matter amounts to countering what has been “falsely” said about it. Thus, it makes sense -- especially in the context of striving to understand the variety of phenomena subsumed under the name of “politics” -- to “attempt to judge

² I employ “commitment” to avoid the implication of methodologism carried by most available alternatives in political science, such as, “paradigm,” “research program,” “theory,” “research tradition,” “method,” “program,” and “mode of inquiry.” “Stance,” “approach,” or “disposition” might fit here as well. These terms identify an interpretive practice that understands itself as not governed by method but still aiming to achieve certain explanatory ends. Given the powerful institutionalized “methodological” demands in the discipline of political science, any attempt to avoid methodologism is doomed to fail. What all interpretive political inquirers must do, and all I am trying to do here, is to avoid falling into the habit, well-established in most texts on political science, of situating “interpretive inquiry” within the field of “alternative methodologies” in political science. It is an “alternative approach”, but not an “alternative method”. Here, I am again following John Dunn, who has criticized Charles Taylor’s use of the concept “science” on similar grounds (Dunn 1990b, 184).

methodologically how it is sound to attribute beliefs or feelings to others” (Dunn 1978, 174), how it is sound to say something true of them. I seek to do this here by articulating the framework of assumptions about political life and political explanation that inform interpretive political inquiry. From these assumptions, we may draw out certain rules of thumb that should, from an interpretive perspective, guide political explanation.

These rules of thumb are not procedures which if followed scrupulously or programmed into a computer will guarantee objective “truth.” To “guide political explanation” is not, therefore, to “methodize” it. Following the rules of thumb of interpretive political inquiry will neither produce the truth nor, ultimately, enable us to distinguish conclusively between true and false interpretations. What the rules of thumb enable us to do is to distinguish between interpretive and non-interpretive explanations, not between objective truth and falsity. As my analysis will show, however, I am committed to something like the following thesis: an interpretive explanation is always truer than a thoroughly non-interpretive explanation in the context of understanding political life. As Dunn has put it, “There cannot be *rules* of sociological or historical method; but there can be and are many bad historians and sociologists” (Dunn 1978, 175).

My exposition of interpretive political inquiry begins with a discussion of the background intellectual context for contemporary articulations of the interpretive approach in political science. The contributions of interpretive inquiry -- despite many misunderstandings and misrepresentations of it in the discipline -- are of fundamental significance to the very conception of “political science.” On the way toward identifying this significance, I offer some suggestions concerning why it

continues to be overlooked. Were the costs of missing the point slim, this project would not be so important. But the absence of an adequate understanding of the assumptions and implications of interpretive inquiry is linked with our continual failure to understand the political life of others (and also our own).³ It also has implications for our conception of the “critical” responsibilities of political science. By clarifying the assumptions of the interpretive approach -- its view of human beings, language, politics, interpretation, explanation and criticism -- I seek to clarify what political scientists can “get” by making a self-consciously interpretative turn (since we always seem to be asking “what does it do for me?”). I argue that a commitment to interpretive inquiry is a commitment to viewing the understanding of political actions, practices, relationships, and institutions as fundamentally related in a particular, interpretively defined way. In addition, interpretive inquiry supports an understanding of history in general and modern political history in particular as comprised of various and alternative possibilities. In this way, it is best suited to explaining modern politics.

The intellectual context

Interpretive political inquiry is part of the larger tradition of hermeneutics. “Hermeneutics” denotes the field of study concerned with interpretation, especially as related to the interpretation of classical texts and scripture (Weinsheimer 1991). The concept revives the memory of the

³ Understanding is, of course, a contested concept. This and other statements of a similar thrust in this dissertation should be taken as explicit attempts on my part to promote discussion over the contested nature of understanding, rather than as a contradiction in my argument.

Greek mythological figure Hermes, whose task it was to interpret the messages of the gods for ordinary mortals. In this position, Hermes needed to be conversant in the idioms of both parties: “He had to understand and to interpret for himself what the gods wanted to convey before he could proceed to translate, articulate, and explicate their intention to the mortals” (Mueller-Vollmer 1989, 1). Hermes' task has been embraced in modified form throughout the social sciences, following an awakened interest in meaning and discourse as part of the “linguistic turn” of the post-positivist era. Consequently, recent interest in hermeneutics spans many disciplines, including theology, classical studies, history, law, literary criticism, philosophy, psychology, geography, and political science.⁴

Intimately concerned with interpretation and meaning, hermeneutics itself is part of a larger tradition of inquiry which has sought to distinguish the study of human history and culture from the study of non-human nature. This distinction has been asseverated against a dominant mode of thinking throughout the sciences aiming to subsume the study of human behavior under the study of all nature. The variety of contemporary approaches in both the so-called natural and human sciences make this

⁴ Interesting explorations within English language literature include: Richard J. Bernstein *Beyond objectivism and relativism: science, hermeneutics and praxis* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983); Don Lavoie (ed.) *Economics and hermeneutics* (New York: Routledge, 1991); Martin J. Packer and Richard B. Addison (eds.), *Entering the circle: hermeneutic investigation in psychology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989); Janet Wolff, *Hermeneutic philosophy and the sociology of art: an approach to some of the epistemological problems of the sociology of knowledge and the sociology of art and literature* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975); Sanford Levinson and Steven Mailloux (eds.), *Interpreting law and literature: a hermeneutic reader* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1988); David Harvey, *The condition of post-modernity: An enquiry into the origins of cultural change* (Oxford: Cambridge University Press, 1989). John Thompson, *Ideology and modern culture* (Stanford, 1990); Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and understanding international relations* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990); Friedrich Kratochwil, “Regimes, interpretation and the ‘science’ of politics: A reappraisal,” *Millenium*, 17 (2), Summer, 1988: 263-284.

distinction less than precise today. When it was first offered, however, the arguably hegemonic model in the study of non-human nature was that of methodological naturalism (or positivism) derived from Comtean sociology.⁵ This model had a growing appeal among social scientists who hoped to emulate the methodological and nomological achievements of the natural sciences in the study of “society” (in sociology and political science especially). As I will discuss in more detail below, the death of methodological naturalism in the social sciences, if it has occurred at all, has occurred in name only. While the appeal of the model as a totality may have lessened, many of its core assumptions -- despite being debunked by now decades of philosophical argumentation -- remain at work in research going on now (mostly as a result of a persistent antagonism between philosophy and practice, theory and research requirements in political science today). Thus the critique of the methodological naturalists’ attempt to subsume the explanation and understanding of human behavior under their model of explanation has an ongoing significance.

According to this model, the task of social science is to establish an understanding of the universal, invariable relations of dependence that exist between (manipulable) conditions of behavior and their consequences. Practically, this means that scientists are to employ various techniques of observation and measurement in order to *discover* and to *specify*, “in general terms”, the initial and boundary conditions “under which events of

⁵ There are several different claims associated with “methodological naturalism” and “positivism.” These, too, are contested concepts. And, although the variety of claims share some common features, there are differences that should not be overlooked in any thoroughgoing account of them. In what follows, when I discuss positivism, I mean the school of inquiry committed to the model of explanation and scientific aspirations which I discuss in the text. I maintain that this model and its assumptions remain common in political science research. My statements only tangentially apply to the logical positivism, for instance, of the Vienna Circle. See fn. 9 as well.

various sorts occur” (Nagel 1979, 4, 21ff).⁶ Knowledge of these conditions and the patterned relations of interaction that result from altering them constitutes the “explanation” of an event. Additionally, the formalization of this knowledge as an argument of deductive logic, enables the prediction of future events of similar kind (a statement of the event’s occurrence is deduced from statements of a general form that specify (a) the existing understanding of the relationship between the conditions and the event (either “theories” or “laws,” or “covering laws”) and (b) the conditions under which the event takes place).⁷ Science, on this view, by articulating both the “necessary” and the “contingent” relations that exist between a wide array of measurable variables under a variety of conditions, aims to have an ever-increasing, objective body of knowledge to enable effective, predictable human intervention (“action”) in the world. The potential for such intervention and the power over the determinants of public life that it entails, not to mention the promise of “unifying” the sciences, are two aspects of methodological naturalism that have had a commanding appeal to generations of social scientists.

In rejecting the applicability of these methods to the study of human behavior, theorists of the distinct human sciences have argued in different ways that the human capacity to give meaning to action makes it impossible to understand, much less explain, human behavior simply by observing what human beings are doing.⁸ The “deductive-nomological” view of the natural

⁶ See also Carl Gustav Hempel, *Aspects of scientific explanation, and other essays in the philosophy of science* (New York: Free Press, 1965) and *Philosophy of natural Science* (Engelwood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1966); Karl Popper, *The logic of discovery* (1935).

⁷ Comte referred to the insight into the future afforded by this model of science as “prevision.” Auguste Comte, *A general view of positivism* (New York: R. Speller, 1957).

⁸ See Dallmayr and McCarthy (1977, Introduction) for an overview of this background. Observation here connotes the “gathering” of “sense-data”.

sciences, on this view, simply generalizes our puzzlement. The question remains: "Why did these human beings act the way they did?" There are many different answers to this claim within the camp of those who reject methodological naturalism.⁹ The hermeneutic response to this question begins, as Weber did, by stressing the need to understand the meaning of action, not simply its conditions, causes, and consequences. From this point on, hermeneutics itself offers no generalizable perspective on either the context, nature, or goals of understanding. There are many different hermeneutic understandings of each. Weinsheimer describes the field of hermeneutics as "rife with struggle between opposed positions, each claiming to subvert or supersede the others" (Weinsheimer 1991, 23; cp. Farr 1989, 42). As a result of such contestation, to speak of "interpretation" today is to invite attention to many articulations and sets of literature. The category of interpretive analysis has become very broad, and, indeed, hotly contested as well.

This is true in political science as much as anywhere else in the academy. In political science, however, the category of interpretive analysis is broad not only in the sense that it is developing into several different articulations. Its broadness is evident, in my view, in the various

⁹ And, as an example of how the new diversity in the natural sciences makes the distinction between the natural and social sciences less than precise, there are modes of natural scientific inquiry that reject methodological naturalism that have been appropriated for use in the human sciences. Realism is estimated to be among the most promising throughout the post-positivist social sciences. See Rom Harre, *Philosophies of science* (Oxford, 1972); *Varieties of realism: a rationale for the natural sciences* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986); Roy Bhaskar, *A realist theory of science* (New York, 1975), *The possibility of naturalism* (Brighton, 1979) Jeffrey Isaac Power and *Marxist Theory: A realist view* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992) and "Realism" in Ball (1987), William Outhwaite, *New philosophies of science: Realism, hermeneutics, and critical theory* (New York, 1992 [1987]); Ian Shapiro, "Realism and the history of ideas," *History of political thought*, 3, 535-578 (1982); Stuart Hall, "The toad in the garden: Thatcherism among the theorists" in *Marxism and the interpretation of culture*, Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988).

misrepresentations and distortions of it by non-interpretive political scientists who for many years have simply missed the point and fundamental significance of interpretive inquiry. It is not necessary to be excessively harsh on this point. There is a great deal of genuine interest in interpretation within the discipline. But the fact remains, and any interpretive theorist will tell you, that many political scientists continue to misrepresent the kind of “qualitative” political inquiry that interpretive inquiry represents. It is said, for example, that interpretive research entails studying others from their point alone, or that interpretive inquiry is interested only in “understanding” as opposed to explanation, and so on. There are a variety of institutional and conceptual reasons why these understandings exist, some of which I will discuss shortly. What needs to be said here is that almost thirty years after the initial interpretive intervention into the discipline there remains a need to reassert it and to restate its indispensability in the context of political explanation. Therefore, the fact that there is no one “interpretive political inquiry” is less important as a point of departure for this paper than the fact that what constitutes “interpretive inquiry” in its most sophisticated manifestations is poorly understood throughout the discipline. In what follows, although I will address some of the differences of opinion within interpretive inquiry, I focus on developing a coherent account of what I think holds it (or should hold it) together against the dominant anti-interpretive tendency to classify, distort, and reject it.

The contrast between the approach of interpretive political inquiry and the approach taken by alternative methodological naturalist traditions is often stated in a distinctly humanist manner. It is argued that the capacity

of human beings to give meaning to their actions, relations, practices, and institutions, and to communicate this meaning through conscious reflection and communication in speech -- in short, the human capacity for language in this sense -- makes understanding human experience necessarily different from understanding non-human nature. The roots of this view arguably reach back -- like the tradition of hermeneutics itself -- to the classical world of ancient Greece. In its contemporary forms, many point to the enduring influence of Wittgenstein's notion of "language-games", "modes of life", and conceptual "family likeness (or resemblance)."¹⁰ The implications of Wittgenstein's thought reached a larger English-speaking audience through the work of Peter Winch, whose classic *The Idea of a Social Science* was first published in 1958.

In post-Wittgensteinian political science, several prominent political inquirers with a shared concern for a wide range of explanation in political science (texts, elections, revolutions) have delineated the principles of interpretive inquiry. If only because these inquirers focus on issues raised specifically within the context of political explanation, political scientists should give the works of John Dunn, Alasdair MacIntyre, Quentin Skinner, and Charles Taylor as much of a hearing as they do Weber and Winch.¹¹ To do so might begin to close the gap between the interpretive approach to political inquiry and the perceptions of that approach in political science. While the ideas of Dunn, MacIntyre, Skinner, and Taylor differ in some

¹⁰Although, "it is not necessary to look to Germany for significantly different theories of interpretive understanding" (Dallmayr and McCarthy 1977, 137). In addition to those I discuss here, Dallmayr and McCarthy point to the writings of Michael Oakeshott.

¹¹ Compare Hollis and Smith (1990, Ch. 4); Daniel Little, *Varieties of Social Explanation* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991, p. 71). Ironically, Gibbons's edited reader on interpretation (1987) includes but one reference to the work of MacIntyre as a footnote to an essay by Winch.

interesting ways (only some of which I will speak to), my claim here is that their approach is interpretive, and the assumptions they share about that approach are nearly the same. Their shared concern is how we may best understand, and claim to explain as well as understand, the political life of others.

Despite this concern, however, both their writings and the significance of their approach have eluded the attention of the many political scientists. There are many reasons for this. One relates to the organizational structure of political science in the United States. The discipline is organized in terms of subdisciplines (American Politics, Comparative Politics, Political Theory, International Relations, Public Policy and Administration, Methodology); Dunn, MacIntyre, Skinner, and Taylor are usually understood to reside in the “theorist” wing, where questions of “interpretation” have been routinely relegated. This institutional situation has the effect of implying that the significance of their views is confined to studies in political theory. These perceptions are unfortunate, since all of these thinkers have made their collective contributions to the study of politics in part as contributions to the discipline of political science. Their rich work in political theory is not limited to that particular area of research. Still, while their names might be well-known, their contributions are frequently excluded from the frame of the discipline's broader self-conception.¹² As a result the significance of their contributions to studies in

¹² On the narrow thinking about practices in political science, consider the fact that the following introductory texts, still used, contain no substantive discussion on interpretive inquiry: Robert A. Bernstein and James A. Dyer, *An introduction to political science methods*, 3rd. edition (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1992); Richard I. Cole, *Introduction to political inquiry*, 4th edition (Pacific Grove, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Corp., 1985); Janet Buttolph Johnson and Richard A. Joslyn, *Political science research methods* (Washington: CQ Press, 1986); and W. Phillips Shively, *The craft of political research*, 3rd. edition (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall,

the philosophy of political inquiry gets checked at the sometimes rigidly defined -- almost state-like -- borders that separate subfields of political science. These borders are as rigid within the self-conceptions of many students and practitioners of the discipline as they are in course catalogues. And, despite efforts by many to shatter the assumptions upon which they are founded, they maintain their grip on our view of both the field and study of politics. Interpretive theory seeks to end the "protectionist policy of intellectual isolationism" within political science (Ball 1987b, 2) by stressing the fundamental interpretive dimension common to all its subdisciplines, or what I call the interpretive unity of the practice of political inquiry.

Another, related reason for this exclusion is that the work of Dunn and the others is seen as relevant only to the history of the discipline rather than ongoing dilemmas in political research. From this angle, the interpretive theorists are seen, perhaps, as having once successfully debunked certain assumptions of positivist political science but not as having anything else to contribute to political explanation. Taylor's critique of aspirations to value-free inquiry is a good example in this regard. In several essays, Taylor criticized the objectivist pretensions of political science (esp., Taylor 1985f [1967]).¹³ But, to many, the debates within which

1990). These texts are expressive of anti-interpretive, method-driven approaches in political science.

¹³ Such as: "The kind of paradigm of which we conceive is a 'pure scientific' paradigm. Its only purpose is to improve the description, explanation, and prediction of political phenomena. The puzzles in this paradigm are important only for scientific reasons. A science that is heavily committed to dealing with socially and morally relevant problems finds little use of this kind of paradigm or for the commitment to mathematics that it requires. For political science to advance, it must shed its professional commitment to solving social and moral problems" (Holt and Richardson 1970, 70-1). Compare David Easton, *The political system: An inquiry into the state of political science* (New York: Knopf, 1953). Nagel says best what many political scientists maintain: "The quest for systematic explanations requires that inquiry be directed to the relations of dependence between things irrespective of their bearing upon human values" (Nagel

he argued are seen as debates of the past, ones from which we have learned and must now proceed. The proper place for works like Taylor's on value-freedom, or others of a similar kind, is in the archives of political science.

This view, like the first, is unfortunate. Whereas it is true that time has passed since their initial articulations, these papers as well as subsequent elaborations on the interpretive approach (e.g., Ball 1988; Ball, Farr, and Hanson 1989; Farr 1989) have an ongoing relevance as contributions to political explanation. To view the debates as relevant only to the history of the discipline is to mistakenly assume that these debates were solely about positivism and its prospects when in fact they were about understanding political life generally. Interpretive theorists were not simply playing the role of gadflies. They were articulating a thesis about understanding politics generally.

Moreover, to view the debates between the defenders of the science of politics and the defenders of interpretive inquiry within the context of the "past" is to underestimate the enduring persistence of different forms of problematic "methodological" understandings and assumptions once associated solely with positivism, such as the value-free claims. The tendency to relegate present issues of significance to the past is one I have dealt with at length in the previous chapter. Nonetheless it bears mentioning that this is not a problem limited to our vision of secular and modern political possibilities. Positivist assumptions have not died in political science as much as they have dispersed into all research designs, including some allegedly interpretive ones.¹⁴ This is a fourth reason the significance of

1979, 7). This is one aspect of the value-free assumption persisting in all sorts of political science research that Taylor addressed.

¹⁴ A recent comment by Dunn serves as a good example of what is overlooked when the debates about "values" are consigned to political science's past: "Only very foolish

interpretive inquiry is overlooked. Methodological naturalism, especially in its “neo-” forms, remains a strong tradition of inquiry in political science. Its continuing influence is not an explicit focus of this chapter, but I will address it indirectly. Clearly, as we shall see, the core theses of the interpretive approach are incompatible with neonaturalist and neopositivist approaches to political inquiry. Thus, my discussion of interpretive inquiry will give expression to my view that the assumptions of positivism are dead in political science in name only.

Related to this is a final reason why the significance and implications of the interpretive view continued to be missed. The persistent demand for methodological certainty in political science is an obstacle to grasping a central premise of interpretive inquiry: interpretation cannot and will not satisfy a demand for procedures designed to regulate understanding such that interpretive certainty is achieved. The demand for such methods -- even in “qualitative” political science -- has led many to mischaracterize the interpretive commitment as a set of methods (i.e. to think problematically about what interpretation involves). Unfortunately, in more than a few texts dealing with the scope and methods of political science, the interpretive “method” has taken its place right next to other “methods” of political research.¹⁵

students of politics any longer suppose that their own subject matter can in fact be understood with any power and precision without a close consideration of -- or at least a wary regard for -- human values. But they do, of course, have *rather substantial disagreements* as to just how human values are to be appraised and taken into account” (emphasis added, Dunn 1990b, 183).

¹⁵See, e.g., David Paris and James F. Reynolds, *The logic of political inquiry* (New York: Longman, Inc., 1983); Alan Zuckerman, *Doing political science: An introduction to political analysis* (Boulder: Westview, 1991) and Little (1991). Paris and Reynolds draw mostly on literature from outside political science (Wittgenstein, Schultz, Winch and others). Zuckerman has a section on “anthropological approaches” but contains no recognition of statements in political science literature.

The upshot of all of these factors is that they do not present a rosy picture for interpretive inquirers hoping to invigorate political science with a new interpretive consciousness. The work of interpretive theorists is often not read with an interest that defines or understands its proper relevance. Hoping, for example, to transcend certain causal assumptions about the relationship between language and political action, interpretive theorists usually find that these assumptions are powerfully held and transmitted from one generation to the next in the discipline. Practitioners of political science respond not always by accepting what I will refer to as the “constitutive thesis,” but rather by distorting it. My delineation of the interpretive commitment implicitly takes this and similar responses into account.

Language as expressive and meaning as inter-subjective

The cornerstone of the interpretive commitment in political inquiry is that the relationship between linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of political life is “constitutive.” To say that “language is constitutive of reality” is to say that language, as Taylor puts it, “is essential to its being the kind of reality it is” (1985e, 32). The concept of language I employ here is broad. Language does not consist simply in words; rather, it encompasses a broad range of subjectively and inter-subjectively held concepts, symbols, and understandings that make up the communicative apparatus for human relations. From the perspective of interpretive inquiry, these concepts are accessible and hence graspable through conscious reflection and communication in speech (or metaphorically similar modes of historical research) between the interpreter and the subject of interpretation.

In order to understand this frame, it is necessary first to locate the interpretive view of the constitutive relationship between language and reality within a particular account of human language. This account, what, following closely Charles Taylor's explication of it, I refer to as the expressivist account of language, contrasts significantly with an alternative account, referred to as the designative account of language. My aim in this section is to unpack this thesis and its implications for the study of political actions, practices, relationships, and institutions. The designative account of language, which is the more dominant account of language that undergirds research in the social sciences, supports the view that the relationship between language and life is disjunctive. Understood disjunctively, the two can be separated; understood constitutively, they cannot.

Few in political science are accustomed to thinking about "accounts of language" (or what are also called "theories of [linguistic] meaning"). While it is apparent that political science research is carried out through language, rarely do practicing political scientists stop to think about how to understand language itself -- how to view what is said, uttered, spoken, and written in the context of carrying out empirical research. Although we often think about the various tactical purposes for which certain things are said (and others not) and about different meanings concepts have in their "use," rarely do we think about our view of those concepts and of language itself. A discussion of alternative accounts of language forces us to consider issues like these. Different accounts of language see the "significance" of language -- its composition and its relational place in the context of living -- differently. And it forces us to see that just as all observation presupposes a variety of assumptions about "vision," all "observation" of language

presupposes some account of language. In this way, hearing, listening (not just “interviewing”), and reading are as much a matter of interpretation as viewing is.

According to the designative account, the meaning of words or signs consists in what they designate; hence explaining their meaning consists in identifying the way words or signs are used to depict, designate, or represent non-linguistic *or other* linguistic phenomena in the world. Taylor argues that the history of the designative account illuminates the way in which the designative, depictive, and representative functions of language are “fundamental” to it. Originally part of the seventeenth century mediaeval nominalist repudiation of the existence of abstract universal (theocentric or platonic) meanings, this account sought to bring meaning within a this-worldly frame. Words gain their meaning by being correlated with states of affairs in the world, not outside of it (metaphysical) (Taylor 1987, 106-7). On this account, it follows that the world can be studied from an objective position through language. Language is “a set of designators, words we use to talk about things” (Taylor 1987, 117); the world is external to the language “used” to describe it; ideas are “little units of representation;” thought is “how these ideas are put together;” understanding amounts to “breaking the ideas down and then putting them back together,” thinking is “assembling clear and distinct ideas,” and knowledge is an “objective” appeal to the designators (Taylor 1987, 110-111).

By contrast, the expressive theory of meaning does not conflict with the view that the meaning of language is sometimes or partly in its designative use, but it sees the designative theory as a postponement of the study *of* language. By posing such questions as “what are the things

language designates?” and “how can that designation (definition) be clearer and more precise?”, the designative account creates an interest in the so-called uses of language, but it does not say much about what language *is* for human beings, what its status is in their lives. To know that I used this word in this way and that one in another, or that I “attach” this set of meanings to that experience and that to another, is to know that we find language sometimes instrumentally or descriptively useful. But what is it about language that makes even this possible? In its challenge to metaphysical approaches to meaning, the designative theory illuminates one function of language, but it occludes engagement with the nature of language, and because of this with the *nature* of the relationship between language and the world.

On the expressive view, words do not only designate or represent. Words express. They do not only depict the matters of our lives, they disclose life itself. Language does not only designate “externals.” It makes life possible. But the life that it makes possible is not only that of a self which “uses” language or expresses itself. The life is that of an inter-subjective, language speaking community.

Unpacking this view, draws on Frege, Herder, Humbolt, and Heidegger to identify three “functions”, beyond the designative, “for which language seems indispensable” (1985d, 263). The first is the formulative. Language it enables us “to formulate things . . . to bring to explicit awareness what we formerly had only an implicit sense of” (256). In this way, language is not reducible to “a set of words” that designate. It is a capacity that realizes itself in conscious reflection (as distinct from verbalization). It is a vehicle for

what Herder called a reflective awareness of our beliefs, feelings, hunches, and gettings on (Taylor 1987, 114).

The second function is the “founding” function. Through speech, language enables us “to put things in public space,” “to place certain matters before us.” In so doing, it “serves to found” public space in a way that “bring[s] us to together *qua* participants in a common act of focusing” (1985d, 259).

Finally, language fulfills a characteristically normative function. It “provides the medium through which some of our most important concerns, characteristically human concerns, can impinge on us at all.” Without it, we would lack the medium “to be sensitive to standards as standards”, or to make fundamentally human “discriminations” or “distinctions of worth” (e.g., between just and unjust, right and wrong, good and bad, law and norm, etc.) (262-3).

All three functions “involve different ways of disclosing, of making things plain” (269-71). Together they identify the *expressive* nature of language. Language expresses or discloses (*Erschlossenheit*), it “reveals” and “realizes.” In reflection, it is a “bringing to light” (*Lichtung*). When made accessible through reflection and communication in speech, language makes things manifest, “visible, something out there between us” (“*entre nous*”) (1985d, 264) In this sense, *expression, not designation*, is “fundamental” (1987, 114).

Expression here implies that language is part of -- rather than set apart from -- the life it expresses. This point is central to the constitutive thesis in the following way: That which is expressed in and through language are meanings and understandings that constitute the actions,

relations, practices, and institutions of our lives. Constitute here means identify, or “make it what it is.” The shared and contested meanings and understandings expressed in language make life what it is. Taylor draws the concept constitutive from John

discussion of speech acts (1969; Cp. Lepore and Gulick 1991). Following Wittgenstein, Searle argued that constitutive rules are rules such that the behavior would not be the same without those rules. The rules of “language games” or practices more generally, in Wittgensteinian terms, mark the identity of the practice, define relations within the practice, and distinguish the practice from other games. In the context of political inquiry, Taylor suggests “that this notion of constitutive be extended beyond the domain of rule governed behavior . . . [to] areas where there are no clearly defined rules” (Taylor 1985e, 38). In these other action areas, meanings and understandings, rather than “rules” (in a strong sense, like in chess), are constitutive.

Interpretive political inquiry seeks to identify these meanings and understandings as well as the significance they have in the political actions, relationships, practices, and institutions of those whose politics we claim to understand. Interpretive inquiry stipulates that no political explanation is adequate unless it provides an account of the meanings and understandings that are constitutive of political life as they are expressed (revealed, disclosed, etc.) in the concepts and language of that life. This is the first rule of thumb of the approach. Because language expresses meaning and meanings constitute life, life cannot be adequately understood apart from the

meaning that constitute it.¹⁶ The “delineation of a society's concepts becomes a, if not perhaps the, crucial step in the delineation of its life” (MacIntyre 1967, 62-63). The link between language (and concepts) and meaning (and understandings) is why the expressive theory of meaning is taken seriously by the interpretive approach. On the designative account, language (and hence the meanings it expresses) and life are said to be separate. The expressive-constitutive account rejects this thesis as an inadequate representation of language. Meaning is constitutive of life. To separate language and life is to separate life from that which makes it what it is.

The early eighteenth-century history of the expressive account of language nevertheless contains within it a premise which is not sustained in interpretive political inquiry. This premise raises important questions concerning the conception of “meaning” in political science explanation. The eighteenth century version of this account contested not just the designative account, but also alternative metaphysical accounts. As a result, with the designative account it shared an interest in transposing on to the human “self” that which was said to belong to God: “Expression was self-expression. What comes to full expression are my desires, my aspirations, my moral sentiments. What comes to light in the full development of my expressive power is precisely that what was striving for expression all along was the self” (Taylor 1987, 122).

The emphasis on the “self” that provides and is entirely in command of meaning is contested by interpretive political theorists I review here who seek to stress both the subjective and the *inter*-subjective nature of

¹⁶ In most cases when I speak of “meaning” in this sense, I can be understood to mean “meanings, understandings, and dimensions of significance.” Writing all three into the same sentence all the time becomes burdensome for the writer as well as the reader.

meaning. This is a crucial and yet complex component to the interpretive approach to political inquiry. Since language, as Taylor argues, “originally comes to us from others,¹⁷ from a community,” it is “not unambiguously clear that [all expression] ought to be considered as self-expression/realization” (Taylor 1987, 122). Language is “always more than we encompass.” The concepts in and through which the self expresses meaning are concepts shared among a language-speaking community. They cannot be said to be solely the possession of the self. Therefore, what the self manifests in expression is not simply a self, but the “preconstituted” linguistic world of which the self is a part (Ball, Farr, and Hanson 1989, 1). “We express ourselves, and a larger reality of which we are a part” (1987, 123). Therefore, “a speech community,” not simply speakers, “is always a subject of speech” (122).

All of the interpretive theorists I review here accept this point, seeking to open up meaning to its inter-subjective dimensions without obliterating a notion of the human agent that participates in those dimensions. While the self is not in exclusive control of meaning, it is the self that manifests, expresses, and participates in creating, even reconstituting, meaning. The self’s “reflective awareness” always exists within a background linguistic “web” (Herder). Neither does the self fully dominate this web nor does the web fully dominate the self. “Self-interpretations,” as expressions of the uniqueness of an individual’s experience, are always “drawn from the interchange which the community carries on” (1985a, 8; 1985c, 45). In this way, the language community “is

¹⁷ What Taylor more recently chooses to call “significant others” (1992b, 32ff.)

constitutive of the individual.”¹⁸ At the same time, as “self-interpreting animals” who formulate understandings to and for themselves by engaging in reflective activity, and who found common spaces with others in communication, “we are constantly reshaping” the communities within which we exist (1985c, 45; 1987, 117). To be self-interpreting, to have an identity as a “self” (Taylor 1992b, 33), is part of what it means to be human; “. . . this kind of interpretation is not an optional extra, but is an essential part of our existence” (1985c, 73; 1989; cp. 1992b, 32-33).

The interactive nature of the relationship between the web and the self that is always in potential subject to change has two important consequences. The first is that “the human being alone is an impossibility, not just *de facto*, but as it were *de jure*. Outside of the continuing conversation of a community, which provides the language by which we draw our background distinctions, human agency [as reflective, self-interpreting, language using beings] would not be just impossible, but inconceivable. As organisms we are separable from society . . . but as humans this separation is unthinkable.” Human life is, in short, “fundamentally dialogical” (1992b, 36).

The second consequence is the following, put well by Taylor: “Reshaping [the web] without dominating it, or being able to oversee it, means that we never fully know what we are doing to it; we develop language without knowing fully what we are making it into” (Taylor 1987, 117). This second consequence is important enough to be reformulated as a

¹⁸ Throughout this essay, the reader might wonder about the extent of my claims regarding the “constitutive” thesis. Do I mean “entirely” constituted? Do I mean “partly”? My answer is that I do not mean entirely, but I do not mean partly either. I mean constituted more significantly than is generally appreciated. (I cannot claim to have solved this problem.)

second rule of thumb of interpretive inquiry: meaning is inter-subjective, and the web of inter-subjective meanings always exist in part beyond the grasp of the self that expresses them. This point carries the strong implication that an interpretive inquirer should never expect to provide a comprehensive account of meaning in any interpretive political explanation. The fact that many dimensions of meaning exist beyond the immediate conceivable grasp of any given self in any given speech community, wherein meanings are shared and contested and thus constantly altering, makes the definitive account of meaning an elusive goal. Interpretive explanation (or account of meanings in particular contexts) is always (perpetually) and necessarily unfinished. As essential as it is to provide an account of constitutive meanings in any political explanation, we can never expect individuals who express meanings to provide a single, definitive account of them. The web is always bigger than any self that attempts to account for it. This perspective on interpretation does not constitute a shortcoming for political explanation. Rather, it is a statement about the form and limits of explanation. A definitive and universally true interpretation of constitutive meanings -- and by consequence of the politics constituted by those meanings -- is not available to us. Because meaning is inter-subjective, and not *simply* subjective, interpretation is always an open-ended affair.

This statement of inter-subjective meaning poses a critical challenge to dominant epistemological individualist research programs in political science. These programs assume that "all knowledge may be reconstructed from impressions imprinted on the individual subject" (Taylor 1985e, 40). This thesis finds expression in a variety of projects which seek to explain

political behavior based on some gauge of individual preferences (e.g., various forms of survey-research, Q-sort analysis). As a result, inter-subjective meanings frequently “fall through the net” of the discipline. As they do, several criticisms of the notion of inter-subjective meanings emerge. Interpretive inquirers should take these seriously, especially since they raise valid ethical in addition to sincere methodological concerns. It is argued by non-interpretive theorists, for instance, that positing the existence of inter-subjective meaning implies the absence of subjective meanings (which, it always appears, is all we can ever hope to gauge); is equivalent to presuming a “consensus” of meaning; and legitimates “going beyond” self-understandings, a move which lacks any valid justification and raises many practical dangers. It is useful to address these criticisms in order to clarify the interpretive perspective.

As we have seen in the above discussion on various accounts of language, the view that meanings are “anthropocentric” rather than theocentric opens up several possible understandings of meaning. Within these possibilities, the interpretive approach attempts to establish philosophically valid reasons for thinking that meaning is expressed by agents who formulate it as an act of reflective awareness but is developed within “the social matrix in which individuals find themselves and act” (Taylor 1985e, 36; Cp. 1985d, 272, 276). This social matrix is constituted by inter-subjective as well as subjective meanings, and the line between the two is always shifting. It is shifting, not non-existent. The point is that there is no reason to think of meaning as wholly subjective. It neither resides entirely “in the minds of individuals” nor entirely outside of them. The

interpretive approach does not annihilate subjective meanings as much as enrich our understanding of their “subjectivity.”

It is, nonetheless, important to address the criticism that the interpretive account of inter-subjective meaning presumes consensus of meaning. Judith N. Shklar suggested this when she criticized the interpretive attempt to “get” “subjects of investigation . . . to recognize their hidden unities of belief” (Shklar 1986, 473; cp. 457-58). To think that interpretive inquiry aims to identify such unities is to miss the point of its account of meaning. Interpretive inquiry, as we shall see, is concerned to illuminate inter-subjective spaces of contestation as well as commonality. Indeed, identifying contestation is fundamental to an interpretive political explanation. But even commonality does not presume “consensus” or unity. Taylor uses the example of “freedom” in the United States to illustrate this point. In part, what makes freedom a “common meaning” is that it “is differently articulated by different groups” (1985e). The point Shklar seems to miss is that the claim that meanings are not simply subjective but inter-subjective is a claim about the nature of meaning, not an attempt to specify a new class of particular meanings. Within an interpretive frame it is just as ludicrous to presume that all meaning is consensual as it is to presume that all meaning resides in the individual.

Of course, by saying this, the interpretive inquirer sounds like he or she is committing one of the worst fallacies in contemporary political science research: going beyond individual preferences or understandings in the process of explanation. With regard to this objection, it must be admitted that the critics are on to something. An interpretive commitment to inter-

subjective meanings clearly expresses in an interest in identifying aspects of meaning that exist beyond self-understandings.

The view that “going beyond” understandings is a problem with *any* explanation is premised on a view that understandings should be “reported” solely within the frame of meaning of the subjects we study. The qualitative researcher, it is said, “suspends, or sets aside, his or her own beliefs, perspectives, and predispositions” (Taylor and Bogdan 1984, 8). This is a version of the claim that in order to understand any “other” (culture, time, etc.) one needs to adopt the point of view of that other (“native,” “historical actor”, etc.). “Going beyond” what subjects understand about their lives, on this view, contaminates explanation by introducing the bias of the researcher.

This view, it seems to me, is flawed on at least two accounts, both of which are related to a misconstrual the hermeneutic situation. The first has two separate aspects. As I have discussed in my introduction, all interpretation involves, in one sense of the words, already “being beyond” the understandings of those we study. In another sense, this language is entirely unsuitable to capture the issue since we are always also “being within” the history of those we study. On the first sense: We never read the world from a clean state. Prejudgments, foremeanings and all sorts of expectations -- many of which constitute the inter-subjective context of the practice of interpretation that resides outside of our own conscious understanding -- always inform our interpretations. This “preunderstanding,” as Taylor calls it, is “what we have to draw on to make other people intelligible” (Taylor 1990, 39). In this way we are already “beyond” those whose lives we study, and the idea of “going beyond” them

makes no especially “extra” sense. I can’t say anything about your life that in every way possible is also not something about my life. The interpretive hope is that what I will say will be something that we can both agree is true about your life when it is expressed and explained by me (Taylor 1988, 1990).¹⁹ We are always beyond those we study and should not fool ourselves into thinking that at some point we “fully” capture their world and at another point we are “going beyond” it, though this does not mean that we necessarily will fail to capture theirs (fuse horizons). We are beyond it when we believe we have fully captured it or not.

On the second sense, we never “receive” those we study apart from their own history. Our identification of something to be in need of understanding is a response within the history of that which we seek to understand. “[U]nderstanding is never a subjective relation to a given object but to the history of its effect” (Gadamer 1989, xxxi). We are never fully bracketed from those we study. I recognize, for instance, the “problem of secularism” as a problem within the effective history of secularism, not outside of it (this is true also of my own definition of “problems”). My engagement with the political thought of Ziya Gökalp occurs within the effective history of Gökalp’s ideas. My response to this particular problem is not outside of it, but intertwined historically with it.

The second reason the view in question is flawed is actually more a comment about it than a critique. It is important to add this reason, since it helps to get us closer to identifying the character of an interpretive explanation. It is also important since many political scientists think that

¹⁹ With regard to those of the past, the dialogue falls to the the interpreters who must ask the same questions for those who no can longer add to our dialogue about them.

interpretive inquiry “amounts to” providing the meanings that people “attach” or “give to” the actions by themselves.

The view that one should avoid going beyond understandings in order to understand others is intrinsically related to the “old” positivist view that one needs a neutral language for explanation, even though the two are usually held up as opposites. The latter view was based on the claim that common sense or ordinary language was less systematic, too variable, and radically incomplete for the purposes of cross-cultural generalization (the search for theories and laws). “That there is a need for a general theory in the study of political life,” David Easton declared in the 1950s, “is apparent” (Easton 1957, 399-400). Holt and Richardson, clearly shared this view because they sought to trump it, believing that comparative explanation could avoid “ethnocentrism” by employing “non-culture bound concepts” (1970, chapter 1). In a similar vein, Richard Rose has recently defended “the use of generic political concepts” in comparative analysis (“to relate knowledge across national boundaries”) (Rose 1991, 462).

The search for a neutral language (to adopt another) and the attempt to go native (to lose one’s own language) are related in the sense that both assume that it is possible for the inquirer to bracket his or herself in order to understand others (Taylor 1985g, 119-122). Given the reality of pre-judgement, however, neither accepting the “native’s” point of view as the (incorrigible) language of explanation, nor getting outside of culture are humanly possible maneuvers. The interpretive approach recognizes that a language and conceptual world which is not the agent’s is always part of interpretive practice and explanation. The point of interpretation is to place our language out in front, as it were, opening it up to a dialogue with those

we seek to understand. In that process, understanding occurs when our conceptual frame is expanded in the context of understanding. To withhold oneself, (or, rather, to operate under the false assumption that one can in fact bracket oneself) is to fail to make understanding possible. To repeat Gadamer's maxim, "we understand differently, if we understand at all." Many in political science would like to read this as meaning, "we understand differently than you do." This would keep our language insulated, but it is difficult to see how we could claim to understand the political lives of others. *In order to understand others, it is we who must understand differently.* The so-called detached, neutral language of explanation in political science tends to express more about the constitutive understandings of political scientists than it does about those whose lives they claim to explain. To reiterate the first rule of thumb: No truly comparative explanation can be adequate unless it attempts to bring the constitutive languages of others to our own language in the context of making contrasts between our frames intelligible. It is therefore absurd to suggest that either total immersion or detached neutrality is possible, or even desirable. (Gadamer 1989, 395-396; Cf. Skinner 1988d, 279).

Therefore, rather than thinking about the process of interpretive explanation in terms of staying with or going beyond self-understandings, it is more appropriate to think of it as eliciting a multiplicity of meanings, in which this multiplicity is realized in a fusion of horizons. This can only be achieved in conversation (or metaphorically similar modes of historical research²⁰) with those we seek to understand. Understanding others is always a process of coming to understand more fully -- and broaden -- our

²⁰ William Outhwaite calls this a "virtual dialogue" (1987, 71).

own conceptual horizons in relation to those of others.²¹ Most often, especially in culturally different contexts, this occurs less through communion (Taylor 1987, 147; Geertz, 147) than it does through insight and comparison expressed in a common language between interlocutors.

The language of explanation that attempts to express our understanding is what Taylor calls a language of perspicuous contrast. It is “not simply our language of self-understanding, and certainly not theirs.” It is one in which the differences and similarities between us “can be perspicuously stated” (Taylor 1985d, 281). One task of interpretive inquiry is thus to identify and articulate perspicuous contrasts between our understandings and those of others, “thereby ceasing in that respect just to read them through our home understanding” (Taylor 1990, 41). This can only be accomplished in conversation, which Clifford Geertz usefully describes as a “hopping back and forth” (Geertz 1987, 145). The image conveys the way in which dialogue with those whose political lives we seek to understand is required for understanding to occur at all. Dialogue enables us to arrive at a common language in which we may express the meanings that constitute the lives of others in a language “which makes them accessible for us” (Taylor 1990, 46). Taylor draws on Gadamer to describe a “successful understanding:”

What has to happen is what Gadamer has called a “fusion of horizons.” We have to learn to move in a broader horizon, within which what we have formerly taken for granted as the background valuation can be situated as one possibility alongside the different background of the formerly unfamiliar culture. (Taylor 1992b, 67)

²¹It might, furthermore, expand the horizons of our interlocutors. But this need not happen, because their interest may not be what ours is, namely to make sense of others. Their interest might be to help us make sense, and, in this process, if conversation takes place, they will understand differently as well.

To do this without “distortion” (as best as we can believe at the time), while recognizing also the necessary open-endedness of the project, is to be able to explain something true about others. It is to offer a compelling interpretive account. This language of perspicuous contrast “formulates both their way of life and ours as alternative possibilities in relation to some human constants at work in both” (Taylor 1985g, 125). This language, then, is the language necessary to accounting for alternative modernities, as I have posed in the first chapter. The language of perspicuous contrast “allows for the fact that their range of activities may be crucially different from ours, [and] that they may have activities which have no correspondent in ours, which in fact they turn out to do” (Taylor 1985g, 129).

Many interpretive theorists have discussed problems related to translating another’s language as a way of illustrating what is meant by recognizing and identifying “crucial” contrasts. Such an example helps to illuminate the kind of “findings” we might expect or not expect from a self-consciously interpretive account. “There will often be no prospect of translating terms in an alien language by means of anything approaching counterpoints in our own,” observes Quentin Skinner. “But,” he argues, “this does not prevent us from learning alien terms, and in consequence finding out what discriminations they are used to make” (Skinner 1988d, 251-2). Or, put more generally, “that we can understand completely what is being said in some language other than our own never entails that we can translate what we understand” (MacIntyre 1987, 393). Grasping points of discrimination, as Skinner calls them, can result from the process of identifying the expressed meanings and understandings for which we hope to account. It is akin to grasping the meanings of constitutive concepts..

Furthermore, the idea that grasping the meaning of constitutive concepts is less like translating them than it is like grasping points of (what are sometimes fundamental, human) discrimination serves to remind us of the crucial difference between understanding “concepts” and understanding “words.” Interpretive inquiry is interested in grasping the meanings concepts express, not just when and how “words” are used. The difference is crucial, since a concept of something can exist without a word or shorthand phrase to express it. Finding, for instance, that Milton expresses an understanding of “‘things unattempted yet in prose,’ . . . [we] could never have arrived at this conclusion by examining Milton’s use of the word *originality*. For while the concept is clearly central to his thought [even if his topic is not], the word did not enter the language until a century or more after his death” (Skinner 1989, 7-8; Cp., Farr 1989, 27). Skinner formulates what for us can be taken as another rule of thumb: “The possession of a concept will at least *standardly* be signaled by the employment of a corresponding term. As long as we bear in mind that *standardly* means neither necessarily nor sufficiently, I think we may legitimately proceed” (Skinner 1989, 8).

The fact that we can’t “go native” or create a “general” language of explanation need not, therefore, leave us in a situation of utter despair. Both directions seek to escape “human constants” at work in all interpretation. On the interpretive view, explanation always expresses the prejudices, presuppositions, and pre-understandings of the inquirer. Its is “ethnocentric” only “if we stick with” our “provisional identifications” (Taylor 1985g, 120-21; 1990, 40). Engaging in interpretation through a language of perspicuous contrast involves arriving at new understandings

and new prejudices, where both are not always neatly separable. Thus another rule of thumb emerges: while trying to grasp the meanings and understandings that constitute political actions, practices, relations, and institutions: seek to identify perspicuous contrasts between meanings in the language of the life of those you study and meanings in the language of your own life. Moreover, come to a common language in which those contrasts can be perspicuously stated without distorting the constitutive meanings. "The aim is fusion of horizons, not escaping horizons" (Taylor 1990, 42). While articulating these contrasts, do not think of the process as one outside of which you can stand. Think of it as a movement within a linguistically constituted matrix between you and those whose life you are studying (which involves, at the same time as I will discuss later, examining one's own life).

From the foregoing discussion we can see how the interpretive/constitutive perspective borrows heavily from the expressive view of the internal, relationship between language and life. It takes issue with subjectivist understandings of meaning, favoring a more fruitful, understanding of meaning as inter-subjective. From this discussion, it should be clear that interpretive inquiry is not simply a matter of listening to others talk or reading their texts. What we assume about meaning when we listen or read can, in the end, make a great deal of difference concerning what we come to understand. The implication is that interpretive inquiry does not consist solely in archival research, discussion, or qualitative interviewing. To think of interpretation divorced from the expressive account of language (or theory of meaning) is to overlook the kind of thinking that is necessary to interpretation within interpretive inquiry, and to distort the point. If the expressive/constitutive view is correct, then

understanding political actions, relationships, practices and institutions cannot begin without attempting to grasp the meanings, expressed in language, that are constitutive of them. And doing this requires that we be in conversation (though not necessarily agreement) with those whose political lives we seek to explain.

The constitutive thesis in political explanation Action.

The view that we can understand or provide an adequate account of political action simply through sense-data observation has had its day in political science. One response to this view has been to point out that “the same overt behavior may fall under a whole range of descriptions that are inaccessible to any one who derives his or her knowledge from the observation of overt behavior” (MacIntyre). Thus, understanding what one is doing requires understanding what one understands they are doing when they are doing something. When you find me bending down and working with the soil, I could be digging the garden, taking healthful exercise, pleasing my significant other, making sure we have vegetables this summer, and so on.²² While it is possible that I am doing all of these, it is not always true that each understanding is equally powerful in my life, significant to me in my life. In order to understand the action, you must provide an account that attempts to grasp the meaning(s) and various aspects of significance the action has for me (even it is distasteful to you). These can only be accessed by trying to understand the language and concepts of my life, that constitute my life. Moreover, none of the discriminating concepts in the above possible descriptions are simply “mine”; “significant other”,

²² I draw this example from MacIntyre, and extend it slightly.

for example, marks a particular kind of practice constituted by shared meanings within a given speech community. Still, no consensus of meaning can be assumed; the central concepts as well as the practices they constitute are various in meaning as well as contested by those who participated in them. Thus, understanding my action requires thinking of me as a participant in a broader linguistic community, with distinctive, shared, and contested parlances, grammars, etc. Would I be digging if my significant other were not pleased by my doing so (hence I may value “pleasing the one to whom I am committed”), if the government had not legislated against meat-eating (hence I may be “obedient to the law”)? Would I be doing so even if I did not know that it was good exercise (good exercise may be an “excuse;” I believe meat-eating is a “sin”)? The action cannot be understood adequately from an interpretive view without understanding the meanings *in* my action, that is, without understanding the way in which my understandings -- subjective and inter-subjective -- are constitutive of the action. My beliefs are not “antecedent causes,” “distinct and separately identifiable social phenomena.” My actions are “uninterpretable and unidentifiable apart from” those beliefs. These actions get their intelligibility from the beliefs I have of them (MacIntyre 1967, 70).

What is true of bending down and digging is true for voting, assassinating, exploiting, canvassing, and pissing off. All of these, it must be kept in mind, cannot be identified adequately within a merely subjective meaning context. The meanings and significance of the action (such as “pleasing partners”, “fulfilling duties,” “showing them,” “seeking support,” “obeying laws”, “rationalizing”) are expressed in concepts that come to us as members of a language community, even as they are formulated by agents in

particular ways. MacIntyre illustrates this in the case of assassination. In this example, MacIntyre deepens our understanding of explanation in the context of inter-subjective meanings with his concept of “dramatic narratives”. He also illustrates the profoundly historical nature of inter-subjective meanings:

The action of assassinating a tyrant, [presupposes a whole] web of political beliefs. For the agent and others to see his actions in the same light, a certain community of shared beliefs is a prerequisite. But social community can coexist with a great deal of divergence of belief. That it does so is one reason why it is indeed a task to make what others are doing intelligible to ourselves. Consequently . . . our beliefs about, and our beliefs which bear upon, our actions always have as part of their content explicit or implicit reference to what others believe about our actions, and *a fortiori* to what others believe about our beliefs. Nor are matters as simple as this. Our actions express our beliefs, including our beliefs about what others believe about our actions and beliefs, but their beliefs are similarly informed by beliefs about what we believe their beliefs to be, including their beliefs about our beliefs.

“The” action, about which so many theorists write, cannot therefore be identified independently of the beliefs of the agent and of the others with whom he interacts, and, of course, of their actions as well. One crucial way in which this has to be understood is in terms of the dramatic narrative forms into which we and others continually reorder our lives. These forms make our actions intelligible not only in relation to what has gone before, but also to future possibilities. It is of prime importance here to note that any action may be a response not just to the immediate past but to any point in the recollected past, and that it may be, at one and the same time, a response to a number of past episodes and present situations. Moreover, any given action or string of actions may be situated in any number of historical sequences from the recollected past of the agent, so that different features of that action may be responses or sequels to quite different pasts.

The production of the dramatic and narrative forms through which we make our actions intelligible to ourselves as well as to others is of course a cooperative affair . . . (MacIntyre 1973a, 324-325).

An interpretive account of an assassination, then must try to grasp “the coherence between the action of agents and the meaning of the situation” for the agent (Taylor 1985e, 24). Another rule of thumb thus emerges: seek to account for the coherence between the action of agents and

the meaning of the situation for them. This coherence inevitably requires reference to the inter-subjective dimensions of the agent's own situational understanding. Therefore, we must seek to identify the assassin's purposes (beliefs, aspirations, intent, etc.) as they are informed by the inter-subjective meaning- context. He may have killed the jurist because he hated his rulings, but "hatred" is an insufficient account. We must also inquire into the meanings that informed that hatred and the significance they had in the lives of those in question: did the assassin shoot the jurist because the jurist consistently ruled in favor of the rights of the unborn as against the rights of women, because his daughter died the previous day in a back-alley abortion carried out without his knowledge (hence serious judgements -- some political, regarding "reproductive rights," and some familial, as they are structured by the "judgements" of others, are *in the act*)? That act cannot be adequately explained outside of a reference to the meanings -- subjective and inter-subjective that constituted it.

"Coherence" in this rule of thumb does not imply consistency. As Taylor notes, "the meaning may be full of contradiction and confusion." An interpretively adequate explanation must attempt to make sense of this contradiction (rather than try to correct for it). The purpose of inquiry is to try to make clear both "the agent's criterion," and why the agent "made use of this criterion rather than another" (MacIntyre 1967, 61), however "confused" either appears from the perspective of the inquirer. This purpose lies behind Skinner's "golden rule": "however bizarre the beliefs we are studying may seem to be, we must try to make the agents who accepted them appear (in Hollis's phrase) to be as rational as possible" (1988d, 246). By "rational" Skinner means a situationally rational: beliefs are those "suitable

for them to hold true in the circumstances in which they find themselves” (1988d, 239; cp. Farr 1987). This sense of rationality is a sense which brings to language the concepts and language of those we study.

Skinner has made a distinct contribution to interpretive inquiry in his approach to understanding a certain class of action, “speech acts.” In a series of articles over the course of twenty-five years, Skinner has articulated, defended, and clarified his views on understanding texts as speech acts.²³ No introduction to interpretive inquiry can ignore this contribution, even if Skinner himself does not consider it “anything particularly novel.” His views reflect what has come to be known as the “contextualist”²⁴ or “Cambridge” (Wootton 1986, 14) school of political inquiry. It has been profoundly influenced by the ideas of, among others, R. G. Collingwood, J. L. Austin, H. P. Grice, J. G. A. Pocock, Peter Laslett and, especially, John Dunn (see Skinner 1988d, 234-235). Collingwood’s view of the history of political thought and Austin’s notion of illocutionary acts were especially significant in both Skinner’s and Dunn’s articulation of the interpretive view.

Collingwood suggested that “the history of political thought is not the history of different answers to the same questions, but the history of a problem more or less consistently changing, whose solution was changing with it” (quoted in Dunn 1980a, 2; cp. Skinner 1988d, 282-283). Both Skinner and Dunn sought to draw out the implications of this view as a response to a

²³ I will rely heavily on his latest “statement of what I actually believe” (1988d, 235) in my discussion here. My own view is that some of these points may have been stated differently with different emphases in his many articles, but that this latest statement is the best account of them.

²⁴ Martin Jay has referred to Skinner’s influential essays entitled “Meaning and understanding in the history of ideas” as “the manifesto of a militant contextualist movement” (Jay 1991, 8).

shared “dissatisfaction with the range of genres prevalent in the mid 1960s in the historical study of human thinking” (Dunn 1980a, 3). In their view, these genres misunderstood “thinking” in two fundamental ways. First, thought was divorced from action. As Dunn put it, the tendency in political inquiry generally was to overlook the fact that thinking is “effortful activity” (1980b, 161; cp. Taylor 1987, 124-125). Second, thought was divorced from the subjective and inter-subjective contexts in which it occurred. They sought, therefore, to delineate aspects of “context” which must be accounted for in any adequate interpretation of “political thought.”

