

**RELIGION AS A SOURCE OF LEGITIMACY: TURKEY AND SAUDI ARABIA
CASES**

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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The legitimacy of the regimes in Turkey and Saudi Arabia are in crisis. Political culture has been changing and the sources of legitimacy which regimes were established are no longer enough. Islam has emerged and is increasing its power as a challenge to major sources of legitimacy of current regimes. But it is unlikely that religious groups will assume control as happened in Iran.

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INTRODUCTION:

When I was child, I observed in my family and in the wider community how people gave a good deal attention to religious statements from politicians even if they did not carry any religious meaning like “Allah forbid!”, and this affected their voting behavior. After starting study political science, legitimacy is one of the concepts that I have been particularly interested in. Why do people obey authority? People do as they are told even if they are not forced to do so. Commands are obeyed because of a belief in the legitimacy of the authority of the command-giver. There is no need for coercion when authority is seen as so legitimate as to be obeyed automatically and without question. Max Weber argues that there are three grounds upon which the legitimacy of power may rest: legal-rational, traditional, and charismatic. The first characterizes legal authority, the second refers to long-established beliefs and the legitimacy of those who exercise authority under them, while charismatic authority is attached to exceptional persons who are obeyed precisely because of their unusual capacities . In any given case, of course, these different types of authority may be intertwined.

Methods and Research Hypotheses

Legitimacy is a useful tool for political and social analysis and it is used widely in comparative political analysis. To conduct my research, I will first examine political legitimacy, the sources, criteria, and problems of it. Then I will discuss religion, especially Islam, as a base of legitimacy. I will attempt to argue why and how the sources of legitimacy of regimes by which were established in Saudi Arabia and in Turkey are not enough to legitimize the current regimes. I will look at opposition movements and parties such as the

Welfare Party in Turkey and The Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights (CDLR) in Saudi Arabia when measuring the loss of legitimacy. I will rely upon available literature and news reports in both countries as well as my personal observations on Turkey.

I chose these two countries because of their distinctive similarities and differences. First of all, both countries are Muslim. Second they are important for the Muslim world and the world in general. Saudi Arabia has the world's largest oil reserves and has Islam's holy cites. Turkey has strategic importance. While having similarities, the two countries have significant differences. Turkey has a western democratic system, while Saudi Arabia is a kingdom. Turkey is the only Muslim secular state, while Saudi Arabia is a traditional Islamic state. Although constitutionally the place of religion is well defined in these two Islamic countries, the real situation is more complex. Both regimes are facing challenges based on Islamic ideals.

Chapter I

POLITICAL LEGITIMACY

Definition and Significance

Political power, one of the most significant concepts of political science, is the capacity to limit the behaviors of other people and can be attained through different means: by force, by threat, by manipulation, or by the fact that one person considers another's wish to be just and fair, which is called authority. In other words, authority may be characterized as influence based on legitimacy: A has authority over B because B regards A's claims upon him as legitimate or rightful. Exercise of power can be based on different power bases; one of them is the conviction that rulers and ruled have a number of norms and values in common. Scholars call this legitimacy.

According to Seymour Martin Lipset: "Legitimacy involves the capacity of the system to engender and maintain the belief that the existing political institutions are the most appropriate for the society."¹ Jack Plano offers another definition: "Legitimacy reflects an underlying consensus that endows the leadership and the state with authority, and that offers respect and acceptance for individual leaders, institutions, and behavior norms."² The common point of the two definitions is that political power is converted into rightful authority by being accepted willingly by subordinates. Lawmakers and enforcers are supported less without widespread social acceptance. Therefore, the making of law is not enough to guarantee obedience from citizens. It is also important to differentiate between legal and legitimate governments. The government in any given country may possess legal authority, but we have to pay attention to the source of its authority.

Another word related to legitimacy is coercion. Coercion is sometimes contrasted with authority on the grounds that authority is legitimate influence while coercion is illegitimate compulsion. Legitimacy is fundamental to the maintenance of political order in society. People may obey their leaders under coercion and pressure, but coercion alone may be insufficient to preserve the stability of the system. According to Robert Dahl: "When a political system is widely accepted by its members as legitimate, and when the policies of its officials and other leaders are regarded as morally binding by citizens, then the costs of compliance are low. Conversely, when legitimacy and authority are low, leaders must use more of their money, police, privileges, weapons, status, and other political resources to secure compliance."³

Legitimacy, however, does not imply that all subjects at all times agree completely with all rules and regulations, or even the form of government. According to Cleassen, moreover, to accept a government as right, or legitimate, does not imply that people agree totally with its policy. They may, however, give the government some credit, or accept unpleasant measures as inevitable (e.g. taxation). It is very difficult to estimate the real support of a population: The fact that there is no rebellion or civil war is no proof of wholehearted support. Differences of opinion over such basic issues may lead to resistance or even revolt. So, it is better to speak of the degree of legitimacy. No political system exists based on consensus only; there always will be some coercion, too. For a government to function adequately, it seems to be sufficient when there is a certain degree of overlap in the views on government and policy. Naturally, the greater overlap the more legitimate the policy will be and vice versa. "In operational terms legitimacy covers a range of reactions to authority. As long as there is no active opposition, then the system is supported because no observable

efforts are in place to withdraw compliance to authority”⁴

According to Gabriel Almond, legitimacy may vary from time to time; it can be strong or weak. For example, the legitimacy of the American system was quite substantially high in the decade following World War II, but it declined substantially during and after the Vietnam War. Low legitimacy may be the reason for breakdowns in political organization and failures in public policy. Policy failures in turn can be the cause of declining legitimacy. The collapse of the Soviet system came after a failed and costly war in Afghanistan, a nuclear power disaster at Chernobyl, and an apparently irreversible decline in economic productivity.⁵

According to Lipset, legitimacy is highly subjective because people evaluate a political system depending upon how well it fits their own values. Legitimacy may be associated with many forms of political organization, including oppressive ones.⁶ Nevertheless, Dahl claims that popular governments necessarily require more legitimacy and authority than dictatorship because they are not permitted to acquire sufficient resources to enforce their policies through naked power.

Political Development and Political Culture

Because of the subjectivity of legitimacy, it is totally related to the political culture. Samuel Huntington claims that political scientists have neglected the importance of culture in political development. Developing countries differ greatly from each other and from developed countries in the choices they make. The political economy approach and rational-choices models do not explain the fundamental questions as to which values or preferences are chosen, how and by whom. What is clearly needed is a cultural theory of preferences which enables us

to understand why leaders, citizens, and various groups within cultures prefer one set of choices over others.

The crucial question is how one can explain the differences in progress, achievement and reconciliation. The answer lies, Huntington says, in the uniqueness of each particular country: “These include natural resources, geographical location, character of the population, and of course, historical experience. In terms of explaining different patterns of political and economic development, however, a central independent variable is culture—that is, the subjective attitudes, beliefs, and values, prevalent among the dominant groups in the society.”⁷

Furthermore, Huntington identifies nine cultural families and evidently large significant differences do exist among cultural groupings in terms of the extent to which their countries have made progress toward their developmental goals. In addition, he suggests trying to avoid altering non-western societies to make them more similar to western developing models. He also suggests to scholars to develop models of modern Islamic, Confucian, or Hindu societies that would be more relevant to countries where these cultures prevail. He emphasizes the distinction between modernization and westernization. For Huntington, they have historically been synonymous, but recently the partnership between them has broken and indigenous cultures naturally become more important in shaping the development of these societies. I will elaborate later in the sections concerning Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

Almond’s definition of political culture is “a particular distribution of political attitudes, values, feelings, information, and skills. A nation’s political culture affects the conduct of its citizens and leaders throughout the political system.”⁸

Political culture may be consensual or conflictual on issues of public policy and on

views of legitimate governmental and political arrangements. In a consensual political culture, citizens tend to agree on the appropriate means of making political decisions and tend to share views of what the major problems of the society are and how to solve them. In more conflictual cultures the citizens are sharply divided, often on both the legitimacy of the regime and solutions to major problems.