To analytically explicate the first point with explicit reference to the interpretation of the texts of the history of political thought, Skinner turned to J. L. Austin’s discussion of linguistic acts and H. P. Grice’s discussion of meaning and intention. Austin’s point so valuable to Skinner was that “any agent, in issuing any serious utterance, will be doing something as well as saying something, and will be doing something *in* saying what he says, not merely as a consequence of what is said” (Austin, quoted in Skinner 1988c, 83). This is a “fact about language”: in issuing a serious utterance, one is “acting” (doing) as well as “saying.” All serious speech acts have this illocutionary or performative “force” as a quality of them; they are “deliberate and voluntary” in this sense (Skinner 1988d, 261).²⁵

Austin believed that it was possible to understand what the agent was doing in saying something by gaining “uptake” of the illocutionary force. Was she commanding, promising, deliberating, manipulating, sending

²⁵ Though Skinner wishes to avoid the ideas that Austin’s contribution lies in offering a “theory of speech acts” or a “hypothesis about language.” With Wittgenstein, Skinner suggests, “Their achievement is better described as that of finding a way of describing, and thereby of calling to our attention, a dimension and hence a resource of language that every speaker and writer exploits all the time, and which we need to identify whenever we wish to understand any serious utterance” (Skinner 1988d, 262).

encoded messages? Skinner redescribes Austin's point by suggesting that understanding the illocutionary force is "equivalent to" understanding intentionality (Skinner 1988b, 99). For Skinner, to understand a speech act, means to grasp the intentions of the author that are *in* the act, that are constitutive of the act, that make the utterance what it is. Dunn put it slightly differently; to gain uptake is to grasp the "original point of the intellectual enterprise" (1980, 16).

To this end, Skinner and Dunn have suggested three crucial aspects of the context that must be conceptualized in order to grasp illocutionary force. One is referred to variously as the linguistic, ideological, rational, argumentative, discursive, rhetorical, or intellectual context. The second is the social or political context. Skinner refers to both these generally as the "general social and intellectual matrix" within which utterances are issued (1978, x). The third is really an aspect of the "social" context. This is the speaker's personal biography, his or her "life." Providing an account of the author's personal history is a way of exploring the subjective dimensions of meaning and trying to account for their relationship to and within the inter-subjective context. In what ways and within what settings was the agent's self-reflective awareness developed? Who is the agent? The social and political aspect more broadly understood "sets the problems" for speech (1978, x). What were the social, economic, and political situations within which a serious utterance was issued? How were the practices associated with specific dimensions of these contexts understood by the participants in them? To whom and for what reasons was the utterance issued? Finally, the intellectual aspect is comprised of prevailing assumptions, vocabulary, conventions, styles of debates and so on. Interpreting illocutionary force and

meanings requires situating a text with “whatever intellectual context makes best sense of them” (1988d, 247). The criterion of “best sense” requires looking closely at the vocabularies, meanings, audiences, interlocutors, and so forth -- that is, the broadly conceived, elements and participants in the subjective and inter-subjective contexts of the utterance. Here, then, are three general rules of thumb regarding definition of the context for pursuing an adequate interpretative explanation of speech action.

Both Skinner and Dunn argued, then, that in order to understand the textual manifestations of speech actions, the intentions constitutive of those acts must be recovered through an engagement with the subjective and inter-subjective contexts within which they were issued. While there is a good deal of controversy about what precisely this involves and to what extent the Cambridge historians think they can achieve this, the posture of their inquiry, in my view, fits well within the “hermeneutic enterprise” (Skinner 1988d, 233) of interpretive political inquiry.

To be sure, the interest in grasping intent sounds slightly different from the interest in meaning and understanding I have described as the interest of interpretive inquiry. But the two are closely related for Skinner. He distinguishes “what a text means” from “what its author meant.” He is interested in grasping the latter, those meanings which are *in* the text-act as a result of the author’s illocutionary force.

Any text must include an intended meaning; and the recovery of that meaning certainly constitutes a precondition of understanding what its author may have meant. But any text of complexity will always contain far more meaning . . . than even the most vigilant and imaginative author could possibly have intended to put into it. So I am far from supposing that the meanings of texts are to be identified with

the intentions of their authors; what must be identified with such intentions is only what their author meant by them (1988d, 271).²⁶

The relevance of Skinner's argument to the interpretive perspective is that it forces us, in the manner that we must be forced, to grapple with identifying the meanings of actions for those whose actions they are. To fail to grapple with these meanings is to risk explaining the actions as entirely something other than what they are, perhaps what we might do if they were our actions (Dunn 1980b). It is to "assume what has to be established" (Skinner 1988d, 247). Perfectly consistent with the constitutive thesis, Skinner makes clear that if we are to understand speech action, we must provide an account of the speaker's intentions and meanings that are *in* the text.²⁷ Intent is constitutive of the act, it is "a feature of the work" itself, and therefore we must as interpretive inquirers have as an aim to "recover" that intent (Skinner 1988b, 99). As in the study of other individual actions, we should seek to grasp the coherence between the action and the meaning of the situation for the speech-acting agent.

Again, all of this must be understood within the set of possibilities and constraints within which any interpretive explanation is offered. To forget these conditions for all interpretation is to exit the frame of interpretive

²⁶ His focus is primarily on intentions as distinct from "motives". The former, he argues are "inside" the text-act, while the latter are antecedent to and "prompt" it. "Motive" is close to what Austin called the "perlocutionary" force, which informs what a speaker was doing *by* doing something, as distinct from *in* doing something. Skinner's interest in intent makes sense, since he has been concerned with understanding what an author was doing in saying something rather than what all of the audience was doing in or by receiving it.

²⁷ Because Skinner distinguishes his own judgement from the judgement he is trying to recover, his approach to understanding others is often considered incompatible with a Gadamerian one. I think, however, that Skinner's conception of what it takes to understand others is highly compatible with the conversational frame of understanding them. As can be seen in this description, his argument that we must understand others as if we were in conversation of them approaches closely the view that we are in conversation with them.

inquiry. In my opinion Skinner is well aware of these conditions. He accepts the reality of prejudice in all interpretation (254, 280-281),²⁸ rejects epistemological individualism (206-9), and does not believe that interpretation ever stops (285). Furthermore, what he says about “doing” interpretation he says by way of offering “precepts”, not methods, for “how best to proceed; they are not claims about how to guarantee success” (280-281). He stresses, for instance,²⁹ that his aim has not been to offer “a method for doing the history of ideas” (1988d, 236).³⁰ Rather, it is “to articulate some general arguments about the process of interpretation itself, and to draw from them a series of what I take to be its methodological implications” (1988d, 236).

The outcome of the hermeneutic circle can never be anything approaching the attainment of a final, self-evident and indubitable set of truths about the utterance concerned. It scarcely follows from this, however, that we can never hope to construct and corroborate plausible hypotheses about the intentions with which a given utterance may have been issued. We can frequently do so in just the manner I have tried to set out. We can focus on the inter-subjective meanings of illocutionary acts, and then seek further corroboration for such ascriptions of intentionality by enquiring into the motives

²⁸ Though this must be read as a concession when compared with some of his previous, more militant anti-anachronistic writings. In one, he suggested not “bowing to” a “limitation,” he associated with Gadamer, that “we are likely to be constrained in our imaginative grasp of historical texts in ways that we cannot even be confident of bringing to consciousness” (1984, 201). Surely Gadamer does not speak *only* of “constraints”. Still we should recognize Skinner’s considered judgement: “We inevitably approach the past in light of contemporary paradigms and presuppositions” (1988d, 280-281); “It would be a quixotic form of self-denying to insist that our language of explanation must at this point match whatever language the people in question applied or might have applied to themselves. If we wish to furnish what we take to be the most powerful explanations available to us, we are bound to employ what we believe to be the best available explanatory theories and the concepts embodied in them. As a result our vocabulary of appraisal and explanation will be almost certain to include a number of concepts that would have been incomprehensible to the people to whom we are applying them” (254).

²⁹ On Dunn, see the introduction to this chapter.

³⁰ Even if others, like James Tully speaks as if Skinner’s approach is a “procedure” (with five steps!), or a “technique” (Tully, 1988, 7, 10).

and beliefs of the agent in question and in general the context of the utterance itself. (1988d, 280)

In addition to these suggestions on context, Skinner also makes specific suggestions regarding how utterances, especially unfamiliar ones, should be received by the social inquirer. These suggestions, too, can be considered rules of thumb for producing an adequate interpretive explanation. Two are particularly important for our purposes. Both are derived from his above-mentioned "Golden rule." The first is what Skinner considers the "sine qua non of the whole enterprise" (1988d, 246). This is that the interpreter should "treat utterances as straightforward expressions of belief" (1988d, 246). We need to assume a "convention of truthfulness:" agents are being truthful about what they believe. There is no other way to begin an inquiry into meaning and intent. The second is very closely related to this. "However bizarre" they appear, utterances must be taken at "face value." We must assume that "this is exactly what they believe" (246). To do this is to avoid slipping into a number of errors that frequently accompany interpretation from cultural or temporal distance. We might be uncomfortable, for example, with the understandings of those we study, and hence refuse to believe that what is uttered is actually what is meant. We might, in such a case, abandon the focus and concern for meaning and seek some structural explanation for their beliefs. There is not much understanding in these approaches, from an interpretive perspective.

Practices, relations, institutions

How do we account for practices and relationships such as those associated with representation, interest articulation, revolution,

administration, coups d'état, or deliberation? What is true of an account of individual action is also true of an account of political practices and relationships.³¹ “The kind of footings we can be on with each other,” writes Taylor, are “constituted in and shaped by language.” Practices and relationships cannot be adequately identified apart from the understandings -- contested as well as shared -- that constitute them. As such, an interpretive explanation must provide an account of those meanings and understandings: “it is not just that people in our society all or mostly have a given set of ideas in their heads and subscribe to a given set of goals. The meanings and the norms implicit in those practices are not just in the minds of actors but are out there in the practices themselves, practices which cannot be conceived as a set of individual actions, what are essentially modes of social relation, of mutual relations” (Taylor 1985e, 36).

Does the fact, for instance, that I am “living with my significant other” mean that I am “married,” or participating in the social, and legally sanctioned, practice of marriage? From an interpretive perspective on political explanation, an adequate understanding, and hence explanation, of the living situation requires an account of the matrix of meanings and understandings of those living in it. This is not to say that other interpretations are unavailable. Rather it is to get us into conversation with those whose lives we make authoritative claims about.

The practice of “living together” differs from the practice of marriage in terms of the understandings, even though they may look like the same set of behaviors. Of course, there is wide variation. In fact, two couples may be married and yet have vastly different understandings of the

³¹ My claim is not that “this is all that is true of” either.

practices associated of marriage. (Marriage is a shared and contested concept.) Compare, for example, the view of marriage of a religious fundamentalist couple with the view of marriage of a gay couple. From an interpretive perspective, we raise the question whether or not these are the “same” institutions or whether they are meaningfully distinct (even if, some day, they may be covered by the same laws). Any political science survey research that presumes to tell us something about “married” couple attitudes thus is indecisive from an interpretive perspective. Should we use the state’s definition of marriage or the widely shared and contested definitions? Who is in, who is out, and how are we to formulate generalizations about married couple attitudes when the practices associated with marriage are themselves highly contested? How would we do a cross-national study, especially given wide cultural variations on understandings of marriage gender and authority relations? If persons have different understandings of the practices and relations in which they participate, those practices are not necessarily the “same.”

How then are we to understand policy-making practices? Should we construct abstract ideal type models and seek their explanatory power in alternative contexts, or does this procedure, carried out in a non-interpretive manner, risk missing the practice entirely? By saying that practices and relationships are constituted by the understandings people have of them, I am saying that those practices and relationships are not possible without those understandings. Any adequate political explanation of those practices must, then, account for the meanings and understandings that constitute them. Grasping these understandings, again, requires grasping them as they are realized (through conscious reflection and

communication in speech) in the concepts and language of those whose lives we claim to explain.

Practices take place frequently within various institutional settings or contexts. Thus representation and policy-making take place in committees, parliaments, the national security council and convention halls (etc.); coups d'état emerge from networks of relations within army units or between such units and members of a cabinet (etc.); economic policy in and through “money”, the Federal Reserve, and the IMF (etc.); protests within the organizational structures of social movements (etc.). The important interpretive point is that these institutions and structures, like the practices and relationships within and across them, cannot be adequately “explained” apart from the understandings of those who participate in them. The meanings and understandings expressed and expressible in language are constitutive of these institutions in such a way that the institutions cannot exist as they are without them. “A given piece of paper or metal,” MacIntyre writes, “has the value it has not only because it has been issued by a duly constituted authority, but because it is accepted as having that value by the members of a particular currency-using population. When this condition is not generally satisfied, as in Germany in and Austria in 1923, the currency ceases to have value, and this ceases to be currency” (MacIntyre 1972, 11-12). The same is true of an army, a parliament, a city council, or a social movement, and the positions persons hold within them. The meanings and understandings constitutive of these institutions and institutional positions make them what they are, and for a political scientist to make claims about them apart from what they are seems to grossly fail in our task. “It is

impossible to identify an institution except in terms of the beliefs of those engaged in its practices” (MacIntyre 1972, 11-12; Cp. Taylor 1985e, 38).³²

We may formulate a rule of thumb for understanding political practices, relationships, and institutions. Drawing explicitly from Wittgenstein, Taylor helps us. He suggests, that “an essential condition of anything we would count as grasping some social practice” is, “to understand what it would be like to be a participant” (1985d, 280). It is important to underscore “what it would be like.” From an interpretive perspective, understanding practices, relations and institutions requires “some degree of participant's know how, some ability to ‘call’ the right response” *in* the practical, relational, and institutional contexts within which the participant lives (1985d, 280). We can do this by grasping the concepts constitutive of these practices and so on, the points of discrimination they express, and their significance both within the subjective understandings we have access to and the inter-subjective context which they illuminate. In the case of institutions, we must account for interpretations of institutional rules (not just the rules themselves) as well as norms, expectations, and aspirations participants hold within those institutions. “You have to grasp what would be the appropriate thing for a participant to do in certain situations” in order to claim to understand these situations (Taylor 1985e, 28; cp. Popper 1986). In order to do this, language must be our focus, and where those we seek to understand are still alive, communication must be our practice. I might also underscore, as I have discussed above, that the understandings we seek are always bigger than the agent-understandings we uncover. We are therefore inexorably driven to constant inquiry and open-ended research.

³² This is strong version of the hermeneutic claim that I understand as I state in note 18.

At this juncture, an objection is frequently raised against interpretive inquiry which must be addressed. This objection focuses on the apparent lack of concern within the interpretive frame for what might be termed “non-linguistic” aspects of political reality that most surely impinge on political life and hence just as surely should appear somewhere within a political explanation. What about, for instance, the relationships between action and social status, power, or class position? What about historical context? How are we to claim we understand anything about the IMF, for instance, unless we account for the international political economic context within which it operates and on which it sustains itself? How does an interpretive inquiry help us in accounting for why “food riots” occur?

The interpretive explanation does not deny that actions, practices, relations, and institutions are shaped by relations of power, privilege, property, style, and so on. What it maintains, and I hope that this is clear by now, is that these relations cannot be adequately identified without providing an account of the understandings of those who participate in them. These relations are what they are because they are constituted by a shared and contested, subjective and inter-subjective, vocabulary for which it is the aim of interpretive inquiry to account. The objection presumes what on the interpretive view is an “artificial” distinction between social reality and the language of description of that social reality (Taylor 1985e). That is, it presupposes a designative view of language, wherein language depicts or represents, and meanings are understood to be something persons attach to objects rather than as constitutive of them. Against this, as we have seen, the interpretive view suggests that language expresses, reveals, or discloses. As Taylor has put it, “language marks the distinction among different social

acts, relations, and structures.” Taylor 1985e, 32), “the point is that relations of power, and property themselves are not possible without language; they are essentially realized in language. Language is essential because these footings represent in fact different shapes of the public space established between people; and these spaces are maintained by language” (Taylor 1985d, 271). Therefore, the explanatory questions posed as a challenge to the thesis must be answered by being broken down into their various constituent parts. Relevant contextual history must be interpretively described: this is true of the political economic context for the IMF as well as for food riots. It is indeed essential that the food riots be studied from an interpretive perspective. We cannot understand why certain people join together for certain purposes without understand the meanings constitutive of that “joining.” This holds true for class and power relations as well.

To summarize, then, what should an interpretive account try to accomplish in the study of political actions, practices, relationships, and institutions? We should seek to grasp the coherence between an individual action and the meaning of the situation for the agent (again, all within the frame of coming to a fusion of horizons). This in turn requires us to make sense of the rationality of the situation for the agent. In the case of understanding speech acts, accounting for the illocutionary force is indispensable for this project. To understand practices, relations, and institutions, we must account for what it would be like to participate in those practices, relations and institutions. We must seek to identify the meanings and understandings that are constitutive of those dimensions and their significance(s) within those dimensions. Obviously, these are not methodologically regulative directives. They do not tell you how to proceed

each step along the way. What they do provide are guides for the explanation of political life. We must learn the concepts embedded in the matrices of meanings and understandings of those we seek to understand and whose political lives we claim to explain. This means that we must engage in mutual self-clarifying exchange with those we study. There is no way to finesse the absence of communication (or metaphorically similar historical approaches) with those we purport to understand.³³

From an interpretive view of political life, then, there is a fundamental relationship between the study of actions, practices, relationships, and institutions. Each dimension is linguistically constituted and it is the purpose of interpretive inquiry to bring these languages out.

How this task relates to explanation and criticism

Interpretive inquiry is frequently understood within political science to be more concerned with “understanding” than with “explanation.” It is also, as a consequence, understood to provide no basis for a “critical” social theory. In this section I seek to provide one view of “explanation” and “criticism” broadly conceived from an interpretive view.

The objective of all interpretive political inquiry is to achieve explanation as well as understanding. But by “explanation” we do not mean the methodological naturalist model of it (explanation and prediction on the covering-law model). To “interpret” means more than to “translate” and to

³³ Of course, what Dunn calls the “anti-hermeneutic sciences” have been doing this for a long time. This is, how they have been so attractive. “An anti-hermeneutic science can retain its epistemological respectability only by the consistent refusal to say anything about what we are *doing* and why we are doing it” (Dunn 1978, 151).

“understand.”³⁴ It means to provide an account that answers questions such as, “why this act and not another?”, “what was the nature of this relation (between actor and action, institutions and practices, etc.)?”, “what other narratives attempt to explain this relations?”, “are these continuities, changes?”, “are there relevant anomalies, aspects of political reality that challenge our account?”

Positivist ideology has so captured the language and imagination of political scientists that explanation is somehow reserved only for those who seek generalization and prediction. There is no reason to think of this as a necessary or historically conclusive claim on “explanation.” To those who question interpretation as explanation, the question should be reversed: how can questions such as “why this act?” “why then?” and so on be answered without accounting for constitutive meanings? What interpretive inquiry says is that no explanation is empirically adequate without accounting for the meanings and understandings of those we study. Furthermore, no explanation is adequate in and of itself if it assumes meaning is solely subjective and that there is any end to the interpretive enterprise.

Moreover, two theses of interpretive inquiry interact to make prediction of the kind still searched for within and demanded from the social sciences either impossible or fortuitous (lucky). First, the thesis concerning the inter-subjective nature of meaning instructs us, as we have seen, that what we come to understand is always less than what can be understood. For this reason, there can be no closure on interpretation. (This does not mean that human beings *qua* human beings will not consciously decide to close

³⁴In fact, within the web of meanings of the word “interpret” offered by the Oxford English Dictionary, we find that interpret means, inter alia, “to explain”; the act of interpretation means, inter alia, “explaining”; and an interpretation is, inter alia, an “explanation” (Simpson and Wiener 1989, 1131-1132).

interpretation on some matters.) Second, the thesis concerning human beings as “self-interpreting” tells us that human beings formulate and reflect on their lives in an ongoing fashion (though not necessarily *always*) in their engagements within changing linguistic and conceptual (and hence practical) contexts. As they do, they not only express their lives but they come to an awareness of things that may have been to them previously only implicit or inchoate (not yet conceptually considered). Perhaps they reconsider a nagging problem or come up with a new way of thinking about a set of relations in light of some new experience. This may happen in “common acts of focusing” such as conversation, listening, training, producing; or it may happen in reflection in one’s study, on a walk in the woods, or cooking a meal; it may even happen in “play” (Farr 1989, 36). The important point is that reflective awareness brings about *both* vision and change in who we are. It is not simply that we see things previously unseen; it is also that we see our lives differently. To do so is to change the understandings that constitute our lives, and to change the most powerful of these, is to change our lives.

This is the crucial point. From an analytical perspective it has the consequence of instructing us not simply that our interpretations are endless, but that “the very terms in which the future will have to be characterized . . . are not available to us at present” (Taylor 1985e, 56). As self-interpreting beings, our formulations and forms of narrative that constitute our lives (actions, practices, relations, and institutions) -- always partial “readings” within a constellation of meanings well-beyond our subjective view -- are fundamentally unpredictable. They cannot be adequately posited “in advance” (MacIntyre 1980, 56-58). “To have predicted

the wheel,” writes MacIntyre,” It would have been necessary to characterize the wheel; but to have been able to characterize it would have been to have invented it already. Where basic conceptual innovation is involved, we cannot predict, because to predict we would have to apply the new concepts that have yet to be articulated” (MacIntyre 1973a, 331; compare Ball, Farr, and Hanson 1989; Farr 1989).³⁵ Thus, given the constitutive view of political reality, we cannot in fact predict political life with the kind of certainty naturalisms and neo-positivisms -- explicitly teleological or not-- want us to (MacIntyre 1972; 1981, 8; 1966, 2-3). “To any stock of maxims derived from empirically founded generalizations the student of politics must always add one more: ‘And do not be surprised if in the event things turn out to be otherwise’” (MacIntyre 1972). Human history is unlawful in all of its dimensions, past, present, and future (Weinsheimer 1991).

With this fundamental point in the background, interpretive inquiry does not, however, rule out a certain kind of prediction, or, better, prediction understood in an interpretive sense. The Wittgenstinian notion that we aim to explain what it would be like to participate in relations in order to understand them opens up the possibility that we can anticipate certain moves (actions, relations, practices, policies, etc.) in given relational contexts which we have explained. An account of the rules and languages constitutive of these relations enables interpreters to anticipate in advance a certain range of possible behaviors. Prediction in this sense is made possible by interpretive inquiry. But this statement must always be qualified by the ultimate unpredictability of interpretive explanation based on the reality of

³⁵MacIntyre cites Popper on technical invention on this point. See Popper (1986).

conceptual innovation and alteration of conceptual consciousness discussed above.

As a further consequence of the open-endedness of interpretation, no interpretive account is necessarily more “objective” than others. Alternative accounts are better understood as “rival interpretations” within the hermeneutic circle,³⁶ interpretations which we consider *within the interpretive frame* as correct or incorrect, compelling or less compelling, right or wrong, and even true or false as we continually engage with the field of those we study.³⁷ (Not all interpretations are equally valid.) In this way, an interpretive explanation can further enrich our narratives and accounts of politics, even adding to accumulated rival interpretations.

Not all political scientists, however, appear ready to accept this view of alternative accounts, especially those seeking generalized explanation. John Ferejohn, for instance, has criticized the interpretive “method” for failing to provide a “criterion within the approach to decide between” rival interpretations. He writes, “Taylor calls this the ‘hermeneutic circle’; I call it incompleteness” (1990, 8). Ferejohn, however, confuses the claim that there are only rival interpretations with the claim that there is no way to adjudicate between them. Interpretive inquiry is committed to the first but not to the second. That there are no specifiable rules or criteria for adjudication does not mean that there is no way to adjudicate. This is where the rules of thumb posited here can assist in clarifying the objectives of

³⁶ Compare Taylor: “the demand has been for a kind of certainty which can only be attained by breaking beyond the circle” (1985e, 18). I believe that this demand still exists, albeit within a different, so-called post-positivist, language-games these days.

³⁷ I prefer compelling and less compelling, but when something grossly anti-hermeneutic is claimed, “false” and “true” make a great deal of sense, like: “What you say might be a ‘true’ expression of the your meanings and understandings, but it is simply not true of those whose politics you claim to understand.”

interpretive inquiry. Contrary to Ferejohn's claim, there are certain standards for a "better" interpretive explanation. Inquiry that strays forever from the rules of thumb I have outlined here is bound to generate less compelling, less adequate, and less true explanations than inquiry that centers itself within them.

Moreover, an "incompleteness" is always part of any interpretation. An interpretive claim against a rival might be something like the following, "I understand your argument, but I will try to show you something you have not seen yet."

If an interlocutor does not understand this kind of reading, or will not accept it as valid, there is nowhere else the argument can go. Ultimately, a good explanation is one which makes sense of the behavior; but then to appreciate a good explanation, one has to agree on what makes good sense; what makes good sense is a function of one's readings; and these in turn are based on the kind of sense one understands. (Taylor 1985e, 24)

In adjudicating rival interpretations, we are forced to return constantly to the various languages of understanding -- both the self-interpretations of those we seek to understand and to our own previous formulations. We do this inexorably. "We can never expect our debates about interpretation to have a stop" (Skinner 1988d, 285). This is why it is crucial for us to commit ourselves to interpretive inquiry in order to grapple with understanding the condition of politics in modernity. Anti-interpretive methods, usually supporting blinding prejudices like the narrow "secular-modern" ones I have detailed in the previous chapter, have for too long occluded our engagement with, and hence, explanation of the range of contested, alternative, contemporaneous actions, relations, practices, and institutions within modern politics.

Within the interpretive frame, therefore, the question of whether or not interpretive inquiry is “critical” turns out to be improperly posed. The question is not “should we or can we criticize.” The question should be, when is interpretive inquiry not “critical?” The engagement with the study of politics offered by interpretive inquiry is inherently critical, but its understanding of criticism does not satisfy the demand too frequently made within social sciences that we criticize those we claim to understand without adequately providing an account of their understandings and the inter-subjective contexts within which they must be situated. Nevertheless, it would be an oversimplification of interpretive inquiry to suggest that all interpretive theorists are united on this question. There are two related kinds of criticism interpretive inquiry enables.

The first is what comes closest to the demand for “criticism of others” in the social sciences without, I think, leaving the interpretive frame. This is the view that a self-consciously interpretive posture toward political explanation makes room for correcting, supplementing, or even repudiating subjective understandings. This is true of both the interpreter’s and the interpreted’s understandings, generally, but the focus of this first kind of criticism is on the latter. This is a complex claim and it is imperative that it be viewed within the context of the general interpretive thesis I have delineated. That is, it is based first on the view that any interpreter (the formal “interpreter” and the “interpreted”) of a given context may have an alternative reading of the inter-subjective context within which subjective interpretations of that context -- presumably those we will correct, supplement, or repudiate -- must be situated. But more importantly, it is based on the fact that understanding takes place in conversations with others

aimed at the fusion of horizons. Criticism in the form of correcting, supplementing, or repudiating claims must be part of the process of coming to a deeper understanding of the constitutive meanings we are seeking to account for. The standard for such critique is that it be articulated with the aim of showing how it makes sense “within an agent’s own mapping of his ‘problem situation’ or ‘set of problem situations’ (action context)” (Dunn 1978, 170). “Criticism” of these kinds, that is, must be articulated in the process of mutually self-clarifying exchange (or metaphorically similar historical approaches) seeking to elicit, what Dunn calls the “best description,” and what I would call the “best expression”, on the one hand, and the best account of the best description, on the other. Dunn comments on the latter:

Any supplementation, for instance, must remove anomaly within, or add information to, the best description which he himself is [those we seek to interpret are] able to offer; and it is because they must do so that it is tempting (though plainly wrong) to insist that they must provide characterizations which an agent could or even would in practice accept. When we have the best description which he is able to offer, we may well be able to illuminate him to himself, perhaps even to show him that some of his initial statements are the reverse of the truth; and our potential ability to do so will not be impugned should he not in fact wish for further illumination, wish to understand himself any better. What we cannot do is to claim to *know* without access to the best descriptions which he is able to offer. (Dunn 1978, 167-8)

This, it seems to me, is the crucial point which differentiates criticism as correcting, supplementing, or repudiating within an interpretive frame from criticism within an anti-interpretive one. Taylor is worth quoting on it as well:

Social theory . . . is very much in the business of correcting common sense understanding. It is of very little use unless it goes beyond, unless it frequently challenges and negates what we think we are doing, saying, feeling, aiming at. But its criterion of success is that it makes us as agents more comprehensible, that it makes sense of what

we feel, do, aim at. And this it cannot do without getting clear on what we think about our action and feeling. That is, after all, what offers the puzzle theory tries to resolve. And so there is no way of showing that some theory has actually explained *us* and *our* action until it can be shown to make sense of what we did under *our* description (where this emphatically does *not* mean, let me repeat, showing how what we did made sense). For otherwise, we may have an interesting, speculative rational reconstruction . . . but no way of showing that it actually *explains* anything. (Taylor 1985g, 124; cp. 1992b, 46)

The demand for locating criticism within the web of the subject's intersubjective world and context is a high one, which is why interpretation is not simply understanding or interviewing. "The arrogance of ideological explanation of the thought of others lies in the claim to understand another's thinking more deeply than he does himself without being in a position to provide true descriptions of almost any of it. It is a routinised claim to authority where routinised claims must be false, where all authority must be earned in detail and where the mode of its earning is by explaining persons (and their situations), more lucidly to themselves. . . . If we claim to *know* about others, we must try as best we can to give them what is their due, their right" (Dunn 1978, 170).

In addition to being able to challenge subjective understandings of others, interpretive inquiry also provides a frame for challenging ourselves.³⁸ This is the second kind of criticism enabled by interpretive inquiry. A self-consciously interpretative understanding of politics opens us up to "making and remaking the forms and limits" (Taylor 1990) of our own understanding. In dialogue with those whose lives are, from the outset, presumable different than our own (either in very subtle or very extensive ways), alternative human possibilities -- the past, the present, and the

³⁸ "Understanding is inseparable from criticism, and this in turn is inseparable from self-criticism" (Taylor 1985g, 131).

future-- come into view (see chapter one; Cp. Taylor 1985g, 131; 1990, 40; Farr 1989, 40). As Peter Winch has understood it, interpretation makes possible “learning different possibilities of making sense of human life, different ideas about the possible importance that the carrying out of certain activities may take on for a [person], trying to contemplate the meaning of life as a whole” (Winch 1970, 106). Thus, “mapping moral and political possibilities” (Ball, Farr, Hanson 1989, 2), perhaps even taking them seriously, is precisely what interpretive inquiry “gives us.” Moreover, because our (critical) language of explanation is always a language of perspicuous contrast, we, and not simply others, are challenged to think differently about life generally, and about the meanings that constitute our own lives in particular. (Is this not the essence of the critical impulse?) Interpretive inquiry “is inseparable from an examination of the options between which [we] must choose” (Taylor 1985e, 53-4).³⁹

Therefore, the process of interpretation offered here is, in addition to being intrinsically critical in several senses, also necessarily comparative. It enables comparisons among alternative, various actions, relations, practices, and institutions by mapping out the range of matrices of meaning constitutive of them in various contexts (Taylor 1990, 53; MacIntyre 1972). It is for this reason as well, that we must engage the necessarily comparative study of alternative modernities interpretively. The alternative is to avoid a critical confrontation with our own judgements in history as well as to fail to

³⁹ Some interpretive theorists hope that this will lead “to a greater degree of understanding, and thereby, a larger tolerance for various elements of diversity” (Skinner 1988d, 287); or even the “emancipatory effect of opening up the unidimensional discourse in whose terms our political and cultural conversations have for too long been conducted” (Ball, Farr, and Hanson 1989, 14). With a good deal of “charity of attitude” (Dunn 1978, 160) from others as well as on our own part, these hopes might be fulfilled.

account for those of others. It is to fail to see various options, including our own. Anti-interpretive methods have for too long occluded our critical engagement with our own as well as others' modern politics.

Finally, interpretive inquiry's claim to illuminate alternative possibilities which are fundamentally unpredictable has an important consequence for the character of interpretive political inquiry. It means that all interpretation inquiry is "inescapably historical" (but not historicist) (Taylor 1985e, 57; Farr 1989, 25). We are always looking at historically different options. This view underlies the various interpretive pursuits in political science which append "history" to their label, rather than "science:" the history of political consciousness (e.g., Skinner 1978, Dunn 1969; Pocock 1972, 1987), conceptual history (e.g., Ball, Farr, Hanson 1989; Cp. Ball, 1984, 246-247, 1988); and, importantly, comparative histories (e.g., MacIntyre, 1972; Dunn 1972). The domains of inquiry include revolutions in Africa as well as the speech acts of Ockham and Locke. It is thus unfortunate that "history" in political science is considered to lack direct relevance to political explanation.⁴⁰ The study of political languages is intimately related to the study of history, and thus it is tied up with an examination of judgements of possibility in human affairs. It is inseparable from the study of what is true and good in life. As such, history "becomes essential, not incidental to the study of politics" (Farr 1989, 29; cp. Pocock 1972, 1972b).

I agree with Skinner who has answered criticisms that his mode of inquiry is "purely historical" and "without modern relevance," driven by nothing more than "the dustiest antiquarian interest". He suggests that it is

⁴⁰ Compare Dennis Kavanaugh, "Why political science needs history," *Political Studies*, 34:479-495, esp 491ff.

“needlessly blinkered to suppose that intellectual history [or comparative histories] can only be ‘relevant’ if it enables us to reflect our current beliefs and assumptions back on us.” I think as well that this is a shared view among those who take interpretive inquiry seriously. We may find, for instance,

as a result of engaging in such studies, that some of what we currently believe about, say, our moral and political arrangements is actually false. We are prone, for example, to think that the concept of individual responsibility is indispensable to any satisfactory moral code. But Adkin’s analysis of ancient Greek values casts considerable doubt on that article for faith. We are prone to think that there can be no concept of state in the absence of centralized systems of power. But Geertz’s study of classical Bali shows how the one is perfectly possible in the absence of the other. (Skinner 1988d, 287)

So the question of critique is returned to the objectors: Is a “stepping back from our own prevailing assumptions and structures of thought and . . . situating ourselves in relation to others and very different forms of life” irrelevant? Is it *uncritical*? I think not. Situating ourselves in this way equips us “with a new means of looking critically at our own beliefs in light of the enlarged sense of possibility we acquire” (Skinner 1988d, 287)? It enables us to critically engage with the world of politics and, possibly, to alter it by investing our political actions, practices, relations, and institutions with new meanings. There is no necessity for this process to unfold, but interpretive inquiry is certainly a central part of it if it does. From one point of view, by explaining the constitutive nature of meaning, interpretive inquiry shows how changing meanings might enable changing the world. Before inter-subjective, comparative, and historically “conscious” inquiry is rejected as either non-explanatory or uncritical, other political scientists should consider what it is they hope to achieve from explanation. If we can offer to others (such as students, the public)

interpretive explanations and accounts of options available to us, have we not, in fact, made world historical change possible? On what basis do we as human beings act? *What is the relationship between understanding and action?* To paraphrase Taylor, in interpretive inquiry “there can be a valid response to ‘I don’t understand’ which takes the form, not only ‘develop your intuitions’, but more radically ‘change yourself’” (Taylor 1985e, 53-54). Extend your thinking, your serious consideration of other possibilities (Taylor 1985g, 131). Your (our) life might change.

If the point of our practices in political science is to understand and to explain, then we must view the understanding of actions, practices, relationships, and institutions -- separated falsely by the artificial boundaries within modern political science -- as fundamentally related. There is a unity of political science across these dimensions of analysis that continues to go unnoticed in the discipline. Understanding is necessarily conceptual, comparative, historical, and open. Grasping the expressed concepts and grammars of those we study means coming to understand their political lives as theirs. Comparison, intimately intertwined within the critical processes of interpretation, opens up their possibilities in an historical relation to ours. The disciplinary boundaries which uphold the distinctions between conceptual analysis, historical analysis, and comparative analysis, which perforce lead us away from an interpretative consciousness, must be broken down.⁴¹

⁴¹ My original plan was to identify some general theses about interpretation that “hold” various different kinds of interpretive projects together. Any project of this sort risks displeasing someone within its intended scope. I recognize that much remains to be discussed. I have not, for example, identified in any significant detail what these alternative projects look like; I have not discussed explicitly various questions of power or truth involved in the process of interpretation; while I have made some attempt to account for points of difference between interpretive inquiry and other modes, I have not addressed all of them; and I have not fully unpacked the meanings of relevant terms

Why Turkey as a field of study

It will be recalled that my general thesis in this dissertation is that certain “secular” and “modern” prejudices, sustained and supported by anti-interpretive methodological commitments, have governed the study of modern politics in especially culturally different contexts. Turkey is one of those contexts. Moreover, the declared commitment of its founding political elites to supplant the “old ways of life,” based in what they may have referred to as superstition and ignorance, with “new” ones, based in science and reason has long made Turkey a site of great interest for modern political scientists. It has been said that the Western modernization and nation-building literature of the 1950s and 1960s “could, in spirit, have been written by Atatürk” (Richards and Waterbury 1990, 347). In a speech promoting his sartorial reform policies in August of 1925, Atatürk is said to have declared the following:⁴²

The aim of the revolutions which we have been and are now accomplishing is to bring the people of the Turkish Republic into a state of society entirely modern and completely civilized in spirit and form. This is the central pillar of our Revolution, and it is necessary utterly to defeat those mentalities incapable of accepting this truth. Hitherto there have been many of this mentality, rusting and deadening the mind of the nation. In any case, the superstitions dwelling in people’s minds will be completely driven out, for as long as they are not expelled, it will not be possible to bring the light of truth into men’s minds. (quoted in Lewis 1961, 410)⁴³

within my best description of interpretation (understanding, meaning, significance, and so on (see, for a critique, Tully 1989). These and other questions take their place among other items on my future research agenda.

⁴² I write “said to” because the quote is from Bernard Lewis’s highly influential, *The emergence of modern Turkey* (1961), in which his translations generally favored a “modernization” perspective on crucial terms such as “mentality,” “truth,” and so on. Lewis’s translations are not usually problematic, but they are contested. It is significant that Lewis included this passage and brought it to our attention.

⁴³ Lewis cites Atatürk’s *Söylev ve Demeçleri* (Collected Speeches, Istanbul), vol. 2

The “Kemalist” reforms thus ushered in a future that he and his colleagues hoped would free the Turk from, as Mardin has put it, “what [Atatürk] may have agreed to call the ‘idiocy of traditional, community-oriented life’” (Mardin 1982, 212; compare Keyder 1988, 207). He “was very much of the opinion that baggy pants and the fez were part of a ‘carnival’” (216).⁴⁴

Thus, like the “modern” political scientists who believed that “religion” should take a back seat to secular identities in modern politics, Atatürk and those who seized power believed it was necessary to bring Turkey out of what to them was its pre-modern “religiously anchored” present and elevate it to a new future (Sunar and Sayari 1986, 170). In believing this, Atatürk and his colleagues were neither “alone” nor unchallenged (see, e.g., Mardin 1962; Berkes 1964). Rather, they were participating in one tradition of Turkish national thought that understood Turkey’s chances for an independent, respected, and prosperous future to be dependent on this radical transformation of Turkish “national” identity. The ideologist of Turkish nationalism, Ziya Gökalp, appears to have summed up much of this view when he declared favorably that a “modern nation is a creature which thinks in terms of the positive sciences (Gökalp 1959 [1922], 279)⁴⁵ Turkey, it was believed, needed to come of age.

To interpreters of the possibilities for secularism in the modern world, Turkey is, therefore, a site of world historical significance. “I think of Turkey,” wrote the sociologist Donald E. Webster, “as a country which is

⁴⁴ “So long as the sentiments and knowledge of mankind with regard to religious questions are not yet freed from myths and purified in light of true science,” Atatürk asseverated, “we shall find historians everywhere who play a religious comedy” (Atatürk 1929, 591).

⁴⁵ For students in the social sciences, the case of Turkey provides a healthy and needed reminder of the political nature of these ideas (compare Ball 1984a, 237).

coming of age” (Webster 1939, 288). Within political science, it will be recalled that Daniel Lerner’s thesis on the “passing of traditional society” took Turkey as its paradigm case. Lerner and his colleague Richard Robinson expressed the widely shared view that “Kemalist” policy was the epitome of pragmatic modernization politics: “Each policy and program was evaluated by what the ruling elite conceived to be the public welfare, not according to some *a priori* religious doctrine or political ideology” (Lerner and Robinson 1960, 24; compare Lewis 1954, 107; 1961, 483). To these interpreters, it was value-free science, superseding the theological stage of history (Comte, among others), in practice!

My central claim with regard to Turkey is that while the building of a “secular, modern” future may have been a goal within Turkish national politics, the constitutive meanings and ends of this project within Turkish political discourse have been inadequately attended to by Anglophone political scientists whose interest in Turkey has been defined in the narrow secular and modern terms (described in the previous chapter) and whose methods have been non-, and in some cases anti-, interpretive. In consequence, we have yet to adequately explain the character Turkey’s “secular state.” There are, of course, always exceptions and qualifications to any claim like this one. But, as I will argue in the next several chapters, the broad general claim is defensible: governed by narrow “secular modern” prejudices themselves sustained and supported by anti-interpretive methodological commitments, interpreters of Turkey have failed to offer fully compelling accounts of Turkey’s “secular identity.”

I will pursue this thesis by considering interpretations of two dimensions of political life, hoping along the way to illustrate the

interpretive unity of political inquiry as well as my particular thesis about interpreting Turkey's alternative modernity. I will begin by looking at interpretations of Gökalp's understanding of Turkish modernity, and the nature of the relationship between Islam and Turkish nationalism which he believed could be reconciled with Turkey's positivist turn to the West. I will then proceed to examine interpretations of the practices, relationships, and institutions associated with laicism (*laiklik*) in Turkey. As part of my critique, I will provide both an account of the historical meanings we have assigned to Gökalp and *laiklik* as well as an alternative and necessarily open-ended, self-consciously interpretative account of each.

My project participates in several different projects in political science (the history of the discipline, the reinvigoration of interpretive political inquiry, and the study of alternative modernities). It also takes as a point of departure the growing awareness within Turkish studies that significant aspects of Turkish political history remain open to interpretation. Inside Turkish academia, a new set of understandings is emerging concerning a variety of historical issues related to the history of the Republic. Led by the "new Turkish historians" research has begun to challenge accepted "Kemalist" views of Ottoman and Turkish history (e.g., Akural 1984 , esp. 132, 147-148; Z. Toprak, 1992).⁴⁶ It is noteworthy that non-

⁴⁶ Akural suggests that "Kemalist historians refrained from exploring the many contours of history; instead, in an unduly present-minded way, they sought a single element, theme or hero. Official republican history therefore emerges as the very flattened account of a march from darkness to light . . . [T]hey tended to consider all existing Ottoman institutions as 'antiquated,' 'medieval' or 'decrepit.' It did not occur to the Kemalist historians that in attributing the Ottoman decline to pan-Islamism and pan-Ottomanism Atatürk was looking for a rationale to support his regime rather than for the causes of the empire's decline." In addition, Akural notes perceptively that one consequence of the narrow view of early Republican history was the exclusion of alternative political possibilities which lie somewhere in between enlightenment and reaction: "Kemalists associated even moderate conservative elements with the views of reactionaries blinded by religious dogmatism. In fact, however, the conservative account

Turkish historians have contributed to these debates (e.g., Arai 1992; Zürcher 1984).⁴⁷ Even within political science, there is both agreement and evidence that interpreting Turkish political history remains an open affair. As George Harris has recently stated, “studies of Turkey have not progressed to the point where a ‘standard’ view of the country and its prospects has emerged. Thus far, attempts to present Turkish reality as a coherent whole have been rapidly outdated; the polemical literature of recent years remains less than satisfying as well. Indeed, all too many major questions of historical controversy still have not been convincingly resolved” (Harris 1985, 3).⁴⁸

As my comments in this chapter suggest, I differ from Harris (and most mainstream political science views of history) in thinking that these controversies will “ever” be “solved” -- interpretation is a necessarily open affair. But I do agree that the project must go on. The existence of an open interpretive field and the need to understand the various alternative modernities with us today, among other pressing and I dare say “relevant”

of the tribulations of the Turkish people was usually informed by a national consciousness” (Akural 1984, 132). Akural properly notes that Gökalp was among those conservatives whose ideas and politics were distorted by the the Kemalist historians. In fine, then, “The early Kemalists misunderstood the nature of historical inquiry and failed to base their research on historiography proper. Their works have a markedly ethnocentric coloration and contain many distortions of historical facts in the service of patriotic impulses”(Akural 1984 143). For a statement of the need to examine Kemalism itself in a historical context, see (Özbudun, 1981 2-3).

⁴⁷The works of these historians should be seen, in part, as fulfilling earlier calls for such critical historical research by prominent historians in the American Social Sciences (Karpal 1974; Shaw 1974; cf. Lewis 1953; Weiker 1969).

⁴⁸ Several examples of re-interpretation within political science are noteworthy. Turkish political scientist Ersin Kalaycıoğlu (Kalaycıoğlu 1988, 54-57) has recently taken on the widely-held view within Turkish political studies, articulated by Şerif Mardin in his 1966 article, “Government and opposition in Turkish politics,” that one cultural component of Turkey’s periodic breakdowns of democracy has been the lack of tolerance toward political opposition among Turkish parliamentary members. Although Kalaycıoğlu’s research addresses a different institutional and personality context than the one for which the original thesis was intended, his efforts to engage with long-held views of Turkish politics confirm Harris’s comment. Mardin’s work on the *Nurcu* Islamic sect in Turkey is another significant contribution to new political science interpretations of Turkish political history (Mardin 1989; 304; 1991).

matters we must address in grappling with the possibilities for secularism in our world, make Turkey a rich field of study for a self-consciously interpretative working out of the complex interpretive issues I have articulated thus far.

CHAPTER FOUR

Secularization and modernization in Turkey: Interpreting the ideas of Ziya Gökalp

The essence of life is creative evolution.

Human culture is nothing but a synthesis of national culture and international civilization.

Ziya Gökalp (1913b, 92; 1917g, 288)

For the intellectual elite in the Young Turk movement, the last days of the Ottoman Empire were “a time of revolution’ when old values were being pulled down and new ones were being invented” (Arai 1992, 42).¹ The promulgation of a distinct “Turkish” national identity by the Young Turks brought “a certain newness (*yenilik*)” to “the quality of a Turk (*Türklük*)” (Arai 1992, 42). In this context of conceptual change, and beyond the immediate practical-political problem of how best to secure failing Ottoman political and economic structures, the best minds of the day tried to give substance to this newness. Put simply, they asked what has turned out to be one of the most enduring questions in Turkey this century: “Who is a Turk and how ought this national identity be understood in relation to Islamic religious identity, on the one hand, and modern scientific-rational identity, on the other?”

It is the estimation of nearly all analysts of the late Ottoman and early Turkish national period that one thinker stands above all others in formulating an answer to this question. This was Ziya Gökalp (1876-1924). Niyazi Berkes refers to Gökalp as “the most original and influential among

¹ The writer quoted was Ali Canip, who, along with Ziya Gökalp and Ömer Seyfittin, was one of the major contributors to the journal *Genc Kalemler*.

Turkish writers of the twentieth century”(Berkes 1954, 375). “It is no mean achievement,” writes Taha Parla, “to have laid the only plausible comprehensive cognitive map for Turkey’s passage from a six-hundred year empire to a new nation-state.” For Parla, Gökalp “stands out in Turkey as the one person who was able to go beyond narrow ideological blueprints to a systematic theoretical construction. With him, and in contrast to the Young Turks, loose ends come together; eclecticism is replaced by synthesis; the discrepancy between what is prescribed and what is practiced becomes smaller; imitative and idiosyncratic Westernisms are supplanted by a critical appreciation of the West; radical chic is superseded by a sense of proportion and totality” (Parla 1985, 22).

The context that set the problem for Gökalp was characterized by the dissolution of the culturally, ethnically, and religiously heterogeneous Ottoman Empire and the rise of nationalism among both Muslim and non-Muslim populations under Ottoman suzerainty. Ottoman elites had tried through the nineteenth century to secure their state by adopting military, political, legal, and administrative techniques from states to their west.² The famous Tanzimat -- literally “reordering” -- edicts (1839, 1856) concretized their interest in Westernizing reforms, but also sparked a debate in the empire on the relationship between new European ways and old, but changing, Ottoman-Islamic ones. The prominent “Young Ottoman” ideologue Namık Kemal, for example, argued for interpreting Islamic jurisprudential traditions to fit newer constitutional and parliamentary governing structures (Mardin 1962). His ideas contributed to the creation of the 1876 Constitution and parliament that were prorogued only two years later by

² For further detail, see Berkes (1964), Lewis (1961), Parla (1985), and Shaw (1977).

Sultan Abdülhamid II as the splintering and weakening of the Ottoman Empire accelerated. The sultan intensified so-called modernization reforms, but he did so within an Ottoman-Islamic, rather than a “Westernizing”, conceptual frame.

His virtual overthrow by the Committee of Union and Progress (in the “Young Turk revolution”) led to the restoration of the Constitution and parliament. The CUP encompassed varying tendencies, but the presence of a Turkish nationalist group within it marked the end of the political hegemony of solely “Ottomanist” ideas.³ The nationalists, like their chief ideologue Ziya Gökalp, would confront similar problems of reconciling changes induced from the outside, but they would do so, especially after the losses of the Balkans in 1911-1913, with the goal of fashioning a distinctly Turkish national synthesis.

CUP rule ended with the Axis defeat in the first World War, something that landed CUP leaders, including Ziya Gökalp, in a British Jail in Malta. Still, the nationalist project gained steam after the victorious Allies attempted to implement their own designs on Ottoman territory (Treaty of Sevres, 1920). A national liberation movement culminated in 1923 with the declaration of a new Turkish Republic, in whose formation, as we shall see, Ziya Gökalp’s ideas played a significant, though still contested, role.

As an actively engaged public intellectual and ideologue, Gökalp both participated in attempts to make sense of the transformations of the time, and he gave clarity to them. He did this, conceptually, in two related ways. The first was by investing the concepts “nation” (*millet*), “religion” (*ümmet*), and “modernization” (*muasırlasma*) with new meanings. The second was by

³ For further detail, see Mardin (1992).

offering, in a context of rapid political, economic, social, and ideological change, a new understanding of the relationship between Turkish national culture, Islam, and modern civilization.⁴ In short, he believed that underlying the ability of the Turks to retain both their national culture and their Islamic religion while also “absorbing” the more desirable aspects of modernity, was the necessity of grasping the crucial conceptual difference between what he called their culture and what he called their civilization. The distinction between culture and civilization was clearly, in my view, what Gökalp understood to be his own substantive contribution to the debates of his day. After witnessing that his early efforts of publically working out this distinction had fallen mostly on deaf ears -- despite his paradoxically unparalleled influence among the elite of his day -- Gökalp lamented the fact that, “Among us, those who have grasped the significance of culture are few, and an interest in international civilization is yet to be born” (1917g, 287).

My goal here is to examine the identity and significance of Gökalp’s thinking with regard to Turkish national identity, Islam, modernity, culture, and civilization within what we might call -- though Gökalp would certainly not⁵ -- the secularization problematic of modern political thought. Brian Wilson defines this recently as “the significance religion has for the operation and organization of the social system.” Wilson writes that, “The essential question” of secularization theory concerns “just what part

⁴ Cp. Berkes who understands Gökalp’s objective to have been to “revolutionize the sociological and political language of the Turkey of his time” (Berkes 1954, 378); and Parla, who states that Gökalp “both included aspects of Young Turk thought -- transcending the latter, however by incorporating it into a new synthesis, the totality and the logic of which was entirely different” (Parla 1985, 20).

⁵ Gökalp did not employ the concept of a “secularization problematic.” I do so here as a heuristic guide for considering his thinking about religion in modernity.

religion plays in the functioning of society” (Wilson 1992, 199). This was precisely the question that underlay Gökalp’s thinking about the place and significance of religion under the changing conditions of modern life.

Wilson notes further:

It is not necessary to rehearse yet again the functions, now lost, which religion once fulfilled for other social institutions, save to recall that religion once provided legitimacy for secular authority; endorsed, at times even sanctioned, public policy; sustained with a battery of threats and blandishments the agencies of social control; was seen as the font of all ‘true learning’; socialized the young; and even sponsored a range of creative activities. The loss of these functions is the core of the secularization thesis (1992, 200)

As we shall see, Gökalp develops the distinction between civilization and culture within precisely these developments in the late Ottoman-Islamic and early Turkish-laicist context.⁶ He believed that the contemporary age was marked in part by the loss of religion’s nearly exclusive grip on the institutional and ideational spheres of global and local life. In this context, he argued that the loss of religion’s previous universal significance did not entail a loss of its significance altogether in certain social, and understood correctly, public spheres. At the same time, he maintained that the separation between religion and politics was a fundamental requirement for the states of the member nations of modern civilization.

My project here is to develop the conceptual frame within which Gökalp’s argument made sense. As a prelude to this, I will provide an account of existing understandings of the identity of Gökalp’s thought in the Anglophone political science literature. As described in my introduction, my aim here is to contribute to the existing literature first by writing a history

⁶ On alternative interpretations of the relationship between Islam and Ottoman governance, see the control account in the next section.

of interpreting Gökalp, if you will, and then by contesting existing interpretations by offering an alternative account of the concepts and logic that constituted Ziya Gökalp's thought. My focus will be on Gökalp's understanding of the place and significance of religion in modernity, both how that understanding has been construed and how we might alternatively construe it in the context of the secularization problematic and from a self-consciously hermeneutic angle.

My study therefore includes an analysis of two sets of texts. The first are the major interpretations of Gökalp's thought within the English language political science literature.⁷ These include those widely cited as authoritative studies as well as short but extended discussion of Gökalp's ideas. The second are Gökalp's writings that have been translated into English. These writings form the basis of my interpretation, though I also have consulted the original Turkish texts to check the translations and to fill out what I take to be Gökalp's meanings in the translated texts. It seems to make most sense (to me) to stick most closely to the writings that an English-language audience shares and to offer an alternative interpretation of those texts rather than import other texts. The latter move would make sense if it were necessary to offer an alternative interpretation of the issues I will address here, but I do not think that it is. Most of the texts in which Gökalp's most important ideas on the place of religion in modernity are expressed

⁷ Gökalp's political and social theory, like that of others in the history of political thought, has been the subject of great controversy, both within the realm of academic interpretation and within the context of Turkish politics, where he is either criticized or respected from various points of view (see discussion in Parla 1985). While I will introduce elements of the latter in the discussion as I proceed, a full discussion of it is beyond the scope of this paper. Our context for concern is the history of interpreting Gökalp in the Anglo-American literature of social science.

have been translated.⁸ Moreover, as we shall see, it is possible to interpret the questions of meaning and emphasis that I am considering here from these texts (especially, Berkes 1958; Devereux 1968). Where there are potential problems with this move I note them. My view is that no matter how incomplete the translated selections are as a portion of Gökalp's corpus, they are more than sufficient as a basis for an alternative interpretation of the present subject matter.

In my account of existing studies on the identity of Gökalp's political thought, I seek to articulate the context within which my own interpretation of Gökalp must be situated. I also seek to illustrate the two central claims of my dissertation, namely that certain untoward prejudices about the character of modernity have governed the interpretation of complexly constituted secular and religious political phenomena in different comparative contexts, and that these interpretations have been sustained and supported by non-interpretive modes of inquiry. Gökalp's thought, as we shall see, is a perfect field within which to work out these questions. Without being secular as such, the frame within which he clarified Turkey's options at the turn of the century clearly expresses an awareness of the fundamental nature of the dynamic we have called the secularization process. But Gökalp never thought of it explicitly in these terms and offered a tripartite set of ideals that tried to synthesize religion and modernity. As such, his thought is constituted by both religious and non-religious meanings, which are open, as we shall see to a variety of interpretations (cp. Parla 1985, 121). I do not seek to close the interpretive circle here as much as to offer a more

⁸ Exceptions are Gökalp's historical writings and poetry. Selections from the former appear in Devereux's volume. The substance and significance of Gökalp's poetry is discussed below.

compelling interpretation of Gökalp's understanding of the place and significance of religion in modernity than exists in the literature to date.