The Sources of Legitimacy

Why do citizens recognize a government as legitimate? According to Weber, there are three grounds upon which claims to legitimate authority can be based and members might accept their claims.⁹

1. Legality: There is a 'legal-rational authority' exercised over the general populace, leaders and their administrations, by the legal order and their administrations, and by the structure of society itself. There are written laws and, therefore, citizens know the possible results of their actions. Authority in this structure is based on purposeful reasoning and every prescription is justified logically. In a modern democracy, the legitimacy of the authorities will depend on their selection by citizens in competitive elections and on their adherence to constitutional procedures in lawmaking. "In much of the modern world and in many different kind of organizations, it is true that laws, rules, and constitutional practices acquire their legitimacy in large part because the process by which they are enacted is assumed to be legal. Whenever legality is the basis for legitimacy, leaders who are known to act illegally are discredited and lose their legitimacy."¹⁰

2. Tradition: Another form of authority is 'traditional authority'. In this case authority is

derived from established traditions. Legitimacy may depend on rulers inheriting the throne and on the ruler's obedience to religious customs such as making sacrifices and performing rituals. Weber thought that this was the most universal and primitive case, but even modern systems acquire a good deal of legitimacy from their traditions, such as England.

3. Charismatic Authority: The third form of authority is 'charismatic authority' which had its sources in the personality of a leader such as Churchill, Roosevelt, Lenin, Hitler, Ataturk.

According to Dahl: "this kind of leader has an unusual capacity for transmitting to his followers a sense that he pursues grandiose goals, more lofty than mere self-interest, and is worthy of admiration, awe, imitation and obedience."¹¹ This form of authority, however, does not have permanency; if the leader fails or dies, the basis or legitimacy falls away. Even during the rule of the charismatic leader, he or she usually has to be supported by religion or force. Therefore, most of the systems and principles which leaders establish do not last long due to inability to transform their authority to legal-rational or traditional authority.

Weber acknowledges that these kind authorities are "ideal types" and in real life they may exist together. To Weber, legitimacy is purely an empirical concept; the test of legitimacy was what the members of political system thought of their leaders, not what Weber or someone else thought. The fact that a leader's power was legitimate did not necessarily make that system good.

Whether legitimacy is based on tradition, ideology, citizen participation, or specific policies has important implications for the efficiency and stability of the political system. These bases of legitimacy set the rules for a kind of exchange between leaders and citizens regarding their obligations. As long as the obligations are met, citizens should comply and

provide support and appropriate participation. If customs are violated- the constitution subverted, the ruling ideology ignored- then authorities must expect resistance and rebellion.

Criteria of Legitimacy

According to Beran, three kinds of criteria of legitimacy can be distinguished: First, a government can be called legitimate on procedural grounds because it has acquired power in the proper way, regardless of its substantive merits. Almond explains procedural grounds in his first two levels of the political system: system, process. At the system level he is interested in the citizens' and leaders' views of the values and organizations that hold the political system together. How has it evolved, how are leaders selected and how have citizens come to obey the laws? He says: "Perhaps the most important aspect of system propensities is the level and basis of the legitimacy of government. If the citizens believe that they ought to obey the laws, then legitimacy is high. If they see no reason to obey or if they comply only from fear, then legitimacy is low. Because it is much easier to obtain compliance when citizens believe in the legitimacy of the government, virtually all governments, even the most brutal and coercive, try to make citizens believe that their laws ought to be obeyed and that it is legitimate to use force against those who resist. A government with high legitimacy will be more effective in making and implementing policies and more likely to overcome hardship and reversals."¹²

Secondly, a government can be called legitimate on substantive grounds because it pursues goods ends and uses good means, regardless of whether it has come to power in the proper way.¹³ Citizens in different nations attach different importance to various policy outcomes. In some societies, private property is highly valued; in others, communal

possessions are the rule. Some goods are valued by virtually everyone, such as material welfare, but societies differ nevertheless. Some emphasize equality and a minimum standard for all, while others emphasize the opportunity to move up the economic ladder. Some cultures put more emphasis on welfare and security, and others value liberty and procedural justice. Moreover, the combination of learned values, strategies, and social conditions will lead to quite different perceptions about how to achieve desired social outcomes.

According to Lipset calls this effectiveness. A breakdown of effectiveness, repeatedly or for a long time period, of time will endanger even a legitimate system's stability. Then, he attempts to explain the relationship between different degrees of legitimacy and the effectiveness of specific political systems and draws the following table.

		Effectiveness	
		+	–
Legitimacy	+	A	B
	–	C	D

A type societies have both a high level of legitimacy and effectiveness such as the United States, Britain. The societies which fall in box B are legitimate but not effective; Germany, Austria, and Spain in the 1930's for example. C type societies are effective but not legitimate; Germany and the Austrian republics during the late 1920's. The societies which fall in box D are neither legitimate nor effective. ¹⁴ (The Welfare Party in Turkey, as I will examine in third chapter, is trying to obtain legitimacy by effectiveness) Prolonged effectiveness over a number of generations may give legitimacy to a political system. In the modern world such effectiveness means to a considerable degree constant economic

development.

The third criterion is external in that a government is recognized as legitimate by other governments. States are given legitimacy in the international arena even when they lack legitimacy among all the groups within their own societies. Of course, governments are often called legitimate because they satisfy some combination of the three criteria of legitimacy.

Problems of legitimacy

In systems in which legitimacy is low and the bases for legitimacy are not accepted, citizens often resort to violence as a solution to political disagreement. Nevertheless the absence of the use of terror or large-scale repression by no means ensures that a regime is regarded by the population as legitimate.¹⁵

According to Almond, there are three serious problems for legitimacy: 1) Failure of all citizens to accept the national political community, as in Northern Ireland; 2) Lack of a general acceptance of the current arrangements for recruiting leaders and making policies, as was the case in South Africa; and 3) Loss of confidence that the leaders are making the right kinds of laws or following the right procedures. The Soviet Union disintegrated because all three kind of legitimacy problems appeared at the same time.¹⁶

Change in Legitimacy and Legitimacy Crises

Legitimacy is not a static phenomenon and it changes overtime according to changes which occur in political culture. Not only the exposure of citizens to new experiences, but also the gradual change of generations means the continued modification of the political culture as new

groups of citizens have different experiences on which to draw.¹⁷ Changes in legitimacy are connected with changes in social, religious, economic, and demographic conditions. On the other hand, changing ideas of legitimacy also may cause the changes in such fields. Once the basis of legitimacy changes, a government has to adapt to it or run the risk of revolution.¹⁸

According to Almond, the presence of more conflictual policies, or even an intensely divided political subculture indicates possible problems in resolving policy differences. When these differences are firmly incorporated into the political ideals of many individuals, it may be difficult to overcome them. On the other hand, a strong and widely shared sense of legitimacy of the political regime may sustain the political system through hard times and help leaders to overcome policy divisions.¹⁹

Industrialization, modernization, and the rise of the modern media communication have effected similar changes in political culture across national boundaries: "For almost two centuries now the secularizing influences of science and control over nature have shaped political cultures, first in the West and increasingly throughout the world."²⁰ But this trend toward cultural modernization has encountered two counter tendencies- an environmentalist reaction, and a religious fundamentalist reaction, which I will discuss broadly in next chapter.

The legitimacy of government rests on a complicated mixture of procedure and policy. In traditional societies the time frame is extensive. If crops fail, enemies invade, and floods destroy, the governing authority may lose legitimacy. In modern secular societies there is a more direct and explicit connection between acceptable policy outcomes and granting of legitimacy to the government. The belief that human beings can shape the environment puts pressure on political leaders to perform well. "If they do not, they will lose legitimacy, and

their ability to govern will be undermined: in fact, a regime can even be threatened if the incumbents are not replaced. The ease with which communist governments were swept away in Eastern Europe in 1989 shows how deeply their legitimacy had been undermined by their own performance, despite the efforts at direct socialization from above.”²¹

According to Lipset, crises of legitimacy are primarily recent historical phenomena, following the rise of sharp cleavages among groups which are able, because of mass communication, to organize around different values than those previously considered to be the only acceptable ones.²² A crisis of legitimacy is a crisis of change. Therefore, its roots must be sought out in the character of change in modern society. Crises of legitimacy occur during a transition to a new social structure, when (1) the status of major conservative institutions is threatened during the period of structural change; (2) all the major groups in the society do not have access to the political system in the transitional period. After a new social structure is established, if the new system is unable to sustain the expectations of major groups (on the grounds of “effectiveness”) for a long enough period to develop legitimacy upon the new basis, a new crisis may develop.²³

The first general type of loss of legitimacy emerges in countries which move from aristocratic monarchies to democratic republics. If, however, the status of major conservative groups and symbols is not threatened during this transitional period, even though they lose much of their power, democracy seems to be much more secure. In countries where monarchies were overthrown by revolution and orderly succession was broken, forces aligned with the throne have sometimes continued to refuse legitimacy to republican successors down to the fifth generation or more.²⁴

The second general type of a loss of legitimacy is related to the ways in which different societies handle the “entry into politics” crisis -the decision as to when new social groups shall obtain access to the political process. In the nineteenth century these new groups were primarily industrial workers; in the twentieth, colonial elites and peasant peoples. Whenever new groups become politically active, easy access to the legitimate political institutions tends to win the loyalty of the new groups to the existing system, and they in turn can permit the traditional government to maintain their old status.

Political systems which deny new strata access to power except by revolution also inhibit the growth of legitimacy by introducing millennial hopes into the political arena. Consequently, democratic regimes born under such stress not only face the difficulty of being regarded as illegitimate by groups loyal to the ancien regime but may also be rejected by those whose millennial hopes are not fulfilled by the change.

Notes:

1Lipset, p. 77.

2Plano, p. 74.

3Dahl, p. 32.

4Schaar, p. 40.

5Almond, p. 4.

6Lipset, p.77.

7Huntington, p. 22.

8Almond, p. 55.

9Weber, p.328-329.

10Dahl, p. 28.

11Dahl, p 28.

12Almond, p 55.

13Beran, p. 146.

14Lipset, p. 81.

15Weiner, p. 44

16Almond, p. 56.

17Almond, p. 63

18Schaar, p. 43.

19Almond, p. 61.

20Almond, p. 62.

21Almond, p. 63.

22Lipset, p. 78.

23Lipset, p.79.

24Lipset, p. 79.

Chapter II

RELIGION AS A SOURCE FOR LEGITIMACY

As Weiner stated, the most popular widespread political movements during the 1970s and 1980s were not organized around class or economic issues, but centered around religion or ethnicity: the Kurds in Iraq, the Shi'ite clergy in Iran, the Tamils in Sri Lanka, the Palestinians in Israel's west bank, the Mujahidin movement in Afghanistan. "The expectation that religion would wither away under the pressure of secularism, or that at least, it would cease to play a role as a salient political force, has been shattered not only by the events in Iran but by the resurgence of religion in much of the third world in the past decade."¹ Religion has emerged as one of the major sources for legitimacy of power.

Politics and Religion:

In the previous chapter I discussed that the social order requires authority, and authority requires legitimacy. All authority must be legitimized. As the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe clearly demonstrated, naked force is not enough. Personal charisma alone has also never proved entirely successful in the establishment of an enduring social order.

There appears to be a close connection between religion and legitimacy. Historically,

the state has been connected with religion either explicitly or implicitly. Religion has formed the foundation for most social and state authority in almost all civilizations and cultures until the relatively recent advent of broad based democratic institutions and their concomitant appeal to "the people" as a basis for legitimacy.

Indeed, religion has historically been considered the sustenance and source of the state itself. For example, before the First World War Germany Austria-Hungary, and Czarist Russia were ruled by imperial dynasties which sanctioned their rule by resorting to "divine right;" and as late as the Second World War, the emperor of Japan was regarded by most ordinary citizens of that country as a descendant of the sun god. Evidently, religion has been impressed into all of society's experiences and actions - from simple family chores to the corporate activities of the state.

Traditionally, religion has served as securing the approval to obedience by the people. It has legitimized the exercise of power by rulers. To most societies all authority stemmed from the divine because from nowhere else could the certitude so necessary to social order be derived. The effect of religion has been to put people in a particular relation to their society. The proposition that the state could be separated from a religious undergirding - symbolized in the concept of "separation of church and state" - represents relatively new political thinking.

Even today it is difficult to speak of true "secular societies" when talking about the more modern societies of the Western World. There exists the very real and somewhat sobering possibility that the so-called "secular states" of the Western World are much more religious than in theory. The United States has some echoes of the religious trend. Attempts by the religious right to identify America as a "Christian nation" and to bring prayer to public

schools are examples.

Politics is the accumulation, organization, and utilization of power in a region, territory, or society. It is the power to govern, to decide who controls the common institutions of society and on what terms. On the other hand, according to Clifford Geertz, religion is "...a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive and long lasting moods and motivation in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with an aura of factuality so that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic."²

The modern Western privatization of religion and the idea of the separation of church and state have convinced many that politics and religion do and should have little to do with one another. "However, a broader and deeper understanding of history and civilizations reveals that politics and religion are inevitably related, and that religion influences politics at least as much as politics influences religion."³ Indeed, the ideas that religion is and should be 'private' and 'nonpolitical' and that the state is 'public' and 'secular' derive in large measure from the enormous impact that a specific religious tradition, which is Christianity, has had upon modern Western social life and thought.

Why Politics Needs Religion?

As I analyzed in the previous chapter, political power needs a meaningful purpose and vision to be accepted as authority. Authority in all civilizations is incomprehensible without attention to religion. Religion provides legitimacy for political order. Political leaders also can and do influence which religions are acceptable in a region. Religions are sometimes spread by

political conquest, and political leaders in a society can influence which religious perspectives are to be honored.