The strongest claim I will develop here is that unless Gökalp's texts are approached from a self-consciously interpretive perspective, the identity of Gökalp's thought as well as its significance in the context of thinking in Turkey about the secular dynamics of modernity can easily be missed. In fact, I think both have been missed in some, though not all, of the interpretations of Gökalp's thinking within the English-language literature of Anglophone political science. (And where it has not been missed, I think it remains inadequately developed.) As I will show, we find Gökalp's understanding of the relationship between religion and modernity judged as inadequate because it deviates from the standards at work in the secular and modern prejudices I have criticized above (see chapter, "Interpreting alternative modernities"). This judgment alone is not a problem; but it sometimes appears as a substitute for explanation precisely when it should be subjected to reflection in the process of understanding (see chapter, "The interpretive commitment in political inquiry"). Having already outlined the substance of the blinding secular and modern prejudices above, my discussion here will be limited to showing how and where they show up in existing interpretations within the literature. I will also try to show how the understanding of secularism might be enriched through a self-consciously interpretive encounter with Gökalp's interpretation of Turkey's options in modernity.

With respect to interpreting Gökalp as opposed to his interpreters, the major claim in my account is that some of the existing studies inadequately interpret the identity and significance of Gökalp's understanding of religion

in modernity because they fail to grasp one context that was significant to him. This context is best described currently as the set of concerns included within the secularization problematic. It is my view that unless interpreters of Gökalp see the centrality of these concerns in Gökalp's own thinking, they will fail to capture both the identity and significance of his thinking on the place and significance of religion in modernity.

It is important to state at the outset what I mean by emphasizing the secularization problematic. I am not saying that Gökalp intended to address the secularization problematic. I am also not saying that this was the only issue of significance for Gökalp. It clearly was not. He was, after all, engaged in the project of giving substance to the meaning of Turkish national identity in the modern age. What I am saying is that the conceptual frame in our language that most adequately enables us to capture the significance Gökalp's understanding of religion in modernity had for him is the frame of the secularization problematic. As far as consciously choosing prejudices can go, we should choose the curiosities, concerns, and meanings expressed by this problematic -- the realization that the place of religion is undergoing a radical, historical alteration-- if we are to best account for (and appreciate) Gökalp's own understanding of the significance of his ideas on religion and modernity. As I have described in my chapter on interpretive inquiry, coming to understand the horizon within which another's horizon is to be adequately understood is how understanding happens. Thus, when I say that previous interpreters have failed to grasp the significance of Gökalp's thinking within what I am calling the secularization problematic, I am saying that they have failed to grasp adequately the identity of his own conceptual frame for understanding an issue of significance to him. The

failure to locate the significance of Gökalp's political and social thought within the secularization problematic, therefore, while it may produce alternative understandings, does not help to bring about enough understanding of the identity of his thought as a whole.

What was evident in Gökalp's thinking, and what makes the study of his ideas so relevant to Anglophone thinking about secularization today is that in the final analysis, he shared the belief with modernists in the West that social structural changes were leading to an increasingly differentiated and possibly freer world. He shared, that is, a Durkheimian approach to the study of social science.⁹ But what is so obvious from a self-consciously interpretive approach to understanding Gökalp seemed unrealizable from within the non- and anti-interpretive literature sustained and supported by narrow secular modern prejudices. This obvious point was that perhaps Gökalp's own understanding of the processes of modernity shaping Turkey might have its own standing, and hence truth, for Gökalp and within the conceptual and political context to which he was trying to contribute. The failure of existing interpretations to adequately account for Gökalp's understanding of the relationship between Islam and modernity -- the merits of their different insights notwithstanding -- is thus related both to a substantive issue concerning the understanding of modern political history that constitutes Anglophone political science and to an issue of hermeneutic inquiry. (The two are now obviously related.)

In the literature I will examine, this dual failure is observed in two distinct places. It is observed, firstly, in different evaluations of the emphasis Gökalp placed on Islam within his trinity of Turkism, Islamism, and

⁹ On influence of Durkheim, see especially Parla (1985) and Birtek (1991); Cp., Bianchi (1984, 92ff.).

modernism. And it is observed, secondly, in how Gökcalp's thinking is situated within the context of the laicist politics that succeeded him. He died in 1924 and did not live to see how laicist politics unfolded in Turkey. Interpretations of Gökcalp's thought usually include some suggestions regarding how Gökcalp fits into the broader context of secular political thought and action in Turkey. I will accept this context as a context of concern, but I will offer a different evaluation of both his ideas and his place within the history of secular politics in Turkey than we find in the existing literature.¹⁰

Interpreting Gökcalp on the secularization problematic: The identity of Gökcalp's nationalism

In order to understand claims made about Gökcalp's understanding of the relationship between religion/Islam, nationalism/Turkism, and modernism, we must first understand how his nationalism has been differently construed in the Anglophone literature. As I shall show, it would be difficult to understand claims made about Gökcalp's view of the relationship between Islam, nationalism, and modernism without understanding claims made of its core, nationalist component. An account of the contestation over Gökcalp's nationalism also illustrates the vastly different estimations of Gökcalp's political aims and interests one finds in Anglophone studies and provides the necessary backdrop for understanding the four distinct evaluations of Gökcalp's view of Islam in Turkey's modernity that I will describe in the next section.

¹⁰ Situating Gökcalp within the history of Turkey's experience with secularization is obviously tied to the subject of the next chapter. In that chapter, the reader will find more evidence for some preliminary claims I make here.

Two major works have been written on Gökbalp's thought in the Anglophone political science literature. They present remarkably contrasting accounts of Gökbalp's political and social thought. The two works are Uriel Heyd's Foundations of Turkish nationalism: The life and teachings of Ziya Gökbalp (1950) and Taha Parla's The social and political thought of Ziya Gökbalp, 1876 -1924 (1985). The former was *the* authoritative interpretation of Gökbalp in the literature of Anglophone social science until Parla's appeared thirty years later.

Heyd's Gökbalp is one who obfuscates matters of nation and matters of spirituality. To Heyd, Gökbalp is "by nature a collectivist" who laid "the spiritual foundations of the Kemalist revolution" by assigning a "supreme" and "divine" moral status ("all divine qualities") to the Turkish nation (Heyd 1950, ix, 170; 56-7, 123-4, 164). As such, Heyd views Gökbalp's political vision as "an instructive example of modern nationalist thought in an Eastern society" (xi) which is neither particularly original nor worthy of our admiration (149, 163). This is because he sees in Gökbalp both a denial of the individual's absolute moral status and a refusal to respect international obligations and norms (Heyd 123, 169, 58-59, 124).

Heyd acknowledges the fact that Gökbalp advocated national democracy, parliamentary and constitutional government, and the independence of science, religion, art, and academia from politics (Heyd 136-9, 169). But this apparent liberality, to Heyd, is overshadowed by tendencies similar to the "German and other Central European" nationalisms which tend toward the "irrational, collectivistic, and exclusive" (164). Revealing the standards of "political science" (164) upon which his judgement is founded, Heyd explicitly juxtaposes this kind of nationalism to the nationalism of "Western

Europe . . . based on the contemporary philosophy of Enlightenment with its rational approach and its individualist and Universalist outlook” (164).

Gökalp’s distinction, a distinction on which “there can be little doubt” asserts Heyd, is that his “conception of society, the elite, and the Leader prepared the ground for Atatürk’s authoritarian regime” (140).

In nearly total contrast to Heyd, Parla sees Gökalp as a fundamentally democratic, pluralist, tolerant, non-elitist, non-expansionist, rational, egalitarian, feminist, internationalist, non- and anti-racist, non-chauvenistic, humanist thinker. Parla argues that Gökalp’s nationalism must be seen as an alternative to, rather than an instance of, the illiberal, elitist, and pre-totalitarian ideologies that were shaping the early twentieth century context of Western Europe.

Gökalp stands out as a democratic and rational analyst of leadership in an age when theories of charismatic leaders, plebisitarian dictators, ducés, Feurhers, ‘electric currents between the chiefs and the people’, and iron laws of oligarchy were in the making in European political and social thought. At a minimum, faith in the rationality of the citizen and the effectiveness of parliaments was in decline; ascendent was the belief in the irrationality of the masses and the necessity of dirigist elite and leaders. With his sceptical optimism in human reason, Gökalp did not travel that path to such extremes. (Parla 1985, 94, cp. 89)

To Parla, Heyd’s error, an error which he shares with many in Turkey,¹¹ was twofold. First it derives in part from failing to understand

¹¹When Parla declared the need for “a systematic and critical analysis of the meaning and influence of Ziya Gökalp’s political theory,” he had in mind both Heyd’s “slanted” treatment and the “abuses” to which his ideas were put in Turkish political history (Parla 66, 124). In the context of Turkish political discourse, “distortions of his thought were equal to if not greater than, his direct influence and accepted proposals.” The “Left have accused him of racism and totalitarianism, while the right, have praised him for the same, wrong reason” (122). Kemalists consider Gökalp an “exponent of religious conservatism” while the right Islamic radicals think of him as “uncritical advocate of Westernism, insensitive to the prerogatives of Turkism and Islam in history” (121; cp. Berkes 1954, 377). Even within academic circles, Gökalp’s reputation is mixed, with some hailing him as “a sociologist as great as Durkheim, or perhaps even greater,” while

sufficiently the ideological context within which Gökalp's thinking must be interpreted. Parla agrees that Gökalp was not a political liberal, but he perceptively notes that Gökalp's options were not limited to those represented in the individualist/anti-individualist dichotomy on the basis of which Heyd bases his critique. That is to say, in the ideological context of early twentieth century European thought, Gökalp could offer a critique of liberalism without sliding into irrational collectivism. Situated in this context, Parla argues, Gökalp's political vision is best characterized as solidaristic corporatism.¹² Gökalp believed that the egoistic and utilitarian individualist ideals found in some Western societies should never be taken as the basis for building altruistic, tolerant, and public-oriented social norms in Turkey (Gökalp 1918b, 81-82; esp. 1923s, 310-312; 1923t, 64-7; 1923w).¹³

"Individualism" was a bankrupt social and political philosophy, a "threat to equilibrium and harmony of society but also to the individual himself"

(Parla 1985, 67). Directly addressing interpreters like Heyd, Parla writes:

This [Gökalp's system] is pure and simple solidaristic morality which values the individual without negating its prerogatives, according to his service to social solidarist and public institutions. . . . [T]he individual gains meaning only in society without being negated by society let alone by the state. . . . [and] is defended against the incursion of the state precisely by the occupational groups and their corporations, which serve as a buffer between the state and the individual. What facile liberal clichés cannot capture is that, in solidaristic corporatism, even the occupational groups which

others "have described him as no more than an imitator" (120). Still, among the former, there are those who pay uninformed "lip-service to Gökalp's being the founding father of academic sociology in Turkey" (122). Compare Berkes's short remarks to this effect (Berkes 1954, 377).

¹² "The system as a whole took the shape of idealistic positivism: the method was scientific in the positivistic sense, and the ideology was solidarism, a variant of corporatist capitalism, as opposed to Marxist socialism or liberal capitalism. Gökalp labelled it social idealism (*içtimai mefkûrecilik*)" (Parla 1985, 26, 54).

¹³ It is important to keep in mind that "when Gökalp says [advocates] modernization, certainly meaning Westernization, this is not the liberal West, but it is the corporatist West" which he has in mind (Parla 1985, 90).

collectively constitute civil society, exist for the free development of the individual personality, which, however, has to be 'social'; but still within a framework of cultural and philosophical liberalism. (Parla 1985, 67-69)

In addition to failing to grasp the right ideological context, Parla notes that the interpretation of Gökalp as "the direct source" of the "chief-system," tutelary elitism, authoritarian single-partyism, and the "quasi-totalitarian statism of the Kemalist period of 1920-1940" derives further from a "failure to appreciate the moral and theoretical reservations Gökalp entered on these issues, and [from] an irresponsible conversion of some of his slogans into representations of his central ideas" (Parla 93).

With regard to Heyd's text, Parla is correct. Heyd declared his "chief aim" to be "to trace Gökalp's development as a thinker" in a "comprehensive," "objective," "systematic," and "scientific" manner. But the reader quickly learns that Heyd's comprehensive reconstruction¹⁴ excludes Gökalp's "numerous articles on theoretical sociology." Heyd justifies this decision on the grounds that "Gökalp did little original thinking and merely accepted and paraphrased theories of Western, particularly French sociology" (Heyd 1950, x).¹⁵ Instead of attending to the sociological writings, Heyd decides to give "greater attention to Ziya Gökalp's views on religious problems" and the place of Islam in Turkish life, which he suggests have been insufficiently examined by even Turkish scholars (xi). Doing so, he believes, is important "to understanding the religious development in modern Turkey and the secular trend in the Muslim world in general" (xi).

¹⁴ Which he describes as "sift[ing] through all [Gökalp's writings] in order to discover his ideas and weave them as far as possible into a connected system of thought" (x).

¹⁵ On this claim alone there is much debate. Compare Berkes (1954, 376, 383n7); Parla (1985, 8-9, 21, 42ff); Arai (1992 92).

Heyd's choice of topics reflects a tendency in Anglophone social science circles during the late 1940s and early 1950s to study the place of Islam in contemporary Turkish politics and thought.¹⁶ But the decision to exclude from consideration Gökalp's varied writings on sociology has serious consequences for Heyd's interpretation of Gökalp's system of thought generally and for his interpretation of Gökalp's "views on religion" in particular. Parla is correct. No portion of Gökalp's thought can be understood adequately apart from the sociological writings wherein Gökalp expresses the fundamental premises of his thought (in addition to theoretical reservations of the kind Parla mentions). As I will show below, this is true especially with regard to his views on the place and significance of religion in modernity. These writings were more than mere topical excursions for Gökalp. To the contrary, they express the conceptual frame within which his political vision took shape.

¹⁶ See: Birge, John Kingsley. "Islam in modern Turkey." In Islam in the modern world: A series of addresses presented at the Fifth Annual Conference on Middle Eastern Affairs, ed. Dorothea Seelye Franck. Washington: The Middle East Institute, 1951; Kingsbury, John A. "Observations on Turkish Islam today." The Muslim World 47 (2 1957): 125-133; Lewis, Bernard. "Recent developments in Turkey." International Affairs 27 (3 1951): 320-331, and "Islamic revival in Turkey." International Affairs 28 (1 1952): 38-48; Reed, Howard A. "A new force at work in democratic Turkey." The Middle East Journal 7 (1953): 33-44, "Revival of Islam in secular Turkey." The Middle East Journal 8 (1954): 267-282, "The religious life of modern Turkish Muslims." In Islam and the West, ed. Richard N. Frye. 108-148. The Hague: Mouton, 1957, and "Secularism and Islam in Turkish politics." Current History 32 (June 1957): 333-338; Rustow, Dankwart A. "Politics and Islam in Turkey, 1920 - 1955." In Islam and the West, ed. Richard N. Frye. 67-107. The Hague: Mouton, 1957; Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. "Turkey: Islamic Reformation?" In Islam in modern history, 165-207 [originally published as "Modern Turkey: Islamic reformation", Islamic Culture 25:155-186]. New York: The New American Library, 1957; Stirling, Paul. "Religious change in republican Turkey." The Middle East Journal 12 (1958): 395-408; Thomas, Lewis V. "Recent developments in Turkish Islam." The Middle East Journal 6 (1952): 22-40, and "Turkish Islam." Muslim World 54 (1954): 181-185; Tibawi, A. L. "Islam and secularism in Turkey today." Quarterly Review 294 (1956): 325-337.

We may even say that his sociology was his political contribution. Gökalp never participated in practical politics in “the usual sense,” as Parla puts it, but he did consciously apply the judgements he reached as a sociologist to the political debates of his day. And he did so as a member of the political and intellectual elite in which he enjoyed a wide influence as a political advisor, lecturer, and educator of new recruits to the Turkish movement (Heyd 31-33, Arai 45, Parla 13-15, 50-53). His writings during his middle period (1911-1918) are exemplary in this regard, for they illustrate, as we shall see, the deep connection between his sociology and his Turkism.

It is thus outside the context of Gökalp’s considered judgements about the sociological trends which he believed were setting the context for Turkey’s new identity, that Heyd interprets Gökalp’s political thought.

By excluding some of Gökalp’s important texts, Heyd comes to rely mostly on Gökalp’s poetry and some essays written on the nature of Turkish nationalism. (Many of the sociological essays dealt with this issue as well.) In this process, Heyd’s interest in Gökalp’s view of religion turns out to be more than simply an interest in Gökalp’s views on Islam. To Heyd, Gökalp’s religion is not Islam but Turkish nationalism, “the central ideal of Gökalp’s thinking.” The “deified” nation is “the source and model for all ethical values” (123). It has, in short, “become a religion” (57). To illustrate this interpretation, Heyd frequently appeals to Gökalp’s poetry, within which he finds a justification for a strong elite leadership, “glaring patriotism,” and “hatred against the West” (123, 125, 135-6, 160-3).¹⁷ Therefore, when Heyd

¹⁷ In order to maintain my focus on the substantive aspects of dispute within the literature, a full discussion of Heyd’s use of poetry is beyond the scope of this paper. Briefly, it should be said that Berkes (1959, 7) and Parla (1985, 34-5) agree that selective reliance on Gökalp’s poetry has led “to his ideas being understood partially or inadequately” (Berkes 1959, 7). Berkes notes as well that the poetry for Gökalp was only a hobby he practiced to popularize some of his ideas. Gökalp apparently also believed

says that Gökâlp can claim to have laid the spiritual foundations for the Kemalist regime, he is making a point about the nationalism of the regime, not its posture with regard to Islam.

Finally, it must be said that Heyd's critique of the political vision he sees in Gökâlp rapidly and frequently slides into a critique of what he sees as Gökâlp's irrationalism (an irrationalism that the reader can only assume to be there if Gökâlp is in fact a proto-totalitarian thinker). One cannot turn the pages of Heyd's analysis without coming to an understanding of Gökâlp as essentially a sloppy thinker. The following language is used or implied by Heyd to characterize Gökâlp's thinking: "emotional and biased" (164, 155; cp. 66, 78, 81, 112), "subjective" (155), "unscientific" (137, 155-6, 159, 164), "naive" (81), 113), "extreme" (113), "exaggerating" (77-78), "vague" (51, 110, 125), "contradictory" (113, 156, 157), "inexperienced" (81, 155), "unreliable" (159), and perpetually inconsistent (155).¹⁸ By highlighting Heyd's critical frame, I am not denying that some of these critical judgements may be deserved. But I am trying to show that, overall, Heyd does not seem to think that Gökâlp's thinking and standards might be different, and possibly coherent, both on their own terms and relative to the standards Heyd himself employs. This is a highly anti-interpretive posture to assume, especially

that it might help contribute to the development of modern Turkish national literature. Moreover, "placed its proper context," writes Parla, the poetry "reveals nothing but personal and political integrity and intellectual, if pedantic, consistency." The proper context is the context of the Balkan and First World wars when Gökâlp idealized the Turkish nation "to reinforce popular morale and solidarity." According to Parla, the nationalism expressed in the poems is neither racist nor irredentist as some have suggested. It is rather an expression of the defence of national cultural values, consistent with the standards Gökâlp expresses in his theoretical writing. But Heyd largely excludes a discussion of those writings. This is one reason why Heyd's and Parla's interpretations of Gökâlp's work are vastly different. It should be added that the poetry Heyd relies extensively on totally ceases after 1915 (Parla 35).

¹⁸ And yet, despite such a devastating critique of Gökâlp's analytic capacities, Heyd is still able to complement Gökâlp for having "had beneficial influences in developing the scientific study of sociology in Turkey" (Heyd 1950, 153).

when one has excluded from consideration numerous texts that might evidence more coherence than appears at first sight (see chapter on interpretive inquiry). To Heyd, Gökâlp's ideas are nothing but an "old mentality in European dress" (155).¹⁹ Their irrationality (always both implicitly and explicitly juxtaposed to Heyd's rationality²⁰), is obvious.²¹

Clearly the more hermeneutically sensitive study of the two, Parla's interpretation rightly rescues Gökâlp from Heyd's thoroughly anti-interpretive account by showing the coherent corporatist identity of

¹⁹ Despite its shortcomings, Heyd's view of Gökâlp became the orthodox view within the social sciences for many years. Although the relationship between Heyd's analysis and similar judgements is difficult to trace precisely, we can say that Heyd's interpretation was often cited as, for example, "the best study on Gökâlp in English" (Tachau 1959, 264fn). In truth it was the *only study* on Gökâlp in English until Parla's appeared. We can also say that the judgement that Gökâlp's nationalism was "autocratic, totalitarian, [and] leader-worshipping", as Kemal Karpat put it in his introductory text to Turkey's politics, was a shared one (Karpat 1958, 27, 252-260, 455). Karpat accepted Heyd's argument, suggesting that Gökâlp's nationalism "denied the individual freedom," "unlike liberal nationalisms in Western Europe" (Karpat 26, 252). Furthermore, he lamented the fact that Gökâlp symbolized the lack of "a tradition of political thinking in Turkey [which]. . . prevents politics from concentrating on ideas and issues" (Karpat 456, cp. 260). Karpat asserts that a central question that has yet to be addressed in any thoughtful manner is, "Does the need for modernization arise from a desire for advanced comfort and prestige, or is it the expression of an inner urge for broader views on the human being and his society?" (456). As will be seen, this is precisely the question with which Gökâlp grappled.

²⁰ Heyd presented his study in antonymous terms than those used to characterize Gökâlp's thinking (scientific, objective, etc.). Heyd's interpretation, then, expresses an unequivocal dichotomy between Heyd's own rationality and his subject's irrationality.

²¹ A good example is Heyd's view that Gökâlp "exaggerates the deficiencies" of the Tanzimat reforms, and "in general does not appreciate the importance of this period which, in spite of all its imperfections, was a necessary stage in the modern development of his nation" (Heyd 77-78). Compare this with what I think is Gökâlp's careful but critical treatment of the Tanzimat's attempt to "extend the process of Europeanization even to the most intimate sources of our national personality. That was their greatest mistake" (1917e, 249). Gökâlp says, "Doubtless we would not have been able to survive at the age without accepting and assimilating European civilization unconditionally. Since the leaders of the *Tanzimat* realized this and put it into practice, we are deeply indebted to them. Under the circumstances of their age, their understanding of a renaissance could not have been otherwise. But to think in this way today would be unpardonable" (1917e, 249). The fact is that Heyd's sympathies lie with the Tanzimatists, for he does not appear to accept the value of Gökâlp's distinction between culture and civilization either, characterizing it mistakenly as an "antithesis" (64; compare Berkes 384). Similar examples can be found throughout Heyd's analysis.

Gökalp's nationalist thought. It is significant that it is only after Parla reconstructs this aspect of Gökalp's thinking that he subjects it to a critique from a Marxian perspective (64, 105-116). Parla criticizes Gökalp's view that capitalism could be the economic foundation for a democratic society. But in this sense Gökalp is more a foil to criticize the basic ideological center of Turkish politics than the single object of Parla's critique (7-8, 123; see Gökalp 1923s). Parla's more hermeneutic approach is illustrative in his respect for Gökalp's "intellectual integrity" (86) even if he disagreed with a core component of his system. Unlike Heyd, he views Gökalp's thought as "realistic" (22), "well-considered" (22), internally consistent (120) and eminently rational (92-3). "In fact," writes Parla, "the respect for theoretical reason over practical action starts and ends with Gökalp in Turkey in the twentieth century: . . . [where] the Kemalist maxim 'doctrine follows action' has pervaded political life and academia alike" (120).

To be fair, Heyd's dilemma was that he believed he was interpreting Mussolini. From the texts he had in hand, he understood himself to be face to face with twentieth century chauvenistic irrationalism. The problem, however, is that he failed to push his inquiry of Gökalp's conceptual context where it needed to be pushed, namely and deeply into the theoretical writings. That is to say, the identity and significance of of Gökalp's views on nationalism cannot be understood adequately apart from his theoretical writings on the subject.

In this respect, Parla's analysis is entirely superior to Heyd's, and, as will become clearer as my discussion develops, on the whole correct. Where Parla's interpretation falls short, for my purposes, is in not seeing aspects of Gökalp's political theory within the frame of secularization where I think in

large part they must be seen in order to be fully appreciated. Parla situates Gökalp within the ideological frame of corporatist capitalism and as such illuminates more about the identity of Gökalp's thinking than any previous interpreter. My view is that there is still more to say within the specific problematic of secularization.

Interpreting Gökalp on the secularization problematic: The question of religion in modernity

In addition to Heyd's and Parla's sustained attempts at explicating Gökalp's thought, several other major contributors to the social science literature on Turkish politics have discussed the identity of Gökalp's ideas and their significance in relation to the laicist politics of the republic. These are Masami Arai, Niyazi Berkes, and C. H. Dodd.²² In this body of commentary, four accounts of Gökalp's understanding of the place and significance of religion in modernity can be espied. All of these accounts share the view that Gökalp sought to synthesize Islam and modernity. Within this broadly shared understanding several aspects of Gökalp's thought and practice form common reference points.

The first is Gökalp's well-known rejection of the dominant Islamic jurisprudential view that the sources of Islamic law (*shar'ia*) should be found solely in divine revelation (*nass*).²³ Gökalp believed that the *nass*,

²² The distinguishing feature of the contributions of these interpreters as opposed to others (like Karpat's noted above) is that these provide some account of Gökalp's ideas rather than simply a category within which they fit.

²³ I say well-known because even the most passing comments and references to Gökalp in the literature tend to relate his name to Islamic reformism in Turkey (eg., Webster (1939, 156-7), and Rustow (1960)). One of Heyd's lasting contributions to understanding Gökalp is in making this point clear. In a passage cited by Parla and Dodd (1979 81), Heyd wrote, "But for the anti-Islamic attitude of Atatürk, Gökalp might have become the initiator of a fruitful scientific investigation of Islam in Turkey and perhaps even the father of an interesting religious reform movement" (1950, 82). (Whether or not

comprised of the Koran and Sunna (the “saying” and “doings” of the Prophet), were inadequate on their own as sources of legal judgement in Islamic law. He argued that the *‘örf*, or mores of different Islamic societies, should also be considered sources of law. Conduct, opinion, customs, traditions, and collective judgements, should be a kind of social sharia. While the *nass* derived from the “absolutes” of the religion -- a shared text and understanding of the significance of the Prophet -- and could never be subject to change, the *‘örf* derived from the ever-changing and variable, social life circumstances of different Islamic communities. In his arguments on these matters, Gökalp consistently appeals to several Islamic jurists to justify this view, and he argues that this view better accounts for the actual historical experience of Islam in different contexts (see Gökalp 1914a, d, f 1915c, 1916).

Gökalp thus saw within both the theory and practice of Islam an inherent ability to accommodate changing contexts. If it had lost this ability, this was due in part to its being misunderstood and in part to its exploitation by political regimes. Gökalp’s position here is very consistent with the tradition known as Islamic reform. Following these premises to one of their conclusions, he even advocated interpreting the *nass* through the lens of the *‘örf*. The mores of society, that is, could be a basis for the application of the divine revelation.

The second common point of reference is Gökalp’s belief that the full separation of religion and politics, or complete disestablishment of religion, is a fundamental legal requirement for modern states. This view can be found in many of Gökalp’s writings, but it is best stated in his summary of

Atatürk’s view of Islam was fully “anti” is a matter of great debate, a point that I will address in the next chapter.)

the democratic legal goals of Turkish in his essay, "The program of Turkism" (1923):

The aim of Turkism in law is to establish modern (*asrî*) law in Turkey. The most fundamental condition for our success in joining the ranks of modern nations is the complete cleansing of all branches of our legal structure of all traces of theocracy and clericalism.

Theocracy is the system in which laws are made by Caliphs and Sultans who are regarded as the Shadows of God on earth. Clericalism refers to the acceptance of traditions, claimed to be originally instituted by God, as unchangeable laws and of the belief that these laws can be interpreted by spiritual authorities, believed to be the interpreters of God.

The state that is completely freed from these two characteristics of the medieval state is called the modern state. In the first place, in a modern state the right to legislate and to administer directly belongs to the people. No office, no tradition, and no other right can restrict and limit this right. In the second place, in a modern state all members of a nation are regarded as equal to each other in every respect. No special privilege is recognized for any individual, or family, or class. States that fulfill these conditions are democratic; that is, they are governed by the people. The first aim of Turkism in law is to create a modern state . . . *all traces of theocracy and clericalism should be completely eliminated.* (emphasis added, 1923r, 304)

A third point of reference, related to the second, is Gökalp's role as an advocate of several institutional reforms carried out by the Young Turks. Gökalp is said to have authored a memo which spelled out reforms that were eventually undertaken by the leadership. While there is little doubt that he was in support of these reforms, his sole authorship of the memo remains in question. The reforms included the elimination from the Ottoman cabinet of the highest Islamic official in the Ottoman Empire, the *Şeyh-ül-İslâm*; the transfer of the religious courts to the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice; and the transfer of the administrations of the medrese schools (part of the religiously authorized educational institutions) to the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. These were early movements in the Turkish

nationalist process of subordinating religious institutions and officials to lay control (see, e.g., Berkes 1964).

Gökalp is also known to have advocated ending the independent financial and political authority of the Islamic foundations (*evkaf*) which he considered to be a “state within a state.” At the same time, however, he supported the continuation of an entire network of religious institutions which would function autonomous from politics to continue to provide a common institutional frame for all Muslims.

Finally, all of his interpreters commonly refer to Gökalp’s view that the basis of modern civilization was increasingly becoming non-religious (*La-dini*) in its character. He saw the acceptance of Japan and Turkey within the orbit of modern civilization as proof for this claim, which I will examine in greater detail below.

With these common reference points in mind, we may now look at the four accounts of Gökalp’s understanding of the place and significance of religion in modernity that exist in the literature of Anglophone social science.

The first may be described as follows. As much as Gökalp tried to achieve a synthesis between Turkish nationalism, Islam, and modernity that gave equal weight to each, he failed. The first (nationalism) and third (modernity) categories were much more significant to him than the second (Islam), which is the weakest element in his system. His interest in Islamic reform, for example, was weaker than his interest in fostering the development of a modern Turkish nationalism. There are two articulators of this thesis in the literature: Uriel Heyd²⁴ and Niyazi Berkes.²⁵ Both Heyd and

²⁴ Heyd actually makes several claims with regard to this issue. But given the methodological problems associated with his interpretation I will not deal with all of

Berkes argue that Gökalp diminished the value of Islam even as he attempted to maintain it within the trinity of Turkification, Islamization, and Modernization. This interpretation further situates Gökalp within a particular place in the history of twentieth-century Turkish secular thought. Because his interest in Islam is seen as the weaker part of his system, he is seen as a forerunner of Kemalism's "more complete secularism" that was even less interested in synthesizing Turkish nationalism and Islam.

Heyd's analysis is plagued by the methodological problems discussed above. Still, in it, several serious claims are made about Gökalp's understanding of the place and significance of Islam in modernity. They are usually situated within the conceptual frame of what Heyd takes to be Gökalp's central aim, namely the deification of the nation.²⁶ Thus Heyd argues that Gökalp's attempt to distinguish nation and religion by suggesting that religion was part of national culture was meant really to "diminish Islam as a cultural factor" (in favor of the nation as such), something he "did not admit" for political and strategic reasons (Heyd 1950, 98). Because Gökalp hoped for the ideals of the nation to be superior to all other ideals, that is,

them in the main body of the text. Here are others: He suggests that the most important fact about Gökalp's Islam was how the Islamic concepts of equality, fraternity, and jihad were intended to "strengthen" his "patriotic sentiments" (123) and then "illustrates" this claim by quoting solely from Gökalp's poetry (see footnote 16). And, he suggests that it was "in the last years of his life" that Gökalp "strongly emphasized the importance of Islam as a moral factor and attaches particular value to the religious education of youth." To "illustrate" this claim, Heyd quotes from an essay of 1922. What is missing, however, is an acknowledgement that Islam is a moral factor in both life and in education in Gökalp's writing at least as early as 1915 (see esp 1915c, 184-193). On my reading, at least as early as 1915, Gökalp's logic is something like the following: since religion is part of culture, and no longer a civilization, and since culture is the basis of education, religion ought to be part of education as well. This will be unpacked below. There is not enough space to discuss other errors in Heyd's treatment of Islam in Gökalp's thought. The reader is advised to compare Heyd's reading of Gökalp on the rituals of Islam (p. 84) with Gökalp (1915c, esp. 188ff).

²⁵It should be noted that Berkes explicitly disagrees with aspects of Heyd's general interpretation of Gökalp's thought.

²⁶ See footnote 23.

Islam as such assumed a less significant place in the system of Gökalp's thought.

As is true with the rest of his analysis, some of Heyd's claims are nothing more than criticisms of the conclusions he believed Gökalp had reached regarding the place of religion in modern Turkish nationalism. The following passage is illustrative of Heyd's treatment. Heyd both discounts Gökalp's argument that Islam is no longer (i.e. in modernity) properly considered the civilization of the Turks, and suggests that Gökalp's argument otherwise lacks substance.

In Gökalp's synthesis of Turkish culture and Western civilization there is no proper place for Islam as a third element. As far as Islam belongs to the sphere of civilization it has to be superseded by modern European values. . . . Although Gökalp is at a loss to find the roots of Islam in Turkish national traditions, he does not suggest the development of a specifically Turkish Islam. His 'religious Turkism' is one of the weakest points in his programme for the cultural revival of his nation, consisting merely of the demand to introduce the Turkish language into the religious service. It is significant that Gökalp never tries to expound his concept of Islam as a purely ethical religion. For him, it is only important to state what Islam does *not* imply any more, and what has to be eliminated because of its incompatibility with the major factors of Turkish culture and Western civilization. . . . Gökalp's system does not allow religion any separate existence. (Heyd 1950, 98-9)

As my account in the next section will show, it is not clear that Gökalp sought the "the roots of Islam in Turkish national tradition," or that his advocacy of Islam as an ideal "consisted merely of the demand to introduce the Turkish language into the religious service," or that he "never" tried to expound on his view of "Islam as a purely ethical religion," or that "it is only important to state what Islam does *not* imply any more."

Compared to his treatment of Gökalp's attempt to reconcile Islam, Turkism and modernity, however, Heyd's analysis of Gökalp's advocacy for

the separation between religion and politics is much more serious. Heyd accurately describes Gökalp's insistence that "religion and state" must be "separate" in the modern state (88-92). What is interesting is that Heyd sees this separation fulfilled in the policies undertaken by Atatürk to abolish the Caliphate (1924), to eliminate from the constitution the statement that Islam is the religion of the state (1928), and to declare the state "secular" in the constitution of 1937. As a result of these changes, Heyd suggests, "the separation of religion and state was complete": Turkey "has become an entirely secular state" (94, 158).

As my next chapter will clearly show, this is a very complex claim. It is not clear whether or not the state and religion were separated in Turkey, or, if they were, whether or not they were separated in the crucial sense which Gökalp believed was necessary, namely a structural sense. The collective judgment of most scholars is that the state was never structurally separated from religion in Turkey, even if many (including outside observers like Heyd²⁷) believe this to be true (see the "control account" below for a full discussion). In other words, the important claim made by Heyd here -- that the policies following Gökalp's death were fully consistent with Gökalp's thinking on the need to separate religion and the state -- may not be true not because Gökalp did not advocate it but rather because Turkish political elites never achieved it.

But there is another point I think Heyd is making. And on this point, he is joined by Berkes. This is the general point, which we will meet again, that Gökalp would have approved of the specific form laicist politics took in

²⁷ As well as the scholar who introduced Heyd's book, who wrote: "In conformity with Ziya Gökalp's views, religion and the state are to-day separated in Turkey" (Deedes 1950, viii).

Turkey eventhough aspects of his articulated political vision were at odds with some of the practices undertaken by the laicists. That is, on this first account, Gökalp's thinking is understood to have provided an intellectual basis for the Kemalist "revolution;" where it suffered, it did so from not being enough like it in finally eliminating what was, from Heyd's view, its weakest element. As the weakest part of his system, it is something from which he would have been able to part. This is clearly Berkes's view:

[Gökalp's] ideas with regard to the particulars of Islamic reform suffered most during the ensuing period of drastic secularism. However, I believe that if he had lived longer he would have been able to reconcile himself to the Atatürk policy because his ideas on the caliphacy were already at variance with the logical consequences of his Westernist nationalism, being rather fanciful utopias designed to lay a basis of internationalism to Turkish nationalism. Furthermore, we know that the constitutional clauses on secularism and the freedom of conscience and thinking were from his pen as he was a member of the committee which prepared the new constitution in 1924. (Berkes 1954, 376)

This first account, therefore, raises two questions: the first is, whether or not Islam was the weakest part of Gökalp's trinity or ideals? The second is, how does his understanding of the place and significance of Islam relate to the lacist politics that succeeded him? By "weakest," I mean Gökalp's emphasis on Islam was *not enough* relative to his emphasis on Turkism or modernism; the Islamic component ultimately could be jettisoned.

The second understanding of the relationship between Islam, Turkish nationalism, and modernity in Gökalp's thought found in the Anglophone political science literature is expressed by C.H. Dodd in his short but intelligent overview of Gökalp's thinking in Dodd's 1979 book, *Democracy and Development in Turkey*. In contrast to the previous interpretations, Dodd reads Gökalp's emphasis on Islam within his trinity as too strong rather

than too weak. This claim is closely related to the first account, but differs in one important way. Rather than reading Gökalp's understanding of Islam as something he could have jettisoned from the trinity without altering his primary goals, Dodd reads the Islamic component as overemphasized: Gökalp placed too much, rather than not enough, emphasis on the Islamic component. As such it remains less secular than the understandings of those who implemented laicism but it is so for a different reason. To Dodd, Gökalp honestly assigned too much room to religion in his vision of the modern state.

The problem was, as Dodd sees it, that Gökalp wanted to limit religion to the sphere of private conscience (as distinct from "temporal or social" relevance²⁸) even though he "found its vitality" in society. Thus while trying to distinguish national identity (based on language and culture) from religious identity, he never fully held them apart. The result was a nationalism that was too connected to religion. Dodd refers to Gökalp's inability to hold the two apart as "the snag in Gökalp's thinking." "He equated society with nation and insisted in language as the necessary route to the national soul. This created a dislocation between religion and nation, at least between Islam, with its waning Arab connection, and Turkism. Gökalp appeared to believe that he had limited religion to a spiritual dimension but in fact he found its vitality in a notion of society he could not square with his concept of a nation. To this day Islam fits warily and unsatisfactorily in the Turkish national context, if at all" (83-5). Dodd's analysis is thus distinct from those of Heyd and Berkes who suggest the emphasis was less pronounced.²⁹

²⁸ Dodd writes, "Islam should rightly be regarded a spiritual, not a temporal or social religion. . ." (1979, 84).

²⁹ In order to see the contrast with Berkes' view, for instance, consider Berkes's claim that Gökalp "mobilized all his energies to demolish the theocratic conception of

But like Heyd and Berkes, Dodd believes that the Gökalp's understanding of the place of Islam in modern Turkish nationalism was less secular than that offered by Kemalism.

[His] concern for religion was rather too great for the many Westernists found in the Atatürkist regime. They did not wish to find a place for the Caliphate or for the education in religious ideals which Gökalp advocated, and they were prepared to go to the West for more than just the civilization Gökalp found there.

Atatürkist official ideology proclaimed Turkey to be republican, nationalist, secularist, statist, populist, and reformist. Its nationalism abandoned the Pan-Turk, or Turanian ideals which strongly colored Gökalp's nationalism for a long period of time, *and it also became more secular.* (Dodd 1979, 85)

The upshot of the final claim is important; and, it is important to state explicitly how it bears resemblance to first account about the significance of Gökalp's political thought in relation to laicist politics in Turkey. In both accounts, Gökalp's understanding on the place of religion in modern Turkish culture and politics is viewed as less "secular" than that of the Kemalists who followed him and created, as Heyd termed it, an "entirely secular" Turkey. The difference is that while the first account couples this claim with a critique of Gökalp's thinking on Islam as his "weakest" element, the second joins it with an evaluation that Gökalp' thinking was too religious.

In this regard, it is important to note that in Dodd's comments quoted here, the first paragraph is written to describe the Kemalist view of Gökalp's understanding of religion. The second paragraph describes Dodd's interpretation of the Turkish state after Gökalp. Thus, both Heyd and Dodd seem to agree that the place which Gökalp gave to religion in modern

nationality" by seeking to distinguish between Islam as an international religious community and the nation as a distinct sociological entity (1954, 385).

Turkish social and political life was less secular than the place with the Kemalists gave it.

Like Dodd, Masami Arai, who offers a third perspective, suggests that the Islamic component of Gökalp's thought was a stronger, rather than a weaker, component of his nationalism. Unlike Dodd and the others discussed above, however, Arai does not suggest that Gökalp's thinking in this regard is properly situated within the frame of secularization. To the contrary, after an historical analysis of the journal *İslâm Mecmuası* within which Gökalp's essays most important essays on Islam were published, Arai claims that Gökalp and his colleagues were not interested in secularization at all. Their primary interest was in Islamization within the frame of a modern, reformist Islam. This is the third understanding of Gökalp's view of the significance of relation in the English-language literature. And, despite the fact that Arai's analysis is limited to the Gökalp's works before 1919, it is a rather important one.

The reason for this is that Arai is, for the most part, interpreting the same arguments that the others above have, including but not limited to Gökalp's argument on Islamic reform (Arai 1992, 91-92). The important exceptions to this overlap are Gökalp's positions on matters brought to the fore by Kemalist laicism (e.g., Gökalp's position on the Caliphate). But this should not be seen to weaken the impact of Arai's point because Arai intends his claims about the identity of Turkish nationalists in this period to challenge accounts of the kind I have reviewed thus far. His claim is that Gökalp's thinking on Islam cannot be subsumed entirely within the secularization stream of Turkish national thought. He writes, "Contrary to the received wisdom, Turkish nationalists did not necessarily pursue

secularization or Westernization; they were rather in favor of Islamization and modernization. They searched for a means of regaining the original truth of Islam, and a way of modernization other than Westernization” (Arai 1992, 97).

The bulk of evidence Arai marshalls for this claim comes from his analysis of *İslâm Mecmuası*, to which Gökâlp contributed seventeen articles (Arai 1992, 85). The journal was published in 63 issues between 1914 and 1916. Out of twenty-eight contributors, Gökâlp was the sixth most prolific.³⁰ The journal was established by the Central Committee of Union and Progress (*İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*), the main political organization for the Young Turks, to show that “nationalism was not contrary to Islam.” The issue had arisen in the form of a debate in *Türk Yurdu*, considered the ‘most prominent and influential nationalist periodical in the Young Turk era” (48). *İslâm Mecmuası* was established to focus solely on Young Turk support for Islamic reform. “Its watchword was ‘Life with Religion, Religion with Life’” (83). Arai believes that “this leads to the assumption that the periodical’s aim was not secularization, but the revitalization of Islam.”

When his claim about the identity of Turkish nationalist thought in general is put this specifically, it is very difficult to contest. Contributors to *İslâm Mecmuası* believed that a period of degeneracy had set in within the world of Islam (see Arai, pp. 84-93). And they believed that the way to forestall this process was to counteract all of the causes for decline. This meant that Western civilization, invading from all directions, should be

³⁰ Arai also analyzes the content of two other journals to which Gökâlp contributed, *Genç Kalemler* and *Türk Yurdu*. It should be noted that in addition to showing the Islamist orientation of these periodicals, Arai stresses their relation to the government of the Committee of Union and Progress and the development of their nationalism in cooperation with immigrants Turkish intellectuals from Russia.

criticized for its excesses rather than adopted in full; and, more importantly, it meant that the autocratic and superstitious Islamic tradition should be reformed by going back to Islam's original truths. To this end, the editors argued that the gates to *ijtihad* -- the authority to interpret the sharia -- should be opened. More importance should be placed on changing social conditions ("the advocate of this view as, needless to say, Ziya Gökalp"). Finally, the emancipation of women should be undertaken in accordance, they argued, with the original truths of Islam. As part of their project to overcome what they saw as Islam's "backwardness," the editors of *İslâm Mecmuası*, for instance, published a translation of the Koran to make the truth more accessible to the people of the Turkish nation (Arai 90).

It is important to note that Arai wants to go further than simply suggesting that *İslâm Mecmuası* was an Islamist journal. He believes that the commitment expressed in this journal truly captured the identity of the thought of these nationalists with regard to the significance of Islam in Turkish national identity. It is important to quote from his study at length in order to appreciate fully the contrast between Arai's interpretation and those already discussed. In the concluding section of the chapter on *İslâm Mecmuası*, entitled "Modernization and Islamization," Arai puts Gökalp clearly at the center of attention:

As is well known, the CUP government accomplished, on the advice of Ziya Gökalp, many reforms of secularization, which can be regarded as forerunners of those by Atatürk. In 1913, *ulemas* and their religious courts came under State control, they were forced to admit the authority of the secular appeals court (*Mahkeme-i Tehmyiz*). The Ministry of Justice began to supervise over religious courts and their employees. Then, the State began to interfere in religious education: a State-operated *medrese* was set up in Istanbul and even a state examination was given; *medreses* came under the control of the Ministry of Education, which sent directors to *medreses* to effect reforms in the curriculum and teaching staff. A Council of *Şeyhs*

(*Meclis-i Meşayih*) was organized to supervise all the dervish monasteries and lodges.

These reforms are of the kind normally associated with secularization. However, articles included in *İslâm Mecmuası*, whose leaders were closely connected with the CUP, saw these reforms as religiously motivated. As we have seen, the leaders asserted with emphasis that the original truth could be regained if alien elements and superstitions could be removed; Islam could thereby restore its clarity it enjoyed in Prophet's days. One of the means of so doing was to establish the 'social base of the Law,' since change and social evolution were, according to them, a manifestation of the will of Allah. It is worth mentioning that many of these works were entrusted to *ulemas*. They were responsible, according to *İslâm Mecmuası*, for the degeneration of Islam; at the same time, however, they were expected to rescue it. The Young Turks' policy of interfering in religion, establishing State-controlled *medreses*, for example, can be regarded as a measure of revitalizing Islam, a means of substituting superstition with true religion. That is, *according to them, the policy was not that of secularization but that of Islamization* [emphasis added].

This hypothesis is valid for the issue of emancipation of women too. As is well known, in the Young Turk era, reforms in education and law, and the codification of a family law in particular, led women to gaining a foothold in society. . . . In *İslâm Mecmuası*, however, the emancipation of women was asserted in terms of original Islamic truth; it could therefore only proceed as far as Muslims could allow. If one supposes that such reforms aimed at Westernization, they certainly seem insufficient and half-hearted. They did not aim at Westernization, however. They could discern the nature of Western civilization while learning many things from the West. They were not so superficial as to insist -- and rest content -- that Islam was a basis of Western civilization. The leaders of *İslâm Mecmuası* perceived the violent and religiously fanatical aspect of Western civilization. Christian barbarism and fanaticism were victimizing many Muslims every year under the slogan, "Civilizing savageness." *İslâm Mecmuası* consequently criticized superficial Westernization, or a mania for Western ways. Their position was, needless to say, very delicate since they knew well that they had to learn many things from the West; Aġaoġlu Ahmet felicitously expressed their position as follows: Oriental ignorance, Western injustice (*Şarkın cehaleti, Garbın da adaletsizliđi*). They might pursue a way of modernization other than Westernization. At the very least, one must interpret Ziya Gökalp's idea of "Turkification, Islamization, Modernization" in such an ambivalent context. (Arai 1992, 95-6)

Arai makes two claims that need to be considered as we continue here. The first is that Gökalp's ideas lent support to the policy of state "interference and control" with religion (as part of his insistence on the separation of

state and religion); the second is that this policy was not seen as secularization but as Islamization.³¹

The upshot of the first three understandings reviewed here is that either Gökalp's thinking was not secular enough or that it was not secular at all. There is a fourth understanding in the literature that suggests that Gökalp's views on the place and significance of religion in modernity was something else altogether. This view is found in Taha Parla's book, in which Gökalp is characterized as a secular thinker.

I have already noted above that I find Parla's interpretation to be compelling. I have also noted that I find it inadequate in the crucial respect of the secularization problematic. It will be recalled that Parla's primary goal was to resituate Gökalp within the appropriate ideological context of solidaristic corporatism, to rescue him from distortion, and to subject Gökalp, and by consequence the entire tradition of corporatist-capitalist thinking in Turkey, to a Marxian critique. It is within this context that Parla's evaluation of Gökalp's secularism must be seen. For although Parla says that Gökalp's thought is far more secular than religious, he does not discuss the issue in any detail (1985, 22).³² From what is said, the reason Parla considers Gökalp's

³¹ One of his less important claims should be addressed here, however. My reading of the essays translated by Berkes suggests that Gökalp's critical appreciation of the West can be found in articles dating from 1913 in the journal *Türk Yurdu* (see eg., 1913a, 74-5, 1913c, 101-2).

³² Parla's emphasis is clear in one of his introductory remarks. "In constructing his synthesis of Turkism, Islamism, and Modernism, Gökalp's genius was able to do justice to all of these elements. He could handle the dichotomies of tradition-modernity, continuity-change, nationalism-internationalism, and Islamism-secularism much better than his contemporaries. What has not been duly appreciated in Gökalp's thought is the fact that, in his synthesis, the emphasis has always been on the second terms of these dichotomies. That fact, I think, will emerge clearly from the present study. In this sense, Gökalp's thought is more modern than traditional, and more universalist than nationalist, however surprising at first sight this may sound to ears accustomed to cliché interpretations of Gökalp" (Parla 22). Notice how the issue of secularism drops in favor of Parla's primary contexts of relevance.

thinking to be more secular than religious is twofold. On the one hand, he sees the social function of Islam as a national, corporative subunit to be Gökalp's primary interest in Islam. Parla writes that "the social function of Islam, not its theology, interested Gökalp" (38-40). Presumably a less secular thinker would be more interested in the theology of Islam rather than its foundational Islam.³³ On the other hand, Gökalp's thought was more secular than not because he upheld the necessity of keeping all cultural institutions, religion among them, separate from politics.

Despite the emphasis on a secular element in Gökalp's thought, there is one way in which Parla's analysis bears some resemblance to the first account. Parla intimates at one point that another reason Gökalp's thinking is more secular than not is the fact that Gökalp's interest in the reorganization of the spiritual institutions of Islamic authority waned over time. After discussing G's Islamic advocacy of the Unionist reforms, Parla writes:

Under Unionist rule, Gökalp expressed his anti-monarchical feelings in poems and endorsed the abolition of the Sultanate and its separation from the Caliphate in 1922 in the opening years of Kemalist rule. Nor did he object to the abolition of the Caliphate in March 1924, shortly before his death. Much, however, has been made of Gökalp's lack of explicit condemnation of the institutions of the Caliphate. His critics used this as evidence for his religious communitarianism (*ümmetcilik*) and thus for his alleged opposition to the nationalism (*milliyetçilik*) of the Kemalists as the driving principle of social and political organization. What led to such allegations, however incompatible with the universal acceptance of his credentials as the father of modern Turkish nationalism, was the position and organization Gökalp tried to give to religion as a moral and cultural institution. He envisioned a religious organization on the national scale ranging from local mosques (*mescids*) headed by *imams* to large mosques (*cami-i kebirs*) in towns headed by *müftüs*, to a national

³³ Parla also notes Gökalp's view that Sufi Islam could provide an ethical ideal for Turkish society. But the emphasis, Parla suggests, was society first, then Islam. Sufism "was a prop for solidarism, not the reverse." Like other Durkheimians, Gökalp viewed religion generally as something that "helped hold society together" (Parla 38).

office of head *müftüs* as the highest religious authority. The *head-müftü* of all Islamic nations would select a caliph as the head of the entire Islamic community of nations. Such a religious organization, which resembled the Roman Catholic Church, did not, however, in any way intersect with the secular political institutions of the nation. With its conferences and congresses, such as “ethical corporation” represented solely a spiritual authority. At any rate, this idea was not among the central tenets of Gökalp’s system, for *his writings on the subject consisted of a few articles only, dating back to his second phase and progressively losing their strength.* (Parla 40, emphasis added)

The idea that Gökalp’s concern for the independent spiritual institutions lost its strength overtime bears resemblance to the view that the Islamic component of his system was the weakest element. A question to consider is whether the weight to which Gökalp gave the idea of institutional organization of the Islamic *ummet* can be separated from the “position he tried to give to religion as a moral and cultural institution”? Parla suggests that the latter was an idea that dropped out of this writings with the former.

But the big question regarding Gökalp’s understanding of the place and significance of religion in modernity also still remains. My view is that the truth lies somewhere between the existing views. This can be seen, as we shall see, even if we only limit our scope to Gökalp’s writings during the period which Arai takes as evidence for Gökalp’s interest in Islamicization. My view is that there is a consistency in Gökalp’s major judgments about these issues. To be sure, his thought goes through some changes as it develops overtime. But the central core of the issues related to the place and significance of Islam in modernity remains relatively consistent from 1911 through 1924. My focus here in the main body of the text will be to build a case related to the writings before 1919 (concurrent with Arai’s time frame). I will use the footnotes to show continuities where they need to be shown,

and I will explain any important changes or developments in Gökalp's thinking on these matters where discontinuities exist.

An alternative account

The key to grasping Gökalp's understanding of the place and significance of religion in modern Turkish life is understanding how fundamentally his framework was shaped by the what I have dubbed the secularization problematic. Before describing the place and significance of religion in modern life for Gökalp, we must therefore understand this as a central element of his overall sociological frame. We must also understand the conceptual schema of internationality/civilization and nationality/culture within which that is located. Arriving at a more adequate understanding of Gökalp's understanding of religion and its significance in life requires seeing the overall frame of his social and political thought.

Gökalp was a student of French sociology generally, and was highly influenced by the thinking of Emile Durkheim in particular (Gökalp 1918a; Parla 1985). Like Durkheim and the sociological school of structural functionalism more generally, Gökalp believed that all societies pass through stages of evolution from primitive societies based solely on mechanical solidarity to organic societies based on social solidarity and an advanced division of labor. Following this logic, Gökalp argued that the morphological, demographic, political, economic, and industrial changes of the contemporary age were bringing about increased structural and functional differentiation in the world at two levels of human organization. The first was within culture-nations (what Durkheim called societies), where the advanced division of labor was creating an occupational group structure

within which individuals were incorporated.³⁴ In the most highly developed societies, these occupational groups (eg., family, professional) would function independently yet reciprocally in order to bring about harmony in society (1918a, 98-100; 1915a, 121; 1918a, 98)). The second level was the level of civilization, which Gökalp understood as the supranational grouping to which different nations belonged and according to which they related (see eg. 1918a, 100-101).