But even what can be called purely political actions take place within a socioreligious frameworks of authority that limit the range of possibilities. In fact, politics is more fragile than its relative control through coercion makes it appear to be. The fact that power constantly gets out of hand and wraps itself in sanctity, becomes temporarily uncontrollable, violent, and arbitrary is perennially disturbing.

In some countries, however, religion has served more as an instrument of the state than as a force for popular opposition to the regime. Governments of Islamic countries have used Islamic beliefs as a means of creating an atmosphere of state legitimacy. Similarly, East Asian governments have used Confucianism as a mean of inculcating obedience, legitimizing political authority, and encouraging discipline in schools, in the working place, and in politics.

Revivalist movements have emerged in many societies experiencing undergoing modernization. While the use of religion by governing elites is as characteristic of modern states as it is of developing countries, religious elites in fact rarely take political power, and their influence on the political institutions of most countries is restrained by secular political forces.

Religion and political development

It is widely assumed that religion is an obstacle to modernization. The secularization of politics is a major aspect of *differentiation*, separating the politics from the religious structures, symbols, and leaders. As well, organizations have served as vehicles to bring the masses into

the political process, producing mass *participation*. In traditional societies, religion is a mass phenomenon, politics is not; but religion can be used to make politics meaningful. Religious values are also an important influence on political culture, and predispose individuals and societies toward certain patterns of political life. Lastly, in the contemporary third world, religions are being interpreted to provide ideological support for political systems seeking to increase their capacity to direct socioeconomic change.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century the secularization of the polity has been the most fundamental structural and ideological change in the process of political development. The erosion or destruction of the religious legitimation of governments, with or without formal constitutional changes, has been a prominent phenomenon everywhere.

In the conflicts engendered by secularization, Catholic, Buddhist, and Islamic religious functionaries have emerged as powerful leaders. As the politics of mass participation has increasingly become a reality, Catholic, Hindu, and Islamic political parties have appeared. And as the indigenous religious traditions have attempted to come to terms with the problems of socioeconomic change, the ideological innovations have included Catholic, Hindu, Buddhist, and Islamic versions of socialism. Religious tradition not only molded the institutions of the ancien regime, but has continued as an existential reality as the core of third-world cultures and as a vital intellectual resource and psychological support.

The problems of political development are substantially different in areas of the third world not integrated by major religious traditions. Religion integrates traditional society by providing it with a common framework of meaning and experience. Government is considered

as sacral. Religion and government, the two major society-wide institutions of social control, form an integrated religiopolitical system.

According to Smith, initially in traditional societies, the ideological component of the system is provided entirely by religion; there are no secular ideologies. Religious ideas maintain the legitimacy of the system and especially of the ruler; all traditional monarchs rule by virtue of some theory of the divine right or divinity of kings.

The vital connection between religion and polity, so widespread as to be almost universal, is rooted both psychologically and doctrinally, in fundamental assumptions about power. The exercise of power is at the center of the polity and in virtually all cultures power is an attribute of divinity.

Second, the political community of a traditional religiopolitical system is identical with the religious community in theory and substantially in fact. Third, it is the religiously integrated and legitimated social system, not a governmental apparatus, which enables the ruler to maintain stability in the realm over considerable periods of time. Fourth, religious specialists perform essential rituals which legitimize royal power, function as advisors to the king, and inculcate in the people the virtue of obedience to divinely ordained authority. Fifth, the ruler's religious functions are extensive: he is chief patron of the clerical class, appoints their hierarchy, and enforces their discipline. The ruler is in every sense the defender of the faith. For all these reasons, according to Smith, the only adequate conception of the traditional system is that of an integrated religiopolitical system.⁴

The Disruption of Traditional System

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, traditional systems militarily, politically, technologically, economically, socially, intellectually and religiously came under attack. These attacks separated the major components of the religiopolitical system. Religion could no longer legitimize political power in the convincing way it had once done, nor could governments confidently arrange ecclesiastical affairs in the traditional manner. The disruption of traditional systems left governments without legitimacy and autonomous religions with no prior experience of autonomy.

Secularization

This disruption was the beginning of the secularization of the polity, which is one of the major aspect of political development. For those societies which came under Western-imperialist rule, the question of legitimacy was never fully resolved. After independence, liberal, democratic, and socialist currents of thought merged with nationalism, and produced legitimating ideological formulations. These were subsequently deemed satisfactory to the political elite, despite their Western origin and their near unintelligibility to the masses still steeped in traditionalist modes of thought. Ideological bridges were built with such slogans as “Islamic socialism” and “Islamic theo-democracy”.

Secularization involves the separation of the polity from religion; legal and constitutional recognition is given to the fact that the political system does not derive its legitimacy from religion, and the symbols and structures which linked the two are destroyed. Secularization involves the expansion of the polity at the expense of religion as major areas of

social life pass from religious regulation to the jurisdiction of the state. Secularization involves the transformation of political culture as politically relevant values assumed a secular orientation. Nationality and nationalism displace religious notions of political community, and secular ideologies develop a legitimating power of their own.

Notes:

1Weiner, p. 47.

2Geertz, p. 90.

3Stackhouse, p 408-423.

4Smith, p. 7.

Chapter III

RELIGION AND POLITICAL LEGITIMACY IN TURKEY

Historical Background

The Ottoman State was governed according to Millet System. The Ottomans granted partial autonomy to the Muslim, Christian and Jewish *millets* and emphasized religious differences between various cultural groups. The millet system allowed the accommodation of religious and regional particularisms by the center. From the beginning there were communities from various ethnicities and races and religions. While It is true that the Ottoman law system was based on the Islamic law (Sheriat), the Ottoman Empire was not a theocratic state. The *Sheriat* covered matters concerning the personal status of the empire's Muslim subjects as well as providing principles of public law for the government, while the religious laws of the non-Muslim subjects were elaborated and enforced by their own religions' leaders.

Turkish Sultans did not claim religious leadership until the sixteenth century. Although the Ottoman sultans assumed the leadership of the Muslims and did use the title caliph from the conquest of the Arab world in 1517 to 1923, only two of them attempted to use it as a political tool: Selim I and Abdulhamit II. Nevertheless, a clear line remained between the secular power of the sultan and the religious authority of the Ulema. "This disassociation of the temporal from the spiritual provided fertile ground for secular reforms in the nineteenth century and for the

emergence in the twentieth of a modern state founded on popular sovereignty.”¹

According to the political culture of the Ottomans, the Sultan was appointed by God to hold together the estates of the society which constituted its order.² However, the Sultans never claimed divine nature or any prophetic attribute. The people did not attribute any divinity to them either. In Weber’s classification, the Sultan’s authority came from tradition.

2- Republic Era

a- One party era

Turkey became an independent state in 1923 after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

The sources of Legitimacy of the New Turkish State:

1- National Liberator : First of all, leadership of the new state gained legitimacy by winning the War of Independence and freeing the country from foreign occupation. This gave the leadership the courage and justification for reforms. Mustafa Kemal Pasha emerged as the national liberator of the Turks when the Ottoman Empire, carved up by the Western Powers, was in its death throes. Already a legendary hero of the Dardanelles and other fronts, in 1919 he became the leader of the Turkish emancipation. With a small and ill-equipped army, he repelled the invading enemy forces on the East, on the South, and on the West. After winning the War of Independence, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk- his posthumously awarded name meaning “father of the Turks - proclaimed the Republic of Turkey on October 29, 1923. The claim that “If Atatürk had not saved us, the Turkish state would have not existed and no one would have been alive today” is still used widely today by leaders attempting to legitimize their regime.