Gökalp also followed Durkheim in believing that the real engines of human history were ideas, or what Durkheim called collective representations (1918b). Each group within the differentiated structures of the modern world -- from the family to the civilization -- manifests itself through its ideals. These ideals are conditioned ("dependent upon certain social causes for their rise, growth, decline, and disappearance" (1923, 65)) by changes in the constantly evolving social structures.³⁵

Betraying his positivist-idealism, Gökalp maintained that both the processes associated with social-structural evolution and the ideals that took shape in those processes were amenable to scientific study. Indeed, this is the fundamental premise that lies behind all of Gökalp's social and political judgements. He approached the sociological objectives of explanation and prescription with relentless attention to the social-structural and idealistic possibilities contained within contemporary civilization. He estimated that an objective reading of the conditions under which the Turks now found themselves -- as Turkey continued to undergo a transformation from a

³⁴ Eg.,: ". . . the law regulating the life of the culture-groups is the differentiation and multiplication of the primitive groups from an undifferentiated and multi-functioning unit to a state in which special groups come into existence to perform specific functions" (1918a [1913], 101). For continuity, see also (1922c, 224).

³⁵ For continuity, see 1923j, 64-65; 1923l, 275ff; 1923u; and 1923t, 64-65.

multinational empire to a culturally independent, nation state -- made possible an articulation of the ideals expressed in those conditions. Moreover, he believed that Turkey's national sociologists ought to combine a thoroughly positivist study of the objective conditions of "social reality" (including an explanation of factors accelerating or retarding growth) (165) with a prescription for conceptual apparatus for living in them. It was the national sociologists duty "to discover the elements of national conscience in the unconscious level and to bring them up to the conscious level" and thus best adapt culture to its place within civilization (1917a, 173; cp. 1916, 237-8; 1914f, 149; 1915a, 114; 1918a, 100).³⁶ Gökalp believed he had fulfilled his duty by identifying the objectively realistic path for Turkey, one which took complete account of the various and constantly evolving structural and ideational transformations as well as the needs of the Turks.

Gökalp's reading of the social structural conditions of life showed that three collective representations or ideals were necessary for Turkey to negotiate its way through this period of change: Turkism, Islamism, and Modernism. These three collective representations or ideals, Gökalp believed, were the ones most suited to the Turkish nation under the conditions it faced in the teens and early twenties. (Whether or they are equally suited today is an entirely different matter.) According to his interpretation, the two major sociological phenomena setting the context for these ideas were: (1) the differentiation of multiethnic, multi-linguistic, and religiously-legitimated empires caused by the intensification of the ideal of nationalism and (2) the

³⁶ He contrasted his own work with that of the "utopian who fails to see that nature is an ordered system governed by uniform laws, and thinks that he can impose over nature whatever he likes" (1917b, 165). Unlike the utopian, "the evaluation and creation of new values, or *idées forces*" "must take real trends into account" (1911a). For continuity, see (1923d).

eclipse of religious-based internationalism by a new internationalism founded on the principles and techniques of modern science.

Gökalp did not need to argue the first point. It was readily apparent to he and his Turkist colleagues that nationalism had undercut the coherence of Ottoman multinationalism and cosmopolitanism (1918b, 81). Nationalism had become a primary (though not the only) collective representation of our time: “Today the West as well as the East shows unmistakable that our age is the age of nations. the most powerful force over the mind of this age is the ideal of nationalism” (1913a, 72; 1918a [1913], 81-82; 1917b, 158, 1917e ,49).³⁷ By nation, Gökalp means a “homogeneous” linguistic and cultural grouping “composed of institutions in harmony with each other” (1916, 238). He explicitly rejects racial, ethnic, and religious criteria as the determinants for national identity, arguing frequently and forcefully that national identity is determined by socialization not blood, ancestry, or religious belief.

The the rise of nationalism is directly related to the eclipse of religious universalism. In order to understand how Gökalp understood this, we must first understand his concepts “culture” and “civilization.”³⁸

Culture consists in “the complex of rules of language, politics, religion, morality, aesthetics, law and economy, which exists on an unconscious level in the life of the nation” (1917b, 166). The sense of rule is not strong here; when considered alongside other expressions of the

³⁷ For continuity, see (1923f).

³⁸ The meanings of these two central concepts take shape overtime in Gökalp’s writings, especially between the years 1911 and 1919. After 1917, however, Gökalp’s thinking about them is relatively consistent. Compare the concept of “sentiments” (1911c) with “living vernacular of the people” (1913a, 74), with (1914g, 151), with “civilization of the people in (1913c), and with “the sum total of value judgements” (1916, 246; 1917e, 168). He later admits to a “confusion” in 1911, renounces the “chauvinistic” tendencies in his discussion of the “Turkish civilization” (in 1911c) and restates the distinction in its clearest form (1917g, 284).

meaning of culture, it is better understood as “ethos;” “accepted norms” regarding belief, moral duty, aesthetics, and ideals” (1918a, 97); or even “tastes and manners” (1917e, 248). These are “unique to each nation.” If there are similarities among nations, they are due either to the fact that the nations belong to the same social type (and are consequently evolving similarly) or one of the nations is “copying,” a phenomena Gökalp warned against if cultural integrity is to be preserved (1916, 247; 1917a, 173; 1917c, 134).

Indeed, because culture and nation are related concepts, Gökalp considers the preservation of Turkish national culture in the context of modernization as one of his primary normative concerns. Culture has its own dynamic that makes a nation what it is, and this dynamic should be preserved rather than undercut as modernization takes place. “The culture of a nation is not something to be imposed or instituted” (1917b, 166).³⁹ Rather, it is transmitted within the culture’s living institutions, primary among them education. Those things national constitute “interlocking systems” -- religious, moral, legal, aesthetic, linguistic, economic, and technical (1915a, 121).⁴⁰

It is impossible, however, to understand fully Gökalp’s understanding of culture apart from its twin concept, civilization. Gökalp always develops the meanings of these concepts together, and he makes the strong claim that the two concepts must be understood in their relation: “One can understand the significance of civilization to the extent to which he grasps culture” (1917g, 287).⁴¹

³⁹ For continuity, see 1923k, 266.

⁴⁰ For continuity, see (1923f, 135-137; 1923l, 269; and 1923q).

⁴¹ For continuity, see especially (1923p).

A civilization group encompasses culture groups to which the latter belong. "A civilizational group is a society above societies, made up of culture groups or nations." (1917g, 287).⁴² It is "the whole that is common to various nations," which share and transmit civilizational commonalities (1917e, 248). These commonalities comprise those things that are "international" and "common" (or "shared") (1917c, 134; 1917e, 248; 1917c, 132)). The existence of civilization "indicates that nations do not live in isolation, that they are parts of larger groups" (1917e, 248; 1918a, 101).⁴³

Thus, in the days of nationalism, culture and civilization provide two simultaneous reference points for each member of civilization, two related groupings to which all individuals belong. In this way, a cultural consciousness is wed to a civilizational consciousness: "As civilization consists of the sum total of the common features of several national cultures, each national culture would naturally distinguish itself from others, and then seek the international features it has in common with other cultures" (1917g, 287). Or, put within the terminology of parts-whole relations, "A nation considers modern civilization a whole and itself a unit of it" (1917c, 133).

Now, for Gökalp, just as the nature of culture in "our time" is primarily determined by the rise of nationalism as a historical phenomenon among collectivities, civilization too has been "for some time" undergoing a historic, substantive transformation. He maintained that in order to understand the nature of the relationship between culture and civilization,

⁴² Like the concept culture, Gökalp's understanding of "civilization" developed overtime. Used without precision -- in Gökalp's own estimation -- in (1911c, 1913e), but clarified later (see above footnotes on culture). Achieves clarity in (1913a), and (1918a[1913]). The concepts remain consistent thereafter.

⁴³ For continuity, see (1923, 269); and (1923q).

one must understand the specific historical tendencies represented by civilization as well. Like many others of his time, Gökalp argued that the commonality which modern nations shared was increasingly a commonality based on modern science. Modern civilization is, in fine, “the product of the positive sciences, their methods and techniques” (1917c, 134; 1917e, 248; 1917g, 288). As such, “scientific truths, hygienic and economic rules, practical arts pertaining to public works, techniques of commerce and agriculture” are the new commonalities shared by diverse nations in modernity (1918a). They are the most encompassing truths to which nations of different cultural, linguistic, and even religious make-up are aspiring.

Gökalp’s understanding of “modernity” or being “modern”⁴⁴ can only be understood in the context of the new character of civilization. On this point Gökalp was very explicit: Being modern meant becoming scientifically equal to the most scientifically and technically advanced nations of modern civilization. These were the nations of Europe, whose culture, like all other cultures, needed to be distinguished from the civilization groups to which they belonged. “The ideal of modernity necessitates only the acceptance of the theoretical and practical sciences and techniques from Europe” (1913a, 75; 1916, 245).

Gökalp emphasized this point as well. Modern civilization meant the civilization common to the nations or cultures of Europe (the “West”), but in no way was it reducible to their cultures.⁴⁵ Gökalp could distinguish the two

⁴⁴ Gökalp’s Turkish concept is “*asri*,” which may also be translated as “contemporary” or “of the age,” but should not be translated as “secular” as Berkes does on occasion (see e.g., 1923r, 305).

⁴⁵ “Yes we shall accept European civilization unconditionally. But because of our national culture, we shall still remain distinct from the other European nations . . .” (1917g, 289). “We have to be disciples of Europe in civilization but entirely independent of it in culture” (1917e, 250) “... our joining European civilization is

because, as a positivist sociologist, he believed that the concepts of civilization were of "objective nature" relative to the concepts that constituted the national ethos (1917g, 287; cp. 1916, 235).⁴⁶ The objective nature of modern scientific knowledge made it independent of cultural specifics, sharable across societies, and -- when integrated properly into those societies -- beneficial rather than harmful to the integrity of specific cultures. In this sense, he believed that modern science constituted not simply a new or different rationality, but rather a "true internationality." Its truth was evident both in the practical value of its technological fruits and in contrast to the ideal that had been effective over Turkey's collective conscience at the international level previously, namely religious-based internationality. He wrote in 1913: "A true internationality based on science is taking the place of the internationality based on religion" (1913, 76-77).⁴⁷

Gökalp here has in mind what he thinks is a major trend underlying the process of social evolution taking place in the Turkey of his time. In particular, he is evaluating the course of social evolution as it had taken shape from the mid-nineteenth century when Ottoman bureaucrats undertook reforms aimed at modernizing the military and bureaucratic structure of the empire (the Tanzimat).⁴⁸ By Gökalp's time, these reforms

occasioned by its technology, just as our union with Islamic civilization was by religion" (1916, 245-6)

⁴⁶ For continuity, see (1923k,l).

⁴⁷ For continuity, see especially (1922b; 1923k, 268; 1923q, 281).

⁴⁸ I discuss aspects of this project relevant to Turkish laicism in the following chapters. The best sources for the study of the Tanzimat period are: Berkes, N. (1964). The development of secularism in Turkey. Montreal: McGill University Press; Davison, R. H. (1990). Essays in Ottoman and Turkish history, 1774-1923. Austin: University of Texas Press; Lewis, B. (1961). The emergence of modern Turkey. London: Oxford University Press; Mardin, Ş. (1962). The genesis of Young Ottoman thought: A study in the modernization of Turkish political ideas. Princeton: Princeton University Press; Shaw, S. H., and Shaw, E. K. (1977). History of the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey. London: Cambridge University Press.

had given life to modern institutions and ideas across many different social and political spheres in Turkey. They had also given life to the ideal of “modernization” (*muasırlaşma*) among the nationalist elite. Thus, Gökalp is not simply advocating a turn to the West. Rather, he thinks that the social structural changes around the world -- created in part by growing economic inter- (if uneven) dependence and scientific exchange -- were creating the basis for a new and effective collective consciousness, or ideal. This ideal was “the concepts and techniques of modern science.” Just as groups at the level of culture are now organizing themselves around new, national identities, different nations and different religious peoples around the world are commonly acting on the basis of a new, and now “true” internationality.

As evidence for this development, he pointed to “the participation of Japan, on the one hand, and Turkey, on the other, in Western civilization” (1913 76-77).⁴⁹ He also cited the rise of the “separate” and “autonomous” disciplines of ethics, law, and philosophy as evidence for their departure from religion's hold over them (1913a, 74, 1913c, 102). And he observed that religious education was suffering from a decreasing lack of interest in it alone (1916, 234), while interest in the positive sciences increasingly strengthened. Such phenomena confirmed, from Gökalp's point of view that, “The area of *ummet* is differentiating itself from the area of internationality increasingly” (76) 1917c, 133). In this process, different peoples were looking outward from their own culture to learn new things from what also turned out to be a new civilization. The term he used to describe this new

⁴⁹ He later drew attention also to the participation of “the Jews” (1923l, 269-270, 277).

internationality was “*la-dini*”, which was a French derived term meaning nothing but “non-religious” (1913a, 76-77).⁵⁰

The conceptual frame described thus far is the unmistakable starting point for trying to understand how Gökalp evaluates the dynamic between nationalism, modern science, and religion under the contemporary conditions set by the process of social evolution. In the language of the secularization problematic, Gökalp saw national identity replacing multinationalism as the hegemonic ideal at the level of culture and science replacing religion as the hegemonic ideal at the level of civilization. It is important to note in this context that the Ottoman-Turkish concept for nation, *millet*, had previously indicated one’s religious-community affiliation within Ottoman social and political life. That is to say that Ottoman multinationalism was founded on the plurality of religious identities. If one were asked to what millet he or she belonged, one would say, Muslim, Christian, or Jew (and so on). After the rise of nationalism, the Turkists would have another answer, “I am a Turk.” The rise of nationalism marked a moment when community identities would be something more than simply religious. Thus “nation,” like “internationality,” was undergoing a process of differentiation. The secularization problematic is Gökalp’s unmistakable starting point.

⁵⁰ Readers of the history of Turkish studies will find passing comments about Gökalp’s understanding of Islam in modern Turkey which suggest that *la-dini* meant “irreligious”, and hence awakened the ire of the religious conservatives. This evaluation is found in Adnan-Adivar (1951: 126) and repeated by Lewis (1961:403). The former writes: “Gökalp’s most unfortunate mistake was the erroneous translation of the word ‘*laic*’ as ‘*ladini*’ (irreligious), an error that did much to lead the Muslim clergy, with Shayh al-Islam at their head, into a hostile attitude.” I think Adnan-Adivar is mistaken, however. Gökalp could have chosen the word *laic* rather than *la-dini*. But he chose *la-dini* because it in fact capture the non-religious character of the new civilization, rather than excited the ire of the conservatives. It is interesting that the term *laic* as well as the practices associated with it, by contrast, had exactly the latter effect. This is a point that will be clarified in the next chapter.

Gökalp believed that his concepts and conclusions should be taken as a professional social scientist's contribution to the national life, and he sought tirelessly to challenge the conclusions of others that were based on unscientific grounds (beginning in 1911c, 58).⁵¹ In an essay published shortly after he made his claims regarding the new "true internationalism", for instance, Gökalp criticized the "formalism" of both "radicalism" and "conservatism" -- forever appealing, he added, to "we Turks." He wrote that "neither attempts to question the origin and growth of the old or the new, or the way in which norms adapt themselves to different environments at different times. Both believe that the rule, or convention, is something above time and space, that it exists by itself as a fixed and inflexible entity . . . a lifeless skeleton." (1913b, 92-93). In contrast, what Gökalp believed was needed was serious sustained research "tracing the historical continuity of our Turkish and Islamic traditions, and ... the origins of the advancements which characterize our age" (94; cp. 1911c).

In this article, he characterized the living cultural institutions of the nation as "traditions," which "mean creativity and progress" as well as "continuity and harmony" (94, 95). "We must, first of all," he wrote, "know the traditions and historical growth of the institutions peculiar to the Turks" (95). This meant those things that were true of the Turks independent of their religious or civilizational identification: their literature, archeology, folkways, mythology and local arts -- all the things found "in the life of their words, proverbs, folk-tales, and folk-epics" (95). "Yet," he averred, "at the same time, the Turks have to study the traditions and the history of our Islamic institutions. They have to know the history of Islamic theology,

⁵¹ For continuity see especially (1922a, 279).

mysticism, and jurisprudence” (95). And finally, stressing the need to think clearly (as a sociologist, as it were) about the Turk’s historical evolution in the modern era, he asserted:

When the development of these [Turkish and Islamic] institutions and the manner in which they have accommodated themselves to manifold circumstances in terms of time and space become clear, then it will be evident which elements of contemporary civilization will be adopted and how they will develop in the future.

. . . As tradition requires continuity and harmony, it becomes necessary to find the connection between the pre-history of the Turk and the metaphysics of religion, and by doing so to develop an Islamic-Turkish philosophy of history. And, thirdly, it is necessary for us to study the historical development, the conditioning social circumstances, and applications of technology and science, and the methods and philosophies of our age in order to use them (1913b, 95).⁵²

The critique of formalism in conservatism and radicalism evolved over time into a general critique of those who failed to understand that evolution is the essence of life, and thus failed to understand the nature of the changes (both structural and ideational) underlying Turkish national identity. Again, it is important always to keep in mind that these were the conclusions Gökalp reached as a sociologist. They were, his scientific premises for the study of the ideals best suited for his nation. From them, he equally criticized both those who followed the old internationality believing that the Islam remained the basis for Turkish civilization, and those who followed the logic of the Europeanization to its cultural roots. The former group ignored real and actual changes while the latter were, to him, purely imitationist vis-a-

⁵² Although we see the conceptual distinction between culture and civilization at work here, this essay preceded his clarity on these two specific concepts. It was also one of the essays in which Gökalp, as he later put it, confused the concept civilization and culture in a truly “chauvinistic” fashion. He had called for a contemporary “Turkish-Islamic civilization” (95). He later admitted the error in terminology (based on his political-ethical views), but he never rescinded the conceptual point which I think stands and is one of his most eloquent early statements of the new ideals to which Turks should aspire in the context of social evolution.

vis Europe (1917a, 178; 1917a, 178; 1916, 237, 1917e, 252; 1917g, 287).⁵³ The ideals they advocated did not fully consider the social structural or ideational realities of Turkey's situation.⁵⁴ The Turkish nation needed neither to rehabilitate "fossils" nor imitate the latest fashions in Europe. It needed to secure the development of its own living rituals and, at the same time, continue to integrate itself with the new civilization based on modern science (1917a, 171ff; cp. 1917b, 167). The rituals included *both* non-Islamic (changing) national traditions as well as the (historically variable) tradition of Islam that had overtime, in different forms, become part of the Turkish national identity. Gökalp's was, as we have heard from others, an attempted synthesis of what he thought were three important social processes shaping Turkey's modern identity.

However, Gökalp saw clearly that just as there were Turks who believed wrongly that the civilization of the Turks was still defined in terms of their Islamic religion, there were also Europeans who believed that their civilization was defined in terms of their Christian religion. In a passage perhaps chillingly relevant to the unconscious ideational realities of our own day, he wrote, "The Balkan wars demonstrated to us even today the European conscience is nothing but a Christian conscience" (1913a, 75). It is "evident" that although there are new ideals, religious internationality as a consciousness, has "a lasting life" -- for peoples of all nations (1913c, 102).⁵⁵ This was problematic in part because it signaled to Gökalp that the major member nations of modern civilization -- the Europeans -- were not

⁵³ For continuity, see especially (1923o; 1923p; 1923k; 1923l).

⁵⁴ The national sociologists use, among other things, the right methods (of "convergence" and "conciliation"); see (1917a).

⁵⁵ "In spite of the growth of several ideals, it is still religion that exercises the most powerful force over our minds" (1913c, 102). He cited the United States and Switzerland here as well (102).

themselves able to admit the Turks into what really ought to be thought of as a non-religious international commonality. (They apparently still saw the world in terms of a Judeo-Christian (or simply Christian)/Muslim dichotomy.) It was also problematic because it led to a rise in Islamic civilizational sentiments in Turkey, the basis of which he could not contest.

The events of our time show eloquently that there are as many internationalities and humanities as there are religions. For a European, humanity is nothing but Christendom. It is true that there are principles of justice and right, brotherhood and kindness in the West, but their application extends only as far as the boundaries of the Christian religion. And, again, it is true that there is morality, philosophy, and civilization in the West, but on all of them there is the implicit or explicit stamp of the cross. It is evident that certain things not colored by Christianity are not lacking entirely in Europe. Science, technology, and industry are universal and common to all humanity. We as Muslims, under the guidance of our own style of social life, divide European civilization into two levels, and accept the 'civilization of society' because it is common. (1913c, 101-2)⁵⁶

Gökalp's recognition that events such as the Balkan wars were thwarting the emergence of the right collective ideals throughout the world contributed to his view that the only way for modern nations of different religious backgrounds to be able to participate in a civilization that was true to the objective criteria of modern science was if they were able to secure their deeply held national and religious ideals as well as share new ideals with others. Relating culture to civilization in such a way that all nations, but especially scientifically-subordinate and culturally-different nations such as Turkey, could become parts of a shared civilization without everyone's religious background getting in the way became a central issue of Gökalp's thinking. More generally stated, the nature of the relationship between culture and civilization within the newer social structures is a

⁵⁶ For continuity, see (1923t, 64).

problem that occupies much of Gökalp's thinking after he outlines the social-structural and ideational processes shaping his judgements. It is also one of the most difficult and complex areas of this thought. When considering his thoughts on this matter, it must always be kept in mind that, to Gökalp's mind, there were always active tendencies inside and outside Turkey that, ignoring the distinction between culture and civilization, would take Turkey either away from civilization on the one hand (and risk losing the opportunities of the new age) or away from culture on the other (and risk annihilating Turkey's cultural integrity). Gökalp walked the finer line and sought a synthesis in which the commonalities shared by members of international civilization would be secured within a context of cultural plurality. Thus, for Gökalp, without losing the distinction, culture and civilization must be brought together; "a serious interest in culture is absolutely requisite the rise of a genuine interest in civilization" (1917g, 287; cp., Parla 1985, 33).

The language in which he expressed this bringing together is the language of "absorption." Civilization must "penetrate into the life of the people" (through education and so forth) in such a way that the cultural ethos of that people is maintained (1917g, 288). A nation in this sense evolves as a culture "when it puts the stamp of its own language and ethos on the institutions of international civilization and adopts [these institutions] to its own spirit" (1915a, 120). Gökalp's statements can only be understood properly if they are placed within his understanding of social evolution. The substance and identity of both culture and civilization are constantly "living", that is, undergoing changes in the context of social evolution.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ For continuity, see (1922a; 1922b, 264; 1923l, 270; 1923si).

Thus, nations must learn to evolve on their own while also absorbing the elements of civilization that enable their well-being. In that adoption, cultures do not lose their specificity as much as give the concepts of civilization a culturally-specific meaning. This is why he believed that “a nation does not become civilized if it has not attained cultural consciousness” (1917g, 288). The process of becoming part of civilization must go hand in hand with the processes of cultural evolution.⁵⁸

Gökalp explains this best within the framework of meaning. Cultures within a civilization adopt and absorb civilizational “forms” within the national culture and thus give those aspects of civilization a unique, nationally-specific, cultural meaning. Gökalp writes:

If we take European civilization as an example, we find that among European nations there are only common words, but each one understands a different meaning by the same word they use commonly. The word ‘nation’, for example, has different connotations for the French and the Germans. The word ‘state’ means different things to the British, French, and Germans. The same is true for the word ‘constitution’ or ‘freedom’. . . . Institutions, like language, have an aspect of form and one of meaning. Institutions common within a civilization group are common only in appearance; that is, in form. From the point of view of meaning -- that is, of intimate life -- each nation has its own peculiar institutions. And the sum total of such institutions of a nation constitutes a culture. . . . In short, certain concepts and institutions in words and forms, and the civilization which is the sum total of them all, may be common to several nations; but national conscience is never commonly shared. (1917b, 168)

For Gökalp, the notion of national cultural specificity suggested here never slides into cultural relativity. National consciousness for Gökalp must always be understood within the broader differentiated frame within which meaning takes shape and which provides a commonality for all of its specific members. As we have already noted, he frequently is at pains to hold the two

⁵⁸ For continuity, see (1923l; 1923o; and 1923p, 108-109, 289).

primary identities in his schema together against those who would collapse them or follow either to an extreme.

Living cultures, therefore, must adapt themselves to modern civilization through a conscious and rational selection of the concepts, techniques, and methods of the modern science. They must aim to reconcile and synthesize these externally born modes with their internal cultural traditions, always seeking to preserve the integrity of the internal. Rousseau, appropriately, came to Gökalp's mind. With *Emile* apparently in mind, Gökalp asked, "Can we not apply the method of negative education -- which Jean Jacques Rousseau recommended to protect nature against civilization -- in order to protect, in our case, our culture against civilization" (1917e, 252). Civilization thus becomes "the rational concepts of the nation," whose culture is always evolving (1917e, 247). Cultural consciousness is a primary and a condition of all else in this scheme (1918g, 288); it is its own protection and guarantee; cultural pride the national guard.

With an interest in science and the cultural history of the Turkish nation, it is no accident that Gökalp devoted much of his life to education rather than activity normally associated with politics (see Heyd 1-15; Parla 10-15). Education was the forum in which the dual purposive projects of acculturation on one hand and a-civilization on the other were to be carried out by the national elite. And, even in this sphere, the two processes must be brought together in such a way that their differences are appreciated. The functions of each sphere must be carefully delineated and maintained: the national ethos should be "cultivated" in one, while children must be "trained" in the concepts, methods, and techniques of modern civilization.

Cultivation was necessary for national consciousness, training to make that consciousness what it can be in modernity (1916, 240):

As the educator is a representative of the nation, the trainer is the leader of modernity. As the aim of education is national cultivation, the aim of training is modernity. The professor and the teacher are both educators and instructors at the same time. Training has both educational and instructive functions. This double characteristic serves the national integration as well as modern progress.

Let me, therefore, conclude my discussion in the following way: while we are not in need of Europe from the point of view of culture and education, we badly need it from the point of view of techniques and learning. Let us try to acquire everything in techniques from Europe, but let us find our culture only in our own national soul (1916, 247).

Thus, the upshot of Gökalp's understanding of the significance of culture and civilization as a conceptual frame for modernity is what we might say quintessentially secular in a specific sense of the term. The primary meanings for human beings in their cultural-national and civilizational-international contexts of identity would no longer be "religious." They would be national on one hand and international-scientific on the other. As we shall see shortly, Gökalp was no secular thinker as such. He did not offer a non-religious understanding of life, history, and national identity. But his thought fits within and must be seen as a contribution to the secular problematic of modern political theory. His understanding of culture and civilization is an insight on what it means to be a human being in the "modern world" (really, in the Southeastern context of European modernity at the turn of the twentieth-century), when nationalism on one hand and science on the other are jointly shaping the landscape of public life previously dominated by solely by religious identity, structures, and languages.⁵⁹ In the new world which nationalism and science are shaping

⁵⁹ For continuity, see especially (1923l, 1923q).

in new ways, new possibilities arise and new relationships are developed. People previously separated by tribal or other local identities may now unite in broader national societies; and people of different nations have something in common in potential that they did not have before. Moreover, both these commonalities are constantly evolving. Gökalp neither expected traditions to freeze nor the concepts and techniques of science to remain the same. It cannot be emphasized enough that these commonalities can only be understood in the context of the evolution of “non-religious” collective ideals on a global scale. What Wilson calls the central concern of secularization theory is central in Gökalp’s social and political thought.

This international-humanitarian consequences of this logic are developed best by Parla, in his critique of Heyd and others who have associated Gökalp with chauvenistic nationalism.⁶⁰ As we have seen, against such “distortions” of Gökalp’s thought, Parla brings Gökalp’s international democratic and egalitarian perspective to the fore. What Parla does less successfully, in my view, is connect Gökalp’s understanding of the international commonalities to his overall fundamental interest in the non-

⁶⁰ As we have seen, the development of this commonality through economic relations and scientific exchange does not mean that persons of different nations will understand each other entirely -- cultural specificity and development intervene. But it does mean that the potential is there for communication towards common understanding and action. In short, without saying that this is all that defines human beings in modernity, Gökalp political vision offers of view of a newly shared rationality among individuals who belong to the nations of this world: “Every person is first of all a member of a nation and then of an international community” (1917g, 287). “Human culture is nothing but a synthesis of national culture and international civilization . . . humanity is heading towards an international society by the federation of free nations” (1917g, 288). “In short, civic morality consists in loving and respecting, first our fellow countrymen, then our coreligionists and, finally, all human beings. One of the obligations imposed by civic morality is not to violate the lives, property, freedom and dignity of any of these human beings” (1923t, 62). “People cannot live by only one ideal. As the ideal of nationalist is imperative, the ideals of inter-community life, of international life, and inter-religious life are equally acceptable. With respect to ideals we are pluralist” (1913c, 103).

religious character of this new internationality, or what we are calling here the secularization problematic. It is in this context where Gökalp's internationality must be seen in order to fully appreciate the new basis for civilizational solidarity. To Gökalp, global dynamics had created a new basis for common identity, and interaction among different nations. This is not simply a rote statement about the end of the theological stage of history, often found in the ideological tracts of positivism. And it is not simply a functional view of religion within the frame of Gökalp's solidarist corporatism. It is, again, a point about the very nature of human identity and ideals in modernity. Within cultures that absorb civilization (and not the reverse!), and thus preserve their traditions, human beings are developing multiple identities. Gökalp's political vision cannot be adequately appreciated outside of the conceptual context set by the secularization of the world.

Still, the question remains: Where has religion gone and what is its place and significance? In bringing out the centrality of the concepts national culture and modern civilization in Gökalp's thought, it is quite easy to lose sight of the significance of Islam. As we have seen, some see not much weight relative to his nationalism (e.g., Heyd), others see too much relative to his nationalism (e.g., Dodd); and others, an overwhelming amount within this nationalism (e.g., Arai).

Gökalp's answer I think is that religion remains central within national culture, and therein within the personal and social, spiritual needs of human beings. Though no longer as significant as it once was at either the level of internationality or nationality, religion, within Gökalp's estimation of the sociological trends, is a key element of national culture (see

esp., 1918b, 82 and above-mentioned citations on the meaning of culture).⁶¹

It may even be the basis for commonality of a spiritual kind among coreligionists of different nations. In this way it remains an international ideal, but it simply is not the most encompassing one for modern Turkey. Moreover, as we have seen in our review of the literature above, he attached a condition to all of this. This was that religion must be separated from politics. We have now built the appropriate frame within which the previous interpretations may be evaluated and Gökalp's understanding of the significance of religion in modernity may be understood.

The place Gökalp assigns to religion within the overall frame of modern Turkish identity and society results from what I think are two primary considerations. The first is from reasoning about the consequences of structural differentiation within national society, and the second is from considerations about Islam as an ethical ideal with its own lasting significance in the life of national culture as part of Turkish cultural history. The two are not unrelated. The first generates a detailed analysis of the functional role religion plays as an ideal or "ethical norm" within modern nations generally, and the Turkish nation in particular. The second leads Gökalp to discussions about the intrinsic value faith has for human beings, despite its overwhelming functional role in society. The two considerations work together: Gökalp's is a rational (or scientific as he would have understood it) understanding of the essential place religious sentiments play in modern (read differentiated) life and conscience.

The functional value of religion may be seen throughout Gökalp's writings. In "The social function of religion" (1915c), however, he develops

⁶¹ For continuity, see especially (1923p, 289; 1923m).

the essence of this view at some length. With its rituals governing human ethical conduct and defining one's relationship to the absolute deity, religion performs two important functions for the nation. The first is that it "silence[s] the bestial ego" of the individual on way to acquiring "audience with [one's] deity" (1915c, 191), making individuals into social beings rather than self-oriented egoistic creatures that they might otherwise be (190-191). The second function is that Islam as a religion serves the larger national ethos. Since Islamic practice depends on public spaces for the fulfillment of its positive rituals,⁶² people of the nation are brought together in shared social spaces in order to fulfill their covenant with God. The spaces that enable religious fulfillment, however, functionally work to incorporate geographically dispersed groups into the national whole and to reinforce their common language and culture. National language thus becomes one of the languages of the living, national ritual of Turkish Muslims.

In short, the social function of ritual expresses itself as the renunciation of individuality, and the social function of positive ritual as the fulfillment of nationality. Religion is the most important factor in the creation of national consciousness as it unites men through common sentiments and beliefs. It is because of this that genuinely religious men are those who have national fervor, and that genuine nationalists are those who believe in the eternity of faith. (1915c, 192-193)⁶³

⁶²"Prayers should furthermore be performed in places which are consecrated, that is separated from ordinary places," such as the masjid: "the social sphere where the people of a neighborhood or village get together;" the mosque (*cami*) "the one where the people of a district or country form the congregation; the great mosque (*cami-i keir*) "the one where people of a big city or province form a religious collectivity;" and, finally, the "Kaba and Arafat . . . [that] bring a huge collectivity every year from among the able-bodied members of the *ummet* of Islam. All nationalities within Islam attend these gathering through their representatives . . . (1915c, 191-192). For continuity, see (1922c, d, e).

⁶³ For continuity, see (1922c, 224).

In addition to the national identity, Islam as a religion helps to reinforce a common identity across nations. Islamic international identity is reinforced by the gathering at Kaba and Ararat during the Hijra (pilgrimage). At the international level it reminds believers of their commonality with other people of the faith, however “partial” that commonality appears from the perspective of modern civilization.

We have already seen that Gökalp developed a social evolutionary view of the bases of Islamic law. His Islam was an Islam whose laws governing conduct (as opposed to the fundamentals of the faith) should evolve, or live with, the evolving culture of the Turkish nation. With direct respect to religion, he wrote that, “A law which does not live and give life cannot be a regulator of life” (1916a). In this frame, then, he had no hesitations, for example, when it came to teaching Islam as an ideal in Turkish national education. In his essay on Islamic education, published in *İslâm Mecmuası* he declared that “The religion of Islam is one of our [national] ideals,” alongside Turkism and Modernism, in Turkish national education (1914a, 233). He advocated religious education consisting in the fundamentals of the faith and ritual that he believed lived with the culture of the Turks (Koran reading,⁶⁴ pronunciation, rhythm, catechism, Islamic history, Arabic and Persian).

In fact, the negative language of “no hesitations” does not capture Gökalp’s overall positive understanding of Islam as a living institution of the Turkish national ethos. It was, after all, part of their culture for which he sought to provide a language of preservation in the context of world historical change. “Living rituals” like the Mevlid ceremony (1917a, 172)

⁶⁴ On some occasions, in Turkish (1922m).

should not be preserved simply for consistency: They should be preserved because they are part of the Turkish culture. Being a Muslim, is one aspect of Turkish national identity; and it should remain so.⁶⁵

Now, it must do so under two conditions: one is that its laws (social shariat as distinct from the fundamentals of faith) evolve, and the second, which amounts to a condition of the first, that it, like all other cultural institutions, be independent from the formalizing powers of the state. Gökalp believed that the state tended to freeze and formalize any of the institutions of culture to which it was attached. Thus, the vitality of cultural institutions is directly related to the degree to which they are “independent” and “autonomous” from politics and the institutions of the state. Gökalp believed that such independence was necessary for all cultural institutions because it accorded with the sociological trends of structural differentiation and with the need for a vital religion, arts, and academic research in cultural life of different nations (1917a, 180-181, 185; 1913a, 73; 1913c, 102; for fuller discussion, cp. Parla 69, 90).

Looking backward, Gökalp asserts that, “the attachment of religion to the state in our country has not been to its advantage, but rather to the extreme detriment of religion” (102-103).⁶⁶ The consequence of such attachment was that Islam lost its vitality as a spiritual force. In an essay published in *Türk Yurdu* (before *İslâm Mecmuası* was established), Gökalp described the impact that the Ottoman undifferentiated world had on

⁶⁵ For continuity, see especially (1923k, 267; 1923m; 1923, 108). Consider: “The Turkists are those who aim at Western civilization while remaining Turks and Muslims” (1923p, 290). While it may be tempting to interpret this assertion as a statement that disjoins Turkish national identity from Islam, one must remember that there were among the political elites of Gökalp’s day those who would gladly drop the Islamic component. Gökalp is not disjoining the two as much as he is asserting their relation.

⁶⁶ It was “harmful” (1915c, 185; 1914a, 234).

religion. The themes of structural separation and religious vitality are seen to go hand in hand with the argument for reform in Islam. The entire scheme is also contrasted with the enemies of living traditions, i.e., legalization and formalization:

The state is a legal machinery; it tends to legalize and formalize any social force upon which it touches. It is because of this fact that Islam started to lose its vitality from the moment it began to be fused with the political organization and began to be formalized as a system of law closed against all *ijtihad*. The religion that the state recognizes officially today and the sharia which it formally holds is nothing but the *fikh* (jurisprudence). But the *fikh* did not exist until one and a half centuries after the *Hijra*. Until that time religion and shari'a consisted of the Kur'an and Sunna. The state today officially recognizes only one shari'a, that of the Hanafi schools. Thus, a sect that has only a scholastic value is held prior to religion which is the main thing. The situation is different in those places where Islam is independent. As religion is understood to be a religious life in these countries, the shari'a finds its sources only in the Book and the Sunna, on the one hand, and in the social life, on the other, and is increasingly becoming a social shari'a. (1913c, 102-103)⁶⁷

The point that relates the independence of religion from politics to the processes of structural differentiation cannot be underemphasized. A key element of Gökalp's thinking on the place of religion in modern life was that those who occupied positions of power within religious and political institutions must now comply with these structural realities. This is in part what it means to be a modern, civilized nation. "The separation between religion and state is a goal sought by all civilized nations" (1913c, 102-103; 1917c, 132; 1915a, 121; 1915c, 184).⁶⁸ The religious leadership as well as the political must now comply with the structural differentiation evolution has dealt them, if, that is, they want to have a living religion within a living

⁶⁷ For continuity, see (1923u, 61).

⁶⁸ For continuity, see (1922c, 224-226; 1922d; 1922e, 232; and 1923r, 304-305).

national culture. Religion must occupy its “own sphere” (1915c, 185).⁶⁹ Its elite must give up their claims to politics, just as politicians should insure the autonomy of religious practice and institutions (1915b, 102-105).

It is fundamentally important to understanding Gökalg’s frame on the place of religion in the context of cultural and civilizational change -- or better the significance of Islam in Turkish national life -- to see that Islam, like other religions in modernity, constituted part of culture. This meant several things. One is that religion was no longer the basis of civilizational identities, even if people continued to think so. The other is that religion need not -- and should not -- fade into either the dustbin of history or the private realm. Both ideological options were available to Gökalg, and he rejected them both. To him, losing one’s religion or adopting the ideal of a “personal” religion were ideals specific to the individualist cultures of Europe, whose ethical structures and ideals he believed were entirely unsuited to the living rituals of the Turks. Religion in Turkey should remain a corporate sub-unit of the national culture. In this sense, it had an ongoing function as an institution of personal and what I think is best called “semi-public” fulfillment. That is to say that religion is not simply a private matter; it remains a primary part of Turkish national culture.

Gökalg was not so naive as to think that the process of differentiation would not alter Turkish culture, or that modernization posed no risks of cultural dissolution. “[W]e do not claim that our old culture will remain intact once we enter European civilization. ... the make-up of national personality, culture, civilization, and state affect each other. Therefore, the innovations

⁶⁹ “One of the greatest tasks of religion in organic society is to leave other institutions free within their own spheres” (1915c, 186) and cover “only those ideas and sentiments which have to remain spiritual and sacred” (1915c, 185)

to take place in our civilization and state will certainly pave the way for several changes and developments in our cultural life” (1917e, 249-250). But it is precisely at this point where his idealism intervened: with the right collective representations, Turks as Turks could survive and even thrive under modern conditions. This is why maintaining the conceptual distinction between culture and civilization is so crucial. Turkish culture will rapidly transform as political and economic elites increasingly and inevitably seek to adopt the sciences, concepts and techniques of modern civilization. A reading of the deeper social-structural realities suggests that religion can survive as a corporate institution of semi-public significance. Gökalp intended to provide a conceptual frame within which the preservation of the integrity of culture which included religion as a general category remaining *independent from politics* could be achieved in the process of global transformation.

Thus by placing religion in culture, it seems to me, Gökalp elevates (or at least stresses), rather than diminishes, the significance of religion in the larger context of its loss. Islam, to him, was constitutive part of Turkish identity and history -- in short, of Turkish culture -- which must “live on” in modernity. To conceptualize Islam as such is not to diminish its significance, even though the frame includes a recognition that religion will never be as significant as it once was. There is no evidence in Gökalp’s extensive writings on this topic that his goal was anything other than to find a secure, vital place for Islam within Turkish nationalism.

Now, questions of emphasis are always difficult to sort out in an entirely qualitative manner. But we have seen above that the first account, which suggests Gökalp’s emphasis on Islam was weak, was founded on

several claims. Among the most important are: that his nationalism was overwhelmingly significant relative to his Islamism, that he was not seriously interested in developing what this Islamism entailed, and that his general orientation was Westward anyway. The thrust of the first account is that the ideal of Islamism was something from which Gökbalp could have easily parted. And, we have seen that the second account, which suggested that his emphasis was too great, was founded on a critique of Gökbalp's inability to adequately separate religion from national culture. If these are the bases of the emphasis-related claims of the first two accounts, I think that the conclusion we must reach in light of my interpretation is that Gökbalp's emphasis on the Islamic component of his ideational trinity was proportionate to its due given Gökbalp's understanding of the larger forces shaping the ideational context of modern Turkish nationalism. But this does not adequately sort things out either.

In contrast to the first account, I think that Islam was not the weakest part of his system. While recognizing (perhaps all too clearly, as opposed to not clearly enough) that Islam would not be the hegemonic ideal at the level of either civilization or culture, he still sought to preserve a vital place for it within national culture. (The concept of vitality is crucial here.) Thus, in the context of these changes he seems to elevate Islam's significance, rather than diminish or finesse it for political or strategic reasons. As can be seen, his nationalism consisted largely in a belief that the living traditions of Turkish national culture -- both religious and non -- should remain vital. This is hardly simply a "westernist nationalism" as Berkes calls it. It was, to Gökbalp, a Turkish nationalism, specifically appropriate to the conditions the Turkish nation faced (though its general conceptual frame would be

fruitfully applied to other nations at similar stages in the process of social evolution).⁷⁰ Moreover, the emphasis and development of Islam as an ideal, as well as the attention given to it as a system that is in need of reform, can only be considered sincere. It seems to grossly obfuscate the identity of his thought to say that it was “only important” for Gökalp “to state what Islam does *not* imply any more, and what has to be eliminated because of its incompatibility with the major factors of Turkish culture and Western civilization” (Heyd).

I also disagree with the second account, which sees Gökalp’s emphasis on Islam to be too much. Dodd writes that in attempting to situate religion among the ethical ideals of culture, Gökalp reached a “snag” in his thinking. The snag was apparently there because Gökalp could not provide an adequate place for religion as a matter of non-temporal or non-social relevance. But Dodd’s critique simply expects Gökalp to relegate religion to the private sphere rather than situate it within the national-social sphere, when it was precisely one aim of Gökalp’s theory to provide a place for it within the latter, i.e., the larger social matrix of Turkish culture. Gökalp’s views illustrate less how “Islam fits uneasily in the Turkish context” than how it might have, to him and for the Turkish nationalists of his time, fit more easily. (It would be too hasty to say the same of today’s sociological and ideological context.) That is, Islam may, according to Gökalp, be properly considered a living, non-private, part of Turkish national culture, performing in that process several functions as all religions do. The snag appears to be more in Dodd’s thinking about the place of Islam in Turkish national life and society than in Gökalp’s. Perhaps awaiting the privatization

⁷⁰ Compare Parla (1985, 22): “His modernist proposals were not unrooted in national traditions.”

telos of modern political history, Dodd undervalues Gökalp's conviction that Islam could and should evolve with Turkish culture. And, rather than reaching a snag it appears that he tried to work that snag out!

Dodd, like Heyd especially, also implies that the place to which Gökalp assigned Islam within Turkish life and society made his thought less secular than that of the Kemalists who "were prepared to go to the West for more than its civilization," and who also, unlike Gökalp declared themselves to stand for "secularism." It remains an open question, in this study, whether Gökalp's position which seeks to secure a vital non-political sphere for the practices of religion in both private and social life -- and which connects it logically to its public philosophy without letting it define that philosophy -- is less "secular" than the Kemalist position that religion needed to be subordinated to state supervision and control as aspects of European culture (*qua* "civilization") were brought to Turkey (see next chapter). The implication seen above was that the emphasis on religion was too great for the future "secularists" in Turkey.

It is precisely here where I think the blinding secular and modern prejudices I have discussed in my previous chapter show up in the interpretation of Gökalp's thought. Both Dodd and Heyd seem to have engaged more in showing the validity of their own judgement on the place and significance of religion in modernity than in capturing the identity of Gökalp's. Gökalp could not live up to the norms of their secularism (as he could not with respect to the Kemalist laicists either). In this way, Dodd and Heyd were engaged in what Taylor has called "norm-setting" (Taylor 1985g, 132). In particular, they set the norm for secularism to be the extent to which religion was eliminated from politics and relegated to the private

sphere. Gökalp agreed with the first part without assenting to the second, and for this reason was seen as less secular than those who attempted to comply more fully with this particular modernist conclusion; the Kemalists, in Heyd's words, "eliminated" the Islamic component as they created an entirely secular" state (Heyd 151). Whether theirs remains the only telos of modernity is something we must question. It is significant that Gökalp did in fact question this and was relegated to the status of a forerunner -- an earlier stage, if you will -- of the real secularists, this despite his unqualified commitment to the necessity of separating religion and politics in modernity.⁷¹ What we might call his critical relevance in the history of Turkish laicist and secular political thought is missed.

As we have seen, Gökalp's view on the need to sustain independent ethical institutions for Islam with the Caliph at their head has also been a matter of some contention in the literature. Gökalp's belief that a modern nation state should separate religion and politics undergirded his optimism with regard to the survival of the caliphate as the spiritual leader of the Islamic umma. Gökalp believed that the elimination of the sultanate made possible the spiritual independence of the Islamic institutional organization -- from the local to the international level. The Caliph, as its head, would "no longer be subject to politics of any nation" (1922, 226). Genuine Islam, then, could be institutionalized in a way compatible with modern state (228).⁷²

⁷¹ Would the emphasis on separating religion and politics be too great for the Kemalists whose laicist practices are interpreted by the most authoritative social scientists in Turkey as never having fully achieved the separation between religion and politics? (As opposed to would the emphasis on religion be too great for them?). Or, did Gökalp misunderstand the power relations necessary to secure disestablishment? It seems to me that Gökalp can rightfully be criticized for ignoring politics as a phenomenon that has an importance beyond sociological speculation, but is this criticism applicable in this context?

⁷² After the abolition of the Sultanate, Gökalp wrote, "We are deeply grateful to the Grand National Assembly and its famous president for their success in giving the office

Whether or not he could accept the abolition of the Caliphate by the Kemalists is, of course, a matter of speculation. The abolition would not have been entirely inconsistent his Islamic reform premises. And, he may have certainly come to terms with the outcome of the Kemalist politics. But to Berkes's charge that the idea of an independent religious institutional structure was a "fanciful utopia designed to lay a basis of internationality to his Turkish nationalism" in the context of his otherwise "Westernist nationalism," it must be asked: Which is more utopian: denying common religious institutional affiliations on the basis of nationality or integrating them within a nonpolitical sphere in order to enrich that nationality? And even if his belief in the possibility of creating such ethical institutions waned in print (as Parla notes correctly), who is to say that his interest in the vitality of religious institutions was equally jettisoned? The implication of both Parla's and Berkes's analysis is that the vitality of religion as a matter of faith connected to an institutional frame waned over time. This does not follow. Indeed, the view that Islam ought to be a part of culture, separated from the state, suggests the reverse. The vitality of religion as well as its social-structural bases of this vitality were fundamental concerns for Gökalp. This is a continual theme, rather than a waning one, and should be differentiated from whether or not he thought the Caliphate could, under the Kemalists, be saved and an ethical Islamic corporation established.

For Gökalp the choice is clear, the Turks can have religious vitality within their living culture, on the one hand, or they can have religious laxity, fanaticism, and hypocrisy on the other. The former is established

of the Caliphacy a character that is compatible with the principles of popular and national sovereignty, which is the foundation of modern states and through which genuine Islamic unity in religious life can be achieved" (1922c, 227; 1922e, 231-232).

through the separation of religion and politics, the later through their connection. Interestingly, he believed that the justification for their differentiation did not rest solely on the social structural conditions of modern life alone. It could also be found in Islamic history, despite several historical deviations from the norm. In the Ottoman past, for instance, “Institutions assumed several functions at the same time, in spite of the fact that Islam, from the beginning, had differentiated matters of piety (*diyanet*) from the affairs of jurisprudence (*kaza*).” But “piety and judicial judgment” he argued, “are very different things” (1915b 200-201). Restoration of their original differentiated status is correctable, he thought, by making certain structural changes like organizing both matters under a “ministry of Pious Affairs” (1915b, 201).

Situated within the larger frame of Gökalp’s political and social thought it is hard to believe that he saw such a reform -- or those undertaken by the CUP -- as “Islamicization,” which is Arai’s strong implication. The need for a radical reorganization of the structures and ideals of Turkey’s social and political life derived much more from Gökalp’s sociological judgements, which both preceded and succeeded his writings on Islamic reform in the journal which Arai examines. It is also hard to accept Arai’s claim that the policy of state “interference” and “control,” as he puts it, is what Gökalp advocated. (“As is well known, the CUP government accomplished, on the advice of Ziya Gökalp, many reforms of secularization, which can be regarded as forerunners of those by Atatürk. In 1913, *ulema* s and their religious courts came under State control . . .”) He may have said that certain interferences in the old order were necessary to establish separation, but it is a distortion of his thinking to characterize the essence of

his political counsel as establishing “State control” (with capital “S”) over religion and religious institutions.

Hence, with regard to the functionality of religion in modern corporate bodies, Gökalp follows Durkheim very closely with an appreciation of the lasting significance of religion in modernity. Religion is fitted into a social evolutionary view where it becomes one of the pillars of organic solidarity.⁷³ The loss of religion’s significance at the level of internationality did not entail its loss of significance altogether. Not simply a matter of private conscience, religious belief is able to occupy a place in the public life of individuals, where public means something other than “political.” (It is obviously difficult to employ a philosophically liberal private/public categorization to a corporatist conception of the public, non-political sphere.) Religion neither disappears nor becomes merely a private matter. In modernity, religion is a cultural phenomenon that fulfills several functions in the collective soul of the nation.

Now, it is my view that Gökalp’s understanding of the functional place of religion in modern societies was undergirded by an appreciation of its lasting significance as an intrinsically valuable element of human life and history. Here, his understanding of religion and its significance in modern life has to do less with the nature of social structural change and national solidarity than it has to do with the nature of belief for rational creatures and the need for those creatures to express that belief in more than simply private ways. I will not digress too much on this point, but it is an important one that should be brought to light in order to understand why Gökalp’s

⁷³ For continuity, see (1923I, 268).

contribution to the secularization problematic is not easily considered a “secular” one.

In order to understand this dimension of Gökalp’s thought, one must keep in mind his own religious background in Sufi Islam and the fact that he was educated and socialized within an Islamic milieu. Indeed, his political thought found expression, as Arai’s study powerfully illustrates, in a milieu within which the elite of Turkish society were still heavily constituted by a discourse in which references to, and understandings within, Islamic history were shared by many. Gökalp himself was known as a kind of mentor, or *mürşid*, in this context (Berkes 1954, 376). One can read his works on the reform of Islam and study the concepts of Islam.

The point to be made here is that Gökalp understood religion as something more than simply a system of societal-functional value. He also had a sense for its “living” value, that is, for the living value of Islam in the late Ottoman and early Turkish context in what might be called the everyday life of Muslims in Turkey. Some of his early writings express an interest in the philosophical dimensions of this role, especially as they relate to the nature of social ideals (e.g., 1911b). More usually, however, one espies this perspective (in the translated essays) within discussions of religion’s functional value. Consider Gökalp’s understanding of what he calls “sacred power.” In a discussion of the “positive rituals” of religion, Gökalp offers an understanding of human beings as creatures of both reason and belief and an understanding of the role religion plays in life beyond collective aims:

[Positive rituals] simply bring together at certain places and at certain times individuals who, because of the necessities of life, have to live scattered and make them convene with each other for a holy aim. As all kinds of meetings produce a sense of holiness in souls, so the meetings with a holy purpose certainly generate the same feeling in a

much more intensified manner. The feeling of holiness is such an elixir that we may aptly call it 'sacred power'. Any idea touched by it turns into belief, any sentiment into a conviction. It turns the sad person into a cheerful one, the pessimist into an optimist, the skeptic into a believer. The 'sacred power' makes the coward courageous, the slothful industrious, the sick healthy, the immoral virtuous, the indifferent an idealist, the weak determined, the egoistic altruistic. Men who in ordinary times and places seek different gods are brought together at national times and places by these gathering to experience the national life. (1915c, 192)

There is no simple estimation of the functional role of religion in one's life here. Rather, what we see is an interpretation of the nature of the human conscience and the power of religious belief. Gökalp is offering a perspective on what it means to be a human being with potential to act upon ideals, where one of those ideals is set by the "sacred power" of religious belief. "Men without ideals," he once noted, "are egoistic, self-seeking, pessimistic, faithless, and cowardly; They are lost souls." Human being with ideals -- including religious ideals -- are capable of the highest forms of human activity and achievement. As a thinker who understood the profound nature of what we are calling the secularization process, Gökalp never underestimated the way in which religious belief or "sacred power" could partly and indeed significantly continue to constitute the activities of individuals in the Turkish cultural context, and he believed others should not either.

It seems, moreover, that his elevation of Islam's significance in Turkish national culture is founded on precisely this appreciation of religion's significance in life generally -- modern or not. It is noteworthy that when he compared the Turkish renaissance to the Italian renaissance, he criticized the latter which, in turning against the Age of the Church, "turned against the spirit of religiosity, then devoid of effective vitality,

and unjustly extended its attacks to the still living parts of religion” (1917d, 145). His interest in the “still living parts of religion” is evidence of his stronger appreciation for religion than most “secularists” (without implying that all secular theses are hostile to religion).

It is less important to my study of Gökalp’s contribution to the secularization problematic, however, to develop Gökalp’s understanding of the intrinsic value of religion to human beings in his thinking than it is to show that he never seriously diminished or exaggerated its importance in the context of Turkish national life and structures, as others have argued. Rather, he provided a comprehensive analysis of what he took to be the necessary place of religion under conditions of contemporary civilization. He saw what we would call secularity occurring at the two primary organizational levels of the world: international civilization and national culture. He believed that religion has truly lost the significance it once had. But this did not mean, for him, that it has lost its significance entirely, even under the secularizing and democratizing conditions of modern politics. To the contrary, from Gökalp’s objective determination of the conditions for contemporary collective ideals, he gave it a privileged place within the national culture which it was his fundamental objective to preserve as Turkey continued its integration with the West. Culture is no secondary category for Gökalp. I think the best way to summarize his view is by saying that he observed its diminished relevance at the international level, but secured its importance at the national level. He did so by advocating the establishment of institutions, unconnected to politics, that would insure its ongoing vitality as the broader processes of social-structural differentiation continued apace in the modern world. His appreciation for the vitality of

religion was sincere, and it was enmeshed within a broad concern for the functionality of religion in modern societies and its intrinsic value in the lives of human beings.

Now it may be said that I have inadequately represented the ideals to which Gökalp aspired after the end of the Young Turk period; or, that I have generalized from a reading of what Parla calls his second phase. As such, I fail to consider a clear alteration in Gökalp's thinking from the early days when he was declaring a need for a Turkish-Islamic civilization (eg(1918a [1913], 101 -- quoted above) to the later days when these are separate ideals, and when he gives greater weight and emphasis to nationalism.