2- Nation State and Nationalism: The claim by the leaders of the new Turkish state that the

revolution was for the creation of a homogeneous nation state stood in sharp contrast to the multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire. Atatürk declared Turkey pro-Western, nationalizing nearly all of the economy, and squelching ethnic groups in the hope of creating a "Turkish" nation. Since the turn of the century, there had been evidence of attempts to create a state structure based on 'being Turkish'. While this ideology was created within Turkey, friends and enemies were also identified according to the slogan "The only friends of Turks are Turks". "One Turk is worth all the world" "What a happiness to say that I am Turkish" also became slogans of the day.

Nationalism is deeply rooted in Turkish society and political life. Every political movement is nationalist to different degrees even the Islamic and Socialist movements which are naturally universal. The Islamist Welfare Party is mythologizing the Ottoman Empire's brilliant days and hoping Turkey to obtain similar power among Islamic world and represent Islam against the West. The Nationalist Movement Party is using the pre-Islamic history of the Turks as well as emphasizing the War of Independence. In addition, the leftist parties are utilizing War of Independence.

3-Republicanism and Democracy: Although Turkey did not have free and fair elections under one party government, Atatürkism introduced to Turkey the process of parliamentary and participatory democracy to Turkey. Atatürk claimed legitimacy from his dedication to the sovereignty of the national will and to the creation of, "the state of the people ". Atatürk said "Sovereignty belongs unconditionally to the people."

As Weiker stated "(republicanism) provided for the demise of the Sultanate and Caliphate and their replacement by the sovereignty of the nation as expressed through the Grand National Assembly"³ The republican character of the state has complete legitimacy

amongst the citizens; no one virtually wants to go back to monarchy, nor is there anyone from Ottoman family that can claim such a right. Moreover, most Islamists are inclined to thank Atatürk for dissolving the monarchy because they claim that monarchical government is not compatible with Islam. However, the demise of the Caliphate has not received the same appreciation. Later Muslim authors blamed Atatürk for leaving the Muslim world without a head and damaging Turkey's role as a the leader of the Muslim world.

4-Freedom and Equality: The leaders of modern Turkey promised freedom and equality for all. When Atatürk proclaimed the Republic, he announced that " the new Turkish State is a state of the people and a state by the people." Having established a populist and egalitarian system, he later observed: "We are a nation without classes or special privileges."

5-Modernism: Modernism was, and still is perceived as Westernization by leaders of the Republic and they, therefore, tried to change Turkish society accordingly. To give his nation a modern outlook, Atatürk introduced many reforms: European hats replaced the fez; women stopped wearing the veil; all citizens took surnames; and the Islamic calendar gave way to the Western calendar. A vast transformation took place in both urban and rural life.

6-Economic Growth: The major promise of the new regime was to elevate Turkey to the standard of Europe. Atatürk said: "The major challenge facing us is to elevate our national life to the highest level of civilization and prosperity." Atatürk's aim was to modernize Turkish life in order to give his nation a new sense of dignity, equality, and happiness. Atatürk resolved to lead his country out of the crumbling past and into a brave new future.

In another speech Atatürk said: "In order to raise our new Turkey to the level that she is worthy of, we must, under all circumstances, attach the highest importance to the national

economy.” With determination and vigor, Atatürk's Turkey undertook agricultural expansion, industrial growth, and technological advancement. In mining, transportation, manufacturing, banking, exports, social services, housing, communications, energy, mechanization, and other vital areas, many strides were taken. Within the first decade after founding the republic, the gross national product increased five-fold.

Turkey's economic development during Atatürk's Presidency was impressive in both absolute figures and in comparison to other countries. But the ideal of “reaching the highest level of civilization and prosperity” did not occur and despite huge accomplishments, Turkey is still classified as a “developing nation”. This opened an opportunity for opposition to raise its voice and insist that seventy years should be enough for that ideal. To support their claim, the opponents of the regime often provide give Germany and Japan as examples of countries which accomplished economic success despite their defeats in World War II.

7-Secularism: The leaders of the Republic thought Islam was an obstacle in the path of modernization. What Kemalism did was to find a scapegoat in Islam, and it adopted Westernization and its attendant secularism as a remedy for country's social, political, and economic decline. Making religious faith a matter of individual conscience, in the one party era the leaders tried to eliminate Islam from the state and social realms completely.

The first phases in the introduction of secularism were the abolition of the Caliphate and the Ministry of the Sheria and Pious Foundations(Vakif) on March 4, 1924. These were followed by the introduction of separate educational and judicial systems, the hat reform, the closure of dervish retreats and religious sects, the acceptance of a Sunday weekend holiday rather than the Moslem Friday, the adoption of the western calendar, and finally the adoption of the

principle of secularism in the Constitution on February 5, 1937. Between 1926 and 1930, the Turkish Republic underwent a legal transformation. Religious laws were abolished and a secular system of jurisprudence was introduced. Among the far-reaching changes were the new Civil Code, Penal Code, and Business Law, based on the Swiss, Italian and German models respectively.

The state, however, has continued to play a role in religious matters such as maintaining the mosques and training the religious personnel. In secular Turkey all religious affairs are carried out by a central government organization affiliated to the Prime Ministry, namely the Department of Religious Affairs, established in 1924. The function of this organization is to carry out tasks related to the beliefs, divine services and moral principles of Islam, and to enlighten citizens on religious matters. This has been controversial because secularism means separation of state and religion altogether. One of the decisions of the Turkish Constitutional Court in 1973 stated that the existence of the Department of Religious Affairs in the state system is not in conflict with secularism due to this kind of secularism as 'special for Turkey'. The efforts of trying to eliminate Islam in social life were not successful because Islam has historically been rooted and entrenched in the social and cultural lives of most Turks.

The ideology of the Turkish state: Kemalism

The ideology of Republic of Turkey was, and remains, "Kemalism" or "Atatürkism". It had been outlined during the 1920s and was inserted into the Constitution in 1937. Its basic principles, which supply legitimacy to the state, stress the republican form of government representing the power of the electorate, secular administration, nationalism, a mixed economy

nly proves that Kemalism still prevails in Turkey, but also means that Turkish law will not permit political behavior based on religious principles.

The recognition that no protection shall be afforded to thoughts or opinions contrary to Turkish national interests, the principle of the indivisibility of the existence of Turkey with its State and territory, Turkish historical and moral values or the nationalism, principles, reforms and modernism of Atatürk and that, as required by the principle of secularism, there shall be no interference whatsoever of the sacred religious feelings in State affairs and politics; ⁴

After the death of Kemal Atatürk in 1938, his colleague and close friend, İsmet İnönü, succeeded him. During the Party Congress on December 26, 1938, he was given the title of 'National Chief' and was proclaimed the irreplaceable leader of the Party. Thereafter, it was decided that Kemalism would continue to be the country's sole ideology.