My response is threefold. First, the evidence for the continuity of Gökalp's view on the separation of religion and politics is a matter of consensus in the literature. His unequivocal rejection of theocracy and clericalism in 1923 was only a crystalization of ideas he was expressing at least ten years earlier. Second, with regard to the significance of Islam in Turkish identity, my view is that an interpretation of his thought that shows a greater interest in Islam in his earlier writings should not ignore the clear continuities. I have tried to articulate those continuities here. Moreover, the early rhetoric of a Turkish-Islamic civilization must be seen in a context in which Gökalp's major conceptual frame, including the distinction between culture and civilization, was still taking shape. The fact that he drops this in favor of a more refined distinction between culture and civilization -- something he makes clear himself on both conceptual and political-ethical grounds -- in no way entails that Islam as an ideal becomes less important.

More generally, what we observe in Gökalp's thought over time reflects less a change of emphasis than the gradual working out of his own

sociological judgements (esp., the understanding of social structures and the distinction between culture, religion, and civilization). Thus, by 1923 he wrote with sharper conceptual precision, and certainly no loss of emphasis that:

As soon as such representations as 'we belong to the Turkish nation', 'we are of the *ummet* of Islam', 'we are a part of Western civilization', become distinct representations in the common consciousness of the Turks of Turkey, every aspect of our social life will begin to change. The more we say 'we are of the Turkish nation', the more we shall be able to show originality and personality in terms of the Turkish taste and values in language, in art, in morality, in laws, and even in religion and philosophy. As we say 'we are of the *ummet* of Islam', we shall behave in accordance with the belief that the Kur'an is our sacred book, Muhammad our sacred prophet, the Ka'ba our sacred place, and Islam our sacred religion. As we say 'we are of Western civilization', we shall behave as to the European peoples in science, philosophy, techniques, and in all other aspects of civilization" (1923j, 62-63; 1923l, 276-279).

This is hardly the trailing off the the Islamic component. And it is also not an exaggeration of that component in what now, within the context of his corpus, is a fairly refined and intricately-defined whole.

Gökalp's attention was constantly focused on those in Turkey whose shared with him a "yearning for a synthesis" (1917g, 287) (in opposition, say, to those yearning for other forms of sociopolitical change). And to their inquiry, "How ought we live?" he suggested consistently that changes in the world have come to mean that we must live as members of the Turkish nation, believers in the Islamic religion which is part of our national culture, and reasoning beings benefitting fully from the concepts and techniques of modern science. At the more general conceptual level, he argued that the right way for the members of the Turkish nation to proceed today is to think of themselves within a three-fold matrix of identity, absorb civilization to culture, and restructure place of religion within that nexus.

Specifically, they should drop the “fiction of [multinational] cosmopolitanism” (1911c, 58; 1913a, 71; 1917g, 287) and embrace “nationalism” while simultaneously grasping the “significance of culture” within an “interest in international civilization.” Losing sight of any of these dimensions, Gökalp believed, was a recipe for stagnation and missed opportunity in the changing conditions of the contemporary age. If Turkey failed to adopt the right ideals, it would lose the opportunity for freedom, cultural survival, and rationally governed success in the modern world. The reality of the conditions of the contemporary age suggested that Turks, like all others, would now need to learn to live in a world in which the primary identities of human beings were no longer singularly defined in religious terms. The identity of society, like the identity of the world, was changing, and individual members of different cultures and civilizations would need to learn how to consciously live within these new contexts. With the right understanding of the process of evolution, and some guidance concerning ideals, they might find their way in harmony with others.⁷⁴

Now, there remains one more issue to be resolved. This is the place of Gökalp’s understanding of the significance of Islam in modern Turkish life and society in relation to the subsequent history of secular thought and practice in the Turkish republic. At this point, we can say this: if it is the case that the Kemalists did not institutionally and symbolically separate religion and politics, Gokalp cannot be said to have supported or even laid the groundwork for policy that has as its purpose the control of religion (or any other institution of culture). He was fully on the side of complete disestablishment. If the Kemalists did not achieve this, they may have had

⁷⁴ For continuity, see Gökalp’s “testaments”: (1923b, c, and d; 1923o; 1923k, 266-268).

their reasons. But no justification for the control of religion by the state can be found in Gökalp's writings on the subject. He demanded the complete independence and autonomy of political and religious spheres, for the sake of both. Thus, we can say the following: contra Heyd, Berkes, Dodd, and Arai (and following Parla), Gökalp's position, which seeks to secure a vital, non-political sphere for the practices of religion in both private and social life -- and which connects Islam logically to Turkey's public philosophy without letting it define that philosophy -- offers an alternative rather than necessarily less secular understanding of secularism in Turkey.

We say this without implying that Gökalp was a "secularist." But this does not make his contribution to the secularization problematic any less valuable. Throughout the world today, including in Turkey, there are "secularists" and "non-secularists," as well as "laicists" and "anti-laicists" (as they understand themselves) still seeking a conceptual frame for granting religion a prominent place in "public" life without it becoming the sole determinant of that life. Some of us are still seeking a language for the freedom of conscience in the global multi-religious context when that means free to be religious (in a variety of ways) as well as non-religious (in a variety of ways). Gökalp's culture/civilization conceptual frame with its evolutionary backdrop is certainly more appealing than the recently more popular accounts that collapse religion with civilization and offer us no historically grounded way to a more secular, common future.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ I have in mind Samuel Huntington's sketch of "The clash of civilizations?" as well as "criticisms" of Huntington that reiterate the core of his conceptually problematic -- from the more refined Gökalpian perspective -- understanding of the concept "civilization." See Samuel P. Huntington, "The clash of civilizations?" (Huntington 1993).

Understanding Political Science: Modernity and Method

Volume 2

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

Andrew Glen Davison

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

October 1995

CHAPTER FIVE

Interpreting Turkey's "secular model"¹

Since beliefs about social institutions are partially constitutive of social institutions, it is impossible to identify the institution except in terms of the beliefs of those who engage in its practices.²

Alasdair MacIntyre (1972, 12)

How far is the self-designation 'secular state' still appropriate, either as a description or as a political principle in modern Turkey?³

Richard Tapper (1991,2)

The hermeneutic imperative has been gaining wider currency in comparative political studies lately. In a new, attractively-entitled study called, *Rethinking Middle East Politics*, Simon Bromley endorses G.

Hawthorne's version of this imperative that,

To grasp the politics of any Third World country and thereby to make illuminating comparisons between the politics of several is to understand how those in power (and those who seek it) have framed the common ambition to capture and define social and political space and economically to develop; how they (or their predecessors) have framed constitutions and formal institutions to realise these ends; and the ways in which, imaginatively and practically, these and other more or less institutionalized institutions have been used . . .⁴

¹ Or, "The hermeneutic commitment in comparative political inquiry as illustrated in the study of laicism (*laiklik*) in Turkey."

² For a full explication of the assumptions and objectives of interpretive political theory, see my "The interpretive commitment in political inquiry," Chapter Two of this work.

³ It should be noted here that I will take issue with some of the assumptions in this question.

⁴ Geoffrey Hawthorne(1991, 42), quoted in Bromley (1994, 3). Cp. Hawthorne (1976). In the Middle East studies context, compare Hudson (1980); Karpas (1986); Esposito (1990).

Our common attention to the “frames” of political life is certainly a step in the right direction -- in the study of any politics, “Third World” or “advanced.” The difficulty comes in pulling it off.

The range of conceptual frames for explaining *laiklik* in Turkey

In his discussion of Turkey’s secular politics, Bromley highlights the “draconian” character of “Kemalist opposition to religious intrusion into public life,”⁵ asserts that, “Kemalism was the exemplary instance of modernization *against* Islam” (emphasis in original),⁶ and concludes: “In fact, the militant secularism of the state amounted to rigid state control over religious life, and a strict laicism in public affairs, rather than the institutional separation of Church and State, or the decline of personal

⁵ Bromley avers that this “character has been well-summarized by [John L.] Esposito,” and quotes that latter extensively. (I reproduce the quote in its entirety here for the sake of completeness.) Esposito writes, “Kemalist reforms effectively controlled and suppressed the traditional religious establishment of the *ulema* and the heads of Sufi organizations. The secularization of law and education and state control over of religious endowments struck to the very heart of the power and authority of the ulama who had served as judges, legal experts, and as advisors, educators and administrators of the religious endowments with their related social services. Most of these jobs were now abolished and their revenues sharply curtailed. In addition seminaries were closed, the use of religious titles forbidden, the wearing of ecclesiastical clothing prohibited outside mosques, and religious education in state schools was discontinued” (Esposito [1984 in attached bibliography; Bromley lists date of publication as 1991] 98, quoted in Bromley 1994, 125). To this description, Bromley adds, “As if this was not enough, the alphabet was changed, Sufi brotherhoods were banned, sacred tombs were closed, the Koran was translated into Turkish, a mythical history was invented, people were compelled to take European surnames, the fez and turban were banned and European-style hats were made compulsory; indeed, seventy people were executed for opposition to the hat laws!” (125-126).

⁶ The full text of this comment follows the text quoted in footnote 5, and reads: “Thus, Kemalism was the exemplary instance of modernization *against* Islam, a fact arising from the imbrication of Islam with the discredited old order and the extensive dependence of the Sunni *ulema* on the tributary power of the Ottoman state. Though the defence of Islam became a rallying point for those who sought to resist the centralizing political control of Kemalism, the social location of Islam within the Ottoman order rendered it relatively defenceless against this ruthless onslaught. As a material force, Islam was obliterated under Atatürk. This is not gainsaid by the fact that ‘the Turkish national movement was essentially a Muslim protest again Christian assertion’ (Yapp 1991:15)” (Bromley 1994, 126).

belief” (Bromley 1994, 125-126).⁷ As such, he joins many others who have distinguished “secularism” -- a translation of the *laiklik* “arrow” or “trajectory principle” of Kemalism⁸ announced in the 1931 party program of Mustafa Kemal’s Republican People’s Party -- in Turkey from “secularism” in “the West” on the basis of the former’s Erastian, control-oriented character.⁹ “The religious establishment,” wrote Dankwart Rustow in an influential essay on the topic, “has never been separated from the state” (Rustow 1957, 70).¹⁰ “The separation of religion and state was never attempted in its Western sense,” observes Binnaz Toprak (1988, 120). Rather, Islam was “put under control and made subservient to state authority” (1988, 120; 1992).¹¹ In the Kemalist “reforms,” the state may have been freed from religion, but the reverse was not true (Stirling 1958, Adnan-Adivar 1935). On what we may call the “control account” of Turkey’s *laiklik* politics, the relevant terms to describe *laiklik* are “control” and “supervision as subordination,” not “separation.”

Much of the control account is difficult to contest, as we shall see. But if our project is to be an hermeneutic one, then the limits and inadequacies

⁷ “After all,” Bromley continues, “Turkey was purged of its non-Muslim population and it was still predominantly a peasant society: in the new state 98 per cent of the population was Muslim (a majority Sunni), 85 per cent spoke Turkish (10 per cent Kurdish) and some 80 per cent were dependent on agriculture” (Bromley 1994, 126).

⁸ The six are: republicanism, nationalism, étatism, populism, laicism, and transformationism.

⁹ The concept “Erastian” -- referring to attempts to sever a church/state connection by subordinating the religious establishment to lay control -- is offered by Bernard Lewis in *The emergence of modern Turkey* (1961). Lewis generally describes *laiklik* as an effort to “disestablish” Islam, “to end the power of its exponents in political, social, and cultural affairs, and to limit it to matters of belief and worship” (1961, 271, 412; cp., e.g., 1991, 121). I will situate Lewis’s view of *laiklik* within the literature in the subsequent discussion in the main text.

¹⁰ On influence, see, e.g., Karpas 1959.

¹¹ See also Toprak (1981); Abadan-Unat (1991, 193-4); Dalacoura (1990, 208); Keyder (1988, 201-202); Rustow (1987, 29; Dumont (1984, 38); Heper (1981, 352); Stirling (1958); Reed (1957a, 147-8); Adnan-Adivar (1935).

of this account must be seen and appreciated. In particular, the contrast between “control” and “separation” must be broken down, for it was in the original constitutive meanings of Kemalist *laiklik*, and it continues to be as the dynamics of *laiklik* politics unfold in Turkey. The purpose of this paper is to clarify the “separation” dimensions of *laiklik*, to identify their significance in *laik* politics past and present, and to offer a self-consciously hermeneutic contribution to the unending quest within comparative inquiry to better understand alternative, existing relations between religion and politics in the modern world.

An understanding of the “separation” dimensions of *laiklik* is noticeably absent in many of the debates over *laiklik* in Turkey (even though they are sometimes discussed) in addition to the social science literature on the topic. There are reasons for this absence in both contexts. In Turkey, a retraditionalization of political life has slowly taken place since a multi-party electoral system was established in the late 1940's. (It has been subject to periodic review and change by the military (in 1960, 1971, and 1980), which, when not solely in power, has continued to influence state policies, including those associated with *laiklik*.) This retraditionalization -- inaugurated and sustained by “*laik*” parties as well as religiopolitically-interested ones¹² -- has been undergirded by a critique of *laiklik* based on the control account. Whereas, in the Anglophone social science literature, the absence of an adequate discussion of the separation dimensions of *laiklik* politics results from non-hermeneutic tendencies to explain political practices and institutions without due consideration given to their constitutive understandings.

¹² The religio-politically interested parties recently made big gains at the polls in the municipal and local elections of 27 March 1994.

As will be seen, my project here is not to displace the control account. It is, rather, to deepen it by offering a fuller interpretation of the control relations from a self-consciously hermeneutic view. My interpretation involves rehabilitating dimensions of “separation” within the original field of *laiklik* politics that are inadequately captured by the conceptual frame of the control account.

Several risks accompany this effort, not least of which is the mistaken view that hermeneutic inquiry is relativist, conservative, uncritical, and suited only for understanding as opposed to explanation. My hope is that this essay contributes to an expanding area of inquiry that demonstrates otherwise, and that shows the indispensability of hermeneutic political explanation in our collective efforts to speak authoritatively about the political lives of others.

There is also the risk that the reader will understand my account as a defence of Kemalism, when it is not. My goal is to contribute to the project of interpreting *laiklik* by offering a more compelling explanation than can be found in the existing Anglophone literature. I seek to do this by clarifying dimensions of the political “frames,” or matrix of meanings, that heretofore have been either dismissed, down-played, or incompletely considered. In my mind, the literature on *laiklik* (like on most other topics of political science interest these days) needs more hermeneutically sound contributions. The authoritarianism of the Turkish state, not unlike many other states, has created many troubles (including, but not limited to, problems associated with the arbitrary application of state power) for many people, with many different interests. Aspects of these problems have their sources in the Kemalist experience. But I see no need to endorse one group’s interpretation

over the others'; there is, rather, a need for disentangling the web of interests and concepts that the state has effectively tangled over the last 70 years.

My political interest, if it can be reduced it to one, lies only in the wish that laicism be seen as an element of secular politics in which historically important kinds of separation between common political matters and less common religious matters may occur *in some senses*, kinds of separation that are significant within the ongoing debate over *laiklik* in Turkey. Aside from my own risks, the risk is even greater that reinterpretations of laicism and secularism in Turkey and other places in the world today, exercises led largely by non-hermeneutic forces on site and in the academy, will produce an even less secular outcome than *laiklik* because they fail to see it within historical attempts to create and maintain a "separation" between "religious" and "political" life (or, if they do, they lack the hermeneutic skills to explain how this is so). Indeed, to argue that there is a need to reinterpret *laiklik* is to presume that there is some shared understanding of that which is to be reinterpreted. And if there is anything that is clear to this observer, it is that there is no agreement on this issue of first priority. My project, therefore, is to offer an account of the original field of *laiklik* about which there remains much controversy even as it is being reinterpreted.

Background: Neither separation nor disestablishment

In order to understand the significance, as well as the limitations, of various control accounts of *laiklik* politics, these accounts must be seen generally as a critique of two other, related accounts, which themselves

appear in various forms.¹³ The first of these two is what we may call the “separation” account, and the second is what we may refer to as the “disestablishment” account.

When Rustow wrote that the “religious establishment has never been separated from the state,” he was explicitly correcting the views of what he called “the casual Western observer with some knowledge of recent Turkish history who is likely to credit Atatürk with making Turkey over from a traditional Muslim society into a modern Western nation, and in that process, separating the religious establishment from the state” (Rustow 1957, 69). Rustow may have known of certain celebrity “casual observers” in Anglophone social science. It was the relationship between religion and politics in Turkey that defined Turkey’s relevance to modernization theory’s founding father, Daniel Lerner. In his seminal work, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing in the Middle East*, Lerner wrote, “Turkey is not yet a Modern [sic.] society in our sense, but it is no longer a Traditional [sic.] society in any sense.” The reason for this, he maintained, was that, “the Muslim institution has been separated from the secular state” (1964 [1958], 111).

Lerner, however, was neither the first nor the last to see either the identity or significance of “secularism” in Turkey as “institutional separation.” Earlier and more recent observers of Mustafa Kemal’s reforms -- among them social scientists, political historians, and journalists -- have seen in *laiklik* “the separation of church and state” (e.g., Earle 1926, 85;

¹³ It should be stressed that my categories depicting the accounts of *laiklik* are somewhat more fluid than simple classification allows. Still, as what follows should show, I think that the categories adequately capture differing attempts in the literature to characterize the original identity and the purposes of *laiklik*. In this sense, accounts differ fundamentally.

Webster 1939b, 127-129; Dodd 1979, 82; Lenczowski 1980, 115; *The Economist* 1991, 4) or the “complete displacement” of the religious institutions (Harris 1965, 65). In the course of the reforms, Ahmad has suggested, “the state cut its formal ties with Islam” (Ahmad 1991, 6).

Subscribers to the control account have also taken issue, both implicitly and explicitly, with the concept “disestablishment” as applied to Kemalist *laiklik* (see, especially, Mardin 1981, 191). The concept disestablishment connotes an attempt to deprive religion of state connection and support by removing its institutions and elites from a position of union, patronage, or control within a political structure. Because it means withdrawing religious control or removing religion from an established position of political power, “disestablishment” is close in its meaning to separation (cp. Simpson and Wiener 1989). Bernard Lewis, whose book, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, is perhaps the most widely read introduction to “modern Turkish political history,” argues that the purpose of *laiklik* was to “disestablish” Islam and make it “a strictly private affair” (Lewis 1952, 38; 1961, 412-3; 1991, 121).¹⁴ Lewis’s influence is discernable in the Anglophone social science literature. It can be seen, for instance, in the interpretations of the political scientist Walter Weiker whose work also focuses on the theme of modernization in Turkey. He consistently cites Lewis on this point, noting that Turkey accomplished “the formal disestablishment of Islam, and formal-legal separation of mosque and state” (1985, 27, 29).¹⁵ Weiker also suggests the applicability of the disestablishment while acknowledging the debate over Kemalism’s severity: “whether it was necessary for Atatürk to be as

¹⁴ See note 11, above.

¹⁵ For Lewis’s influence elsewhere in the literature of political science, see, e.g., Trimberger (1978, 67-8); Mehmet (1990, 119). All three cite him explicitly on this point. Cp. also Webster (1937b, 229); Landau (1984, xii).

drastic as he was in disestablishing Islam is still debatable . . . (Weiker 1981, 110; 1985, 29-30).

Because of nuances in the meaning of all of these concepts, adjudicating the “disestablishment account” is a complex matter. As we shall see in more detail below, Kemalist *laiklik* clearly exhibits anti-clerical tendencies aiming “to destroy [religious] control,” as Mardin has put it. That is to say that Mustafa Kemal and his political allies launched a conscious effort to “deprive” Islam “of a considerable share of its controlling influence both in public and in private life” (Kohn 1933, 146; cp. Dodd 1969, 21; Tachau 1984, 30-1; Sunar and Sayarı 1986, 168-9). But whether or not the reforms sought to “dismantle” Islam, “to drive it out of official favor and out of the collective consciousness of the people” (Tachau 1984, 27), or to achieve “virtually total exclusion of religious influence from public life,” “ending forever” the “formal power of religious functionaries” (Weiker 1981, 110-111) -- all things implied by disestablish -- is *still* debatable(!).

The disestablishment account has the merit of connoting the exercise of political power (in a rudimentary, Dahlian sense) to achieve *laiklik*. For instance, the abolition of the Caliphate on the 3rd of March, 1924 did not happen simply as an inexorable outcome of nationalism’s rise in Turkey. (Not all Turkish “nationalists” would have agreed with Hans Kohn’s view of the Caliphate as “anachronistic amid modernization,” though Mustafa Kemal and many others, including religiously-inclined persons, would have (Kohn 1933)). Rather, the abolition of the Caliphate was at least, *inter alia*, one of the first shots fired in a “political battle” (Berkes 1964, 450-1) in which the anti-clerical-like Kemalists sought to deprive their opposition of a rallying point that they believed, as Mustafa Kemal later stated, might be used to limit

Turkey's independence and sovereignty vis-a-vis other Islamic countries (Atatürk 1929, 593-5; Toynbee 1927, 55-6; Dumont 1984, 38; Keyder 1988, 210; Toprak 1988, 120; Dalacoura 1990, 208).

Disestablishment, however, would entail ending the established status of Islam and ending *control* -- at least of religion, if not of lay control over religion -- *in* the state. On the control account, this did not happen in Kemalist *laiklik* politics.

In fact, the abolition of the Caliphate together with the abolition of the cabinet-level Ministry of Religious Affairs¹⁶ was followed immediately by the founding of two new institutions: the Directorate-General (*Reislik*, which is also translated as "Presidency") of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri*) and the Directorate-General of Pious Foundations (*Evkaf*).¹⁷ The latter was charged with the administration of the religious endowments, upkeep of mosques and, in 1931, cleric remuneration. The role and existence of the former -- the *Diyanet İşleri Reislighi*, hereafter simply the *Diyanet*¹⁸ -- in Turkish *laik* politics continues to generate controversy. It became the highest religious office in the new Turkish Republican state. Its head was to be "appointed by the President . . . on the recommendation of the Prime Minister," to whose office it was to be "attached" (as Article 4 of the law put it). Its function: "the dispatch of all cases concerning the Exalted Islamic Faith which relate to beliefs (*itikadat*) and rituals (*ibadat*)." These included: "the administration of all mosques . . . and of dervish houses within the boundaries of the territories of the Republic of Turkey as well as with the appointment and dismissal of all *imams*, *hatibs* (orators), *vaizs* (preachers),

¹⁶ Hence their "exclusion" from the center of power (e.g., Toynbee 1926, 60).

¹⁷ Law number 429 *Şer`iye ve Evkaf ve Erkanıharbiyei Umumiye Vekaletlerinin İlgasına Dair Kanun*. English text in Toynbee (1927, 572-74); Allen (1935, 176-177).

¹⁸ Later, the Directorate-General of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*).

şeyhs (leaders of dervish houses), *müezzins* (callers to prayer), *kayyims* (“sextons”), and all other employees of a religious character” (Article 5). The law also stipulated that “the Directorate-General of Religious Affairs is the proper place of legal recourse” for the jurisconsults (*müftülük*) of Islamic law (Article 5). This stipulation entailed the responsibility for the distribution of “model” sermons (*hutbe*), and “translating, editing, and publishing authentic religious works for the public” (Reed 1970, 322).

In short, the abolition of the Caliphate by the Republic was followed by the establishment of other religious institutions that were thought to be more compatible with the Turkish national project. These institutions were, in their original conception, linked with the government, with power over the religious sphere, within the state. Toprak underscores this linkage by noting how the “organization and personnel of Islam” all became “paid employees of the state” (1992, 3; Trimmerger 1978). Writing in the early thirties, Allen suggested that the sample sermons distributed by the *Diyamet* were “designed to encourage obedience to God and the Republican government” (1935, 221ff; cp Sunar and Toprak 1983, 426). Putting the control dimensions more explicitly, Mardin writes, “The Directorates were to be attached to the Prime Minister’s office so that the state would control all training for religious offices as well as salaries and appointments of all religious officials” (Mardin 1982, 179; 1977, 287). He goes on to suggest that these relations that have been maintained and extended overtime comprise a large part of what may be defined as Turkey’s “official Islam” (1982, 191).

From the viewpoint of subscribers to the control account, therefore, the existence of the *Diyamet İşleri Reisliği/Başkanlığı* counts as counter-evidence to any claim that Islam was disestablished, separated, or privatized

through the policies, practices, relations, or institutions associated with *laiklik*. To the contrary, the new state's religious institutions were "designed" largely, as Keyder has put it, "to control from above all aspects of religious life" (1988, 210). This dynamic, I think, is what partly lies behind Mardin's remark that, "In Turkey, laicism amounted to more than official disestablishment of religion . . . (1981, 191, discussed further below).

Interpreters of *laiklik* might want to down-play the established status of these offices, for example by identifying the head of the *Diyanet* as "a mere director-general of a department" (Rustow 1987, 29), but they cannot discount its reality within the *laik* relations of control. (If one is to stress the contributions of *laiklik* to secular politics, this is not where the emphasis should be placed.)

The control account unpacked

In order to understand further why *laiklik* amounted to *something more than disestablishment* and *something less than institutional separation*, we must look to the explanations given in the literature concerning *laiklik* as control. The essence of the control account is that the policies, practices, relationships, and institutions associated with *laiklik* must be understood within a set of state-religion authority relations true of the Ottoman imperial past. These relations were characterized by the ultimate supremacy of the state over religious institutions and officials. On the control account of Turkey's *laiklik* politics, the Kemalist-nationalist faction of the nationalist alliance exploited the pre-existing relations of sovereign supremacy over religion in order to eliminate, eradicate, exclude, subdue, subjugate, and

pacify opponents to their "Republican-nationalist" project of cultural, political and economic change. These two features -- the institutional context and the drive for power by the Kemalist faction -- are two of the crucial dimensions of explaining *laiklik* as control. A third crucial component of the control account relates to the "cultural" impact of the RPP's politics and of the reforms associated with *laiklik*. I will discuss each of these dimensions in detail before proceeding to develop the lost separationist dimensions of *laiklik*.

Persisting institutional authority relations

The Republican regime inherited and exploited a long-standing tradition of institutional relationships between the state and religion in the Ottoman-Turkish context (İnalçık 1964; Heper 1985, 24-7; Keyder 1988, 207; 1994; Mardin 1969; 1973; 1983, 191; Sunar and Sayan 1986, 168-169; Sunar and Toprak 1983, 421; Toprak 1988). The characteristic feature of this relationship was the integration between state and religion with ultimate sovereignty, including the power to define and determine the scope of religious power, resting with the state. Integration was achieved in several ways, none of which should be thought of as mere instrumentalization; indeed some see the Ottoman Empire as "probably the most perfect Islamic state ever to come into existence" (Karpas 1986, 9-10). The ulema "were integrated within the apparatus of the state." "Through their control of education,¹⁹ of the judiciary,²⁰ and of the administrative network, they acted as agents of the

¹⁹ They oversaw an extensive mekteb and medrese system.

²⁰ Qadi, Islamic jurists, applied the Sharia law within Muslim communities. The leaders of the non-Muslim religious communities (millet), who were formally recognized and integrated into palace governance as well, oversaw application of their own community's rules.

state” (Mardin 1981, 194, Lewis 1961, 265). The Ottoman palace officials, in turn, “saw [their] duty as the preservation of the state and the promotion of Islam” (Mardin 1983, 139). The Sultans, claiming not lineage but divine selection, assumed the title of Caliph,²¹ named their armies the “soldiers of Islam,” insured the implementation of the Sharia (Islamic law), and consecrated a Grand Mufti -- or Sheikh of Islam (*Şeyhülislam*) -- from whom religious approval (*fetwa*) would be sought for legislative purposes.²² This integration between Islam and Ottoman power was “expressed in the formula *din-ü devlet (din wa dawla)*, or ‘religion and state’” (Mardin 1983, 139).

Nonetheless, structurally it was not Islam that was sovereign; it was the House of Osman. The crux of the relation was always determined firstly according to “the viability of the state” (*raison* only in this sense, something not unique to the absolutist states), not the viability of religion -- even though the two were “organically” (Mardin 1981, 194) connected both in institutional and legitimation terms. “In the sense that the state was necessary to keep religious flourishing, it had priority over religion” (Mardin 1983, 139). By will, command, and in circumstances of necessity, the Ottomans developed their own “public law” (*örf* and *kanun*) outside the stipulations of Koranic law (the Sharia) (Heper 1985, 24-27; İnalçık 1986). “The members of the religious institutions were appointed and could be dismissed by the Sultan” (Heper 1985, 24-27), and *fetwa* rulings were subject to tacit and displayed influences within the context of patrimonial rulership.

²¹ The Ottoman Sultan laid claim to the Caliphate in 1517 after Selim I conquered Egypt.

²² An accessible description of some of these themes in practice in the earliest years of the Ottoman Empire can be found in Runciman (1965). For great detail, see also Shaw (1977). And, though certainly late in the game and articulated under conditions of change well beyond Ottoman control, the 1876 Constitution expressed the tight relationship between Ottoman power and Islam; see AJAI (1908).

In short, “Islam in the Ottoman polity was never an autonomous force or power *vis-a-vis* the state” (Heper 1985, 27).²³

Along with state hegemony over society came immense structural leverage in the definition of that relationship. Thus, it was due to the tradition of state priority that “the Ottoman statesman of the Tanzimat²⁴ could consider the translation of the French Civil Code into Turkish without flinching” (Mardin 1989, 18). The new laicist Republic availed itself of this position as well: it promulgated new laws to the end of defining its own state structure (The concept “state structure” is, in fact, a close translation of the word it used to designate the constitution, *Teşkilat-ı Esasiye Kanunu*, literally the “legal organization”).²⁵ For example, a new Penal Code was adopted in 1926 “based almost entirely on the Italian Criminal Code of 1889” (Gölcüklü 1966, 179).²⁶ And, extremely important to the policies of *laiklik*, a new Civil Code, based almost entirely on the Swiss Civil Code was adopted in place of the Sharia in matters of “civil law” (October 4, 1926).²⁷

²³ There is an ongoing debate as to whether or not one should consider this relation as one of theocracy. Compare Karpas (1959, 288) and Lewis (1961, 212), who suggest it was “theocratic” with Rustow (1985, 174), for example.

²⁴ Literally “re-order, also known as the “modernization” program of the 19th century; see previous chapter for a fuller discussion.

²⁵ One additional support for this arrangement can be seen in the similarities between the Ottoman-Turkish jurisprudential system and the French and Roman statutory law tradition (Güriz 1966, 1). In contrast to Anglo-Saxon, common law traditions in which the state lays down broad, abstract outlines for judicial interpretation, the French-Roman traditions stipulate absolute and detailed codes for judges to identify and to apply, granting less room for interpretation than is available in common law systems. Characteristically, the sovereign stipulates a law in great detail for every anticipatable offense. The presence of this system in the Ottoman Empire can be seen in the Ottoman Imperial Code -- the *Mecelle* (Bucknill and Utidnian 1913) -- and its theological analogs in the religious laws that governed the different religious communities of the Empire.

²⁶ March 1, Law number 765.

²⁷ This reform will be discussed in detail below.

Interpreters who see *laiklik* as “control” frequently point to the tradition of state “priority” over religion, a “continuity” in “the system of power . . . and the whole system of relations between state and society,” as a structural or institutional underpinning of *laiklik* (Sunar and Sayarı 1986, 169). In addition, with no independent Ottoman-Islamic religious institution to speak of, the Republican nationalists who assumed control of the state could hardly be said to have “secularized” Turkey’s state structures like the “church and state” “separation” experience in “the West” (Berkes 1964, 480). On the control account, the Kemalists did not so much end the integral relationship between the state and the religious corporate body as much as recast it in a new relationship between the state and the Directorate of Religious Affairs. Power over religion within the state was not relinquished.

The new *institutional* relationship is better described, in Sunar and Sayarı’s cumbersome but illustrative phrase, as “state-dominant monoparty authoritarianism,” reflecting the new regime’s interest in exploiting to their own ends, rather than fundamentally altering, the traditional relations of power. Applying Hawthorne’s concepts (from the first few pages above), it can be said that the political space captured by the Kemalists was characterized by state hegemony, and that this structural relation was not altered fundamentally once its inhabitants changed.²⁸ Shortly, we will see how the state-society relationship instituted by the Kemalists might be even better described as party-dominant, state authoritarianism. Indeed, a pre-

²⁸ This point has implications for the nature of the Turkish founding; i.e., was it a “revolution” as many describe it, or was it a “transformation,” as others do? The latter is closer to the meaning of the Kemalist “arrow,” *İnkilâpçılık*. Whatever conclusion one reaches, it is clear that the reforms discussed thus far illustrate the Kemalist interest in preserving some state-society structural relations rather than overhauling them and recreating them anew.

condition of *laiklik* in Turkey was that the Kemalists should occupy by themselves the hegemonic position in the state.

Thus, the persisting tradition of state hegemony over religion constitutes one reason why separation and disestablishment accounts (with their privatization addendum) fall short in capturing the frame of structural political power within which the policies, practices, relationships, and institutions associated with *laiklik* were effected. Modernization prejudices (Gadamer) expecting secularism as structural differentiation qua “separation” between the “political” and the “religious” appear to be inadequate to capture the institutional frame of power which shaped Kemalist possibilities. Due to existing institutional conditions, subscribers to the control account suggest that interpreters of *laiklik* should “expect control, not separation;” despite the temptation to equate modernity with unfolding differentiation between spheres -- to see perhaps a “liberal evolution” as Robinson saw (Robinson 1951) -- interpreters of Turkey should expect “transcendental state hegemony” (Heper 1985, 87-8).

To this picture (it is still incomplete), we must now add another feature, namely the Kemalists drive for political power to control the state itself.

The political battle

Beyond institutional conditions, the control account also points us in the direction of examining the political struggle within which *laiklik* politics took place. In order to fully understand *laiklik*, as well as the full force of the control account of it, we must go beyond the structural background and look at the context of power politics that shaped its possibilities in Turkey.

The “national struggle”²⁹

It must be remembered that *laiklik*, as many religiopolitically interested parties in Turkey are apt to remind the public, was not a declared principle in the constitution of the Turkish Republic until 1937.³⁰ Between 1922, when the last Ottoman Sultan left Istanbul in the custody of the British navy (the Caliphate was divided and maintained),³¹ and 1928, the constitution of the Republic declared the religion of the state to be Islam (Article 2) and the state to be the executor of the Sharia (Article 26).³² The Sharia was no longer formally enforced by 1926, when the Ottoman Imperial Code and the Sharia were replaced by a modified Swiss Civil Code. However, even when “the religion of the state” clause is dropped in 1928 (April 10), *laiklik* does not appear in the Constitution.³³

²⁹ Throughout this and following sections, I will draw on documentary material published extensively in two studies on the Kemalist single-party period, in Turkish. They are Mete Tunçay’s, T.C.’nde Tek-Parti Yönetimi’nin Kurulması (1923-1931) (The founding of the single party regime in the Turkish Republic) (1992 [1981]), and Taha Parla’s Türkiye’de siyasal kültürün resmî kaynakları. cilt 1 ve 2: Atatürk’ün Nutuk’u and Kemalist tek-parti ideolojisi ve CHP’nin Altı Ok’u (The official sources of Turkish political culture volume 1: Atatürk’s Speech and The Kemalist single-party ideology and the RPP’s Six Arrows) (1991, 1992). I frequently cite only the documents printed in these works, but I do not mean to suggest that Tunçay and Parla are only compilers of historical documents. Much to the contrary, both Tunçay’s and Parla’s studies are original contributions to the literature on the single party period. If this study were focused on the Turkish literature on *laiklik* as well as the Anglophone literature, I would certainly do more work with the arguments in these studies.

³⁰ February 5, Law number 3115. The current President Süleyman Demirel is on record as stressing this point (Acar 1991, 198).

³¹ Indeed the law of Nov. 1, 1922, which abolished the Sultanate (Muhammad VI, Vahidettin), preserved a role for the Caliphate (Abdul Mejid, cousin of Vahidettin), founded on the sovereignty of the Turkish state, to be occupied by a member of the House of Osman (English text in Toynbee (1927, 50-1)).

³² Compare, “The founding of the secular Turkish republic in 1923 . . .” (Sunar and Sayarı 1986, 168-9) -- an error commonly made.

³³ Compare, “A further step toward equality came in 1928 when articles of the 1924 Constitution specifying Islam as the state religion . . . were replaced by articles

Significantly, *laiklik* makes its first, explicit and “official” appearance in October 1927 as part of “The President Gazi Mustafa Kemal His Excellency’s Declaration of the General Principles agreed to in harmony at the Republican People’s Party³⁴ [3rd] Congress.” In this document, the Party declares itself to be “Republicanist, *lâyük*,³⁵ populist, and nationalist” (*Cümhuriyetçi, lâyük, halkçı ve milliyetçidir*” (text in Tunçay 1992, 394).³⁶

This party -- whose members and subsequent inheritances are referred to usually as the “Kemalists”, and their ideology “Kemalism” -- emerged from within a geographically diverse national independence coalition organized by prominent members of influential political, religious, and economic classes,³⁷ led by Mustafa Kemal and founded originally “to safeguard the Sultanate, the Supreme Caliphate, and the integrity of the country against foreign pressure” (quoted in English by Earle 1926, 80; c.f., Tunçay 1992, 28 and Parla 1992, 273).³⁸ The British occupation of Istanbul

separating religion and state and declaring the Turkish republic a secular state” (Shaw 1977, Vol.2, 378).

³⁴ *Cümhuriyet Halk Fırkası*, or RPP, founded as the *Halk Fırkası*, September 9, 1923. *Cümhuriyet* (Republican) was added on November 10, 1924. Later, the spelling of the first term is changed to *Cumhuriyet*. It was not until May 9, 1935 that the CHF changed its name to the *Cümhuriyet Halk Partisi*, adopting the French term in place of the Arabic-derived term *fırka*. The standard reference is to the CHP (rather than CHF) or to its translated equivalent, RPP.

³⁵ An older spelling of *laik*, the adjectival form of *laiklik*.

³⁶ See note 32.

³⁷ *Anadolu ve Rumeli Müdafaa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti*, the Association for the Defense of Rights, formed in 1919 at the Sivas Congress (September 4-11) with Mustafa Kemal as chairman. The Congress declared its opposition to foreign occupation and the formation of the state of Armenia. It succeeded the Association for the Defence of Rights of Eastern Anatolia (March 3, Erzurum), formed just after Greece made formal claims to Izmir at the Paris Peace Conference (February) and in response to the Ottoman governments capitulatory moves to cooperate with the occupying powers (formalized by March 7). On March 29, the Italians landed in Antalya (Mediterranean coast) as agreed to with the Allies. On May 15, Greeks landed at Izmir under British and United States naval protection. By the 23rd, they take Aydın, and on the 25th, the first armed clashes between the Greeks and the Turks occur west of Aydın.

³⁸ Mustafa Kemal and members of the Young Turk CUP had begun to organize a nationalist resistance from Amasya (north of Ankara) in June of 1919. The nationalists’

and arrest of prominent nationalists (March 15-16, 1920), the subsequent dissolution of the Ottoman legislature (final session, March 18; formally dissolved by Sultan, April 11), the political and territorial designs set for Turkey in the Treaty of Sevres,³⁹ and the Ottoman Sultan's capitulatory condemnation of both Mustafa Kemal and the Anatolian-based movement⁴⁰ initiated a "national struggle" (*milli mücadele*) in defense of the sovereignty of the "nation" (*millet*), as having been declared in Article 1 of the provisional constitution of Jan 2 1920.⁴¹

The struggle was waged, like many before it, in an Islamic idiom.⁴²

The Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) opened on April 23, 1920 in

purpose was affirmed in the "National Pact" (*Misak-ı Milli*) drawn up at the Congress of Erzurum (July 23 - August 6, 1919) and promulgated on September 13 at Sivas as a signal to the foreign powers that there was a new sovereign in Anatolia. It was endorsed by the nationalist-dominated, Istanbul Chamber of Deputies on January 28, 1920, three months before the city was occupied by the British. (The nationalists had won a victory in the elections of October 1919.) and unanimously endorsed on August 7, 1919 by the Ottoman House of Representatives.

³⁹ This treaty gave Greece a mandate over Izmir, Thrace and the Aegean islands, and the Italians mandate over the Dodacanese and Rhodes islands. It also recognized the independence of Armenia, including Erzurum and Bitlis (eastern, central Anatolia) and Trabzon (eastern Black Sea). The final borders were to be decided by the president of the United States. The Ottoman government signed the treaty on August 10, 1920.

⁴⁰ After dismissing Mustafa Kemal from Ottoman duty on July 8, 1920, the Sultan declared him an outlaw on July 11, shortly after Mustafa Kemal's activities in Amasya. Then, on April 11, 1920, the Sultan had his Şeyh of İslâm issue a fetwa "denouncing the nationalists as a gang of common rebels whom it was an imperative duty of any loyal Muslim to kill" (Rustow 1957, 75). Rustow considers this "a real turning point -- the watershed between a religious past and a secular future." Had the Sultan "like so many of his generals and ministers, . . . escaped to Ankara to lead the resistance movement," the conclusion of the struggle might have taken a different political form (1957, 77). On May 24, the Sultan condemned Mustafa Kemal to death, just after the Anatolian-based assembly was established.

⁴¹ Mustafa Kemal called for a meeting on March 19, the day after the Ottoman legislature met for the last time. "Millet" must be translated as nation, but should not be thought of as a strictly "secular" term. Previous to its incorporation within a nationalist discourse, it had the meaning of "religious community" in the multi-religious Ottoman setting. Cp., Tunçay (1992, 30n.6) who quotes Mustafa Kemal's own affirmation of this religio-national dimension in the mobilization context.

⁴² Ahmad identifies a policy of legitimation through Islam as late as the Young Turk period: "The army that Enver Pasha led against the Bolsheviks was called the 'Army of Islam'" (Ahmad 1991, 5).

Ankara with a prayer at the Hacı Bayram mosque whose Mufti pronounced a counter-fetwa “to do all to liberate the Caliph from captivity” (Rustow 1957, 76). The TGNA followed up by passing a Law Against High Treason forbidding, *inter alia*, “the misuse of religion for political purposes” (April 29, 1920, translated by Lewis 1961, 412). A conference in Sivas of July 1921, attended by religious dignitaries such as the Bediüzzaman Said Nursi, affirmed its support for the struggle and helped mobilize the population to “free Islamic lands” by expelling “the infidel invaders” (Atatürk 1929, 363; Lewis 1991, 119). In battle, those who fell were constituted as *şehit* (shehit), and, on September 19, 1921, the victorious leader Mustafa Kemal was hailed as *Gazi*, both terms powerful within the Islamic conceptual “cluster” of struggle (Earle 1926, 80-1; Allen 1935, 172; Rustow 1957, 75-76; 1968; Stirling 1958, 400; Mardin 1981, 209; 1987, 94-5; 1989, 3-4; Karpat 1988, 153; Toprak 1981, 64-5; Lewis 1991, 119-120). (*Şehit* connotes a martyr for the faith; *Gazi*, meaning fighter for the faith, was a title historically bestowed upon the most courageous of Ottoman warrior heroes.) The identity of the national struggle as a struggle for Islamic freedom waged by Ottoman patriots was apparently so profound that, at the war’s end in October 1922, “many now became convinced that the Sultanate could be abolished and a constitutional system essentially Islamic in character maintained at the same time” (Ahmad 1991, 6; Mardin 1987, 95; Tunçay 1992, 28).

Alignments and conflicting aims: Mustafa Kemal’s and the RPP’s drive to control the state

But the reality was that within the “national” coalition, there were deeply different visions of the future structure and aims of the new state. Turkish political sovereignty was yet undecided, especially as it pertained to

the relationship between Turkish nationalism and Islam.⁴³ Two groups emerged in the TGNA to compete over Turkey's new constitution. Though somewhat rough in capturing all orientations -- there were multidimensional "secularists," "westernists," and "Islamists"⁴⁴ -- the groupings adequately describe the general tendencies within the TGNA that coalesced as political developments unfolded. There were others outside, such as one led by Enver Pasha as well as other left and local liberty-oriented opponents to the national movement. In order to subdue *this* opposition, the TGNA passed a law, on July 31, 1923, creating Independence Tribunals empowered to execute on the spot those who committed "crimes against the nation" (Shaw 1977, 352).

The "First Group" (*Birinci Grup*) was organized by Mustafa Kemal originally as the Group for the Defense of Rights in Anatolia and Rumelia.⁴⁵ In order to further their objectives, Mustafa Kemal and the leadership of this group exploited "the Gazi's" identity as victor against the infidels by transforming Mustafa Kemal into the role of a charismatic "Chief."⁴⁶ Many

⁴³ One should keep in mind throughout this section that there is much interesting work still being carried out on the history of this period. Given that one purpose of this study is to stress this point, I wish to put a large set of brackets around this section for future refinement. I can say with certainty, however, that the reader will find here a good summation of the accounts that are to be found in the Anglophone social science literature.

⁴⁴ A point relevant to our study is that, in 1920, one fourth of the members of the TGNA had "religious backgrounds" (Frey 1965, Rustow 1957, Lewis 1961, Toprak 1981, 64-65). By 1923, this dwindled to seven per cent, and by 1927, three per cent.

⁴⁵ *Anadolu ve Rumeli Müdafaa-i Hukuk Grubu*, the Defense of National Rights of Anatolia and Rumelia. By its name, this group tried to inherit the standing of the previous nationalist movement. It is also worth noting that the First Group was not, in fact, the first group founded in the assembly (Tunçay 1992, 42).

⁴⁶ Mustafa Kemal's own drive for power should not be discounted; on August 5, 1921, he had persuaded the TGNA to grant him nearly dictatorial powers at a moment of apparent imminent defeat in the national struggle (the Greeks had taken two major cities in Anatolia, Kütahya and Afyon, and retaken Eskişehir). It is said that his opponents supported this resolution sure that he would be defeated (Karpas 1959, 39; Shaw 1977).

of the group's members were, like Mustafa Kemal, products of the military- and civil service- training schools created during the Ottoman state's modernization efforts, the Tanzimat, and the extension of these made by Committee of Union and Progress within the early nationalist milieu.⁴⁷ Ideologically, they were also anchored in a quasi-positivist version of Turkish nationalism that saw, on the one hand, "degenerate" Islam as responsible for the nation's "decay," and "science," on the other, as "the truest guide to life" (Rustow 1957, Mardin 1981, Atatürk 1929, 41, 336). As such, they sought to use the institutions of the state in a tutelary fashion to effect a far-reaching, political and cultural transformation program in order to lift the Turkish nation, as Mustafa Kemal was fond of saying, to the level of "contemporary civilization."⁴⁸

The "Second Group" (*İkinci Grup*) countered the First's claim to speak on behalf of the population by forming the "Society for the Protection of

⁴⁷ Niyazi Berkes states that the Tanzimat reforms established "the definite ascendancy of the secular statesman and intelligentsia in the destinies of the state" (Berkes 1957, 62). The new government schools produced an elite that would dominate the political scene, as the theologically-trained graduates "were progressively eased out of it" (Chambers 1972, 36; Mardin 1962; 1981, 195-196; Reed 1956-7; İnalçık 1964; Shaw 1977). As a result, the new elite viewed the Ottoman reconciliation with the occupying Western powers as a threat to their life project: Birtek writes: "[the peace] was destroying the institutions they had been trying to build and on which their new power and prestige had been based; their honor and *raison d'être* relied on the autonomy of these institutions . . ." (Birtek 1991, 124). On Mustafa Kemal's relations with the old CUP, see Zürcher (1984).

⁴⁸ The reputation of the group and the Republican People's Party that followed it within the Anglophone literature, and indeed within Turkish historiographical work as well, is "pragmatic" (Lerner and Robinson 1960, 32). Szyliowicz calls Atatürk "above all a non-ideological pragmatist" (1975, 30; cp. Atatürk 1929, 336; Giritli 1984, 252; Mardin 1987, 136). This view results from at least two, related sources. The first is the acceptance of the actors' own self-definition without question. "Pragmatism," writes Birtek, was also "the favored self-definition of the RPP . . ." (Birtek 1991, 126). The second is the granting of a privileged status to the stated scientific goals of the new regime while overlooking how even these goals were contained within one particular articulation (among many others) of the Turkish nationalist thesis. Kemalism is not non-ideological and its "pragmatism" should be measured within the ideological context out of which it was born. Compare Parla (1992) who argues that Kemalism's objectivist claims conceal its own status as an "Third Way" ideology.

Sacred Institutions”⁴⁹ and then later the Second Defense of Rights Group. It was composed of several factions who joined together to check the increasingly arbitrary powers of the First. Among them were opponents to the personal rule of Kemal, constitutionalists favoring greater political liberty, economic liberals, defenders of the Ottoman past and advocates of an ulema-dominated Assembly. On most accounts,⁵⁰ this group’s dwindling influence in the TGNA was offset by its support by the majority of the population (Shaw 1977, 360-3; Karpas 1959, 36ff; Frey 1965, 376-77; Rustow 1957, 76ff; Atatürk 504ff; Berkes 1964, 448ff). Important to our story is this group’s shared view that Islam “was not opposed to science” (Karpas 1991, 46) and thus that political and cultural reforms should take place within a frame of respect for Turkey’s Islamic traditions. Countering criticisms of the First Group, it denied any opposition to “change” and declared its allegiance to “the national spirit” (Karpas 1991, 46).

Portions of the Second Group evolved into a political party on two occasions during Mustafa Kemal’s rule. However, both the Progressive Republican Party (*Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası*, hereafter PRP, founded November 17, 1924), whose leaders had “played a role in the national struggle only second to that of Mustafa Kemal himself” (Ahmad 1991, 72),⁵¹ and the Free Republican Party (*Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası*, hereafter FRP, founded August 12, 1930) who were “hardly distinguishable from the RPP in terms of social background characteristics” (Özbudun 1976, 41-2; Frey 1965, 342-3), had the misfortune of becoming successful in focusing opposition to

⁴⁹ *Muhafaza-i Mukaddesat Cemiyeti*, July 1920.

⁵⁰ I reiterate here the point I make in footnote 43, and add that the following account is the one that students of Turkish politics are most likely to encounter within the literature of the control account of Turkey’s *laiklik* politics.

⁵¹ E.g., Rauf (Orbay), Kazim (Karabekir), and Ali Fuad (Cebesoy).

the governing party and Mustafa Kemal's increasingly personal rule. They were charged with abetting "obscurantist reactionarism" (*irtıca*) and dissolved (along with other forms of opposition, including media). The PRP was dissolved after the Kurdish uprising and the FRP only four months after its founding when Mustafa Kemal and the RPP perceived the challenge the opposition parties posed to their power (Toprak 1981, 74-5; Ahmad 1977, 66-79, 1991; Özbudun 1976, 134; Rustow 1960, 408; Keyder 1979, 13; Frey 1965, 332-5; Atatürk 1929, 718-721; Lewis 1961, 255; Weiker 1963, 1991, 84). In 1926, after a discovery of a plot on Mustafa Kemal's life (June 15, 1926), seven leaders of the PRP were executed. As Rustow points out, "only few . . . had any prior knowledge of the plot," while "the charges that the Progressive Party had abetted the Kurdish uprising" were "even flimsier" (1968, 805).⁵² These were purges of a viable political opposition (cp., Zürcher 1984).

If the abolition of the PRP and FRP proved the Kemalists' intention not to tolerate any opposition within the state governing center, the regime's militant response to the Kurdish rebellion and Kubilay (or Menemen) incident (1930-31) demonstrated its determination to eliminate its rivals on the periphery.⁵³ Enabled as they were by the community-organization and authority relations of the the religious Sufi orders (*tarikât*), both protestations were constituted greatly by an Islamic idiom.⁵⁴

⁵² Several political parties emerge during the multiparty period (post 1946) whose roots, politically and genealogically, are traceable to the Second Group: Demokrat Partisi (1945-60), Adalet [Justice] Partisi (1961-80); Doğru Yol [True Path] Partisi (1983-present); Anavatan [Motherland] Partisi (1983-present). Islamist interest have been incorporated within these parties and have been articulated specifically by other parties: Millet [Nation] Partisi (1954); Milli Nizam [National Order] Partisi (1970-72); Milli Selamet [National Welfare] Partisi (1972-80); Refah [Prosperity, or Welfare] Partisi (1983-present).

⁵³ I am adopting the common center/periphery parlance from Mardin (1973).

⁵⁴ The Kurdish rebellion is generally recognized to have been complexly constituted by both religious and nationalist dimensions of meaning, something true of the Turkish

Indeed, like the *tarikats* leaders, “the Kemalists also recognized the significance of religion in the Kurdish revolt and the vital role played by popular Islam in the lives of the masses” (Ahmad 1991, 6-7). They responded by declaring martial law⁵⁵ and securing extensive power to crush their opponents. These powers were codified in the Law for the Maintenance of Order⁵⁶ that, *inter alia*, renewed the power of the Independence Tribunals to execute enemies of the regime without the Assembly’s sanction (Ahmad 1977, 71-8). On June 3, the TCP was dissolved. The revolt was crushed, some of its intellectual and military leaders hanged, and, six months later (November 30), all *tarikats* were legally outlawed. The same law closed all *tarikats* meeting houses (*tekke, zaviye*) and other sacred sites (including the *türbe*, or sacred tombs).⁵⁷

A similar pattern followed the Kubilay incident. This “incident” -- really a violent protest -- was considered unique among those studied by the officials because it signified the power of “savage reactionaries” in Western Anatolia, where Kemal’s status as liberator was assumed to be most widely recognized. Martial law was imposed⁵⁸ followed by a new set of institutional reforms designed to propagate the Kemalist view of the Turkish national project (see Ahmad 1991, 7). Not necessarily in direct response to Menemen, but certainly as part of their “nation-building” effort, the regime opened People’s Houses (*Halk Evleri*) in rural towns in 1932, and the People’s Rooms (*Halk Odaları*), in the villages (Lewis 1961, 382-3; Karpas 1991, 52, 63)

national struggle as well (see Martin van Bruinessen’s work on this topic; cp. Atatürk 1929; Lewis 1961, 266; Ahmad 1991, 1977, Yalçın-Heckman 1991, 105).

⁵⁵ Feb. 21, 1925, initially supported by the PRP, and remaining in effect until Dec 23, 1927.

⁵⁶ *Takrir-i Sükun Kanunu*, March 4, 1925; opposed by the PRP. In effect until March 1929.

⁵⁷ Law number 677, November 30, 1925.

⁵⁸ January 1, 1931, lasting through March 8, 1931.

Szyliowicz 1975, 38-9). Both were successors to the unsuccessful Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*). The Kemalists conceived of these institutions in large part as replacements for the local mosque as a place of social gathering and forums within which their view of the Turkish national project would be encouraged. On the control account, these places had one aim: “propagating culture in the Western mold” (Mardin 1983, 207). We will return to aspects of cultural control within these accounts shortly.

In the highly charged and increasingly less-contested atmosphere created by Kemalist authoritarianism, the RPP constituted itself deliberately as a cadre party under the leadership of the President, His Excellency, Gazi Mustafa Kemal (Özbudun 1970, 343; Keyder 1988, 204; Landau 1984). (It was not until November 26, 1934 that the TGNA, now fully consolidated under Mustafa Kemal’s rule, bestows him the surname of “Atatürk,” meaning literally, “the ancestral father of the Turks.”) The Kemalists read this fluid situation as one in which their new “legitimacy” (cp. Özbudun 1987, 341; Heper 1985, 78-9, 99) must be forged -- by force and coercion if necessary -- if their version of the modernization of Turkey was to go forward (as well as their positions enhanced, etc.). “The essence of the Turkish revolution,” writes Özbudun, “is that it concentrated on the extension and consolidation of the precarious beachhead . . . to make it secure beyond all possible challenge” (Özbudun 1976, 43).⁵⁹ Mustafa Kemal and the party’s publicists activated Mustafa Kemal’s charismatic image and all institutions it could find or create to define its new legitimacy as well as the formally unified concept of Turkish citizenship it would require (Keyder 1988).⁶⁰ Özbudun expressed the gist of

⁵⁹ For one Anglophone critique of this as “revolution”, see Trimberger 1978; cp. Keyder 1987, 1994.

⁶⁰ The first statues of Mustafa Kemal were erected in October 3, 1929.

the control account by saying that the RPP “conceived of” all six arrows of Kemalism “as a means of strengthening the state (or the center)” (Özbudun 1976, 43), that is, of strengthening its control over the state. This political power dynamic is at the core of the control account of *laiklik*.

The Kemalist vision of the central reforms

In his “Speech” of October 1927, spanning six days and nearly forty hours, Mustafa Kemal gave his version of the intentions and purposes guiding the RPP’s struggle. The Speech has not been systematically studied in the Anglophone literature; therefore, some of what follows represents my own attempt to deepen the control dimensions of *laiklik*. Kemal was clearly the chief ideologue of the regime, and so his declarations provide some central insight on the “control” meanings and purposes undergirding *laiklik*. In particular, they express two significant dimensions of *laiklik*.

The first concerns *laiklik*’s relation to other “arrows” of Kemalism, especially republicanism, nationalism, people-ism, and transformationism. As we shall see, Mustafa Kemal’s asseverations suggest that the meanings constitutive of the *laiklik* politics cannot be entirely separated from the meanings constitutive of these other terms within the Kemalist frame. This applies especially to the so-called cultural reforms associated with *laiklik* which I will introduce in this context. These reforms were intended, as Mustafa Kemal himself put it, to lift Turkey to the level of “contemporary civilization”. The second feature of the Speech that is relevant to our concerns here relates to crucial statements Mustafa Kemal makes regarding his own understanding of Islam and its relationship to political power. These assertions are significant because they illuminate partly the conceptual

frame of the “new religious policy” within which the Kemalists undertook the control of religion.

The Speech was delivered following the RPP’s overwhelming victory in national elections for the Assembly. (All of the candidates were handpicked by Mustafa Kemal, and so his RPP naturally did well.) It also coincided technically with the period in which the Law for the Maintenance of Order, imposed during the Kurdish rebellion, was still in effect. Just sixteen months prior, opponents of Kemal’s implicated in an Izmir assassination attempt were executed. Furthermore, the Speech came on the heels of the adoption in the previous year of several significant “reforms” associated with *laiklik*. Important among these in this context are: 1) the implementation of the new Turkish Civil Code replacing Islamic law (to be discussed further below), and 2) a Penal Code outlawing “political associations on the basis of religious or religious sentiments” and reaffirming the Law Against High Treason concerning the “misuse of religion, religious sentiments, or things that are religiously considered as holy, in any way to incite the people to action prejudicial to the security of the state” (January of 1926; translated by Lewis 1961, 412). Set in this context, Mustafa Kemal’s rhetoric expresses a confidence that the RPP’s interpretation of the Turkish national project will proceed undeterred by political opposition; this includes policies associated with *laiklik*.

In the Speech, Mustafa Kemal rejected as “absurd” and “erroneous” suggestions that Turkish sovereignty be based in Islamic concepts and structures of legitimacy (Atatürk 1929 591, 592). Turkey’s “national salvation,” he asseverated, required tearing up the old foundations, replacing them with new ones (he was not one to stress continuities), and, in

the process, securing respect for Turkey's "unlimited independence" from foreign design (526). Articulating the basic premise behind the Kemalist "populist" arrow, Mustafa Kemal declared that the new source of legitimacy should be "the people," whose collective interests should be represented by a new leadership (meaning, frequently, Mustafa Kemal himself) that would usher in a new era and a new consciousness for it.

As for the old sources of legitimacy, the Assembly had already declared the Ottoman Empire to have "passed into the dustbin of history . . . in perpetuity" on the day the British took over Istanbul (Law passed on Nov. 1, 1922; English text in Toynbee 1927, 50-1). Concerning the institutions of Islam specifically, Mustafa Kemal believed that the goal of maintaining the Caliphate as a temporal head of the international Islamic community to be both a threat to "national sovereignty" and unrealistically utopian. His strong implication was that other Muslim state leaders would need their heads examined if they were to surrender the definition of their interests over to a Turkish Caliph (591-7). "Neither common sense nor reason," he stressed, "will ever admit that any individual Muslim will confer on any man the authority of guiding and administering the affairs of the whole Muslim world," regardless of the "beauty" of the idea (595, 594). Those who propose it lay open the Muslim world to the exploitation of others as well as risk Turkey's own political sovereignty. Kemal averred that they are "ignorant" and "blind" to political realities (686).⁶¹

Part of this ignorance, Mustafa Kemal maintained, was founded on the failure of his adversaries to appreciate the need to gain respect, as he put it, "in the eyes of the civilized world." This concept, along with its converse

⁶¹This view is partly what underlies his reputation as a "pragmatist."

regarding the need to rout the ignorant forces of the uncivilized, appears as a primary justification for many of the reforms associated with *laiklik* (cp., esp. Mardin 1981, 210). Just as the Ottoman Empire lacked the authority accorded to modern states based on the sovereignty of “the people,” the Caliphate would only have been a “laughing stock in the eyes of the really civilized and cultured peoples of the world” (586, 489).

Indeed, this logic of living up to the standards of the “really civilized and cultured peoples of the world” reached far into the politics associated with “secularization” in Turkey. Regarding the Hat Laws, for instance, Mustafa Kemal had this to say (in a passage sometimes favorably quoted in the Anglophone literature):

it was necessary to abolish the fez, which sat on our heads as a sign of ignorance, fanaticism, or hatred to progress and civilization, and to adopt in its place the hat, the customary dress of the civilized world, thus showing, among other things, that no difference existed in the manner of thought between the Turkish nation and the whole family of civilized mankind. (Atatürk 1929)⁶²

The sartorial reforms have a complex and significant background history that is not always mentioned by those who find them particularly significant. This history represents well Mustafa Kemal’s understanding of “national” aims vis-a-vis “international civilization” expressed in his Speech as well as the conflict those aims would engender inside Turkey, wherein different conceptions of the “civilization” to which Turkey should belong continued to assert themselves.

Sartorial styles appear to have been telling political symbols even prior to the nationalist period. During the previous century, Sultan Mahmud (1808-1839) adopted the fez “from current Venetian fashion as a brimless

⁶² Quoted, e.g., by Lewis (1961, 268); and G. Lewis (1965, 92).

compromise between the Muslim turban and the Christian hat” (Rustow 1968, 814). According to Rustow, this act “implied a death sentence on the bastard Levantine culture that pervaded Istanbul” as well as Kemal’s home of Salonica (Ibid.). It also coincided with efforts -- in architecture and the arts -- to maintain a unique Ottoman identity while also adopting a Europeanization-modernization program. Almost a century later, Turkish national sympathies led some to adopt the *kalpak*, or black, lamb-skinned cap worn by the Turan peoples of Anatolia and Central Asia (Toynbee 1927, 73-4).⁶³

Mustafa Kemal shared with the Turanists the view that Turks should dress differently, but he rejected the *kalpak* because it was not representative of the “international civilization” whose “ways” he believed the Turks must adopt in their entirety. Toynbee captures the core of Kemal’s view: “The galpaq [sic],” he wrote, “no less than the fez, marked off its wearers from the Western people who wore hats and had inherited the earth” (Toynbee 1923, 73-4). Thus, the RPP “deliberately set itself to remove this symbolic banner” (Ibid.). In speeches delivered around Anatolia, Mustafa Kemal also pointed out that the hat was less expensive, and that Turkish dress was already multifaceted due to Byzantine cultural diffusion (G. Lewis 1965, 92). But the justificatory conceptual thrust remained: the Turks must dress in “the ordinary clothes in use among the civilized peoples of the world.”

The first law on dress during the Republic referenced the head gear of public servants not otherwise required to wear special dress (September 21, 1924). By this law, all hats and veils were prohibited in state institutions. In

⁶³ Apparently, the Greeks of Anatolia celebrated their apparent liberation from Ottoman rule by donning the brimmed hat (Toynbee 1927, 73-4).

May of the following year, the Turkish navy adopted the German Naval cap. The famous law of November 1925 (number 671) extended the logic of all of these policies, declaring that all men who covered their head must do so with a brimmed cap. Head covering for women was never prohibited except for women working in state institutions, but it was greatly discouraged on grounds of social equality among all members of the nation and greater social liberty for women.⁶⁴

The regulations on dress met with immediate resistance. General Nurettin Pasha, a deputy from Bursa, "sought to prove the law unconstitutional, and pleaded that, whatever regulations might be imposed on officials, all other governments -- both in Europe and Asia -- allowed private citizens to wear the head-gear they pleased", a recurring theme in some quarters of the nationalist movement (Toynbee 1927, 74-5). Other opponents claimed that the brim constrained prayer (which requires the touching of the forehead to the ground), or that it illustrated once again that Turkish "modernizers" were interested less in national development than in "imitating" the West (Toynbee *Ibid.*; see also previous chapter for discussion). Protests that followed the regulations precipitated more Independence Tribunals and a forceful response by the government in parts

⁶⁴ In several widely quoted phrases, Mustafa Kemal said, "Let them show their faces to the world and let them have a chance to see the world." "A society or nation consists of two kinds of people, called men and women. Can we shut our eyes to one portion of a group, while advancing the other, and still bring progress to the whole group? Can half a community ascend to the skies while the other half remains chained in the dust? The road of progress must be trodden by both sexes together, marching arm in arm as comrades . . . In some places I see women who throw a cloth or a towel or something of the sort over their heads, covering their faces and their eyes. When a man passes by, they turn away, or sit huddled on the ground. What is the sense of this behavior? Gentlemen, do the mothers and daughters of a civilized nation assume this curious attitude, this barbarian posture? It makes the nation look ridiculous: it must be rectified immediately" (quoted in Abadan-Unat 1991, 179; G. Lewis 1965[55], 44).

of Anatolia (Sivas, Erzurum, Rize, and Giresun).⁶⁵ The series of incidents related to the Hat Laws are illustrative of *laik* politics in Turkey because many of these dynamics and themes never disappear within the conceptual frame of modernization in Turkey (see, e.g., Olson 1985; Arat 1990). The Kemalist goal of reaching contemporary civilization as Mustafa Kemal conceived of it would forever be contested as unconstitutional, imitationist, or hostile to the religiocultural ways of the Turkish people.

Still, the RPP pressed on with its program; and its ambition to align Turkey's gears with the political, cultural, social, and economic flow of the world to its West, sloughing off its "repressive past of ignorance, fanaticism, and backwardness" along the way, remained a primary justification. This understanding is a constituent component of all the so-called "cultural" policies, practices, and institutions associated with *laiklik* politics. These include: the adoption of the Gregorian calendar (Jan 1, 1926); the adoption of Aramaic numerals (May 24, 1928) and the prohibition of public use of Arabic script (Nov. 3, 1928);⁶⁶ the elimination of Arabic and Persian from school curricula (1929); the adoption of the metric system (1933); the abolition of all titles and hereditary positions (November 27, 1934); the adoption of last names (January 1, 1935); the prohibition of wearing religious clothing outside of religious places of worship (1934); the adoption of Saturday-Sunday weekend in place of Friday (May 1935); the conversion of the Hagia Sophia into a museum (1935); and the encouragement of western music, literature, arts, theater as well as the creation of new "modern Turkish"

⁶⁵ Bromley correctly notes the executions, but as this story shows, the opposition was not simply "to the hat laws." See footnote 7 above.

⁶⁶ Private usage in such things as school notes and private correspondences, even by Kemalists, continued.

ones.⁶⁷ In fact, as I will discuss in more detail below, the simple declaration of the state as *laik*, translated for Westerners as “secular,” was itself a signal to “the West” that Turkey was looking its way. To the Turks it was clear.⁶⁸ Their new leadership was consciously demoting the Islamic past in favor of a “westernized” future.

Differing interpretations of Islam

As we have seen above, the demotion of Islam as part of the state’s legitimacy formula occurred in structural terms as well with the creation and subordination of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Reisliği*). A particularly significant moment in Mustafa Kemal’s speech occurred when he discussed the significance of abolishing the Caliphate. He claimed that the decision was taken as a result of a shared recognition among the elite “that it is indispensable in order to purify and elevate the Islamic faith, to disengage it from its condition of being a political instrument which it had been for centuries through habit” (Atatürk 684). This utterance is considered significant in some accounts of *laiklik*, because it is interpreted as evidence for the “disestablishment account” (see, e.g., Lewis 1961, 264) or as evidence that Mustafa Kemal (and hence his politics associated with

⁶⁷ I make a distinction between these reforms and those associated with Kemalism’s inward looking nationalism, intended, as Landau puts it, “to further pride in an attachment to Turkey,” as Landau puts it (1984, xii). These include the Sun Language Theory, language purification, and the Turkish history thesis. The first held that pure Turkish was central to the development of all languages. Its thesis was institutionalized in 1932 with the founding of the Turkish Linguistic Society (July 12). The function of this institution was to purify the language by replacing all words derived from Arabic or Farsi roots with their “pure Turkish” equivalents. If none existed, a new word was to be created (see Heyd 1954). The Turkish historical thesis suggested that Central Asia Turks were the original source of all civilization.

⁶⁸ One such Western-centric and culturally-narrow view was expressed as follows: “It is easier to think of the Turk as a normal member of the family of European nations if he wears a hat, a pair of trousers, uses the Latin alphabet, respects the integrity of women, and parades with a constitution, than the exotic characteristics he has symbolized heretofore” (Jameson 1936, 493).

laiklik) sought to implement a form of “secularism” that respected religion rather than one that was hostile to it (e.g, Rustow 1994, 10).⁶⁹

Set in context, the utterance insinuates a distinction between Islam as a “pure” faith with a moral message and set of rituals, and “reactionary” or “obscurantist” Islam that views Islam’s position in power as a perpetual historical necessity (cp. Kushner 1986, 92-3; Karpat 1959, 22; Rustow 1960, 433; 1994, 10; Dodd 196, 307; Turan 1991, 39-40; Heper 1981, 351).⁷⁰

It is worth underscoring this point, for there are different interpretations of the RPP’s attitude toward Islam even within the literature of the control account. For example, Toprak asserts that “Islam was equated with reactionary and obscurantist political views which stood in the way of reform, development and progress” (Toprak 1987, 2; 1981, 38), and Dodd claims that “there was no truck with religion” (Dodd 1969, 316). Bromley (quoted above) goes even further by suggesting that Kemalism was quintessentially a form of “modernization against Islam.” My view is that the Kemalists made a distinction between “Islams,” and that they supported one and actively opposed the other.

Those whose politics were constituted by what the Kemalists referred to as “obscurantism”⁷¹ (whether their understanding of political Islam is

⁶⁹ The phrase that I translate as “purify and elevate” is differently translated in the literature as “cleanse and elevate” and “secure the revival of;” cp, Webster (1939, 280); Lewis (1961, 264). The concepts Mustafa Kemal employed were “*tenzih ve ilâ etmek*.” It is interesting that both concepts are located within a Islamic discourse and were perhaps cunningly used by Mustafa Kemal as a response to those who sought to preserve Islam in a position of political power.

⁷⁰ This is not to suggest that all those the Kemalists considered “reactionary” were anti-laicists. They may have been anti-Kemalists: “Kemalists associated even moderate conservative elements with the views of reactionaries blinded by religious dogmatism” (Akural 1984, 132).

⁷¹ For an interesting set of reflections on how this concept has been fundamental to Kemalism and to perpetuating religious conflict in politics, see, Toprak (1981, 122-3); Reed (1954, 267).

based in Anatolian, Istanbulian, or Medinian roots) would (or at least should) always meet opposition from the *laik* state; whereas, those for whom Islam was a matter of faith and a moral message with an attendant set of rituals would find the *laik* Republic hospitable.

This point is not incidental to a control account of *laiklik*. Toprak, who misses the distinction in the comment quoted above, makes this point clear enough with regard to one form of Islam found in the Turkish context: “Because Islam is something more than a religious belief system, the problem of secularization also becomes something more than formal separation [between the state and religion]” (1981, 25). The problem is one of sovereignty, and whatever else the Kemalists may have wanted to do with religion, they were not willing to relinquish sovereignty to entirely divine sources.⁷²

For those interpreters who make the distinction between different interpretations of Islam in Turkey, Kemal’s support for Islam “in all its plain trueness” (Parla 1992, 288) (or, “pure,” “non-degenerate” Islam), becomes on many accounts evidence for the RPP’s concern for religion and support for freedom of religious conscience and belief, if not for an interest in Islamic reform.⁷³ Thus, even while it instituted a new structure of control over

⁷² This was at least clearly true after March of 1924. Previously, however, as Parla has brought to light in his study of the Six Arrows, Mustafa Kemal “entertained an idea of a Turkish-Islamic (-Western) synthesis” while he was still maneuvering his way through the early debates on sovereignty (Parla 1992, 276). As early as 1922-23, Mustafa Kemal asseverated a concern that his “group’s” politics “lacked certain things in terms of religion” (quoted and interpreted in Parla 288). He praised Islam as the most “reasonable”(*makul*) and “natural” (*tabii*) religion and articulated a desire to see it made right for contemporary times by purifying it from its degenerated and superstitious forms to which it had fallen (274-75). Reed (1970, 325) also notes this as Mustafa Kemal’s position.

⁷³ Apparently, there is evidence that a case was made to the RPP leadership at the time by some Islamic reformists that the Caliphate was not necessary to Islam, and that its implicating Islam in a position of political power was in conflict with Islam’s theological purposes. Therefore, undergirding the view that abolishing the Caliphate would “rescue”

religion, the Kemalist regime is seen to have insured the conditions for the fulfillment of Islam as a faith. Rustow interpreted the situation this way:

The official pronouncements of Kemal's Republican People's Party commonly stressed that its secularism stemmed from a desire to rescue religion from its traditional entanglement with worldly affairs and thus to see it assume an even stronger position within its proper sphere of personal conscience. There is no doubt that from the lips of many Kemalists such statements were perfectly sincere. Nothing could have been more alien to the spirit and practice of Kemal's policy than any systematic persecution or molestation of clerics. The mosques remained open, and parents remained free to bring their children up in the precepts of Muslim ethics and in the practice of worship. The two highest festivals -- the *Kurban Bayramı* [feast of the sacrifice] and the *Şeker Bayramı* [feast after Ramazan] -- were recognized . . . cannons and drums continued to sound during Ramazan; and boys at the time of the circumcision continued to parade in the streets in their blue caps and colorful sashes (Rustow 1957, 84-5).

It may also be pointed out that the abolition of the medrese system did not, in fact, entail an abolition of state-sponsored religious training and instruction for the state's religious establishment. The medrese of the Süleymaniye complex in Istanbul was to be replaced by the Faculty of Divinity at the University of Istanbul (quite nearby), administered by the Ministry of Education.⁷⁴ In 1928, a committee of the Faculty issued a report stating that, "religious life must be reformed, like moral and economic life, by means of scientific procedure and by the aid of reason" (Quoted in Toynbee 1929, 208). It proposed that, consonant with the language of the Turks, prayers and Koran recitation be offered in Turkish rather than Arabic. (This was not the first call for Islamic reform in Turkey. As we have seen in the previous chapter, some Young Turk ideologues had already been publishing

Islam may have been some Islamic reformist ideas (this issue awaits further research). Given the prevalence of the claim that *laiklik* was not the same as atheism, it is clear that the Kemalists at least believed that they were doing Islam as a religion a service by disengaging it from the condition of being a political instrument.

⁷⁴ Law number 430, March 3, 1924. I will discuss this law as it relates to another dimension of *laiklik* politics in some detail below.

translations of the Koran so that it would be accessible to people who did not know the meaning of the Arabic text⁷⁵). The report also suggested some far-reaching reforms of the mosques themselves, including the introduction of vocal and instrumental music, Imam's missions, pews, cloakrooms, and the wearing of clean shoes (Birge 1951, 44-5). Although these were never adopted, aspects of the reform project were accepted in 1932 when, "under the initiative of Atatürk [sic], the Qur'an was intoned in the mosques in Turkish" and an edict from the *Diyanet* required that all calls to prayer (*ezan*) be issued in Turkish translation (Birge 1951, 49). The edict did not reference the language of prayer, which continued in Arabic (Reed 1957a, 123).⁷⁶

The significance of these policies, practices, and institutional relationships, some of which are directly while others only indirectly associated with *laiklik* politics in Turkey, is that they demonstrate what might be best described as the *laicism* of Kemalist *laiklik*. I say this in direct contradistinction to attempts throughout the literature (control account and other) to describe Kemalist state support for religion as "secularism" (in any sense, "western" or not). This point requires a bit of conceptual exploration.

Laicism not secularism

If "secularism" as a political concept connotes anything, it connotes a non-religiously influenced political sphere. This conception leaves some room for control relations between a secular center and religion (institutions, elites, ideas, etc.), but little room for religiously-interested

⁷⁵ Mustafa Kemal made a similar claim regarding the *ezan* at a speech from the pulpit of the Pasha mosque in Balıkesir on February 7, 1923 (Reed 1970, 325).

⁷⁶ Müezzins (the callers to prayer) were given the option of Turkish or Arabic after 1950. "Most chose Arabic" (Ahmad 1977, 365).

public policy. *Laiklik* in Turkey did not entail ending state interest in religion. Therefore, a better understanding of *laiklik* politics in Turkey would take the concept of laicism, or lay-governance, seriously.

Within a broadly conceived religious frame, *lay* persons-- literally “the people” distinct from the “religiously-wise strata” -- can be religious believers too. *Laiklik*, in the Turkish case, is no exception to this general rule (though I don’t mean to suggest that all supporters of laicism were, or must be, practicing Muslims). The institutional relations established in its course reflect a concern on the part of the Kemalists to support -- certainly with varying degrees -- a version of their interpretation of pure Islam, which adopted aspects of the Islamic reformist ideas seen, for example in Ziya Gökalp’s Turkish nationalist thought. The elimination of the Ottoman ulema was followed by the elevation of “lower-level religious personnel” to fill a similar role for the Republic (Mardin 1994, 165). Their knowledge of what Mardin terms “the religious sciences” might not have been as thorough as their predecessors, but this does not alter the fact that Turkey’s *laiklik* included what Berkes aptly named, a “new religious policy” (Berkes 1964, 484). The state’s efforts to cultivate a new clerical class, thus “enabling many more laypersons to be vocal in religious affairs” (Mardin 1994, 165) -- should not be left out of sight in our account of the original conception of *laiklik* politics.

More generally, laicism entails elevating the role of the lay people to a position of power over those who occupy institutional positions as members of a religiously-wise strata.⁷⁷ This is the path the Kemalists pursued, largely, as we shall see, as a way of implementing their “Turkish transformation”.

⁷⁷ There are different, contested understandings of the constitutive relationships between the lay and the non-lay in different religious contexts.

Supporters of laicism can be devout or not; they may even be clerics who oppose, for instance, the excessive entanglement between religion and political power.

Thus, although laicism in the Turkish context clearly expresses an anti-clerical purpose to *some* extent -- but only to some extent because state clerics remained⁷⁸ -- its constitutive meanings do not express a thoroughgoing “anti-religious” one (cp. Kuyaş 1992, 211).⁷⁹ In one of its dimensions, *laiklik* in Turkey entails giving priority over religious matters to those who believe in the Kemalist version of it, rather than to those who believe in either alternative versions or religious hegemony (Smith 1957, 180-1). The class of Kemalist supporters in this case included clerics as well as lay persons who accepted the Kemalist interpretation of the place of Islam in politics.

I will develop this point in more detail at the end of this essay. It is important here because it helps to make sense of the new religious policy of Kemalism. It also clarifies some confusion among interpreters of *laiklik* who see *laiklik* as “secularism” and who might be less aware of the different interpretations of Islam in Turkey’s *laiklik* politics.⁸⁰ The confusion is caused in part by monolithic conceptions of Turkish Islam and in part by descriptions of RPP authoritarianism that ignore its religious policy.

⁷⁸ Compare Rustow quoted above with, “The state was not anti-clerical as long as the ulema made no overt attempts to interfere with the reforms” (Shaw 1977, V.2, 387)

⁷⁹ Few utilize the full, comparative conceptual vocabulary of state-religion relations to capture the identity of what are commonly termed secular politics in any context. “Anti-clerical” is one example in the Turkish case. Here, I note Kuyaş’s perceptive exception. Cp. Özbudun (1970, 33), who mentions “anticlericalism” among other concepts.

⁸⁰ I borrow the theme of “different interpretations of Islam” in a general sense from Esposito (1991).

I do not mean to suggest that all of the areas of ambiguity involved in interpreting Kemalist *laiklik* are resolved by seeing it as a form of laicism. The depth and range of its commitment to its own “religious policy” are matters of ongoing debate. I do maintain, however, that the shift in our comparative, explanatory language from secularism to laicism helps to make better sense of the politics associated with the original conception of *laiklik*.

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The contribution of Şerif Mardin: Kemalist positivism and “the stranglehold of folk culture”

In the minds of Kemal’s critics, especially those opponents he considered reactionary, the association between his and his party’s politics and the program for political and cultural westernization became so close that even the latter took on an authoritarian character in relation to Islam itself. Thus, notwithstanding the RPP’s defence of its agenda, modernization in Turkey, within some versions of the control account, would be seen as

⁸¹ Mustafa Kemal’s pronouncement concerning true Islam would not be the last in the future of *laiklik* politics, as careful interpreters of Turkish politics have noted. İsmet İnönü, his deputy who succeeded him as president, defended the CHP’s position of respect toward Islam, expressing the hope that “the whole world . . . will observe that the cleanest, purest, and truest form of Islam will flourish in our midst” (quoted in Reed 1954, 270). Cemal Gürsel, one of the leaders of the 1960 coup ousting the CHP’s opponents from power, argued that Islam “has been explained negatively and incorrectly” and articulated a “national and progressive understanding of Islam” (Ahmad 1977, 374); Gürsel’s replacement as president in 1966, Cevdet Sunay, “made the necessary point that religion and reactionarism are not the same thing” (Dodd 1969, 307); CHP descendant Bülent Ecevit defended his 1974 coalition with the Islamist “National Salvation Party” by arguing that: “Turks should derive their strength from the essence of Atatürk’s republic ‘which merges Islam and nationalism’ and which opened the path for contemporary civilization and democracy” (Kushner 1986, 93). The 1980 coup leaders, avowedly Kemalist, codified religious instruction in the 1982 Constitution as the duty of the state. This was defended by Prime Minister Bülent Ulusu: “As stated by the generals and government spokesmen, the purpose was to undermine the undesirable Koran courses given privately, to liberate religious education from erroneous and harmful influences, and provide, instead for a true and enlightened understanding of Islam” (quoted in Heper 1987, 188-139). Such assertions continue to be made today.

modernization by “a secular elite” at the center “imposed on” or “against Islam” of the periphery (*modernleştirmek* as opposed to *modernleşmek*). The foremost interpreter of this dynamic in Turkey is the sociologist Şerif Mardin, whose paradigmatic notion of a center-periphery cultural gap has had a profound influence on interpretations of “modern” Turkish politics (Mardin 1973).

Mardin’s work has consistently stressed how Atatürk’s “cultural Westernization” program,⁸² with its underpinnings in Comtean positivism and Mustafa Kemal’s own disposition against “the stranglehold of folk culture” (1981, 216), manifested itself in an effort “to chase out of modern Turkey” the Islamic “mythopoetic forms” of Turkish folk culture, forms that were central to Turkish identity during the Ottoman period (1989, 18). Islam, Mardin writes, “was a rich store of symbols and ways of thinking about society” (1983, 156). It defined for many individuals the means by which they handled their encounters with daily life, served to crystallize their identities and regulate their psychological tensions, and provides modes of communication, mediation, and community leadership” (Mardin TIW, 180-1; 1983; 1989, 185, 197; Cp. Reed 1954a, 125; 1957; Stirling 1958). In short, Islam constituted an integral element of self and society (Mardin 1989).⁸³

⁸² I will leave aside whether or not this captures the entire character of the RPP policies oriented toward cultural change.

⁸³ Citing Robert Bellah’s work, Mardin suggests: “Just as biblical imagery provided the basic framework ‘for imaginative thought in America up until quite recent times’ (Bellah 1975, 12), so too it was on the metaphors of the Qur’an that Muslims depended and still depend for imaginative creation, for self-placement and self-realization” (Mardin 1989, 195-7; cp. Keyder 1988, 208ff.) Mardin details one case of this phenomena by offering an interpretation of the life and influence of Said Nursi (1873-1960). Nursi, who suffered incarceration and internal exile under the RPP, considered the Kemalists “European worshipping imitators of Frankish customs” (in Mardin 1989, 95). For Mardin, Said Nursi’s life story represents a “reaffirmation in the concepts of the periphery” of the “norms set by the Quran in such as way as to re-introduce the traditional Muslim idiom of conduct and of personal relations into an emerging society of industry and mass communications” (1989, 13). Said’s contribution to modern Islamic

Positivism, by contrast, provided for the Kemalists the vision that the theological stage of history is over, and that its remnants are a sign of historical backwardness in need of enlightenment through education based on the modern sciences.⁸⁴ In this frame, reason and theology are at odds,⁸⁵ and, as the Kemalists conceived it, it was the role of the new “secular” state to “eliminate the power for religious ideas and laws, customs and arrangements” in order to bring the people to a higher rationality (Abadan-Unat 1991, 178). This would be done, conceptually speaking, by “cleansing” their minds of anachronistic superstition and “purifying them in light of true science” (Atatürk 1929, 591; Mardin 1981, 198; Landau 1984, xii-iii).⁸⁶

thinking is also noted by Kurshid Ahmad, who places him among the likes of the most influential “contemporary revivalists” in Islam. Mardin’s work, as the significance he sees in Said Nursi implies, also contains the insistence that “student’s of social change” not forget that “spiritual needs” are expanded with “the growth of social communication” and an “expanded vision of the world” (Mardin 1989, 221, 229-230; 1983, 138-9).

⁸⁴ The Ottoman-Turkish roots of positivism can be traced back to the early Tanzimat period. See Mardin (1987, 30ff; 1962); Birtek (1991, 112-113); Gökalp (1959). An interesting text from this period is Auguste Comte’s letter to Reşid Paşa, then Grand Vizier, urging the Ottomans to seize the positivist project. Comte suggested that Islam, with its worldly emphasis, was even better prepared to enter the positivist future than Christianity, which counselled its believers to look away from this world; see, Comte, “a Reşid Paşa, ancien Grand Vizier de l’Empire Ottoman,” *Correspondence Generale et confessions* (Paris:Mouton, 1973 [1853], 38-41).

⁸⁵ A thesis long contested in Islamic thought in Turkey.

⁸⁶ Countless Anglophone interpreters stress Kemalism’s rationalist and positivist underpinnings. Özbudun and Kazancıgil write, “If it is possible to reduce Kemalism to a single dimension, it would not be wrong to single out rationalism, since it was a rationalist and positivist mentality that underlined all of Atatürk’s speeches, thought, actions, and reforms” (1981, 4); Cp. Mardin (1981, 198, 216; 1989; 1993); Rustow (1968, 873); Heper (1981, 1985, 63); Toprak (1987, 1); Sunar and Sayarı (1986). “The new individual whom the Republican regime wanted *to bring out*,” wrote Karpas in a memorable line in Turkish studies, “was a rationalist, anti-traditional, anti-clerical person, approaching all matters intellectually and objectively” (emphasis added, Karpas 1959, 53; Heper 1985, 64). It seems to me, however, some of these interpreters over-emphasize the rationalist dimensions of Kemalism, choosing not to consider the problems with positivist rationality, on one hand, and ignoring its place within Kemalist nationalism, on the other. Heper suggests that Kemalism parallels the French ideologues for whom “science was a means for dissolving illusions” (1985), but it is clear that the Kemalists were engaged in creating some of their own illusions. That nationalism diluted Kemalism’s scientific and rationalist tendencies is evident in some of the early Kemalist

For Mardin, Kemalism's emplacement within positivism constituted its fundamental flaw in general sociopolitical terms, especially in the Turkish-Islamic context. Based in an "uncompromising materialistic problem-setting mode" that manifested itself in "a clear distaste for religion," Kemalism, on Mardin's account, offered only "a cognitive directive" as a foundation for modern Turkish identity (1989, 32; TIW, 180; 1981, 1983). It therefore created "an ethical vacuum" with profound consequences in a society whose "cultural knapsack" was deeply rooted in the metaphorical and mythopoetic dimensions of religion (1989, 25). The "inability of Kemalism to provide a social ethos that appealed to the heart as well as the mind was more disorienting than would appear at first sight" (1983, 155-7; cp. 1989; 1994, 163). Coupled with a program designed to alter the entire cultural dynamic of Muslim Turks in line with their non-Muslim neighbors in the West, Kemalism amounted to an assault on the integrity of Turkish society:

Depriving a person of his ability to use the set of symbols which shape his individual approach to God may be a more distressing blow to him than depriving him of other values. It may be easier to take defeat on the battlefield than to be deprived of the means of personal access to the sacred, especially if this access is one of the processes that make for mental equilibrium, personal satisfaction, and integration with the rest of society. (1989, 21).⁸⁷

historiography: The works of the "early Kemalists," Akural writes, "have a markedly ethnocentric coloration and contain many distortions of historical facts in the service of patriotic impulses" (Akural 1984, 143).

⁸⁷ Mardin's interest in critically evaluating the implications of Kemalism's positivism and in exploring the Islamic foundations of life in Turkish society has had a discernible impact in the social and political science studies on Turkey, in Turkey and abroad. The critical edge of his thesis -- centering on "the inability of secular Republican Turkey to replace Islam as a world view" (1989, 25, 28) -- has been understood as the suggestion that, as one well known sociologist in Turkey has recently put it, "As Şerif Mardin has argued, Kemalism lacked a morality." (I am not sure this is Mardin's point, which he has repeated recently in these terms: "The Republic had not been able to propagate a social ethic that was sufficiently meaningful to the rural masses to enable them to react positively to its modernization drive. This was its main failing, and it was especially galling to the Muslim population of Turkey" (1994, 163; cp. 1993). Versions of these views can be seen in the Turkish context as early as the late 1940's (see Karpas 1959,

But it was not only positivism that undergirded this “blow” to Turkish folk culture. Mardin argues that an additional impetus derived from Mustafa

275; Lewis 1961, 480; Yalman 1943 Toprak (on 1946 CHP Congress when even those sympathetic to *laiklik* look to religion as a solution to perceived problems of morality.) Frank Tachau cites Mardin’s claim regarding Kemalism’s “inability to provide a psychological anchor for educated, highly motivated and socially mobile young men and women at a time when the social framework was changing” as an acceptable explanation of the “cultural and social crisis” during the 1970s (1984, 87-90). For similar reasons, Metin Heper endorses Frederick Frey’s declaration that the Kemalist paradigm is “exhausted” (*Patterns of Elite Politics*, 1975) and draws explicitly on Mardin’s work to elaborate: “Kemalism did not play any role at the level of personality development. The end result was ‘the real impoverishment of Turkish culture’; among the intelligentsia this state of affairs led to a type of human relations which have been vacuous, sentimental and yet devoid of compassion . . . Kemalism could not perform the metaphysical function of a religion . . . for at least some members of the educated elite. . . their life must have become increasingly dissatisfying; they must have felt a need to complement it with ethical principles that could not be derived from Kemalism (Heper 1981, 360-362; 1985, 90-1; Cp. 1959, 275). Although she does not cite Mardin in this regard, Binnaz Toprak gives expression to this view as well, arguing that Kemalism like “secular ideologies in general . . . did not develop a powerful alternative to Islamic identity” (1988, 1). As a result, Islam served a functional role “filling the emotional void” or “gap” of the widely recognized “cost of modernization” (in a context of rapid social and political change) (Toprak 1981, 37). Finally, one of the political implications of Mardin’s thesis as interpreted by others is found in Walter Weiker’s comprehensive study of *The Modernization of Turkey*. Weiker cites Mardin explicitly and captures a widespread understanding in the Turkish state that Islam *can* and *should* play a role in Turkey’s political life: After noting Mardin’s point, made in a 1969 essay, that “there are [in Turkish folk culture] . . . many dimensions of religion among the lower classes in Turkey which are more secular than religious,” Weiker writes, “Thus one of the reasons for the revived role of religious-based *institutions* ([in the multiparty period] as distinct from the revival of *religion*) was simply that in large part the Republic had not yet succeeded in replacing those services. It is widely agreed that the large number of religious-based local associations which have been organized in all Turkish communities have at least as many community functions as theological ones. Of course, one of the problems is that these associations often serve as vehicles for political influence of persons who have radically conservative orientations to social, economic, and political issues. But, on the other hand, their leaders are often fairly representative of the general social values of much of the Turkish people, and they may thus be able to serve as sources of stability and of easing the potential psychological dislocation of people who are undergoing rapid social change. (For another expression of this view and that religious-based associations are also used to ward off the growing power of “the dynamic forces of capitalist development” see Ergil 1975.) As hypothesized in this study, such a situation may be functional for orderly Turkish development even though some other aspects of modernization may be slowed down as a result” (Weiker 1991, 106-107). In contrast to Weiker, Mardin has registered some reservations about the ability of state elites to truly understand the dynamic of Islam if they chose to use it for stabilization purposes (1983, 146).

Kemal's "disgust with the forms of social control which sprang from folk culture" (1981, 213; see biographical sketch Rustow 1968). A "common denominator" of all of the "secularist reforms" is "the liberation of the individual" -- the attainment of a "broader" sphere of "autonomy" -- "from the collective constraints of the Muslim community" (1981, 213).⁸⁸ "Mahalle Islam" (roughly, neighborhood Islam) in Turkish culture "snuffed out personality" (217). It constituted a "stranglehold," requiring always that "final legitimation" be "obtained in terms of religious values" (216). To Atatürk, "Western society which received its legitimation from science, was more open and therefore more inventive" (216). It would be necessary, therefore, through reform, to "rest the individual away from" "the idiocy of traditional community-oriented life" (213). "Could a civilized nation," Mustafa Kemal had asked rhetorically, "tolerate a mass of people who let themselves be led by the nose by a herd of *sheikhs, dedes, deids, tschelebis, babas, and emirs*; who entrusted their lives to chiromancers, magicians, dice throwers, and amulet sellers?" (Atatürk 1929, 722). Mardin notes how Kemal's interest in integrating male and female relations, for instance, stems from this attitude and could only be seen as an attack on the influence of local notables. "In fact, Atatürk's thrust to establish women's rights may be conceptualized as a concentrated effort to smash what to him appeared as the most stifling, and dark aspect of the *mahalle* ethos, namely the restraint it placed on contacts between men and women in the day-to-day routine of life" (1983, 216).

Put all of these factors together, Mardin suggests, and you will see how Kemalist claims that *laiklik* was *not anti-religious* could hardly have been

⁸⁸ For Mardin's influence, cp., e.g., Robins 1991, 36-8.

convincing to its opponents -- early or more recent. Islam as a "personal value" could not meet the everyday life "ethical demands" of a culture in which Islam constituted a "principle of social cohesion" (1983, 425). Viewed from this angle, all of the "secularist" reforms intended to "modernize" Turkey amounted to "something more than disestablishment" because they were an imposed form of control -- meaning here a shutting out of one idiom and transforming it into an alien one -- by a Western-oriented elite intent on carrying out, with "considerable courage" (1983, 217),⁸⁹ an ethically limited and contextually inappropriate, political and cultural program (1989, 1994).

Each one of the "cultural reforms", Mardin suggests, can be seen as a "devaluation of" Islam's "rich symbolic fund" (1989, 22). The adoption of the Gregorian calendar, for instance, signalled the "alien"⁹⁰ "time dimension of the Republic." By "erasing" "the metaphor of Islamic time", this reform "caused" "a void in the structure of time." It "shattered" the "cultural process."⁹¹ New schools that "tried to bring students into contact with Western culture, literature, music, and even social thought," failed to address "esoteric" but "familiar" themes in the periphery, such as "the unity of God, the limits of man's freedom and the danger of the times though which they were living."⁹² "For some," the "village institutes (People's Houses and People's Rooms) were dens of iniquity because they shared the influence of Marxism; for others, because the students were exposed to the teachings of Freud" (1989, 195-6, 198-9; 1983, 212). At once a turn to the West in favor of

⁸⁹ Cp. G. Lewis 1965, 92.

⁹⁰ Compare Reed 1954, 125.

⁹¹ For oral testimony to this effect, see Mardin (1989, 196-7).

⁹² For oral testimony and Said Nursi's influence in this regard see Mardin (1989, 198-9)

"opera, ballet and Western polyphonic music (oriental music in public being banned for a time)," Kemalist modernism with *laiklik* at its core came to symbolize the oppression of local culture (1983; 1994, 163). (A fertile ground was set in Turkey for the future reception of "post-"modernism.)

Summary: The contributions of the control account

If, therefore, we look at the unfolding dimensions of *laiklik* politics from within the frame described in various control accounts, it is possible to understand how interpreters of Turkey's *laiklik* politics explain them, as Bromley does, in terms like "rigid state control over religious life" and "modernization against Islam."⁹³ The combined consequences of Kemalist political authoritarianism, on the one hand, and the Kemalist cultural reforms, on the other, suggest an institutionalized pattern of political and cultural control as part of the constitutive identity of "secularism" in Turkey.

To be sure, there is no single control account. We have seen differences among them. For instance, Mardin sees aspects of *laiklik* as "galling to the Muslim population of Turkey" (the singularity of "the Muslim population" is important), while others, like Rustow see *laiklik* perfectly consistent with the religious needs of modern Turks.

Despite the differences, however, it is the strength of these control accounts that they explain the way in which the actions, practices, relations, and institutions associated with *laiklik*, founded on the Ottoman-Turkish tradition of sovereign hegemony, were conceived of and carried out within a context

⁹³ It is out of these dynamics that Kemalist *laiklik* earned its reputation as strict, firm, militant, staunch, and determined -- in addition to "rigid" which is the English word that comes closest to the Turkish concept *kati*, used to make the same point.

of political contestation in which the Kemalists captured the reins of political power and utilized them to effect their version of “the Turkish transformation” (cp. Allen 1935; Özbudun 1981, 5; Berkes 1964, 416; Szyliowicz 1975, 3; Abadan-Unat 1991, 190). This is what allows us to consider “a” control account among its diverse versions. It offers a persuasive description of the structural power relations between the sovereign-state “center” and the religious institutions within it, and it attempts to capture the sociological dynamic between that center and the periphery. To those who saw, as many Anglophone social scientists have, secularization as institutional separation, proponents of the control account suggest, “not separation, but control.” To those who believed that modernization in Turkey confirmed religion’s taking a back seat to public life as history unfolded, the control accounts suggests, “not privatization, but supervision through institutionalized power relations.”

At work here in the control account is an implicit critique of two of modernization theory’s historical expectations for modernity. On the one hand, the control account posits that “secularism” in Turkey did not result in a structural differentiation as “separation” between the “political” and the “religious” spheres. This should be clear enough by now.

On the other, the control account suggests that religiopolitical forces in modernity did not, in Turkey, inevitably and naturally assume their place in the “private sphere.” Rather, some of them were crushed in the exercise of political power by the state as the Kemalists articulated a new interpretation of Islam and constructed new institutions to meet the needs of that interpretation. As a result, Islam has never been fully privatized in Turkey. Clerics who accepted the Kemalist terms of laicism, were allowed to

assume a new place within state's religious institutions. The control account suggests that the separation and privatization theses of modernization must be open to reconsideration in the study of Turkey's *laiklik*.

Both of these assumptions are aspects of the narrow "secular-modernist" prejudgments about the character and flow of modern political history that I criticize in the first chapter. In Gadamer's terminology, such assumptions constitute "blinding" prejudgments that should be provoked in a hermeneutic engagement with this field of interpretation (see Introduction and Chapter Two).

In effect, then, in the history of Anglophone interpretations of Turkish politics since the Republic, the control account functions as a kind of "counter-historiography" (Mardin 1977, 288). Importantly, this is true within the Turkish political context as well, where expositions of the control dynamics constitutive of *laiklik* -- from a variety of viewpoints with a variety of interests -- have had a profound impact on the critique of "official history" (cp., Akural 1984; cp., Zürcher 1984) and consequently on course of *laiklik* after the one-party period. Early republicans defended *laiklik*, like the other reforms, as an achievement in line with making Turkey a modern state in "the Western sense" (Toprak, quoted above). Mardin calls "the idea of a secular state" the "foundation myth of the republic" (1989, 1). A close reading of the control accounts -- in the literature of Turkey or in Turkish politics itself -- reveals clearly an attempt to distinguish secularism "in its Western sense" from "secularism" in Turkey. Where the state wished to assert commonality, interpreters of the state's claims have asserted difference. As Toprak puts it:

What the control account argues is that what early republicans did was to call a relationship of control, "separation"; that this was not

true; that originally there was no separation; that what the state did was to control religion in order to relegate it to marginality in public affairs. Hence the control account questions, or is critical of, the official Kemalist claim that there was a separation. Hence, the control account is, in a sense, a counter-historiography to official history.⁹⁴

The rest of the control account: the separation dimensions of *laiklik*

Still, without forgetting or losing sight of the persuasive claims of the control account, it is not entirely clear that its conceptual thrust captures adequately the identity and character of the power frames constitutive of *laiklik*. For example, the visible distinction in theory and practice between Islam as a faith, moral message and set of rituals, and Islam as a counter-revolutionary religiopolitical force intimates that it is not true to consider “secularism in Turkey as hostile to religion.” The conceptual thrust of the control account is not entirely adequate to capture the identity of some practices associated with *laiklik*. The original practices associated with *laiklik* may have been hostile to certain forms of Islam, but the general claim is not compelling, as argued by some subscribers to the control account.

Similarly, if we look more thoroughly, as I will presently, at some of the “separationist” claims made regarding the identity and significance of *laiklik*, we see that they do not simply reference the power dimensions implied in the institutional separation claims the control account seeks to override. Before doing so, it is important to restate some of my hermeneutic assumptions.

⁹⁴ Personal communication; used with permission.

The existence of certain forms of separationist claims does not itself constitute counter-evidence to the control account. The hermeneutic imperative to gauge conceptual frames is not so facile. What it suggests, however, is that we identify the different aspects of the constitutive matrix of meanings and consider which of them are compellingly and most powerfully true of the actors themselves. These meanings must appear as part of our account of their political lives. We might say, for instance, that actors are wrong about separation in some sense, while truthful about it in others. But to say that they are wrong at all must be grounded in a compelling account of aspects of their conceptual frame that are in fact true for them.

In this context, it should be noted that the control account gets a hermeneutic boost when we examine the broad contours of debate over *laiklik* after the one-party period. Although normative evaluations differ, all participants agreed that control was a central constitutive element of Kemalist *laiklik*. Defenders of the Islamic “past” saw “religion tied to the state” that sought to impose atheistic (or communist) designs on an essentially religious people. (This argument unravelled into a consistent demand for greater “religious freedom” as what many call “true secularism” requires.) Some descendants of the core of the Second Group saw *laiklik* as a heavy-handed attempt to interfere with and to deny the Muslim identity of the Turkish people. (“The Turks are a Muslim people and will remain Muslim” -- read “we will not try to change this aspect of your identity,” became a familiar frame among this group’s leaders.) Kemalists, in turn, who continued to deny accusations of atheism⁹⁵ -- even to the point of pointing

⁹⁵Kemalists have pointed, for example, to guarantees in the constitution for religious freedom (1924 Art 64, Sect. 5), laws against religious discrimination (Art 75, sec. 5),

out their support for religious reforms -- argued that some controls over some forms of religiopolitical expression remained necessary to stem the influence of "reactionaryism" in politics. All three understandings have constituencies for these views (Yalman 1943, Reed, 1956-7; 1957, 47-8; Rustow 1957, 92-4; Karpas 1959, 233, 274, 434; Reed 1970, 333; Ahmad 1977, 365-9; 1991, 9, 19; Toprak 1981, 77ff; 1987, 3; Sunar and Toprak 1983, 429). What is important to notice here is that the constitutive control dimensions of the policies, practices, relations, and institutions associated with *laiklik* are in fact given expression in the control account. It is also appropriate to say that relative to claims about "separation between religion and the state," the control account is more powerfully true than alternative separation accounts. This is a hermeneutic fact arising from the control account literature.

What I seek to do in the remainder of this paper is to recall dimensions of "separation" that are powerfully true in the constitutive frame of the practices, relations, and institutions associated with *laiklik* as well. I do this not to override control claims, but rather to deepen them and hence to expand our understanding of the identity and character of *laiklik*.

What, therefore, are the possible dimensions of "separation" that are true of *laiklik* in the single-party period? There are several, evidenced by specific constitutional, educational-sociocultural, and legal reforms. These separation dimensions are expressed conceptually in the most definitive descriptions of *laiklik* in both statements by the RPP's leading ideologues and party documents during the project's formative years, especially 1923 - 1931.

and penal code statutes regarding blasphemy, damage to sacred sites or insults of "spiritual officials" (Articles 175-178, adopted March 1 1926; Gürelli 1965, 70-71; cp. Mardin 1981, 210).

While it is necessary, following the insights of the control account, to separate some fact from some fiction in their claims, it is also essential in order to arrive at a fuller and more hermeneutically sound explanation of *laiklik* politics to identify these true, separation-constitutive dimensions of the policies, practices, relations, and institutions associated with it.

Evidence of non-institutional separationist understandings.

Besides claims to have separated religious institutions from the state, we find in the early historical dialogue other kinds of separationist claims. For example:

(1) In the rationale for the draft bill of the Turkish Civil Code, Minister of Justice Mahmut Esat (Bozkurt), a member of the ruling cadre's inner circle, asserted that "the principle distinguishing characteristic of states that belong to the civilization of the present century" -- a group that Turkey was, in the RPP leadership's conception, in the process of joining -- "is their considering religion and the world separate" (Bozkurt 1926, text in appendix).

(2) Similarly, the 1927 RPP statutes -- issued when the RPP, in Mustafa Kemal's declaration mentioned above, for the first time officially and publicly described itself as "*lâyık*" -- mentioned a "separationist" purpose to *laiklik*. It read, "The party, [so that it may] rescue matters of belief and conscience from politics and from various complications⁹⁶ of politics, and [so

⁹⁶ The word I translate as "complications" can also be translated as "disputes" or "conflicts."

that it may] realize all political, social, and economic laws, institutions, and needs according to principles and forms secured by the positive, experimental knowledge and sciences of contemporary civilization, counts among the most urgent principles the complete separation of religion (*tamamen birbirinden ayırmayı*) from the world in matters of state and nation” (Article 3, text in Tunçay 1992, 382).

(3) Mardin notes that in a parliamentary debate in 1928 *laiklik* was defined as “the separation of religion and worldly concerns” (Mardin 1983, 192-3).

(4, 5) And, the 1931 and 1935 programs of the RPP repeat the decision of the party to make all laws, rules, and, regulations according to the requirements of the present century and the methods, knowledge and sciences of contemporary civilization. Both then go on to state: “As the conception of religion is a matter of conscience, the party considers it to be one of the chief factors of the success of our nation in contemporary progress to maintain as separate (*ayrı tutmak*) ideas of religion from politics, from the affairs of the world and of the state (in Tunçay 1992, 448; Rustow 1957, 84; Henrey 1958, 318; Webster 1939, 307-9).⁹⁷

As I have stated above, the existence of the word “separation” does not alone imply that any real separation occurred. What it does imply, however, is that the concept separation is consistently a feature of the purposes of *laiklik* in its original conception in Turkey. What we must ask now is how

⁹⁷ These statements are selected because of their authoritative status in defining the ends of *laiklik*. Similar statements abound in the documents, journals, and histories of the period.

might this be true? Or, put in the context of the preceding discussion: Given that the control account offers an explicit rejection of other “separationist” claims, we must ask, regarding these utterances, to what extent, or in what ways, are they potentially true constitutive dimensions of the actions, policies, practices, relations and institutions associated with *laiklik* in its original conception? We will look at the constitutional, educational-sociocultural, and legal dimensions that answer this question in detail presently, but first four aspects of the RPP’s conceptually definitive statements should be recorded.

First, in the statements documented above, “separation” is *not* conceived throughout in *institutional* terms alone. Rather, the claims reference separating “religion” or religious “ideas,” and “matters of belief and conscience” from/and “politics,” “the world,” or “affairs of the world in matters of state and nation.” Thus, the emphasis is not on institutional separation simply; it is on separating what we might summarize as religious theory and practice from the theory and practice of the state.⁹⁸ Second, this separation is conceptualized as having several aims, ranging from “rescuing” religious matters from politics and from political conflict (a theme we have met as well in Mustafa Kemal’s speech), to defining what is conceived of as religion’s proper realm, the realm of “conscience” (*vicdan*). Third, each explication of *laiklik* mentions, in some form, the goal of the Turkish nation to achieve progress and success in governing itself according to the positive sciences, methods, and knowledge of contemporary civilization. Finally, the sense of separation in these claims is an active one.

⁹⁸ I include “practice” here because the documents mention not simply “religious ideas” but also “religion” more generally.

In 1927, the party considers it most urgent to create a separation. By 1931 and 1935, it seeks *to maintain* a separation presumably already achieved.

The active, contextual meanings of separation

Some accounts of *laiklik* in the Anglophone social science literature capture this active sense of the concept separation. For example, Heper describes the effort “to free politics from” religion; Ahmad sees an effort “to cut” the state’s “formal ties” with religion (Heper 1981, 305; Ahmad 1977, 369; cf. Karpat 1959, 53). The distinction between an active sense of separating and a descriptive claim that asserts a *de facto* separation is important: the policies, practices, relations, and institutions associated with *laiklik* may not have accomplished a complete “separation” between religion and politics, religion and the world, and so on. But actors who participated in constituting *laiklik* may have had as one of their ends *to separate, exclude, remove, cut, free one from the other, in some ways and to some extent, from a previous position of interrelation in some specific areas of state activity*. Indeed, certain Kemalist policies and practices associated with *laiklik* express precisely this purpose. Salient among them are the constitutional changes of April 1928: the abrogation of articles declaring the religion of the state to be Islam and guaranteeing the execution of Islamic law (Articles 2 and 26 of the 1924 constitution, respectively); and the substitution of “I swear on my honor” for “I swear before God” in the declarations of allegiance to the Turkish Republic taken by Assembly deputies and the President (Articles 16, section 2; and 38, section 3).