Multiparty era: 1946-Present

During the multiparty era, Islam has been allowed in the social realm but it has been completely excluded from the state realm. As Heper stated, "From the mid-1940s to the present, as democracy became consolidated, Islamists have been increasingly reincorporated into political life. This was helped by the gradual change of attitude on the part of the bulk of the Islamists, who moved from a revolutionary stance to a pragmatic one."⁵

RPP under Inonu

After 1946, people began to discuss the religion's place in the press parliament, press and in society in general. After about twenty-five years of excessive secularism, the people wanted to return to traditional values that had played a major role in daily life in earlier times. Some members of the parliament proposed reintroducing religious instruction in public schools in order to strengthen spiritual resistance against the threat of communism. They claimed that the lack of religious education had created a new generation which did not have solid moral values. Others observed that in the modern Western countries religious life was in the open and respected.

Inonu had made concessions toward the religious feelings of the people partly because the Republican People's Party (RPP) had to compete with the Democrat Party which had used the issue of religion skillfully. The publication of a Turkish version of the Encyclopedia of Islam was allowed. Inonu also accepted the reinstatement of religious instruction in elementary schools as well as courses for imams and the establishment of a faculty of theology. The optional religious courses were introduced in elementary schools in January 1949. On May 20, 1948, the Ministry of National Education was given the task of creating accelerated courses for Imam and preachers. On June, 1949, the National Assembly passed law 5424 which approved the establishment of a Faculty of Theology in Ankara. "These measures were the work of an increasing number of politicians who were favorable to a less pronounced break with religious traditions and, in this, they were supported by the majority of the population."⁶ However, these concessions came too late and the results of the 1950 elections, which were the first free and fair elections of the Republic, showed that the people wanted the political and social changes as proposed by the Democrat Party.

The Democrat Party

In 1950 Turkey began governance under a multiparty regime. The Democratic Party, which had started as the opposition movement within the Republican People's Party and was founded on January 7, 1946, won the 1950 election with an outright victory. "In its program, the Democrat party took a position in favor of greater respect for religion. Article 14 of the program stated that the party rejected the erroneous interpretation of secularism that led to a hostile attitude against religion and advocated a clearer separation between religion and public affairs so that the government would not interfere in religious activities."⁷ Moreover, necessary measures concerning courses on religion as well as the opening of institutions to train clerical personnel would speedily be implemented.⁸

Without question the religious feelings of people played a major role in their voting for the Democrat Party. Religious people and traditionalists had not forgotten certain grievances they had against the RPP, which had followed a policy of secularism that they strongly opposed. The concessions toward the religious feelings of the people towards the end of RPP's government was too late to change the image of an anti-religious RPP.

Democrat Party leadership was successful in attracting the religious oriented voters . The DP gave some concessions to religious people and this helped them to integrate the system and begin to legitimize the regime. One of the first concessions of the government was to allow the call to prayer to be in Arabic once again under Law No. 5666 of June 16, 1950. This was met with general satisfaction among the masses. The other concessions involved starting the broadcast of Koran recitations on the Radio on July 7, 1950, making it necessary to petition for exemption from religious courses in schools, introducing religious courses in intermediary

schools and the reopening of the Institute of Islamic Studies.

It is readily recognized that the DP governments directly or indirectly encouraged private initiatives favoring religion such as the building of mosques and the settings up of centers of religious instruction by private funds or communal donations, the increase in the number of pilgrims going to Mecca and the widespread observance of fasting during Ramadan. “The number and variety of religious publications, the increasing number of veil-wearing women and mosques built have been taken as some indication of a religious revival.”⁹

On the other hand, the DP continued to take measures against those who attacked secularism by using freedom of speech. Certain religious periodicals were not allowed to be published. Religious manuals in Arabic were frequently censored or confiscated. Law 6187 of July 24, 1953, which complemented Article 163 of the Penal Code, legitimized the suppression of speech: “Whoever manipulates religion for political, personal, or commercial interest will be condemned to 1-5 years of hard labor. The sentence may be doubled in the case of commercial interest.”¹⁰ This article was abolished in 1991 by the government of the Motherland Party.

However, the public was pleased with the DP’s attitude towards religion and Adnan Menderes was very popular among the people in many rural areas and small towns. On February 13, 1960, a crowd in Antakya welcomed Menderes’ visit by holding a placard which read “We believe in God and then you.” Many people believed that a miracle saved Menderes when he survived an airplane crash in Britain in 1959. This incident increased the DP’s identification with Islam and indicated that people were considering religious concepts in their attitude toward politics. According to Turan, it was not the religious basis of its political ideology, but its tolerant attitude towards religion, which made the DP popular among voters.¹¹ Moreover, I

should add that secularism was well established among the people and religious parties such as the Nation Party and movements were marginalized because average citizens did not pay attention to them.

1960-1980 Era

On 27 May, 1960, the government was overthrown by a military coup and the Committee of National Unity(CNU) was formed. According to Feroz Ahmad, there was widespread belief that the CNU would attack Islam and reinstate the strict secularism that existed before 1950. There were rumors that mosques would be closed and the *ezan* would be recited in Turkish again. However, contrary to expectations, the CNU adopted an attitude that was favorable to Islam, albeit without violating the principles of secularism.¹² Most members of the CNU wanted to make Islam a national instrument of the state in order to prevent its manipulation by conservative interest groups and political parties. The CNU also denied rumors that it would interfere in religious matters and, more specifically, that would change the Koran and the *ezan* into Turkish. Despite its Kemalist stance, the CNU realized that Islam was an important factor in Turkish culture and that it would be counterproductive to go against it. Thus, it would be wiser for the state to control Islam in order to prevent its exploitation by reactionaries.

The CNU accepted certain institutional changes that took place in the Menderes era such as the establishment of Imam-Hatip schools and the Higher Islamic Institute. However, their curricula were made more modern by the addition of courses like economics, astronomy, civil law, and sociology. Moreover, sermons were to be more progressive and enlightened.¹³

The Justice Party(JP) , a close successor to the defunct DP, was formed in February 1961.

Although grass-roots JP politicians exploited religion during the campaign, their program did not carry such implications.¹⁴ Unlike the defunct DP, the JP did not mention that it was attached to the six Kemalist principles stated in the 1924 constitution. As far as secularism was concerned the JP's stance it was stated in Article 17 of the program: "Besides economic development, we also believe in moral development... Our understanding of secularism is not blasphemy or disbelief." ¹⁵

During the election campaign of 1965, all political parties except the Workers Party of Turkey used religion to appeal to the voters. According to Caglayangil of the JP, not only schools but also stadiums, theaters, and mosques were to be used to inform the people in order to reach the development goals faster. Although the JP did not use Islam as an ideology, it gave concessions to it. The religious factor influenced electoral politics in small towns and rural areas. The JP changed its emblem from an open book with the letters "A.P." to a white horse. In the eyes of many voters, the book symbolized the Koran while A meant Allah(God) and P, Peygamber(Prophet).¹⁶

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The Party leader, Suleyman Demirel, who has been President since 1993, has been very skillful in appealing to religious votes. Some religious groups such as one segment of the *Nurcus* group known as *Yeni Asircilar* (*Yeni Asir* is a daily newspaper of the group) supported the JP. There was a rumor that Demirel was the person who the founder of the movement, Said Nursi, informed about his coming.