To underscore the significance of these declarations, they should be situated not simply within the context of the 1921 Constitution.⁹⁹ The declarations must also be seen against the historical background of the relationship between the state and religion during the Ottoman period. The 1876 Ottoman constitution that was nominally in place in the final years of Ottoman rule expressed well this relationship's exterior shell.¹⁰⁰ Article 3 of the Constitution stated, "The Ottoman sovereignty which is united in the person of the sovereign of the supreme Caliph of Islam belongs to the eldest of the princes of the dynasty of Osman . . ." Articles 4, 5, and 7 further elucidated the Islamic identity of the Sultan: "(4) His majesty the Sultan is by the title of the Caliph the protector of the Muslim religion. He is the sovereign and the Padishah of all Ottomans. (5) His majesty is irresponsible. His person is sacred. (7) His majesty the Sultan counts among the number of his sovereign rights the following prerogatives . . . his name is pronounced in the mosques during the prayers . . . he causes to be executed the dispositions of the Sharia (sacred law) and the laws . . .". And Article 11 declared "Islam is the religion of the State", guaranteeing protection and granted privileges for all recognized religions (AJAI 1908, 367-368).

The 1921 Constitution eliminated the imperial dimensions of these articles, but declared itself to fulfill the rather heavy duties associated with maintaining Islam as the religion of the state. Given the previous historical relationship between the Ottoman state and Islam, the 1928 abrogations and

⁹⁹ After all, it was the product of the national independence coalition, and gave more religious meaning to the state than the Kemalists might have had they been acting alone. In fact, with regard to Article 2 declaring the religion of the Republic to be Islam, Mustafa Kemal stated after its abrogation that it had been a rhetorical concession to insure that the unfolding policies of *laiklik* would not be seen as atheism (Parla 1991, 109; c.p. Tunçay 1992, 44).

¹⁰⁰ Compare with discussion above on Ottoman-Islam relations.

amendments appear to overturn a rather profound tradition of state-religion interdependence. The constitutional changes, then, fit squarely within the conceptualization of actively separating or disentangling religion from a previous interrelation with the affairs of the state, *in these particular contexts*.

Therefore, rather than seeing the concept “separation” as a *de facto*, descriptive account of *laiklik*'s achievements, the concept should be understood as a purpose of *laiklik* within a certain historical (political, legal, social, and economic) context. There is no doubt that no matter to what extent the political and religious spheres remained interrelated after the Kemalist reforms (as we have seen above), the ruling cadre sought to insure that their relationship would be less than the previous one. A *separating* the two was “necessary” -- not in a complete and institutional sense, but in other senses related to the political, social, cultural, and economic ends of the Kemalist project.

With the exception of the economic ends of Kemalism that are slightly beyond the scope of the present paper, the political, social, and cultural ends have already been discussed in some detail. What remains to do here is to relate these to the project of *laiklik* and *laiklik*'s character as a central principle of the Kemalist transformation. One preliminary caution: To my mind, the control dimensions of these ends should always be kept in focus when the concept separation appears. My view is that the concept separation here does not mean “complete or full separation;” it means certain separations within a context of overall control. This is why I offer my account of the separationist dimensions of *laiklik* as an effort to deepen the

control account, a point to which I will return in detail after a discussion of the substance of this claim.

Separating affairs of the world

Many documents discuss the project of *laiklik* explicitly after the major reforms are already undertaken. There are few that do so during the reforms, prior to the constitutional changes. Among the former, one of the most important and authoritative statements is Recep Peker's 1931 (October 16) "Explication" of the RPP reforms at a colloquium sponsored by Istanbul University (text and interpretation in Parla 1992, 106-123). Peker (1888-1950) was a member of the RPP inner circle and General Secretary of the Party three times between 1923 and 1936. An excerpt from his Explication in which he describes the principle of "*laiklik*" illustrates partly how the RPP leadership understood "affairs of the world." After quoting the full text of the party definition of its *laiklik* arrow (quoted above), Peker immediately names the abolition of the medrese school system and the Islamic law courts (that implemented Islamic law) as the two definitive accomplishments of *laiklik*. These two actions as well as the totality of educational and legal policies and practices that comprised them are two vital areas of worldly affairs in which the Kemalists understood their project as one of separating affairs of religion and those of the world. More specifically, matters related to education and law are cornerstones of the specifically Kemalist *laik* project of separating religious theory and practice from affairs of the world.

Education

The Unity of Education Law (*Tevhid-i Tedrisat Kanunu*,¹⁰¹ March 1924; text in Serin, 1991) exemplifies this conceptualization. It brought all “educational and scientific” institutions under the control of the Ministry of Education, transferred to its jurisdiction all religious schools (medreses and mekteps) as well as the budgets of the Shariat and Vakf Ministry that managed them. (Recall that the Caliphate was abolished, and the Presidency of Religious Affairs established, on the same date.) The purpose of the law was clear: to “unify” previously dichotomous educational tracks between religion and non-religious education, thus bringing education under the control of the party-controlled state (Berkes 1964, 460ff.). The RPP then proceeded to install a system of education that would teach the ideals of the RPP and to “raise citizens” according to those ideals, especially those related to the study of the explicitly anti-theological and anti-theocentric, positive sciences (see Mardin’s opus, especially).

This goal was not immediately achieved in 1924. Religious classes continued to be offered in the primary schools. In 1927, they were offered by parental request. It was not until RPP consolidation over the state was complete in 1928 that the movement in the direction of a “national education” that excluded religious theory and practice expedited (especially after the 1928 Constitutional reforms). Berkes summarizes: “the Ministry of Education took steps to drop classes in religion from the school curricula” (1964, 476). Lessons in Arabic and Persian were abolished in 1928 (instruction “was left to specialized departments at the university level” (Reed 1970, 330); classes in religion were dropped in the urban primary schools in 1930 and in middle schools in 1931; the change was effected in the

¹⁰¹ Law #430, passed on March 3, 1924, implemented March 6, 1924.

village schools in 1933. (Berkes 1964, 476). 1928 marks the moment of consolidation; just as religious theory and practice were separated in constitutional clauses, they would be separated from education in the contemporary sciences as “national education,” as Mustafa Kemal called it, would take hold.

The Kemalist view was that “religious superstition” “held the nation back.” It induced “lethargy” that was “an obstacle to national progress and development.” Thus religious theory and practice in public education was incompatible with the kind of progress necessary to reach the level of contemporary civilization. To wit, the RPP’s 1931 program stated that “The foundational stone” of its “public educational policy is the abolition of ignorance” (1931 Program, “National education and instruction,” section 5A; text and analysis in Tunçay 1992). Peker describes the schools as ones that would be “far from superstitions” of “the religious traditions” that dominated life in the nation’s past (reiterated in section 5D). Regardless of the kinds of control dimensions entailed by such a policy, the RPP clearly conceptualized their policies related to unifying education as policies designed to separate affairs of religion (theory and practice) from affairs of the world.

A more explicit statement of the attitudinal structure necessary for success that would be cultivated in the new educational system appears in the second clause of the fifth section of the party’s 1931 educational program (text and interpretation in Parla 1992, 71). It states an interest in cultivating “republican, nationalist, and *lâyik*¹⁰² citizens” who would respect or honor “the Turkish Grand National Assembly and the Turkish state.” A short statement of the special need to develop a “national character” that respects

¹⁰² An older spelling of *laik*.

the deep historical past of the Turkish nation (as opposed to Ottoman traditions) is followed by a statement of a kind one meets throughout the literature on *laiklik*: The methods and knowledge pursued in education and instruction are to be molded in order “to secure success in material life for its citizens.” This statement follows one that explicates the “nationalist character” of the new educational program. Presumably it is intended to be further commentary on its “*layik*” character. This assumption is supported by the presence of such themes in the very definition of *laiklik* in the party’s official program. The Kemalist view appears to be that education must be freed from religious beliefs as a precondition for success in the material world. Deep, then, in the Kemalist understanding of the affairs of the world, state and nation is the idea that material success depends on separating religion from educational matters.

The significance of this point calls for a brief detour. As Parla has shown, the declared intent to create republicanist, nationalist, and *laik* citizens for purposes related to success in the material world links specific dimensions of the *laiklik* project with goals of national economic development (Parla 1992). Although my project does not deal directly with the Kemalist state’s solidarist-corporatist policies related to economic development (Parla 1985), there is an intersection between these “affairs of the world” and the purposes of *laiklik*. From its inception, the RPP considered economic development as a matter of first priority (Parla 1992, 246-7). Its 1923 statement (September 9) of the “Nine principles of the People’s Party” which declared the intention of the first group to become the People’s Party, “set forth as certain conditions the securing of national, economic, and administrative independence” (text and analysis in Tunçay,

52). The first four goals deal with national sovereignty of the state and its institutions, the irrevocability of the abolition of the Sultanate, the survival of the Islamic world's Caliphate that will support new national institutions, internal security, and the creation of new courts. Immediately following these, the Party lists ten measures to be taken for economic and social betterment. Among them are new tax policies, support for tobaccos agrocommerce and industrialization, and so on.¹⁰³ Moreover, the full sentence of the 1927 document that declares the RPP to be *lâyık* (mentioned above) reads, "The RPP is Republicanist, *lâyık*, populist, and nationalist and counts as first order of importance the securing of national economic interests" (emphasis added, text in Tunçay 1992, 395).

A detailed study of these economic objectives is beyond the scope of this essay. What is important is not to lose sight of them as the policies and practices associated with *laiklik* unfold. There is a conceptual association between the removal of religion from its place in "national education" and the creation of the educational/sociocultural/attitudinal conditions for "national economic development". Explicitly contained within expressions of the meanings constitutive of Turkey's *laik* politics in its original, official conception is the goal of creating nationally loyal and *lâyık* "citizens" who will "achieve success in the material world" (Parla 1992, 71-99).

The conceptual links between *laiklik* and national economic development illuminate what the Kemalists believed would be the benefits of adopting the knowledge and methods of the positive sciences: the road to progress ran through the development of a non-religiously influenced,

¹⁰³ This topic requires fuller treatment elsewhere.

instrumental rationality (cp., Habermas 1971).¹⁰⁴ As we have seen in the party documents, developing citizens with a positivist rationality was an explicit goal of policies associated with *laiklik*. Thus, aspects of the educational policies associated with *laiklik* should be understood as related and parallel to policies associated with national economic development. The relationship comes into sharper focus if we add to our considerations the policies designed to integrate Turks culturally (e.g., dress, script) with the political economies to its west.

Separate religious schools

Elements of the Kemalist *laik* interest in controlling/supervising *religious* as well as non-religious education, discussed in the control account, appear as well in the Unity of Education Law. This law has been interpreted by some as “eliminating all religious educational institutions” (Abadan-Unat 1991, 179). Birtek asserts that “all religious education was forbidden” by the reforms (Birtek 1991, 132).

According to the law itself, however, neither of these appear to be the case. Article 4 of it empowers the Ministry of Education to establish a Faculty of Divinity at the Darülfünun (later Istanbul University) “with the duty of training officials, such as preachers, for the performance of religious services.” It *also* empowers the Ministry to open “separate mekteps” (*ayrı mektepler*) to serve as lower level religious schools for the same purpose (text in Serin 1991,18).¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Readers might expect the concept “secular” to arise here. My view is that a certain form of instrumental rationality is a necessary but not sufficient component of a secular posture to the world.

¹⁰⁵The compatibility of religious training schools with dimensions of the original conception of *laiklik* -- an issue that has caused controversy with the ever-expanding network of such schools -- is to be found right here.

True, the “dwindling enrollments” and interest led to the transformation of the Faculty into the Institute of Islamic Research in the Faculty of Letters in 1933, and the cessation of the mekteps in the same year (see Reed 1955-6; 1970). The falling interest, again, largely coincides with the post 1928 consolidation. But we should not lose sight that the law itself -- a law that later empowered the revival of these institutions on a scale well beyond the intent of the RPP (but consistent with some of the interests of other members of the Assembly in 1924) -- established a role for the RPP in all education, religious as well as non-religious. In 1934, the *Diyanet İşleri Reisliği* -- that is, recall, “attached to the Prime Minister’s office” -- opened Koran Courses, partly as replacements for the mekteps. “The number of teachers and students grew steadily after 1934” (Reed 1970, 330).

There does not appear, that is, to be a complete cessation in the state’s interest in religious education. If the purpose of the unified non-religious education was to cultivate a new citizen loyal to RPP institutions and ideals, the purpose of the religious education was to allow for some room to meet the religious needs of the nation, “to engage in research and to foster the new religious outlook,” as Reed has put it (1970, 322; c.p., Reed 1955-6). The fact that the Unity of Education law was promulgated simultaneously with the abolition of the Caliphate underscores its status as an expression of RPP purposes to secure hegemony for its version of lay governance. It was not inconsistent with this view that the state should show its support for some religious education. It is significant, however, that in the conception of these founding educational policies, the non-university level religious schools and their purposes would be considered “separate” (*ayrı*) from the

newly “unified” national educational system and its republican, national, and *laik* goals.

Civil affairs: The Rationale of the Turkish Civil Code

Beyond the realm of education, there is perhaps no policy more fundamental in the history of *laiklik* practices in Turkey than the abolition of the role of religious law in governing “civil” affairs, and its replacement with a modified version of the Swiss Civil Code. Peker’s juxtaposition of this reform to those related to education in his 1931 Explication underscores its significance. Mardin notes that the adopted civil code stands “like a rock in a sea of change” during the history of *laiklik*’s erosion in the post-single party period. For our purposes, there is perhaps no better single speech-act of the pre-1927 period that states clearly the aims and objectives of RPP policies associated with “separating religion and state” than Mahmut Esat (Bozkurt)’s “Rationale for the Draft Bill [of the civil code].” The “Rationale” was delivered by Mahmut Esat as the Assembly was presented with a draft of the new code. It appears as a preamble to the code itself which was adopted February 17, 1926 and implemented in October of the same year.¹⁰⁶ The text should occupy a seminal status as an expression of the purposes of *laiklik*, but it has not received the attention it deserves.¹⁰⁷ In it, Mahmut Esat explains the rationale for dismissing the rule of religious laws in civil and commercial relations.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Though not all publications of the code reproduce the text.

¹⁰⁷ For this reason, I have translated and reproduced the translation as an appendix to this chapter. I am especially grateful to Professor Ersin Kalaycioğlu for recommending the text. Another discussion of the text in English can be found in Berkes (1964, 470ff.).

¹⁰⁸ Mahmut Esat (1929-1943) received his Doctorate of Law from Freiburg Law Faculty in Switzerland, served briefly as Economics Minister, and occupied the position of Minister of Justice from 1924 until September 22, 1930. He was, therefore, one of the

As Minister of Justice and representative of the committee that prepared the bill, Mahmut Esat states unequivocally in the beginning of the preamble that the main failing of the Ottoman Imperial Code (the Mecelle) in the context of “the requirements of contemporary civilization” is that its “main principle is religion” (for all quotes, see appendix at the end of this chapter). By definition, religion in contemporary legal codes is both incompatible with the times and consequently, as he explains later, “irreconcilable with Turkish national life.” Significantly, Esat never mentions “Islam.” His frame is more general: he conceptualizes the issue in terms of only “religion,” “mores,” “customs” and “traditions.” And, although the new civil code has been taken as a birth-pang of women’s emancipation in Turkey because of the increased conjugal rights for women¹⁰⁹ (e.g., male

architects of the legal reforms. After 1935, he taught in the Law Faculty at Istanbul University where he also lectured on the same topic as he called his book, *Atatürk’s Revolution* (Bozkurt 1944a). Like Recep Peker, Mahmut Esat (Bozkurt) was a prominent public interpreter of the politics of the single-party period (see Tunçay 1992, 173n. 71, 185 n.1; Bozkurt 1944a).

¹⁰⁹ The process of reform in the interest of female social rights arguably began during the rule of the Union and Progress Party. In 1911, a girl’s lycee was opened, in 1917 a new Family Law, *inter alia*, strengthened women’s rights at the time of marriage regarding the number of wives a husband may take, and rights to abandon the marriage (in cases of disease and financial irresponsibility). It also raised the minimum age requirements from 12 to 17 for women and 15 to 18 for men. There is a wide literature on the question of women’s rights in Turkey. See, e.g., Abadan-Unat, N. (1981). Women in Turkish society. Leiden: E.J. Brill; Abadan-Unat, N. (1991). The impact of legal and educational reforms on Turkish women. In N. R. Keddie (Eds.), Women in Middle Eastern History: Shifting boundaries in sex and gender (pp. 177-194). New Haven: Yale University Press. Kandiyoti, D. A. (Ed.). (1991). Women, Islam and the State. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. Toprak’s idea that Turkish women are “emancipated but unliberated” (1985) is one attempt to distinguish between (limited) personal and legal rights women gained in Turkey and freedom in a wider sense from patriarchal constraints. The civil code is thus seen as a new beginning for Turkish woman whose personal rights extended from the domestic into the political sphere with suffrage legislation during the 1930s. Less than a year after the code was passed, the *Kadınlar Birliği* (Women’s Unity) association was formed “on nationalist principles” (Lovejoy 1972, 26). Women gained, or more accurately, were given, the right to participate in municipal elections (April 14, 1933); to participate in electing the council of elders in villages (Oct. 26, 1933); the right both to vote and participate in general elections (December 5, 1934), 14 years before France, Italy and Belgium) (for

monogamy, prohibition of divorce by repudiation, rights over surname after divorce, inheritance and property claims¹¹⁰), this issue is never raised explicitly in the Rationale. Rather, the emphasis is on the need to create “quickly” a legal system consistent with, firstly, the ruling party’s definition of the “real interests of the Turkish nation” and, secondly, the patterns established by the states that belong to contemporary civilization. All else derives from these two goals.

What were, according to Esat, the real interests of the Turkish nation? There are several stated in the text, all of which related directly to the explicit theme of “separating religion and the world.” They are stated within four different arguments. It is necessary to look at each in detail, for understanding the purposes of implementing the civil code is crucial to understanding the purposes constitutive of *laiklik* in its original conception.

The first argument is that religion and the state must be separated because religions by definition are incapable of change, “whereas life marches on.” States that derive their legal codes from those of religion, and that, as such, usually serve the interests of the “mighty and the oppressors” rather than the interests of the people, condemn the communities in which these codes are applied to living in a medieval status. This means that the

perspective, see Abadan-Unat (1991). Care should be taken not to exaggerate the accomplishments of the civil code since it still reiterated certain patriarchal themes such as male household supremacy and male authority to circumscribe female economic liberties (see Lovejoy 1972). Still, the parties of the time declared their intent to see women as equal participants in the project of nation building and provided enhanced personal status and political rights to that end. Lovejoy accurately writes that the Turkish wife gained “a more equal position vis-a-vis her husband in respect to personal relations,” but cautions against seeing the “assigning [of] a secular status to women” as anything more than “an ancillary motive of the reforms; indeed, a hypocritical one when considering the reformer’s own personal attitudes toward women” (Lovejoy 1972, 26; Cp. Toprak 1985).

¹¹⁰ The new Turkish Civil Code stipulated the same age requirement as did the 1917 Family Law. It is noteworthy that the ages are lowered from 17 (W) and 18 (M) to 15 (W) and 18 (M) in 1938 (Lovejoy 1972, 22-24).

implementation of such codes in the Turkish context is a hindrance to progress and inconsistent with the Turkish "revolution:"

Those states whose laws are based on religion cannot satisfy . . . the demands of the country and the nation, for religions contain [express] immutable judgements. Life marches on; needs quickly change; religious laws cannot express any value, any meaning beyond form and dead words in the face of inexorably changing life. Not to change is a necessity for religions. . . . Laws that derive their principles from religions unite the communities in which they are being implemented with the primitive ages from which they have descended and constitute one of the major factors and reasons impeding progress. It should not be doubted that our laws that receive their inspiration from the immutable judgements of religion and are still linked [in continuous contact] to divine law are the most powerful factor in tying the Turkish nation's destiny to the stipulations and rules of the Middle Ages, even during the present century. The Turkish Republic's remaining deprived of a codified civil code which is the regulator of national social life, a code that should be inspired only by that life, is irreconcilable with the meaning and the conception required by the Turkish revolution.

Esat goes on to generalize this argument such that it applies not simply to religions but to all mores, customs, and traditions embedded in local and regional legal codes. If the Turkish nation, the Minister of Justice asserts, is backward in any sense, this backwardness is due to "the medieval organizations and religious laws that unnecessarily besiege it." As a revolutionary, he goes on to declare, "To stay absolutely loyal to beliefs inherited from grandfathers and ancestors in the face of truths is incompatible with reason and intelligence." The implementation of the new Turkish Civil Code is thus, *inter alia*, the "rational" and "intelligent" thing to do.

The second, related argument is that the previous legal system, in which civil relations of residents were governed according to the laws of their respective religious communities (millets) -- or what Esat refers to as "the Mecelle and similar other religious regulations" -- suffered from

“irregularities and persistent disorder.” As such, these “primitive” codes fail to satisfy the interests of what Esat calls “political, social, economic, and national unity.”

The experiences of Germany, France, and Switzerland, including the struggle of the French to deny the Church its power in civil relations, are invoked to make the point that Turkey’s needs are similar to those of other states belonging to “the family of nations” of “the present century.” Member states of this family, a “family” created as a result of “continuous social and economic contacts,” find it necessary to unify their legal systems by eliminating local juridical diversity. Local and regional, linguistic and methodological, jurisprudential heterogeneity based on religious laws, mores, and customs breeds legal “irregularity and disorder.” Since it places the fate of the people on “chance” rather than a “definite and stable” principle of Justice, such disorder is not conducive to the “real interests of the nation.” Look, Esat says, at the situation in the Republic:

[With some exceptions] judges of the Turkish Republic are adjudicating by extrapolation and inference from slapdash *fikh* [Islamic codes of jurisprudence] and religious principles. The Turkish judge is not bound in his judgements by any specific precedents, binding rulings and principles. Therefore, the judgement reached in a case in one locality of our country and the judgements arrived at in a similar case that is being adjudicated under the same conditions in other localities of the country are usually different from and contradictory with each other. Consequently, in the administration of justice, the people of Turkey are being exposed to irregularities and persistent disorder. Fate of the people does not depend on a definitive and stable principle of justice, but on medieval *fikh* rules that are coincidental, change-dependent, and mutually contradictory. To rescue Republican Turkish justice from this chaos, deprivation and very primitive situation, it has become indispensable to create quickly and legislate a new Turkish Civil Code that is fitting to the requirements of our transformation and of the civilization of the present century.

By contrast, jurisprudential homogeneity brings “great benefits” (in contrast to harm). He expresses the indispensable prerequisite for such benefits as follows:

The fundamental point of these laws [of “the states of the present century”] that we respect is the separation, in the absolute sense, of religion and state. Switzerland, Germany and France strengthened and fortified their political and national unities, and their economic, social salvations and developments by promulgating their civil codes.

Esat asserts that the alternative situation of legal heterogeneity relying on local religions, mores, and traditions in the European context “was not desired, could not be desired, and could not have even been imagined.” In other words, the will of the leadership in this matter is resolute. The “need” to achieve unity -- in order to “strengthen and fortify” Turkey’s political and national unity -- by abolishing backward and confusing legal codes requires, in Mahmut Esat’s words, the separation of religion and state. Of course, given the ties that linked religion to the state in the practices associated with *laiklik*, even though Mahmut Esat asserts “religion and state,” what he means here is “religion *and the legal system* of the state.”

Mahmut Esat’s third and forcefully-stated argument is that religion, once removed from legal power, finds its proper place in the “inviolable and secure” realm of the conscience. This is a consistent theme in all of the documents of the RPP leadership we have considered thus far. It was, to the Kemalists, a corollary of separating religion *qua* religious theory and practice and the state *qua* matters of the world, politics, and nation. Religion’s finding its proper home in the sphere of the conscience was also, as Mahmut Esat put it, “one of the principles of the contemporary civilization that distinguished the old and the new” (c.p., Bozkurt 1944b, 13).

The second and third arguments are summed up in the following passage that is worth quoting at length:

There is no doubt that the purpose of laws is not to arrive at any stipulation which derives from mores or tradition or from any religious rules which should be only matters related with the conscience, but rather with providing and satisfying at any cost the political, social, economic, and national unity. The principal distinguishing characteristic of states that belong to the civilization of the present century is their considering religion and the world separate. The opposite of this results in the domination of the conscience of someone who does not agree with the accepted religious foundations of the state. The understanding of states of the present century cannot accept this. Religion is to be revered and would be immune as long as it remains a matter of conscience from the point of view of the state. Intrusions of religion into laws as articles and stipulations have always during history resulted in serving the arbitrary will and desire of rulers, the mighty, and oppressors. In separating religion from the world, the state of the present century saves humanity from these bloodstained afflictions of history and allocates religion to the conscience as the real and eternal throne for it. Especially in states that contain subjects belonging to various religions, in order to acquire the ability of carrying out a single law in all of the community, this severing of relations with religion is a requisite for the sovereignty of the nation. This is because if the laws will be based on religion it becomes necessary for the state that is faced with the necessity of accepting freedom of conscience to make separate laws for its subjects belonging to various religions. This situation is totally opposed to the political, social, economic, and national unity that is a fundamental condition in states of the present century.

This passage also hints at the fourth justification for separating religion and the legal system of the state contained in the comment, “Especially in states that contain subjects belonging to various religions, in order to acquire the ability of carrying out a single law in all of the community, this severing of relations with religion is a requisite for the sovereignty of the nation.” This reference suggests that the RPP considered Turkey’s religious heterogeneity to be a reason for separating religion and the state. But, this comment might also be an allusion to other considerations

that influenced the RPP's leadership's decision to pursue, *as well as declare*, a policy of "separating" religion and state.

These considerations involve promises made by Turkey to the occupying powers during the negotiations at Lausanne between November 1922 and July 1923. In the "Rationale," Mahmut Esat mentions the issue only briefly, but in an essay presented on the fifteenth anniversary of the Turkish Civil code entitled, "How the Turkish Civil Code was prepared," he notes that the legal position of "foreigners" as well as "subjects of different religions" came up at Lausanne.

To understand these concerns, some background is necessary.

Previous to the Republic, the Ottoman empire allowed foreign powers to gain special economic and legal privileges over both the latter's own "subjects" residing in the Ottoman lands and over residents of religiously-similar *millets*. The former were manifested in the famous capitulations "treaties."¹¹¹ Illustrative of the latter are the consequences stemming from the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, described by Shaw as "one of the most fateful documents of Ottoman history." In this treaty, Russia and the Ottomans agreed to Crimea's independence. In return for some territorial concessions,

¹¹¹ Foreigners became subject to the jurisdiction of their consulates as a result of the Capitulations Treaties signed between the Ottoman Empire and France (Feb. 18, 1536), England (May 3, 1590), and the Hapsburg Empire (June 20, 1685). In the first treaty with the French, in addition to French trade benefits "French consuls were given the right to hear and judge all civil and criminal cases arising among and between French subjects in the Sultan's dominions without interference by Ottoman officials and judges, although the latter were allowed to help enforce judgments if requested to do so. Civil cases involving Muslim subjects did have to be tried in Ottoman courts according to Muslim law, but the defendants were allowed to have French consular representatives to advise them. In criminal cases, French subjects were excused from being called before Ottoman judges but instead were referred to the grand vizier or his agent, in which case the testimonies of Ottoman and French subjects were given equal weight. This was unlike the situation in the Muslim courts, where the testimony of Muslims had to be given special credence" (Shaw, Vol. I, 97-8; cp. 29, 163, 182, 189). Shaw suggests that the Capitulations treaties have their precedent in the fifteenth century agreement between Sultan Beyazıt and the Venetians allowing for special economic status for the latter.

“the sultan had to give the czarina the right to build and protect an Orthodox Church in Istanbul. [This was] subsequently interpreted to signify Russian protection over all Orthodox Christians in the empire . . . thus enabling Russia to intervene in Ottoman internal affairs for its own advantage in the century that followed” (Shaw V.1, 250). Although the Turks at Lausanne were not negotiating with the Russians, they knew this history and were determined to gain recognition of Turkey’s full sovereignty over all the inhabitants of the territory the new state now encompassed.

The Lausanne Treaty eventually abolished all special and unique legal institutions and codes for the non-Muslim and non-Turkish residents in Turkey. Turkey declared its obligation to protect their constitutional rights through judicial reform. Part of that obligation was fulfilled in the adoption of the Swiss Civil Code.

It is clear that the Kemalist leadership sought to signal their compliance with the terms agreed upon at Lausanne. In his commemorative essay on the code, Bozkurt asserts:

When the topic of abolishing the capitulations was raised, foreign states rejected our just wishes, pointed out our legal system’s backwardness and reliance on religious foundations., They were saying that that laws should be *layik* is a requirement of the idea of a modern state. As for yours [they said], they are taken from religious foundations. We cannot give up our subjects to the principles of the Muslim religion. Let alone that although we are Christian, we have abrogated the Christian legal system even in our own countries.¹¹² You can apply religious laws to your own subjects. But you cannot impose these on your subjects who belong to other religions. The twentieth century cannot accept this kind of understanding. Conscience should be free. (1944b, 9-10; c.p.,. 1944a, 339ff.)

¹¹² Note that the statement says “legal system” and not all aspects of religious thought and practice from the state.

These comments express the conceptual link between the goal of attaining respect for Turkey's legal and national sovereignty and the purposes of separating religion and state in legal affairs. Immediately following them, Bozkurt asserts that such demands by the Western powers were the only ones relevant to the adoption of the new civil code. Moreover, he very quickly interprets the demands made by others regarding the separation of religion and the state *within* the goal of achieving national unity. His language is quite revealing about the "frame" within which the leaders of the RPP understood their new position as the hegemonic powers in the Turkish state:

They said many other things. But there is no need to consider them here. This is the one of interest to our topic.

What would be the character of this organ of justice to which foreigners as well should bow (*baş eğmek*)? What possible form would it take?

We may say this in one word: *Layık*.

We know that this is the important attribute that distinguishes modern states from those of the past. (1944b, 9-10; c.p., 1944a, 339ff.)

Considerations of religio- and national- ("foreign") heterogeneity must also be what lies behind the statement in the 1927 RPP program declaring the need to "rescue matters of belief and conscience from . . . various complications [conflicts] of politics" (quoted above). Indeed, the negotiations at Lausanne, on the one hand, and conflicts with religio-political and religio-national oppositions reviewed above in the control account, on the other, suggest that the potential areas of conflict considered in the program emerged from outside of Turkey as much as inside.

Beyond these considerations, the historical record is already clear that the Kemalists took into consideration the many different interpretations of Islam (and religion in general), including its own, extant within the borders of Turkey at the time. The 1925 rebellion and objections to the cultural and

institutional reforms in the name of “freedom of religion” provide some evidence in this regard. At a more general, doctrinal level, there are also significant contrasts between Alewite, some forms of Sufism, and religious-political forms of Sunnite interpretations of Islam; the former, whose adherents have always constituted a significant portion of the population (estimates are perhaps as much as 20% of the population today), along with segments of some schools of folk Islam in Turkey (see, Birge 1937), have generally favored the anti-clerical tendencies of Kemalist *laiklik*.

Summary

Thus, we may sum up some of the affairs of the world from which religion must, within the Kemalist *laiklik* frame, be separated as well as the purposes of that separation as follows: In accordance with the RPP’s reading of the requirements of contemporary civilization; and in order to secure its hegemony and its definition of national aims in legal, social/educational, cultural, and economic matters; and in order to gain respect for national sovereignty in the internal and external political circumstances within which the national movement found itself; religion was removed from its previous position of power, *separated* in this sense, over defining the theory and practice of specific legal, social, cultural, and economic spheres wherein it was seen as having acted as a fetter, causing arbitrary, confused, primitive and mediaeval governance, lethargy and harmful ills to “the people of the Turkish nation.” Within this conceptual frame, then, some of the separationist claims related to separating religious theory and practice from affairs of “state and nation” expressed by the actors who oversaw and implemented the new policies, practices, and institutions associated with *laiklik* must be seen as true characterizations of the RPP effort to separate

actively religious affairs (briefly put) by excluding them from the state, *disentangling them at least partly from a previous state of greater interrelation*. In short, religion was, in some areas and to some extent, separated from the state in Kemalist *laiklik*.

Furthermore, the remaining themes that we have already explored above derive from this general frame of *laiklik* politics: rescued from politics (a theme we have now seen in the major speech acts of the time especially: the rationale to the civil code, Mustafa Kemal's Speech, and the official party programs), religion finds a secure home in the conscience (which the government set itself both to insure and to protect, actively if we consider the role of the Religious Affairs Presidency); *laiklik*, therefore, is not atheism (a theme expressed by all of the major actors, and party publicists¹¹³); *laiklik* is, in their conceptual and power frame, a progressive, civilized, forward-looking principle of national development, progress, and prosperity, whereas anti-*laiklik* principles are uncivilized, backward, regressive and reactionary;¹¹⁴ and, finally, religion separated from the affairs of the world and remaining within the conscience is perfectly consistent with the progressive ends of *laiklik*.¹¹⁵

In essence, then, the *laiklik* politics that separated religion from affairs of the state *in particular constitutional, educational/socio-cultural,*

¹¹³ For statements by Peker, and interpretation, see Parla (1992, 116); and by Bozkurt see (1944a, 339).

¹¹⁴ A seminal statement of this kind is Bozkurt's: "One cannot think of something more wrong than attributing religion to the state" (1944a, 339).

¹¹⁵ Compare Heper who expresses the meaning that I am trying to ascribe to separation in the following way: "One basic goal was to bring institutional secularization as disengagement to its logical conclusion: to completely free politics from religious considerations. Islam was not supposed to have the function of a 'civil religion' for the Turkish polity; Islam was not going to provide a transcendental goal for the political life" (Heper 1981, 305). Where I think Heper errs seriously is in emphasizing the goal of institutional disengagement rather than theoretical and practical disengagement. See also Berkes (1964, 468).

and legal spheres of state activity cannot be wholly decoupled from the RPP's efforts to bring state and society, and to a certain extent the sphere of conscience, under its control. The meaning of separation in Kemalist *laiklik* is, therefore, inescapably situated within the context of RPP governance. This conclusion leads to several points, in a conceptual/political area now thick in complexity, that must be explored before we can proceed to a fuller explanation of the identity and character of Turkey's *laiklik* in its original conception. It is also the area where a hermeneutic understanding of the ends of political inquiry becomes indispensable.

A hermeneutic contribution: Constitutive tension and overlap

As I have argued in Chapter Two (following the tradition of hermeneutic thought in the social sciences), it is impossible to explain the various dimensions of political life adequately without providing an account of the (subjective and inter-subjective, shared and contested) meanings constitutive of those dimensions. This is because the meanings expressed in political life are precisely what make political life, conceptually, what it is, that is, what constitute it. Without offering an interpretation of these meanings (within all of the natural hermeneutic limits I describe in detail in Chapter Two) we cannot be sure that we are explaining others' political lives or our own, if we were to find ourselves going through the same (visually observable) motions. In other words, an adequate account of politics must struggle to describe the meanings and significance of politics -- its identity and character in this sense -- to those who participate in it.

This point is relevant to our study because it can now be seen that the actions, policies, practices, relations, and institutions associated with *laiklik*

politics in Turkey are constituted by “separation” as well as “control” constitutive meanings. Actually, to be more precise about the complex constitutive dimensions of *laiklik* politics: the separationist meanings constitutive of the separation dimensions of Turkish *laiklik* constitutively overlap and exist in a mutually constitutive tension with the control meanings constitutive of *laiklik*’s control dimensions.

To understand the tension, separationist claims made by party publicists that announce the “complete” separation of “religion and state” and thus appear as purposeful attempts to gloss over the control dimensions must be set aside. There is ample evidence to refute these kinds of claims; one need only to discuss the intentional construction of control relations in which the state itself assumed certain religiously-related responsibilities. It is one of the merits of the control account that it successfully debunks the full institutional separationist claims of the accomplishments of *laiklik*.

The tension between separation and control does not lie in fabrication or exaggeration. Rather, it lies in two analytically separable but practically related aspects of *laiklik*. First, tension lies in the fact that actors who established some of the control relations associated with *laiklik* politics actually understood some of the most important dimensions of these relations as relations of separation. Educational policies are a good example. Pre-existing religious schools (medreses and mekteps) were abolished as religious theory and practice was removed (read separated) from a newly unified national educational system under the direction (read control) of the party. At the same time, the law empowered the Ministry of Education to open “separate” and new religious schools for the party’s newly defined new religious educational policy.

Second, the tension lies in the fact that some of the policies of separation that are, I think, legitimately considered as having achieved certain forms of separation between religion and state affairs, were undertaken within the context of RPP control such that they were tools for enhancing that control. The civil code is a good example: religion was removed from legal affairs in the interest of securing legal uniformity (“national unity”) and recognition of the new government by outside powers; i.e. to enhance the control of the new state.

In short, the separation and control dimensions are not conceptually, totally separable. But this also means neither is singularly eliminable. We must understand the practical dimensions (policies, practices, relations, and institutions) of separation within the structural relations of control such that we understand that even these control relations were meaningfully constituted as relations of separation and that the relations of separation played a role in enhancing the control structure.

It is, for the purposes of this paper within the history of Anglophone attempts to explain *laiklik*, also important to notice that the dimensions whose purpose was to effect a separation, were understood as such, and did in fact achieve certain degrees of separation are not adequately considered or disclosed by the control account. It is in this sense that my account of the separationist dimensions of *laiklik* -- dimensions that make *laiklik* what it was in its founding conception -- seeks to deepen the control account by beginning to fill in its (non)hermeneutic gaps. *Laiklik* is not adequately explained by describing the policies, practices, institutional relationships, and purposes summarized in the concepts of the control account.

To be clear about my approach: my account of *laiklik* is not: “*laiklik* contains some contradictions.” Rather, at the meta-empirical level I seek to explain in detail how certain policies, practices, and institutional relations (or “structures”) are what they are because of, not despite, a conceptual tension in their very conception. We might even say, without changing much, that the tension itself is constitutive of *laiklik* in Turkey’s politics. More concretely put, my account is that certain policies, practices, relations and institutions associated with Turkey’s *laiklik* politics have achieved certain forms of separation within an overall structure of control such that specific aspects of this structure of control were in fact seen by the actors who gave them their constitutive meanings, at least in part, as ones of separation. This is what I mean by constitutive overlap. Control and separation within the politics of Turkey’s foundational *laiklik* are not mutually exclusive concepts. The meanings of separation and the dimensions of *laiklik* constituted by the conceptual frame undergirding the purposes of “separation” are inextricably related to the meanings of control and the dimensions of *laiklik* constituted by the purposes of control.¹¹⁶

This conclusion, on the way to several others, is of no small significance. For example, it is impossible to account for the history of the subsequent politics within Turkey’s *laiklik* politics without understanding both the separation and control dimensions of the policies, practices, relations, and institutions associated with *laiklik*. The conceptual tension

¹¹⁶ A slightly different conclusion, but closer than almost all others at expressing the interrelationship is David Kushner’s: “Without relinquishing state control over religious affairs, it was their aim . . . to turn religion into a matter of personal faith and rites, and to eliminate its role in shaping social and political institutions” (Kushner 1985, 89). I have already noted the limits of this claim above. There is no evidence of a lasting, practical interest in fully privatizing religion, or, therefore, of “eliminating its role in . . .” Of course, Turkey’s *laiklik* politics are not unique in this respect.

between separation and control has provided *the* dynamic focal point for the debate over -- the locus of contest over the intersubjective meanings (see Chapter Two) constitutive of -- *laiklik* within Turkey since 1923. Depending on how the tension is resolved (which in turn has depended historically on political-ideological commitments as well as non-hermeneutic postures), the ends and achievements of Kemalist *laiklik* are differently interpreted/evaluated by many participants in *laiklik* politics in Turkey as well as non-participants trying to understand them. The basic point to keep in mind is that just as control and separation overlap, so too do the RPP's authoritarian political tendencies overlap with its laicist separationist politics. Some opponents of the RPP authoritarianism frequently collapse the distinction, while defenders of the RPP reforms are apt to stress separation over control.¹¹⁷

It is no coincidence that many of the reforms associated with *laiklik* were considered by R. Peker to be at the center of the meaning of the Turkish "transformation." In his 1931 explication of the "transformation" principle of Kemalism, he included reforms that he had described previously within the principle of *laiklik* as having almost as much importance to the Republic's new identity as the foundation of the Republic itself: "The most grand and most valuable foundation of the transformation is the republic. However, along with this grand foundation [are] the implementation of the new civil code and laws of justice, the closing of the Islamic law courts and medreses, the emplacement of a single court and school system, the prohibition of dervish orders, the closing of the tekkes and türbes, the

¹¹⁷ For some evidence of the relevance of the concept separation in the debate see comments by Adnan Adıvar (1933); Reed, (1954, 279); Tachau and Ülman (1965, 164); Mango (1991, 172).

wearing of the cap and lastly the new Turkish alphabet, . . .” (text and interpretation in Parla 1992, 117-119; 120-122). Peker’s sequence underscores the centrality of the reforms associated with *laiklik* -- both those definitive of its control dimensions and those definitive of its related, separation dimensions -- in the RPP’s political struggle to affect its Turkish transformation.

With this in view, the hermeneutic inadequacies of the control account in describing the identity and character of the subject matter of *laiklik* now seem considerable. Some of what the ruling cadre saw as its primary achievements in the Turkish transformation are precisely those features of *laiklik* that are inadequately explained simply within the terms of the control account. We might even go so far as to say that the “achievements” of the Turkish transformation lie in the very dimensions of *laiklik* that should be conceptualized, at least partly, as “separation,” not as control. Without seeing this, it is not possible to see how the actors themselves saw what they had accomplished as a “transformation” or as the sixth arrow is almost always translated, as “revolution.” A hermeneutic posture toward the study of Turkey’s *laiklik* politics is indispensable to an adequate explanation of the policies, practices, relations, and institutions associated with those politics.

Shared understandings in Kemalism and Anglophone social science

As can be seen, then, Kemalist *laiklik* contains within it constitutive dimensions that are open to various interpretations. The reception in the Anglophone social science literature, which is a central topic of this entire project, concerns us as well. And, indeed, the RPP’s Western Anglophone

social science jury ruled in favor of the Kemalist reforms (without adequately understanding them) and impact. Research in the history of social science literature on Turkey since 1925 evidences clearly a dominant view among influential observers of Turkish politics, expressing a shared understanding with the Kemalists, of the identity and significance of *laiklik* politics. RPP policies in this area have been viewed as “fundamental” in advancing Turkey’s “maturity”¹¹⁸ (or “passage,” or “transition”¹¹⁹) from one “civilization”¹²⁰ (“old,”¹²¹ “traditional,”¹²² “fatalistic,”¹²³ and dominated by “Islam”¹²⁴) to another (“new,” “modern,” “active,” and dominated by “science”¹²⁵). The view itself was based in an understanding of Islam (in Anglophone circles) as incompatible with progress and therefore in need of relegation to the past (or “private” sphere). In addition, accounts in the literature openly endorsed the aims, interests, and sources of

¹¹⁸ E.g., “I think of Turkey as a country that is coming of age” (Webster 1939, 288); “In the Kemalist republic, a new generation had grown to modernity . . .” (Lewis 1961, 314).

¹¹⁹ See esp., Lerner 1964 [1958]; Lerner and Robinson 1960; Weiker 1981; Lewis 1961.

¹²⁰ E.g.: “Here, before our very eyes is occurring a transition of civilizations, the abandonment of practices which originated in Arabia, based up the union of religion and politics, the adoption of pattern which developed in Europe, based upon the separation of religion and politics” (Allen 1935; cp. Lewis 1957, 267).

¹²¹ Nearly all of the literature on Turkey stresses this theme.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Especially interesting is the emphasis, found in the early political and social studies of Webster, Allen and Lerner, on the concept *kismet*. Literally, this means “fate” or “destiny” – it is a concept deeply imbued with theosophic and what Mardin calls mythopoetic meanings. The aforementioned interpreters adopted *kismet* as the starting point for the development of Turkey and indeed the individual psychology of Turks. Webster called it “do-nothing fatalism;” Robins discussed “dogmatic fatalism” (Webster 1939; Robinson 1951, 36; cp. Allen 1935, 206).

¹²⁴ Again, at least until the mid 1950’s this theme is pervasive, especially in works that do not distinguish, as the Kemalists did, Islam as a faith (a moral message and set of rituals) from Islam as a counter-regime force. Webster called Islam “decadent,” an “incubus” (1939; 69). Allen noted that it might be a “dike to progress” (1935, 85). Even after, it remains a theme in parts of the literature. For example, in a recent study on “religion and political culture in Turkey,” one political scientist writes: “. . . Islam does not teach its followers to change society” (Turan 1991, 48).

¹²⁵ All of these come as juxtapositions to the previous concepts throughout the literature (see also Caldwell 1957, 125).

the RPP legitimacy claims, named the period between 1920 and 1935 as “one of the greatest revolutions in history” (Frey 1957, 3), or a “radical” “break” from the “past.”¹²⁶ Mustafa Kemal was seen as the “catalyst” (e.g., Weiker 1981, 110; 1985, 29-30) or “pragmatic” “alchemist” (Webster 1939; 69, 240, 245ff.) for a process that had its own internal “modernizing dynamic.”¹²⁷ Richards and Waterbury have said that the Western modernization and nation-building literature of the 1950s and 1960s “could, in spirit, have been written by Atatürk” (Richards and Waterbury 1990, 347).

Indeed, judging by the interpretations of “Turkey’s secular politics” in the literature, Atatürk and the RPP leadership appear to have judged correctly that all of the ideas, symbols, and so on associated with Islam, if established in a position of central political power, would not earn Turkey favor and respect in the Western world.¹²⁸ Hans Kohn saw “the complete change in structure of the state” as marking an “epochal transition” (1933, 154-55). The RPP, he wrote, “is imbued with the spirit of secularism and liberalism which is making such headway today in all the countries of the East, fulfilling everywhere the same task as it did in Europe a century and a half ago, the task of overcoming the darkness of the religious and feudal Middle Ages” (1933, 154-5).¹²⁹ “It is as in a stuffy room the windows were suddenly thrown open” (Kohn 1933, 148). Daniel Lerner declared that the

¹²⁶ The theme of breaking from the past is true of nearly all the literature, but see esp. Lewis 1961.

¹²⁷ Today, the debate has picked up several the latent themes in the modernization literature, that of “democracy” and “civil society,” with the consequence the Islam is no longer seen by some as incompatible with political development. Recent books stress the “democratization” theme more than the modernization one, though both have worked together over time. However, just as insufficient theoretical attention was given to the use of “modern,” I fear the same is true with the concept “democracy” (compare, e.g., David Held(1987))

¹²⁸ Cp. note 71.

¹²⁹ For one critique of the “liberalism” of the RPP, see Heper (1985).

Turks, as “transitionals,” were “entering history” out of “traditional” “holes” (1958, 30, 33). Soon he *predicted*, the Turks will “have opinions on public matters,” “tradition” being “none of [the Modern’s] business” (70-71). Walter Weiker, striking a note that pervades his work, wrote in 1963 that, “Certainly it must be agreed that many of Atatürk’s reforms of the 1920’s and 1930’s were *sine qua non* for much of the achievement in the social and economic betterment of the Turkish people that has taken place under the Republic” (1963, 154; 1981, 110; 1985, 20). And Rustow, in one of his more recent studies, writes:

In sum, the Atatürk revolution, combining continuity of leadership with radical change of direction, used Turkey’s defeat in World War I and its victory in the War of Independence as a grand opportunity to transform a decaying, traditional, dynastic-theocratic empire into a vibrantly modern nation-state (Rustow 1985, 10; cp. Landau 1984, xiii; B Lewis 1961).¹³⁰

As a result of these estimations, Turkey’s political evolution has been taken as a “model,” “precedent,” “yardstick,” and “test-case” for “secularism in the Muslim world,” “modernization of Islam,” and/or “Westernization in a non-Western context,”¹³¹ (as well as “post-war democracy”, and “economic growth and rapid sustained recovery”).¹³²

¹³⁰ Compare Tachau, “It is difficult to imagine a more radical break from tradition. . .” (1984, 38).

¹³¹ See, Karpal (1959, 63, 452); Allen (1953, 63); Kohn (1933, 152); Toynbee (1927, 73); Rustow (1959, 523; 1985, 5); Lewis (1987, xi).

¹³² This culminated (in the post-USSR scramble for control over Central Asia) with the US government declaring that, “we think that Turkey could be a model for countries of the former Soviet Union because it’s a democratic secular state with a free market economy, which is the way we would like to see these countries moving” (Legislate briefing network, Feb., 10, 1992). One should note that Turkey’s “democratic secular model” has been taken as a model by Western countries for non-Western ones precisely when Turkey was interested in joining the countries to its west in the new European Union (cp., Eichelman 1992, 5-6; Wright 1992, 142). The relevant policy-related discourse has now turned to “civil society” (see especially, Lewis 1994).

When, during the multiparty period, there are signs of Islam's presence (or "survival"¹³³ or "persistence"¹³⁴) in public life, Turkey became a test case for the harmonious fusion of "civilizations" (Lewis 1951, 1961, 410) and "amalgamated" forms of "tradition and modernity" (Rustow 1965). Indeed, well before the now notorious Turkish-Islamic synthesis¹³⁵ gained currency in Turkey during the 1980's, it was discussed by Anglophone interpreters who had sympathetically received the Kemalist project. Expressing what should now be fairly clear Kemalist laicist understandings -- indeed, as we have seen above, ones that Mustafa Kemal himself considered -- Lewis wrote in 1951:

So far the basic social and cultural reforms are intact, but an extension of religious revival might well endanger them, with far-reaching consequences for the whole future of Turkey. Some restoration of Islam is probably necessary if the Turkish people is to recover its balance after the revolutionary changes of the last thirty years and achieve a harmonious fusion of its inherited and its acquired values. If the people and rules of Turkey today can achieve such a synthesis, they will render a service not only to Turkey but to the whole world of Islam. Unfortunately there is little sign of such a synthesis yet, and many of the leaders of the Islamic revival profess a reactionary and xenophobic faith which, if it becomes dominant could undo much of the work of the last thirty years or longer. (1952, 339)¹³⁶

¹³³ E.g., Tachau 1984, 163 (cp., Özbudun 1980, 107; Toprak 1990, 3-7)

¹³⁴ E.g., Weiker 1981, 66-7; 246-247. Compare, Islam a "reaction" (Toprak 1981, 123) or "shield to rapid change" (Abadan-Unat 1991).

¹³⁵ See Yeşilada (1988); Saylan (1989); Toprak (1992). See also note 59 above.

¹³⁶ Compare with note 72 above. Lewis continues with a comment that seems to anticipate the current debate over civilizational relations: "In Turkey, as in other Muslim countries, there are those who talk hopefully of achieving 'a synthesis' of the best elements of West and East'. This is a vain hope -- the clash of civilizations in history does not usually culminate in a marriage of selected best elements -- rather in promiscuous cohabitation of good, bad, and indifferent alike. But a true revival of religious faith on the level of modern thought and life is within within the bounds of possibility. The Turkish people, by the exercise of their practical common sense and powers of improvisation, may yet find a workable compromise between Islam and modernism that will enable them, without conflict, to follow both their fathers' path to freedom and progress and their grandfathers' path to God" (Lewis 1951, 339-40).

Given these estimations of Kemalism's significance, it is not so surprising that some influential Anglophone interpreters would join the Kemalists by announcing the "separation of church and state" in Turkey. Their understandings of the "historic" significance of the Kemalist project bear remarkable resemblances due in large part, I think, to their shared positivist methodological and historical posture to the world. It is not incidental that the Kemalist justification for changing the script and language of the Turks was repeated in the Anglophone literature (on the devaluation of the constitutive relationship between politics and language, see Chapter Two). Mustafa Kemal's evaluation of Arabic script as a set of "incomprehensible signs" was quoted and endorsed by Lewis as "not without foundation." Arabic, Lewis wrote, is "ill-suited for Turkish sounds," "difficult to teach," and "troublesome to print" (1961, 279). By contrast, Latin is "clear, simple, and phonetic" and likely to enhance literacy rates and "cultural expansion." Similarly, Dodd wrote of "the more cumbersome Arabic" and asseverated that the language reforms "both broke a powerful connection with the Islamic and Arab heritage and made it easier to extend literacy" (Dodd 1969, 22).¹³⁷

¹³⁷ Akural (1984) criticizes Lewis, Uriel Heyd, and by inference Dodd, among many others including Turkish "Kemalist historians," for speaking without competence on this issue: "Historians and social scientists in the field of Turkish studies, though their comprehension of methods of teaching reading is negligible, do not hesitate to cite the reforms as a foreword step towards westernization, and no questions are raised concerning the actual efficacy of the Latin alphabet for teaching reading . . ." (136). Akural cites psycholinguistic research to argue that reading is a selective process in which the reader uses cue systems in the written language "so sample what is written, to predict on the basis of those cues, and then to confirm or correct that prediction according to its congruence with subsequent graphophones, syntactic and semantic information;" "the pace of learning is greatly influenced by non-linguistic factors as well, including intelligence, previous experience with books, social and political considerations, and method of instruction. Moreover, once the ability to read has been acquired, proficient reading seems to proceed as efficiently in a language like Ottoman-Turkish using Arabic script as it does in modern Turkish using Latin script" (135).

The question for us that arises is: Does the shared understanding between Anglophone interpreters of Turkey and the Kemalist political forces in Turkey *thus* vindicate the “secularization as institutional separation” accounts of the former? And, therefore, are we to credit the outside interpreters of *laiklik* with capturing the identity and meaning of its separation dimensions (in ways not captured by the control account)? I have argued here that “separation” is one understanding constitutive of *laiklik*’s institutional relations of control. What must be considered here is to what extent, therefore, the Anglophone interpreters of *laiklik* *had it right* in declaring state and religion to be separated or disestablished (Weiker 1981, 110).

While it is indispensable to a full account of *laiklik* to understand that relations of control between the state and religion are understood as relations of separation within the constitutive frames of *laiklik* politics, I think it is a mistake to credit Anglophone subscribers to a “secularism as institutional separation” account with explaining that dimension in Turkey’s *laiklik* politics. The shared sense of significance of *laiklik* between Anglophone interpreters and partisans of the regime was only that; it was not an explanatory guide (though it often comes within an explanatory frame as a contribution to the objectivist discourse of social science -- please see excerpts quoted above). If statements like Lerner’s declaring institutional separation were explanatory in intent, they were explanatory as descriptions of the structural relations themselves rather than of the constitutive understandings of those relations (see Chapter Two for the fundamental difference).

The exclusive relationship between language and politics manifested by such descriptions is the distinguishing characteristic of non-hermeneutic approaches to the study of political institutions. Moreover, these approaches have, in the recent period of modern political science, sustained and supported certain historical expectations for particular outcomes of modern political history, such as the separation of the religious and political institutional spheres. My thesis in this dissertation has been that hermeneutic approaches cannot sustain this, or any other singular, view of political modernity. History is, and should be, considered more open than the narrow version of secular modernism found in the Anglophone literature and imposed as a standard in comparative studies. The failure to account for the constitutive understandings is, to repeat, the definitive product of non-hermeneutic tendencies in the social sciences interested in political explanation. Non-hermeneutic approaches will always fall short of understanding both the particular characteristics of the subject matter as well as their significance in the political/historical dynamics within which they participate. Here, I hope I have shown how this is true of the study of *laiklik* in Turkey.