According to Geyikdagi:

"The majority of the electors are inclined to vote for the party that manipulates religion as long as they feel that the competing parties are the same in other respects. However, if a relatively

secularist party looks more promising in the economic sphere, the majority of the voters are likely to vote for it rather than the less secularist party which manipulate religion but whose economic policy does not look promising to the voter. Results of the elections confirm this argument. For instance, the National Salvation Party obtained only 11.8 per cent of the votes in the 1973 general elections, 3.4 % in the 1975 by-elections, 8.6 per cent in the 1977 general elections, and 9.7 per cent in the 1979 by-elections.”¹⁷

The JP got a comfortable majority in the National Assembly and the new government was formed by Suleyman Demirel. First the government pledged to fight against extreme ideologies, especially communism. As well, graduates of the Imam-Hatib secondary schools were to gain access to higher education.

The government of the Justice Party faced another military semi-coup in 1971. The general elections of 1973 gave rise to a new party with an apparently Islamic orientation, the National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi), 11.8 % of the total votes, thus making it the third largest one in the National Assembly. This was the first time since the creation of the republic that a pro-Islamic party, campaigning with pro-Islamic slogans along with a socioeconomic and welfare program, came to occupy a relatively important position in the parliament. Its leader, Necmettin Erbakan, current prime minister, had left the JP and formed the Muslim fundamentalist National Order Party which was banned after the 1971 coup. In January, 1974, the RPP and the NSP formed a coalition government. As Gole stated, "Since the establishment of an Islamist party, the Milli Nizam Partisi(National Order Party) in 1970, Turkish Islamism has been incorporated into the political system and legitimated by the parliamentary system.”¹⁸

After 1980

The last military coup occurred on September 12, 1980. While the new administration proved to be strict by not allowing blatant violations of secularism such as preaching a religious order instead of a secular one or wearing dress with the obvious intent of opposing the existing order, measures were taken to teach the youth and the general public courses on religion. Compulsory religion courses were to be taught every year from grade 4 of elementary school to the final grade of high school. In the spring of 1982, the Ministry of Justice began to provide courses on religion and ethics to the more than 80,000 prisoners in jails all over Turkey.¹⁹ The logic behind this was the same as with the case in 1960 coup where it was deemed wise for the state to control Islam in order to prevent its exploitation by reactionaries.

Multi-party democracy was reintroduced in 1983. The Motherland Party, which has some *tarikats*¹ among its founders, came to power. Although the party claimed that it combined four factions into one: liberal, social democrat, nationalist and religious factions; liberal and religious factions were dominant. The party leader, Turgut Ozal, has been more successful than Demirel in appealing to the religious vote with the help of his *tarikat* background. He had been a candidate in the NSP list for parliament and his brother was among the ministers of the same party. Furthermore, unlike Demirel, Ozal did not have the disadvantage of allegation of being a mason. Most religious groups and *tarikats* continued to support the Motherland Party until 1991, when the new leader, Mesut Yilmaz, cut the ties with the religious groups.

As Gole stated, the liberal administration of President Turgut Ozal introduced the

¹The Sufi religious orders, in general, and the Naqshbandi and the Nurcu orders, in particular, have played, and continue to play a major role in Turkish society.

institutions of a market economy and the privatization of the mass media. As a consequence, civil society and associative life expanded, and non-governmental organizations have proliferated.²⁰ The religious groups, which are the largest among the non-governmental organizations, have also flourished.

The Welfare Party(WP) received 21% of the votes in the 1995 elections and for the first time in the history of the "modern" Turkish state. Consequently, it came to power on June 28, 1996, as a bigger partner of coalition government. The leader of the Islamic WP, Necmettin Erbakan, is the new Prime Minister.

In new era that came with the Welfare Party religion is trying to enter the state realm, too. The Welfare Party, for example, has attempted to allow female workers with head scarves in state institutions. But would this mean the alteration of the system altogether? Although it is too early to say, some indications show that it does not. We should examine the WP closely in order to understand which extend the party is threat to regime.

The Welfare Party

The Welfare Party, which aspires to establish an Islamic regime, gets its support from Muslim conservatives. Signs of the rise of Islam are everywhere. Many women have begun wearing the head scarf. Thousands of mosques have been built, bringing the total to 70,000.

The WP has also gained widespread support from the disenfranchised who resent their difficult living conditions, government corruption, and social injustices. The 1995 elections showed that large numbers of people in urban centers sympathize with the WP, which pledges "social justice." In the last 20 years, millions of people have moved from rural areas to

metropolitan areas. Nearly two-thirds of population of large cities now live in shanty towns.

Turkey's social and economic conditions and the rising expectations of the masses account largely for a popular trend toward Islam.

The WP's ascendance is based more upon populist discontent than a growing adherence to Islamic precepts, however. The West's positions on Bosnia and Chechnya and on Turkish membership in the European Union have undoubtedly alienated the voters from center parties and helped the WP which has expressed more independent foreign policy. There is strong belief among the Turkish people that Turkey has not been granted full membership into the EU due to purely religious reasons.

The Welfare Party has received credit for its success in municipalities, especially in the large cities. No matter what their ideological predilections, for example, Istanbul's ten million inhabitants unanimously concede that WP's personnel are the best managers of essential civic services.

As stated above, many of the votes cast for the WP were "protest votes" or votes for change. Many ordinary Turks just wanted to try the WP after other parties have failed to resolve Turkey's problems. Another factor that helped the WP is the deep divisions in the two moderate right and two moderate left parties. There has been rivalry between the leaders of the center right and center left parties.

I also believe that some radical religious movements which flourished in the 1980s and were more radical than the WP have declined in the 1990s. They formerly claimed that democracy is an infidel form of government and the WP thereby became infidels by adopting it. These fundamentalists preferred not to vote at all. However, most of them presently support the

WP. The percentage of these people may vary from 3 to 4 percent of all voters. (Further research is required in this area of study).

The WP, however, has changed its rhetoric since first coming to power. Erbakan has said that the WP is the guarantor of secularism and democracy. He turned the tables on Turkey's secular parties by alleging that in the past the term secularism has been used by those advocating atheism and hostility toward religion. Erbakan also omitted any reference to the Islamist concept of "Just Order" - which among other things would ban interest rates - and to his ideas of forming an "Islamic NATO" or an Islamic common market. Instead, after briefly stating that Turkey wants to develop ties with Islamic countries, he stressed that he will initiate contacts with the United States and Europe.

But some conservatives think Erbakan has abandoned his principles in the quest for power. This could cause a long-term split in The Welfare Party. But in a party known for its discipline, the core is still fully behind Erbakan.

Why Islam has emerged as a major challenge to principles of Republic?

Islam and Modernization

The Turkish experiment casts doubt on the claim that economic progress is likely to entail increased secularism, which turns religion into a private matter between the individual and God. In terms of religion, according to Gellner, Turkey is doubly unique, on the one hand, because Islam is unique among religions in its response to modernity, and, on the other, because Turkey is unique in the Muslim world in its secularism. The given wisdom dictates that under modernity the role of religion diminishes. Not so in the case of Islam! On the contrary, the influence of

Islam has increased in Muslim societies in the last hundred years and with the exception of Turkey secularization has not occurred.²¹

Islamic movements have typically been analyzed as reactionary to some kind of deeper malaise in the transition to modernity, be it economic or ontological; and the Islamists are painted as frustrated, marginal fanatics. We need to approach Islamic movements, not as reactionary to the given order, but as an elaboration of self-definition and a new critique of modernity.