One might find counterexamples to my apparently sweeping claims in this Anglophone literature. For instance, Walter Weiker suggested in 1963 that “secularism” in Turkey “was interpreted to mean virtually total exclusion of religious influence from public life . . .” (1963, 4). This characterization appears to come very close to one of the constitutive senses of “separation” that I have tried to capture above. The word “virtually” is significant precisely in this way. Room is left open for the possibility that the Kemalists did not totally exclude religion from politics. But Weiker in this

account does not indicate the constitutive control meanings at all. A form of the separation account is left as a description of the achievements of *laiklik*. The same habit of explanation can be found in Dankwart Rustow's most recent characterization of "Atatürk's principle of secularism": He writes,

A half-century ago, the defenders of the Ottoman theocratic establishment deeply resented secularism as an attack on religion itself whereas Atatürk insisted that his policy of separation of religion and politics and of secular education did not imply any enmity toward religion. (Rustow 1994, 10; cp, 1993, 61)

It should be said that Rustow, whose seminal 1957 control account added much understanding to *laiklik*, at least provides some account of the meaning of "secularism" when he addresses the matter. By contrast, Weiker's 1963 analysis, where he informs us of a policy debate on "Islam and secularism," the concept "secularism" is frequently used without any conceptual unpacking -- a tendency throughout the literature to leave the concept undefined and more or less open to audience interpretation (Weiker 1963, 9).¹³⁸ Still, the fact that Weiker and Rustow have chosen to highlight the "separation" concept, *apart from* the more powerful constitutive "control" concept, betrays, I think, the kind of non-hermeneutically challenged, pre-judgment that blinds us to seeing the complex, constitutive features of secular politics in modernity.

Interestingly, the control account that is more compelling on the hermeneutic side still falls very short. As we have seen, its advocates offer a compelling description of the control relations between state and religion in Turkey, but these are not always hermeneutically interested ones either.

¹³⁸ Though Rustow is not exempt from this critique entirely. In 1979, he described the Turkish state as "secular" ("A Muslim population in a secular state," in a policy-oriented article (1979, 92). I am aware that one should not expect rigorous conceptual work in such places.

Frequently, they take the form of non-hermeneutically guided structural accounts. This is evident partly in the expressed interest in redescribing “separation” as “control,” thus identifying the power relations between state and religion. But this is done without due attention to the constitutive institutional separation dimensions as well. My account hopefully advances the project of understanding *laiklik* by filling precisely this gap.

Summary

Therefore, a more compelling account of *laiklik* politics in Turkey must account for *both* the control and separation dimensions expressed therein. It is insufficient to identify only one or the other. Both mutually and complexly comprise the matrix of meanings constitutive of the power relations, political history, sociological impact, and geopolitical realities associated with *laiklik* in Turkey. To miss these complex dimensions, moreover, is to unduly narrow our vision of Turkey's political history and future possibilities within the *laiklik* dynamic. As indicated above, when the one-party period ends, *both* the control and separation conceptual streams must be followed. They comprise the major themes of the unfolding dynamic. We are poorly equipped to understand *laiklik* if we begin our analyses without due recognition to both of these constitutive frames that make Turkey's *laiklik* politics what it is.

A critical, comparative, explanatory change: Laicism not secularism

To close, I would like to identify one final advantage of the hermeneutic turn in the study of Turkey's *laiklik* politics, which is generalizable to the study of all “secular modern” possibilities of modern politics. In Chapter Two, I have argued that the chief aim of accounting for

the political lives of others is to bring their concepts and understandings (not just “words”) into our own (with all the natural limitations and exchanges this involves). Understanding occurs, following Gadamer and Taylor, when we fuse horizons such that we become able, in our language, to say something that is true of the other (and this does not necessarily mean that we agree or accept the judgment of the others). This process involves not simply recovering meaning but also what Taylor calls the “central demand” of hermeneutic political theory, namely “that we confront our language of explanation with the self-understanding of our subjects” (1988, 228). In this process of confrontation, our (“the explainer’s”) conceptual language and hence our understanding and sense of political possibilities is enlarged beyond our original language (and remains open to further enlargement) (Chapter Two; Taylor 1990, 42-55).

In this chapter, I have tried to show how the constitutive meanings of “separation” in the politics of *laiklik* in Turkey must be brought into our account of those politics, i.e., into our language of understanding *laiklik*. To close, I would like to suggest that this “bringing into our language something that is *true* of the other” must be done with the concept *laiklik* itself.

For years, along with incomplete analyses of the constitutive dimensions of *laiklik* (not to suggest that mine is “complete” -- see Chapter Two), interpreters have not paid adequate attention to ambiguities that arise in the translation of *laiklik* into “secularism” in the Anglophone context.

The concept *laiklik* is derived from the French *laïcité*, and can be translated into English as laicism (cp., in Spanish, *laicidad*, Italian, *laicità*). The concept is not entirely foreign to the Anglophone vocabulary. The core

meaning of laicism, drawn from the French revolutionary experience by the Kemalists,¹³⁹ clearly implies lay control over religion. By contrast, secularism, at least in Anglophone contexts, cannot be said to connote exactly the same meaning. For one, the concept lay is not synonymous with the concept secular. The former implies the people as distinct from the “religious wise” strata (“clergy” in Christian contexts, “rabbinate” in Jewish contexts, “ulema” in Islamic contexts). A lay person may be religiously devout. By contrast, secular may imply non-religious, irreligious, or even anti-religious. Indeed, secularism is frequently associated with non-religious moral doctrines in direct contradistinction to religious moral doctrines. In addition, in English speaking contexts, the term secularism as a constitutional concept may be taken to imply the “separation” between religion and the state; whereas, laicism may mean lay hegemony over the state. Finally, secular political practices, as distinct from the constitutional concept, might be thoroughly anti-religious. Lay religious practices might be anti-clerical and anti-religious in some senses, but not necessarily as anti-religious as secular practices may be. (These are only a few differences among many.¹⁴⁰)

Now, most interpreters discuss *laiklik* in Turkey as if it were synonymous and perfectly interchangeable with (i.e. *meant*) “secularism.”¹⁴¹ For example, Robins, who refers to laicism, calls “Atatürk’s

¹³⁹ We have seen some evidence of the influence of the French experience in the conceptualization of the Turkish founding, for example in the Rationale of the Civil Code. Birtek writes, “The Turkish Republic was constituted in a world in which the Third Republic prevailed as a model . . .” (1991, 112). Cp. also Keyder (1979, 3); Adnan-Adivar (1935, 244, 251); Özbudun (1970, 394); Toynebee (1927, 64).

¹⁴⁰ The difference between laicism and secularism *may* be seen as one of scale. Perhaps laicism is one step in the direction of secularism. Perhaps it is the final stage of anti-clericalism. To clericalists (as opposed to clerics), it is probably a backward movement. To secularists it may be a step in the right direction. To laicists, it might be just right.

¹⁴¹ I cite only several examples here; pick up almost any text on Turkey’s politics.

state” “formally secular” (1991, 4, 11). Weiker (among many others) refers to “Kemalist secularism” (1981, 107); Yeşilada uses the terms interchangeably (1992, 10, 11); and Keyder calls the center of lay control an “exclusively secular” arena (1988, 207-8). Furthermore, characterizations of the multiparty period which translate *laiklik* as Atatürk’s policy of “secularism” abound. Many of these are not simply descriptive statements; they are, rather, intended to make some serious points about the unfolding dynamics of “secular politics” in Turkey. Critical conversations about *laiklik* during the RPP’s 1947 congress are depicted by Rustow as “the quest for a redefinition of secularism” (1957, 94); Karpat, on the same topic, refers to the RPP’s “understanding of secularism” as having undergone “extensive criticism” (1959, 272-3). As a result, the CHP is said to have “relaxed secularism” while the Democrat Party “de-emphasized secularism” (Bahrapour 1967, 22). Both parties were said to have “compromised the question of secularism for political purposes” (Toprak 1981, 79; Weiker 1985) as a result of their support for religiously interested policies. Weiker asserts that despite these “retreats,” “secularism” “was firmly established in Turkey” (1985, 27) -- several years after he had averred, “it is generally agreed that secularism *per se* is no longer an issue” (1981, 105). Richard Tapper disagreed with this finding, seeing contestation during the 1980’s of “strict traditional secularism” (a remarkable feat of conceptual sloppiness) “once again” ... “being redefined” (1990, 1). Marguiles and Yildizoğlu, either in a state of deep historical ignorance, or aware of some distinction between *laiklik* and secularism, disagreed. They suggested that prior to the 1980’s, “the concept of secularism was not previously open to question” (1988, 17).

The following two comments, by Rustow and Özbudun respectively, exemplify the usual way *laiklik* is portrayed:

Since Atatürk's day, secularism has been deeply embedded both in the constitution and laws of the country and in the political consciousness of the elite. (Rustow 1979, 92)

For more than a half a century Turks have been living under a secular, national republican state clearly based on a Western model. (Özbudun 1987, 329)

Our study shows that even if secularism as separation is a constitutive meaning of *laiklik*, calling Turkey's state "secular" without unpacking the meaning of this term *in an Anglophone* context might fail to capture the history and identity of *laiklik* politics. This is especially true with suggestions, like Dodd's, that the reforms "secularized political life," or Landau's that "Atatürk's goal as a modern secular state" (Dodd 1979, 48; Landau 1984, xiv). *Even if the end was secularism*, which it was not according to my account, it is an obfuscation to ignore laicization as the means. In sum, expressing the identity of *laiklik* by translating it as "secularism" has the consequence of perhaps getting part of the meaning right, but not enough of it. In fact, it has the single consequence of increasing our perplexity.

In this context, we may note that some recent interpreters of Turkey's "secular state" have found some of its not-so-secular dimensions in contradiction with its reputation. In recent years, we espy the emergence of a new "account" of Turkey's *laiklik* politics that expresses a skepticism of Turkey's claim to be "secular." Best named the "so-called account," some of Turkey's interpreters see a "so-called secular state" (Rubin 1992). The skeptical thrust of this account is expressed well by Barchard who describes the *Diyanet İşleri Reisliği* as a "department of the supposedly secular Turkish

state” (Robins 1991; Barchard 1990, 14). It is also evident in the question posed by Tapper (and quoted under the title here): “How far is the self-designation ‘secular state’ still appropriate, either as a description or as a political principle in modern Turkey?” (Tapper 1992, 1-2). It is important to point out that this skeptical thrust appears as early as the late 1940’s inside Turkey. One of the few outside observers to notice it was Howard Reed, who noted that critics of *laiklik* saw the use of their taxes to pay Imam’s salaries as “hardly secular” (Reed 1954, 278).

It seems to me that the hermeneutic imperative to bring other concepts and meanings into our own explanatory language is particularly relevant in this quandary of potentially misleading concepts. We should, however, be aware of the trickiness of such a move in this context. This trickiness stems from the fact that the word *laiklik* is, in the Turkish-speaking context almost without exception, translated into English-speaking contexts as “secularism.” That is to say that, in the Turkish-speaking context the two concepts are often fused. Mardin, for instance, “refers to the constitutional principle of laicism or secularism” (1987, 96). Almost universally, texts, seminars, journalistic writings, and conversational uses of the term *laiklik* are translated as “secularism.”¹⁴² Thus, what appears to be a fundamental distinction between “separation” and “control” from the outside, is collapsed in a mutual interrelation in the Turkish concept of *laiklik* as well as in Turkey’s *laiklik* politics. This linguistic situation nicely reflects the constitutive meanings within Turkey, but it raises a dilemma for *all* interpreters -- participants in Turkey’s *laiklik* politics as well as those who are trying in various languages from the outside to understand that

¹⁴² This point is based on extensive observations and conversations during on-site research in Turkey.

participation. The dilemma is implied in the comment of one of the few interpreters of *laiklik* to attend to the distinction: “. . . in Turkish, secularism is not equivalent to the American term, which generally refers to the separation of church and state. Rather, it is a concept based on the European notion of laicism, according to which religious practice and institutions are regulated and administered by the state” (Abadan-Unat 1991, 3-4). I should note that this comment partly occludes aspects of *laiklik* that we have seen thus far. Firstly, it occludes the fact that religious institutions are *in* the state, not simply subject to its administration. They are not fully independent and autonomous institutions. Second, these aspects of “regulation and administration” are constitutively understood as control, with some aspects of separation.

But beyond these occlusions, the dilemma we face is clear: do we choose, with English speakers of Turkish, to translate *laicism* as secularism? Or, alternatively, do we choose to take a different path, one made available by a broader option -- available in global comparative discourse -- to translate *laiklik* as laicism? If we chose the former, we may accept the Turkish case as one form of alternative secularism; if we choose the latter, we should describe it as one form of laicism. Both are available moves within the hermeneutic frame, but I think one is more preferable than the other.

The choice is not merely a matter of semantics or quibbling about terms. As we have seen, *laiklik* in Turkey consists of certain political power relations that institutionally connect and interpretively implicate the state in religious matters. The policies, practices, institutions, and relations associated with *laiklik*, therefore, might be better understood by an English speaking audience if the concept expressed were not one that was subject to

potential misunderstanding. For this reason, I think that *laiklik* should be translated as laicism and discussed as such. If we must bring the concept “secular” in somewhere, I think that the constitutive meanings are available to describe *laiklik* best as “laicism with some tendencies toward secularism, as well as some tendencies toward non-secularism.”

In the simplest terms, following the hermeneutic imperative down this path will more correctly convey the declared principle of the Turkish state. But it will also help us to better understand some of the most pivotal moments in Turkey’s laicist politics. Alas, the members of the CHP did not “reinterpret secularism” during the 1947 Congress; they reinterpreted laicism (a reinterpretation which coincided with, *inter alia*, an increase in their support for forms of religious education in the state’s “unified” schools). The Democrat Party’s reforms did not amount to a redefinition of secularism as much as it did of laicism (thus, they went even further in their support for state-sponsored religious education). Sunar and Toprak’s description of the DP’s impact on laicism in Turkey is exemplary (though they are hardly consistent on this point)¹⁴³.

The DP criticized the CHP for interfering with the religious practices of the citizenry, stating that laicism did not stop simply at separating religion from politics but meant in practice [under the RPP] interference with and a negative attitude towards religious observance. (Sunar and Toprak 1983, 429-430)

Of course, a “negative attitude toward religious observance” would be one kind of secular attitude. But, as our discussion shows, it is hardly clear that

¹⁴³ Cp. Toprak 1981, Chapter 1. Birtek and Toprak write, “Radical secularism as state policy . . . had been a fundamental aspect of the republican ethos in Turkey” (Birtek and Toprak 1993, 194). While Sunar and Sayarı write, “The founding of the secular Turkish republic in 1923 . . .” (Sunar and Sayarı 1986, 168-9).

this was *generally* true of Kemalist *laiklik*, even though it was true with regard to some forms of Islam in Turkey.

As Sunar and Toprak's statement intimates, conceptualizing *laiklik* as laicism also enables us to capture more closely the contested dimensions between control and separation, a contest whose roots we are now able to trace back at least as far as Ziya Gökalp's insistence that a modern state separates religion and politics (one kind of secular thesis that one can find in the political history of Turkey -- see previous chapter). The Turkish lay elite has, throughout the twentieth century, had its quarrels over how to structure, and, in some quarters govern, the religious institutions and life of Turkey. This is not a surprising fact if we think of *laiklik* as a form of laicism, but it might startle some who think of it as secularism. The evidence of the "so-called account" suggests that this has already occurred (inside Turkey with those who criticize *laiklik's* "secular" shortcomings as well as those outside noted above).

None of Turkey's Anglophone interpreters have suggested that Turkey be consistently considered a laicist state. Bernard Lewis tried to inject the concept into Anglophone understanding when he wrote almost 30 years ago, "The basis of the Kemalist religious policy was laicism, not irreligion; its purpose was not to destroy Islam, but to disestablish it -- to end the power of religion and its exponents in political, social, and cultural affairs, and limit it to matters of belief and worship. In thus reducing Islam to the role of religion in a modern Western, nation-state, the Kemalists also made some attempt to give their religion a more modern and more national form." (1961, 412). Further to his credit, Lewis consistently brings the concept "lay," as opposed to "secular," into his historical descriptions of the Atatürk

experience (1991, 121; 1958, 38). But, as we can see, Lewis's account falls short even as it surpasses others in these respects. It is far from clear that "disestablishment" was the purpose of laicism, especially with regard to "ending the power of religion and its exponents in political affairs." The same may be said about "limiting religion to matters of belief and worship," or the ambiguously stated notion of "reducing it to the role of religion in a modern, Western nation-state."¹⁴⁴

It is not enough simply to switch translations from "secularism" to "laicism." The constitutive content of the politics must be clarified as well. This is Bromley's error as well in the account I represent at the beginning of this paper. Juxtaposing control to separation, Bromley states, "In fact, the militant secularism of the state amounted to rigid state control over religious life, and a strict laicism in public affairs, rather than the institutional separation of Church and State, or the decline of personal belief" (Bromley 1994, 125-126). Lewis makes a similar error recently when suggesting that *laicité* in Turkey -- which he defines as "the principle of separation between religion and state" -- "was accomplished by Atatürk in a series of radical measures, including the disestablishment of Islam" (1994, 46).

Some have tried to capture the uniqueness of the Atatürk experience by stressing its militancy in building a state in which "secularism," as Rustow puts it, "is more stringent" than "the separation of church and state in the West" (1987, 29). Such accounts hedge slightly on the authoritarian dimensions of structural, political, and cultural control. The more usual way in which the distinction is conveyed is illustrated in the control accounts above: "Turkey's secular state is "different from secularism in a Western

¹⁴⁴ Compare Birtek, who defines *laicism* in Turkey as having "rigorously separated the state from religion and relegated the latter to the individual's conscience" (1991, 133).

sense,” assuming there is one Western meaning and practice of “secularism.”

Toprak has made the interesting suggestion that we can get at Turkey’s uniqueness by thinking of it as a “semi-secular” state: “If we accept the principle that the separation of church and state by definition excludes state interference in religious life, we have to agree with [Bülent] Daver that the Turkish Republic is a semi-secular state. Its brand of secularism is rather unique and should be understood as such” (1981, 47).

The problem with suggestions like this,¹⁴⁵ it seems to me, is that they all seem to imply in one way or another that the state center created by *laiklik* was entirely non-religious or that religion became a thoroughly private matter. In some senses, this may be true, but it is not true enough of the overall realities of *laiklik*.

In its use, the concept secular indubitably implies, among other things, non-religious, and to some extent privatization of religious belief; does it make sense to speak of a semi-non-religious state center, as implied by Toprak’s suggestion? Or, is it, alternatively, clearer to speak of a lay center? I think the latter. Toprak’s reasons for choosing “semi-secular” seem to be based on an interest in capturing Turkey’s uniqueness relative to other contexts. (Capturing uniqueness is a necessary part of comparison.) That is, my reading of the “semi” claim is that “semi” is intended to capture the control and supervision dimensions of the *laiklik*’s institutional

¹⁴⁵ Compare Berkes’s historical discussion that locates the roots of “secularism as the separation of state from religion” in the 1839 Ottoman reforms. He writes, that the goal was interpreted to “create a new and modern state and society that would be secular *in so far as possible*. It meant that there would be no room for religious considerations and there would be no difference between a Muslim and a non-Muslim. Even if these remained in their real form in principle and theory only, . . . it had the unavoidable power of effecting and guiding later action” (emphasis added, Berkes 1957, 65). It is a nice idea: “secular in so far as possible;” but it does not clarify enough.

relationships, in contrast to their absence in states that fully separate the two realms. It seems to me, however, that this concept partly occludes the fact that these control dimensions occur within the state umbrella, structurally and conceptually integrated within it, not “under it” in a semi-autonomous, subordinate sense. The use of the concept secular, without placing it *within* laicism, it seems to me, fails to capture adequately the identity of *laiklik* that we must try to capture.

The conceptualization of *laiklik* as “secularism” in all of the accounts on Turkey’s *laiklik* politics betrays the persisting influence of the kind of secular-modern prejudgments constitutive of research in Anglophone social science literature that I criticize in the first chapter. Interpreters insist -- in a less than entirely conscious way -- on seeing “secular” outcomes wherever theocracy does not exist. This is very true of the literature on Turkey’s *laiklik* politics (leaving aside the question of whether or not the Ottoman Empire was a theocracy), and I suspect it is true to a large extent in other contexts. The judgement that secularism immediately (naturally?, necessarily?) succeeds theocracy clearly leads to some confusions in the project of political explanation; that is, it blinds us to identifying variations within non-theocratic politics. Therefore, just as the separation account of *laiklik* politics in Turkey betrays non-hermeneutically challenged, prejudgments about certain secular and modern outcomes of modern political history (“secularization as institutional separation”), the control account does so as well, albeit in a slightly different way.

To call *laiklik* laicism may not be perfect -- we might for instant see that Turkey's laicism, unlike laicism in France, was anticlerical only to some extent (the *Diyanet İşleri Reisliği* remained inside the state). But to see it

anticlerical to some extent rather than secular-- with the clear implication being that the state was not necessarily hostile to its own institutionalized religion as such, but rather in support of what it called true Islam -- we get closer to the identity of *laiklik* than most of its interpreters do. Similarly, if we see *laiklik* as being constituted by control relations, to a certain extent, as well as aspects of separation, to a certain extent, we arrive at a truer account of Turkey's "uniqueness." We can see that the structures and will exist to put religion to use in politics (in what elites take to be the interest of the state) as well as to keep it out (for the same reason).¹⁴⁶ (Referring to the contemporary "functions" of Islam in Turkish politics, Turan speaks matter of factly about how "religion provides a framework within which political power may be exercised, is an element of social control which includes

¹⁴⁶ An issue that has bothered many in Turkey -- on the secular and religiopolitical sides -- who wish to see secular politics in Turkey. In comparative studies of lay elites in Middle East politics, the instrumental "use of Islam" has been explained generally as an effort to enhance a regime's legitimacy (Hudson 1980, 16; Turan 1991, 42). Anglophone interpreters of Turkish politics see "the use of Islam" in the multiparty period as a tool for "political advantage" -- i.e. for getting votes, maintaining kinship and clientelist relations, rewarding regional cliques and tarikats (Sunar and Toprak 1983, 429; Heper 1985, 353); for fighting communism and other so-called "left" and "right," "discordant and divisive," anti-solidarist "partitive interests" political tendencies, including Kurdish national ones (Rustow 1957, 93; Karpat 1959, 276; Dodd 1969, 307; 1983, 45; Bianchi 1984, 105; Barchard 1985; Heper 1985, 353; Parla 1985; Kushner 1986, 94; Toprak 1987, 2-3; Saylan 1989, 16; Ahmad 1991, 13, 18; Abadan-Unat 1991, 187-188) and thus "as an integrative force" (Kushner 1986, 93); for satisfying the moral needs of the Turkish people (see note 89 above); and for outbidding competitors to power. *None of these are unique to Turkey.* Dodd has written, "The crux of the matter seems to be that in a country where the alarm against communism is now always being sounded off, religion can be seen to have its prophylactic uses" (1969, 308-9). The "use of Islam" has become less of a problem to some interpreters of Turkey these days when Islam and the concept of a "legitimate right" with "legitimate options within the system" is taken as an ingredient of Turkish democratic processes (Erguder 1991, 153). As Dalacoura put it, "Even General Evren, leader of the military coup of 1980 and later president of the Republic and head of the army . . . quoted passages from the Koran in his speeches and decided to make religious instruction compulsory in schools. Turks, after all, are a pious people. But this does not mean they want to bring down the secular [sic] state and follow Iran's example" (1990, 216) -- as stated when questions of whether Turkey and states the Middle East would follow Iran's example during the 1980's.

values such as being respectful of governmental authority and of public servants, and compliance with the government's commands (!) [i.e.] is one of the several ways through which obedience to political authority is secured; is a source of symbols, ideas, and meanings that are used to elicit positive political behaviors from society;¹⁴⁷ . . . [and in sum] is a resource which may be mobilized for 'purposes of state' whenever it is found useful or necessary" (Turan 1991, 42).¹⁴⁸ None of this should surprise an observer who understands *laiklik* as one form of laicism.) We also see that the hat reforms may not have been intended to change the contents of the head in their entirety (I borrow the phrase from P. Hitti 1951). In short, we see *laiklik* as laicism. To do so, I think, is to be able to better capture the frames of laicism in Turkey's political life and to understand what it would be like to participate in the policies, practices, relations, and institutions constitutive of this aspect of it (see Chapter Two for the theoretical background of this statement). It is at least a start down that path.

Finally, for all interpreters of Turkey's version of laicism to learn more about distinctions related to secular politics in the global context through a study of the Turkish experience, we are no worse off. There is

¹⁴⁷ Turan notes a few examples that should be familiar by now (i.e. see above for their roots in the one-party period): "A person who dies in battle for the cause of religion is a *şehit* and goes directly to heaven. Now this symbol has been borrowed from religious vocabulary, and is used to describe any public servant who dies in the course of public duty; in this way, government service is elevated to the level of God's cause. Similarly, the Friday sermons are used to invite citizens to engage in acts supportive of government. The Directorate of Religious Affairs sends out model sermons to imams (preachers) which may encourage the citizens, for example, to pay their taxes, or to contribute to foundations established to asses the armed forces . . ." (Turan 1991, 42). (There is no secular state in Turkey.)

¹⁴⁸ Yet, Turan wants to maintain one distinction. "The Turkish state," he says in the paragraph that I quote from in the main text, does "not view religion as giving direction to its policies and actions." Such a distinction is only tenable if we exclude from our thinking about "policy and action" the kinds of instrumental laicist activities he discusses. The distinction obfuscates this crucial point and should be less starkly drawn.

little to credit in the anticipatable objection that laicism is a poor explanatory concept for audiences that are not aware of its existence. The fact that the Kemalists chose accurately to describe their project of laicism in terms of the French anticlerical experience is a hermeneutic fact of indispensable importance in the comparative study of modern, non-and post-theocratic politics. Seeing this through an interpretive engagement with political life enhances not simply our understanding of Kemalist *laiklik*, but also of global conceptual and practical possibilities within the secular-modern problematic. Furthermore, the entire exercise thoroughly underscores the inseparable critical and comparative dimensions of the hermeneutic project's mission of political understanding (cp. Taylor 1988, 228; 1990, 41).

CONCLUSION

Towards a critical, comparative secular hermeneutics

The first and guiding purpose of this study has been to make a case for the indispensability of the hermeneutic approach in understanding and explaining modern political possibilities. By indispensable, I mean to say that an account of the concepts and meanings constitutive of political life is an unqualified, necessary condition of any claim to have understood, or explained, it. I have examined in detail the unifying claim of hermeneutics in political inquiry, what an account should look like with regard to various contested dimensions of politics (actions, relations, practices, and institutions), and how the hermeneutic approach can contribute to broader critical interests in the study of modern politics (including problems of “ethnocentrism,” offering hope, etc.).

Dissatisfied as many are by an argument from abstract theory alone, I have tried to make my case and contribution to hermeneutic political inquiry by illustrating its indispensability in the study of aspects of modern politics that are themselves complexly constituted by a matrix of meaning somewhere in the range of “the secular” and “the religious.” In the context of offering a history of non-hermeneutic political science’s engagement with a particular context of study, I have argued that the conceptual, historical, and critical hermeneutic imperative in political inquiry assists us in better explaining the identity and significance of our subject matter. Moreover, by counseling us to think in terms of alternative and contested rather than singular and necessary outcomes, the hermeneutic posture forces us to expand our conceptual and historical framework -- the pre-

judgements, as Gadamer calls them, of which we can be conscious -- within which we seek to explain politics in modernity.

I have gone on to illustrate these theses in the “field” of Turkish politics. By writing histories of the interpretations of Ziya Gökalp’s thought and the practices associated with Turkey’s “secular politics,” I have argued that non-hermeneutic explanatory dispositions and the peculiar “secular modern” pre-judgments about the character and flow of modern political history discussed in Chapter One show up, as it were, in the history of Anglophone social science’s explanations of two particularly significant features of Turkey’s experience within the secularization problematic. The work of Gökalp, significant for his attempt to articulate the political, cultural, and scientific preconditions for a secular future in Turkey, was chosen in order to illustrate the hermeneutic approach with regard to interpreting speech acts. Turkey’s “secular model,” or what I argue is hermeneutically better understood as Turkey’s laicist politics, was chosen in order to illustrate the indispensability of hermeneutics in the explanation of political practices, relations, policies, and institutions (indeed, the domain with which “comparative political science” is usually occupied). The substantive relevance of Gökalp’s thought and *laiklik* to questions within the secular/religiopolitical problematic is self-evident.

Furthermore, in both cases, I have tried to show how a turn in the direction of hermeneutic inquiry brings out, at once, a better understanding *and* explanation of their identity and character better than has yet been achieved in the Anglophone literature. I have also described what I take to be their significance in both the context of Turkish politics within which they participate and in the context of the theoretical and practical concerns

of comparative political theory and politics. My study of Gökalp's thought regarding the durability of Islam under conditions of modernization and nationalism, for example, illustrates how the hermeneutic move enables a critical confrontation with the view that religion as such must either fade into the private sphere or fade altogether under conditions of contested modern politics. My study of the constitutive dimensions of the original conception of laicism in Turkey shows how institutional possibilities within the secularization problematic are more plural than encompassed by the all too general yet still influential, "secularization as structural separation" judgements found in political science literature on modernity.

The two studies together demonstrate how the hermeneutic turn is best able to bring out more of the subtleties and nuances that make the historical, theoretical and political contest associated with secularism in Turkey what it is (i.e., constitute it). Gökalp's ideas display a still under-appreciated ability to relate secularizing, sociological realities happening largely behind the backs of ordinary people to their lived traditions, which he conceptualized as retaining a vital sense of integrity under conditions of expansive change. A product of both pre-nationalist Ottoman realities and the nationalist milieu, he tried to describe a future for Turkey that would allow for the full development of the evolutionary potential of the "nation" and its "culture" within the increasingly common field of "civilization." That he could imagine fully separating politics and religion within a frame that valued religion as the ethical system of the Turks and placed full priority on the creative evolution of culture, and then make this separation a prerequisite for Turkey's national development, is testimony to his status as a theorist of secularism in Turkey.

Moreover, his insistence that a modern state is one that separates religion and politics as it aspires to “absorb” international civilization within a framework of cultural integrity stands in contrast to Kemalism's laicist politics that institutionalized state control over religion in order to implement, through political reform, its own distinctive version of cultural modernization. (Indeed, had the political and social scientists who studied Gökalp's thought considered as “reasonable” Gökalp's view on the public relevance of Islam as an ethical system within a Turkish culture evolving within the fold of modern civilization, rather than viewing it anachronistically through the lenses of future Kemalist outcomes, they may have had, as we now do, a critical vantage point to examine the nature and ends of Kemalism's laicist politics of control.)

Taken together, the constitutive meanings expressed in Gökalp's thought and politics associated with the Republican Peoples Party's laicism form the conceptual borders within which the processes of laicization have unfolded in Turkey. The Kemalists took the project of separating religion and the state seriously enough to incorporate, in their particular version of the Turkish transformation, some reforms intended to effect a separation between particular aspects of public affairs and the theory and practice of religion. But these dimensions of separation were not enough to weaken fundamentally the control character of Kemalist laicism. In its original conception, laicism never escapes the politics of Kemalist authoritarianism that shaped it.

The Kemalists institutionalized a structure of governance and oversight with regard to Islam. No separation between religion and the state ever occurred under Atatürk, only partial areas of separation within a

structure of state- and society- control, and, in some dimensions, for the purposes of enhancing that control. "Disestablishment" fails to capture the mechanisms of "re-establishment." Indeed, every label needs a qualifier; almost all of the existing accounts of the topic fail to capture the constitutive complexity well enough: control, but not only control; separation, but only within a structure of control; disestablishment, and then re-establishment; anti-clerical, but only to a certain point; privatization encouraged, but not institutionally or ideologically sustained, and so on. The policies, practices, relations and institutions associated with *laiklik* in Turkey were conceptualized within the project of gaining control over the state and over the definition of the Turkish national future. Only a hermeneutic engagement is suited to clarify the identity and character of these dimensions. And, indeed, further work on laicism in Turkey directed toward explaining aspects of these constitutive dimensions in greater conceptual detail, is one research agenda opened up by this dissertation.

In sum, my accounts of Anglophone interpretations of Gökalp and *laiklik* in the social science literature illustrate the general theses of this dissertation. In the history of interpreting Gökalp and *laiklik*, we espy the fact that blinding prejudgments of narrowly conceived secular modern expectations supported and sustained by non-hermeneutic modes of inquiry have worked together to present a less than adequate explanation of the identity and significance of these two crucial feathers of secular thought and practice in Turkey.

It should not go unstated that criticisms of either non-hermeneutic approaches or what I have called narrow-secular modern judgments -- both in general political science inquiry and within Middle East studies -- can be

found in the existing literature. As I have argued above, however, I am wont to disagree with some formulations of both.

For example, in the Turkish context, critiques of the hermeneutic inadequacies of non-hermeneutic approaches (as opposed to allegedly hermeneutic ones) have blossomed in the last decade. These critiques follow on the heels of a recognition of the need, early in the 1970s, for greater language training in the study of Ottoman-Turkish history (Shaw 1974, 124-3). At the time, one of the interests for such training in political science studies was to take research beyond “social-background analyses” (relying on so-called objective indicators such as family, education, profession, etc.) to “value-studies” that would look more closely at attitudinal make-up, socialization, and general “cultural,” “behavioral,” and “political” norms (cp. Frey 1965; Tachau 1975, 10; 1973, 552; 1977, 20; Edinger 1967; Weiker 1969, 16). With regard to explaining Turkish political life, much of this switch was actually contained within non-hermeneutic political inquiry.¹ The shift away from non-hermeneutic tendencies takes place with Şerif Mardin’s reorientation of political and sociological studies from “the center” to “the periphery” (Mardin 1973, 1977, 1981, 1983, 1989; Tapper 1991; Delaney, 1991). Mardin’s works constitute an explicit rejection of what he refers to as the “positivist” and “secular” orientations of research in/on Turkey that, he says, “is conspicuous” in making “no attempt to understand [Islam’s] sociological dynamic” (Mardin 1989, 41; 1994, 167). Tapper has added recently that studies on Islam’s role in Turkey focusing solely on political parties,

¹ There was always a parallel tradition in Anglophone studies, initiated in the Republican period by J. K. Birge and pursued further Howard Reed in the 1950’s, that concerned itself with describing the history of religion and religious change in Turkey (Birge 1937; 1944; Reed 1954; 1957). Winder’s suggestion that religious studies once formed a major part of Middle East studies allows us to place Allen’s Montesquie-like comparative study within this class of works as well (Winder 1987, 40; Allen 1935).

elections and state-centric variables fail to adequately account for Islam's "meaning and importance in the lives of Turkish people" (1991, Olson 1992; see esp., Yalçın Heckman 1991; Delaney, 1991).

In addition to these criticisms, observers of Turkish politics have, for a long time, criticized the expectations of some early researchers awaiting the replacement of all that is tradition by all that is modern. Rustow argued for an amalgamate approach to tradition and modernity based on his studies of the Turkish case (Rustow 1965). Binnaz Toprak followed this up with a study of the complex relationship between "Islam and political development" in Turkey (Toprak 1981). Similarly, Islamoğlu and Keyder have criticized the failure of stage-like modernization theory to theorize "the impact of capitalist penetration" within the Ottoman-Turkish context's peripheral status vis-a-vis the world economy (Islamoğlu and Keyder 1987, 46-7). They specifically object to Bernard Lewis's 1961 book, once hailed as "a complete and satisfactory explanation of the phenomena of the Turkish republic" (G. Lewis 1962, 107), as exemplary of "superstructural analysis" overloaded with the "political and ideological emphasis found in most modernization literature" (1987, 46-47).

My study contests both forms of criticism.

Unlike those who criticize the apparent non-hermeneutic inadequacies in Turkish studies, I submit that the hermeneutic approach is indispensable not simply for the study of "traditions," in a "(neo)conservative" sense of the word, at the periphery. It is relevant in the study of all "traditions," including those within which political phenomena at "center" participate. The hermeneutic engagement cannot ever completely support one reading of history -- narrowly secular or religious.

Some hermeneuticists now try to argue that tradition in the conservative sense of the word itself *is* history (or civilization, or culture, or homeland, or economy, or geography), forgetting the *critical* opening of all alternatives that hermeneutics must open up. The critical edge of hermeneutic inquiry, I admit, is still in need of further theorizing. But it goes much further beyond where it is usually assumed to. Mardin's recent comment that Islamic studies taken up by "many young laypersons" in Turkey "can be termed a hermeneutic exercise for enriching their Muslim culture," is, from the perspective of the interpretive approach I articulate here, representative of this partly faulty theorizing (Mardin 1994, 168). The hermeneutic exercise cannot be placed only on one side of the old tradition/modern dichotomy. Rather than reproducing that dichotomy, it is the tool for opening up both prongs.² I believe that I have articulated the theoretical underpinnings for this claim in Chapter Two. But expounding on the critical and liberating dimensions of hermeneutic work constitutes, for me, a second future research agenda in the field of the philosophy of political inquiry.

In short, my view is that positivism and other forms of non-or anti-hermeneutic approaches to the study of political life have, in the context of political explanation, marginalized all traditions, not simply conservatively understood ones. Thus, we are just as much in need of hermeneutic studies of secular politics -- "its meaning and importance in the lives of people generally" as well as its practices, relations, and institutions -- as we are in

² The full text of Mardin's remark is: "The fact that many young laypersons in the post-1980 period have been engaged in what can be termed a hermeneutic exercise for enriching their Muslim culture, and the fact that they take the Western philosophic discourse seriously, shows the other aspect of the issue [of general secularization trends in Turkey]." With reference to this comment, hermeneutics cannot be placed only on the side of religion and culture. Its interest, even in Turkey, should encompass what Mardin refers to as "western philosophic discourse" as well.

studies of religious, and religio-political, life. As I argue in Chapter One, too frequently the expression of the narrow secular modern judgments about modernity are taken as the truth of secularism and modernism, rather than as one possible -- and indeed contestable -- account of them within these two traditions.

My argument differs from the literature that criticizes historical expectations associated with modernization theory in my insistence that the problem is not simply a problem of "ideology." In fact, to conceive of the interpretive problem in such terms alone will not enable us to avoid it in the future. The problem is one of interpretive prejudice constitutive of much political science research on modernity *that is sustained and supported* by non-hermeneutic approaches to the subject matter. Thus, the problem of assuming historical necessity cannot be solved by looking simply at other variables or with a different ideological emphasis. It requires a shift in our posture toward inquiry; such a shift will entail a real breaking down of the inadequate, overgeneralized categories of "tradition" and "modernity," will bring about a broader vocabulary for the study of political change, and, as such, will entail a genuinely altered sense of historical possibility.

Indeed, the uniqueness of this study in the context of both Turkish studies and general political science considerations on "interpreting modernity" lies, I think, in my attempt to join a critique of conceptions of "modernity" with a critique of the "methods" employed to understand it, to illustrate their combined untoward influences in the context of political explanation, and to demonstrate the indispensability of hermeneutics for getting beyond those influences toward arriving at more complete and more compelling explanations of politics in modernity. As I have argued in

Chapters One and Two, conceptions of “method” and understandings of political life and history are intimately related. Hermeneutic inquiry can literally shake us free of certain narrow forms of historical necessity. Therefore, against those who see the problem only in terms of method, I argue that the errors lie in the very constitutive historical judgments of modern political inquiry. And, against those who see the problem as one of ideology, I call for a rethinking of political inquiry, and thus our posture towards the project of political explanation.

The product of an hermeneutic engagement should be the ability to understand and potentially participate within ongoing efforts to interpret and thus constitute the contested dimensions of the subject matter. As I argued in Chapter Two, one’s account always bears the status of such a participation. At minimum, I believe that my studies of Gökalp and Turkey’s laicist politics should prepare the reader to understand aspects of the identity and character of “secular” and “modern” Turkish politics better than previous accounts.

Obviously, Turkey’s status as a model to other countries aside, the problems of relating the peculiar demands of different religions to politics are not unique to the Turkish context. Understanding experiences within this problematic in other contexts requires that we adopt the hermeneutic approach in order to more adequately delineate the conceptual and historical contours of modern politics within the secularization problematic. The conceptual and practice-related distinction between laicism and secularism I have argued for in the previous chapter, is one example of the more detailed vocabulary of explanation and theorizing we now need to understand more fully the conceptual and historical range of political options within the

secular-modern politics of modernity. Pursuing more comparative work of this kind constitutes another research agenda opened up by this work.

As political and economic programs spread even more rapidly around the globe than they did a generation ago, students of modern politics must become even better at understanding the constitutive dimensions of those politics. A better ability to participate in another's conceptual field might even open the door to more negotiated and participatory, as opposed to imposed and hierarchical, futures. If it does, it will give evidence to the viability of one version of secular politics that seeks to identify a common frame among differently situated inhabitants of common, "public" spheres. (Alternative outcomes are, of course, always within the realm of possibility. But at least the error won't lie solely in having not tried to understand better.)

There are many who would take issue with my claim that secularism as a project remains viable, not to mention is still worth studying. The reasons for dismissing the relevance of secular politics vary. Some dismissals stem from an arbitrary narrowing of the meaning of "secularism" to "solving problems in the affairs of the world". Consequently, it is argued, secularism is nothing unique, and, since many forms of different religions are just as interested in grappling with the flow of everyday life, secular politics can easily be replaced by "secularly-oriented religions." Other dismissals stem from the just-as-reductive claim that secularism relegates ethical issues of politics to a lower order of priority than material issues (see Chapter One). As such, it is argued, secularism has little to contribute to the ethical-political dilemmas of our time. And still others reject the relevance of secularism because, especially in the so-called developing world, so-called "secular"

projects have been tied to authoritarian politics. Gayatri Spivak, for instance, thinks we can simply take for granted “the connection between imperialism and secularism” (Spivak 1993, 194). Claims like this are present in the Turkish context; carelessly equating one authoritarian form of laicism with “secularism,” one goes on (naturally) to reject “secularism’s” relevance in grappling with contemporary ethical-political matters.

Against such conceptualizations, hermeneutic political inquirers must be prepared to clarify the content and viability of a secular political and ethical tradition in modern politics. This is not as far-fetched a need as it sounds. The concept secularism has lost its force in comparative political inquiry in part because it has been stripped of its first and real concern with creating (context-specific) conditions that will insure the widest and fullest expression for the human conscience. Religiopolitical discourses, aided by pluralist academics who have sometimes carelessly accepted the validity of these discourses unquestioningly, have seen secularism as threatening precisely because it poses, among other things, the possibility that such freedom will entail leaving religion behind (and all the supposed worst-case scenarios that follow from that). Their interpretation has gained veritable proof from authoritarian regimes whose interests lie far from insuring the conditions for the free exercise of conscience, yet who claim to be secular.

There are more dimensions of this conceptual situation, a situation that is not easily reversed. And, admittedly, this is not the place to discuss this situation in full. Yet it must be stated here that authoritarian politics is not consistent with the conception of secularism that frees itself from the purposefully obfuscating critiques of it emerging from within religio-political discourses. The conceptual block that pervades discussions about

secularism should not interfere with the need to theorize democratic, secular conditions that can replace existing barriers to the freedom of conscience, whether the matters of conscience be religious, non- or anti-religious, or political in ways having nothing especially to do with religion.

Therefore, along with our need for fuller, hermeneutically sensitive accounts of the range of politics within the secularization problematic comes the need to develop a language and capacity to think broadly and critically about alternative, existing relationships between politics and the human conscience in modernity. This project constitutes a final research agenda opened up by this dissertation, and indeed encompasses the others I have mentioned. A reinvigorated, historically informed, context-specific, politically responsible, and philosophically defensible secular disposition toward the politics of our time might turn out to be the political-ethical wing of the hermeneutic commitment in political inquiry.

APPENDIX

The rationale for the draft bill (of the Turkish Civil Code) Signed by Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, Minister of Justice¹

There is at present no codified civil code of the Turkish Republic. What exists is the Mecelle [Ottoman code] that deals with only a small portion of contracts. It contains 1851 articles. The writing of it was begun on 8 Muharrem 1286, and completed and put into force on 26 Şaban 1293.² It can be said that only 300 articles of this code can fulfill the needs of the present. The rest cannot be implemented because they are nothing but some primitive principles that cannot answer our country's needs. The rule and main principles of the Mecelle are religion. While on the contrary, human life is subject to major changes everyday and even every moment. It is not possible even to arrest and stop life's march and changes. Those states whose laws are based on religion cannot satisfy before long the demands of the country and the nation, for religion's contain [express] immutable judgements. Life marches on; needs quickly change; religious laws cannot express any value, any meaning beyond form and dead words in the face of inexorably changing life. Not to change is a necessity for religions. For this reason, that religions should remain only matters of conscience is one of the principles of the civilization of the present century and one of the most important elements that distinguish the new civilization from the old. Laws that derive their principles from religions unite the communities in which

¹ I am grateful to Taha Parla, Yurdanur Salman and Ersin Kalaycioğlu for their assistance in translating this text from the original. Some of the sentences in the original Turkish are windy and dense. I have tried not to misrepresent this feature of the text. In addition, I have placed the English equivalents of terms that I did not translate literally in brackets.

² Muharrem and Şaban are the names of the first and eighth months, respectively, on the Arabic lunar calendar. The years listed are 1870 and 1877, respectively.

they are being implemented with the primitive ages from which they have descended and constitute one of the major factors and reasons impeding progress. It should not be doubted that our laws that receive their inspiration from the immutable judgements of religion and are still linked [in continuous contact] to divine law are the most powerful factor in tying the Turkish nation's destiny to the stipulations and rules of the Middle Ages, even during the present century. The Turkish Republic's remaining deprived of a codified civil code which is the regulator of national social life, a code that should be inspired only by that life, is irreconcilable with the meaning and the conception required by the Turkish revolution. Another characteristic which distinguished the state of the present century from primitive political organizations is that, in the latter, the rules implemented in the destiny of the community are not laid down in statutory law. In nomadic periods, rules are not codified as such. The judge adjudicates by custom and tradition. With the exception of the 300 articles of the Mecelle, on the subjects of the Turkish Civil Code, judges of the Turkish Republic are adjudicating by extrapolation and inference from slapdash *fikih* [Islamic codes of jurisprudence] and religious principles. The Turkish judge is not bound in his judgements by any specific precedents and binding rulings and principles. Therefore, the judgement reached in a case in one locality of our country and the judgements arrived at in a similar case that is being adjudicated under the same conditions in other localities of the country are usually different from and contradictory with each other. Consequently, in the administration of justice, the people of Turkey are being exposed to irregularities and persistent disorder. Fate of the people does not depend on a definitive and stable principle of justice, but on

medieval *fikh* rules that are coincidental and change-dependent and which are mutually contradictory. To rescue Republic Turkish justice from this chaos, deprivation and very primitive situation, it has become indispensable to create quickly and legislate a new Turkish Civil Code that is fitting to the requirements of our transformation and of the civilization of the present century. To this end, the Turkish civil Code that has been prepared, has been received and excerpted from the Swiss Civil code which among the civilized laws is the most recent, most perfect and in the interest of the people. This duty has been performed by a special commission consisting of our country's distinguished jurists working under the directives of the Ministry of Justice.

There are no major differences among the needs of the nations that belong to the family of nations of the present century. Continuous social and economic relations [contacts] have transformed into a family a large and civilized mass of humanity and continues to do so. It is not valid to claim that the draft bill of the Turkish Civil Code would, upon its being put into force, become irreconcilable with the needs of the country because its principles have been received from a foreign country. In any case, it is known that the Swiss state comprises German, French, and Italian races who belong to various histories and traditions. It is beyond doubt that such a code which has shown the flexibility of application in a context that is heterogeneous even culturally is capable of implementation in a state like the Republic of Turkey that contains a race which is ninety percent homogeneous. Conversely, the viewpoint that a progressive code of a civilized country would not be capable of implementation in the Republic of Turkey is considered invalid. Such a thesis would be tantamount to the logical reasoning implying that the Turkish nation lacks the innate ability for

civilization. On the contrary, the facts of reality, both in the present and past, totally contradict this claim. Having as witness the history of the Turkish renovation, it can be said that the Turkish nation has not been exposed to any of the reasonable and sound innovations which are concurrent with reason and intelligence, and which have been created according to the requirements of the present century. Throughout the course of our history of innovation, the innovations created out of a concern for the public interest have been opposed only by those groups whose interests were threatened who have misled and corrupted the people in the name of religion and wrong and superstitious beliefs. The decision of the Turkish nation to accept unconditionally the contemporary civilization and the whole of its principles should not be forgotten. The most obvious and dynamic [lively] evidence for this is our transformation itself. If some of the elements of contemporary civilization are seen to be irreconcilable with the Turkish community, this is not because of a deficiency in the Turkish nation's ability and aptitude, but because of the medieval organizations and religious laws which unnecessarily besiege it.

As a matter of fact, the stipulations of the Mecelle are doubtlessly irreconcilable with contemporary civilization. But it is also obvious that the Mecelle and similar other religious regulations are not reconcilable with Turkish national life. The Ministry of Justice deems the Swiss Civil Code, which is the most recent and most perfect of its kind, as a civilized work that will satisfy the boundless intelligence and ability of our nation, which as heretofore been restricted, and serve as fertile soil for it. No single point can be imagined in this code that would be disagreeable to our nation's sentiments [emotions].

It is important to point out as well that the Turkish nation which marches with the decision to receive and adopt contemporary civilization rather than graft contemporary civilization onto itself, is bound to keep in step with the requirements of contemporary civilization at all costs, rather than the other way around, that is by adopting the contemporary civilization to itself. The draft bill we have prepared contains the more important parts of these requirements. The idea of absolute loyalty to custom, to traditions and mores, is so dangerous a doctrine that it cannot take humanity even one step further than its most primitive condition. No civilized nation has succumbed to such a doctrine, but rather has, acting in conformity with the requirements of life, not hesitated often to lay waste to customs and traditions that constrain it. (To stay absolutely loyal to beliefs inherited from grandfathers and ancestors in the face of truths is not compatible with reason and intelligence.) As a matter of fact, revolutions have been used as a very influential means to this end.

Prior to the implementation of the German Civil Code, Germany followed, in its central parts, the Roman law codified by the Byzantines 1500 years prior. To this law, both the texts of the national law and those of the localities were added. In the east and north, there was a mixed situation of Prussian law with Roman law and local codes. In the remaining parts, French law was valid. Of the German population, 33% were subject to Roman law, 43% to Prussian law, 7% to Saxon law, and 17% to France's. Before the implementation of the German Civil Code, there were Latin, French, Greek and local German languages in the German law. In Bavaria alone, there were between 70 and 80 methods pertaining to marriage contracts. There was no possibility for a judge to be informed separately of all of those regulations

[texts]. Before the publication of the German Civil Code, there was no possibility of knowing to which code a person in a given circumstance would be subject. With this civil code, the German jurists suddenly rescued their country from laws of a thousand and one kinds handed down through the centuries and created a single code for all of Germany.

The law was promulgated on 3 July 1896 and ratified unanimously by the National Assembly. According to custom and the traditionalists, the draft bill of the German Civil Code was a bit theoretically abstract; and from a practical perspective it was regarded as quite worthless. Nevertheless, they themselves could not even see the possibility of excluding a single principle from the law.

The French Civil Code is also a production of a transformation. It, too, brought forth new principles by trampling over old codes, customs and traditions. Among the most evident innovations of the law were the annulment of class and land privileges and the taking charge of family law from the church. Before the promulgation of the Civil Code, France was administered with very different local and written customs: in the south with the law that remained from Roman times; in the north there were regulations coming from Germanic sources. Moreover, each region had a civil-relations code peculiar to itself. The Civil Code that was an overwhelming blow to superstitious beliefs, erased all relics and declared in their place new codes and regulations. The most intractable adversary of the French Civil Code was the Church. This is because this law denied domination of Catholicism in civil relations and especially in matters of family law.

Switzerland, before the publication of the Civil Code, possessed as many laws as the number of cantons. The Swiss Code suddenly totally

abrogated all of the laws that contained various customs and traditions and in their place put a really different, single code. These three big movements were the latest crushing defeats of the "Historical School" that wanted to tie all of life to dead traditions. Our purpose in giving these examples is to show in a dynamic way that nations, according to the necessities of the times and the requirements of civilization, do suddenly abandon their customs and traditions and that this farewell is not a something that brings harm and danger, but entails, rather, great benefits. The fundamental point in these laws that we respect is the separation, in an absolute sense, of religion and the state. Switzerland, Germany, and France have strengthened and fortified their political and national unities and their economic, social salvations and developments by promulgating their civil codes. In view of these vital needs, in none of these states -- even in a state like Switzerland where public opinion prevails in the most expansive sense -- was the prolongation of old mores, local and customary relations, and religious habits desired, capable of being desired, or even capable of being imagined.

There is no doubt that the purpose of laws is not to arrive at any stipulation which derives from mores or tradition or from any religious rules which should be only a matter related with the conscience, but rather with providing and satisfying at any cost the political, social, economic, and national unity. The principal distinguishing characteristic of states that belong to the civilization of the present century is their considering religion and the world separate. The opposite of this results in the domination of the conscience of someone who does not agree with the accepted religious foundations of the state. The understanding of states of the present century cannot accept this. Religion is to be revered and would be

immune as long as it remains a matter of conscience from the point of view of the state. Intrusions of religion into laws as articles and stipulations have always during history resulted in serving the arbitrary will and desire of rulers, the mighty, and oppressors. In separating religion from the world, the state of the present century saves humanity from these bloodstained afflictions of history and allocates religion to the conscience as the real and eternal throne for it. Especially in states that contain subjects belonging to various religions, in order to acquire the ability of carrying out a single law in all of the community, this severing of relations with religion is a requisite for the sovereignty of the nation. This is because if the laws will be based on religion it becomes necessary for the state that is faced with the necessity of accepting freedom of conscience to make separate laws for its subjects belonging to various religions. This situation is totally opposed to the political, social, economic, and national unity that is a fundamental condition in states of the present century. It is necessary to remember that: the state is not only in contact with its subjects, but also with foreigners. In this case it becomes necessary to accept special stipulations for them under the name of capitulations. This point has been the most important aspect of the rationale used by foreigners for the preservation in our country of the capitulations that are abolished in the Laussane treaty. Besides, from the time of Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror until recent times, this religious situation especially was the cause for the legal exemptions that were adopted regarding non-Muslim subjects. In point of fact, during the preparation of the draft bill of the Turkish Civil Code, all those minorities who are present in our country have informed the Ministry of Justice that they give up all the rights that were recognized to themselves in the Laussane treaty.

We wish to note right here an event that was valuable in our history of renovation. Ali Pasha had once proposed an identical adoption of the French Civil Code to Sultan Aziz. But upon the intervention of Cevdet Pasha this great enterprise came to naught and the Mecelle was substituted in its stead. As a matter of fact, the Sultan's administration whose whole concern consisted of personal interest and which had adopted hypocrisy as its guiding [major] principle, did not even make its principle of decision the requirements of the real interests of the nation.

The Turkish nation, by demanding unconditionally from the world of civilization all the laws which have been given to civilized nations by the present century has imposed on itself, by this proclamation, with its own hand all the civilized duties required by these laws. This is one of the meanings of the draft bill. The day the Turkish Civil Code, which is being submitted for the approval and ratification of the Grand Assembly that is the supreme representative of the Turkish nation, is put into force, our nation will have been saved from the faulty and confusing beliefs of 13 centuries that are enveloping it and, closing the doors of the old civilization, will have entered the contemporary civilization that grants life and light. By preparing this law, the Ministry of Justice harbors no doubts that, before history and our transformation, it has fulfilled its national duty and expressed the real interests of the Turkish nation.

Minster of Justice
Mahmut Esat

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* It appears that Berkes’ translation follows the version published in 1918 (see Berkes p. 316-317n.4). Some confusion exists because of a misprint or error on

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his part assigning the original date of publication to the year 1919 (316 n.4), when *Türk Yurdu* (1912-1914) was long out-of-print.

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