Identity of Turks

Islam has been an indispensable element in the definition of the Turkish identity. The population of Turkey is composed of peoples of various origins who settled in the country under the Ottoman Empire. Many came as refugees after their lands fell under foreign domination. What was built was a political community of Turks who were also Muslims. Islam did not legitimize the regime, nor was it necessarily the appropriate ideology on which to base political action, yet one's claim to membership in the political community, in behavioral terms, was validated by the possession of Islamic credentials.²²

Some segments of the Turkish population continue to view their society as a collectivity characterized by Islam. Mardin's study of workers in Izmir provides an indication of a basic cleavage in how the political community is perceived in Turkish society. In response to a question on how they viewed themselves, 50 per cent said that they viewed themselves as Turks, while 37.5 per cent viewed themselves as Muslims.²³

Economic and Social Problems

Beginning in the 1970s, Turkey became a recipient of large amounts of U.S. foreign aid. This aid did little to promote economic growth. In fact, it was often used to postpone badly needed economic reforms. Recently, however, Turkey has begun to introduce reforms. It has lowered taxes, increased opportunities for foreign investment, and increased its reliance on market forces. Despite such progress, the nation is still plagued by skyrocketing inflation and huge unemployment rates.

Decline of Leftist Movements

Although the 1980 military coup crushed leftist, rightist and Islamist militant, the leftist ideology declined while religious ideology flourished due to several reasons. First of all, Islam has deep roots in Turkish society. Communism and socialism have never been popular among the Turks partly because of their religious beliefs. For conservative Muslims the fight against socialism has not been simply an economic struggle, or a controversy over social institutions, but a deep-rooted conflict between God and Satan.

Religious people and clergy did not support the socialist or communist movements because of socialism's affiliation, actual or perceived, with atheism. The religious leaders disseminated examples of the effects on mosques and Muslims in the Soviet Union. They feared they would lose their source of power through a socialist revolution. The positive affiliation between Islam and Socialism and the creation of concepts like Islamic Socialism in the Arab World never took place in Turkish society. Although the clergy emphasized that Islam is a way of life separated from capitalism and communism, Capitalism was found to be closer to the teaching of Islam than

Communism because of the religious tolerance in the major capitalist countries like Britain and the United States. Recently, Muslim intellectuals are using rhetoric that Turkey did not adopt true secularism and democracy exemplified these countries.

Religious Groups and Tarikats

The religious groups and orders are becoming increasingly more political. People refer to religious leaders and shayks which party they should vote for. The religious leaders used to say “vote for believers or vote for those who help the religion of Allah” by implying the center right or religious party. But now religious leaders proclaim openly which party to support due to their greater security within the state.

Heper claims that religious orders, movements, and sects have had representatives in the secular political parties as well as in the WP.²⁴ This has been the case in most of the multi-party era. The religious groups supported the center right parties for the following reasons: First of all, the religious parties seemed too weak to come to power. They did not want “to waste” their vote. By doing this, the leftist party, which they believed less tolerant of religious feelings, may have come to power. Secondly, the religious party leaders, especially Erbakan, seemed uncompromising toward the religious leaders. Erbakan’s logic was “This(Welfare Party) is the army of Allah, I am the leader of it. Whoever is Muslim should join us.” Furthermore, he once said “Whoever does not vote for us belongs to ‘potato religion’”. In 1991, his behavior led to a clash between Erbakan and the leader of the larger Naksibendi faction and long term supporter of the WP, Shayk Esad Cosan. Consequently, Shayk withdrew his support from the party. But the WP was lucky enough that because there was no party that represented religious orders,

Shayk once again began to support it. The leaders of two center right parties, Yilmaz and Ciller, showed little ability of appealing to religious votes.

Religious Education

The legitimacy of regimes in terms of religion is significantly related to the level of people's religious education. I mean here "religious education" in general not only through formal education. Religious education, as stated above, has increased since 1946. Besides general religious education, people began to learn political aspect of Islam. In the 1950s, liberal politicians satisfied religious people by simply mentioning "Allah" in their speeches. But in the 1990s this is no longer enough

Notes:

1White, p. 7.

2Berkes, p. 10.

3Weiker, p. 5.

4Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, Preamble.
<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/GRUPI/Anayasa/i142.htm>

5Heper, p. 32-45.

6Geyikdagi, p. 69.

7Tunaya, p. 663.

8Geyikdagi, p.74.

9Geyikdagi, p.77.

10*T.C. Resmi Gazete* (The official Gazette), July 24, 1953. Geyikdagi, p. 85.

11Turan, p. 45.

12Ahmad, p. 373-375.

13Ahmad, p. 378.

14Geyikdagi, p. 91.

15Geyikdagi, p. 95.

16Ahmad, p. 376-7.

17Geyikdagi, p. 121.

18Gole, p. 46-58.

19Geyikdagi, p. 141.

20Gole, p. 47.

21Gellner.

22Turan, p. 40.

23Turan, p. 38.

24Heper, p. 32-45.

Chapter IV

I-CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAUDI STATE AND THE SOURCES OF LEGITIMACY

According to Quandt, Saudi Arabia does not fit easily into the conventional models of political systems. It is a monarchy, but the king is only one among several key personalities who participate in most important decisions. It is a family enterprise, but the family itself is not united and commoners are anxious to gain power. It is an Islamic State, but secular influences are everywhere present. It is an authoritarian government, but access to rulers is comparatively easy and citizens' demands for individual redress of grievances are often met. It is a society avidly seeking the comforts of the modern world, but traditional elements such as tribes remain influential.¹

Rentier State

A distinctive characteristic of the Saudi Arabia is the prevalence of the rentier economy. A system is rentier when it derives a substantial part of its revenue from foreign sources and in the form of rent.² Rent is any income not coming from the productive activities of the citizens of the beneficiary state. In such political systems just a small fraction of the society is involved in the creation of the wealth, the majority are only engaged in the utilization of these huge financial resources. Oil revenues, as well as other revenues from the sale of natural gas and from government investments abroad, go directly to the state treasury. Moreover, oil resources are owned and strictly regulated by the government. Thus, the nature of the rentier economy is that it concentrates tremendous power in the hand of the government in its relationship with its citizens.

In addition, oil wealth has enabled Saudi Arabia to provide their citizens with social services such as education, health care, housing, and consumer goods either free or for a minimum charge. The Saudi Government has not felt the need for income or profits to extract taxes from its peoples thanks to its huge wealth. Enjoying a high level of free or heavily subsidized social services, the citizens of Saudi Arabia have had few incentives to oppose their government or even to take part in the political process. Thus a sort of social contract has been forged: Citizens receive substantial material benefits in exchange for political loyalty, or at least political quiescence.³

Type of authority

Weber's ideal types are useful in understanding the sources of legitimacy in the Saudi state. In the process of shaping the political system and its territorial base, Ibn Saud invoked a legitimacy based on a combination of charismatic and traditional elements. He utilized his charisma to mobilize the bedouins and invoked his family's traditional domination of the area of his power. As the territorial development of the country neared completion, Ibn Saud created modern administrative structures to meet the demands of a modern nation state.⁴ We are now seeing that the traditional authority is transforming the legal authority by introducing the Basic Law.

The Sources of Legitimacy

Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarchy that depends on the cohesion of the royal family and the support of the religious leadership for its legitimacy. King Fahd heads the government and governs under Islamic law with the help of the Council of Ministers, or Cabinet, many of whose

members belong to the royal family. The royal family council can also restrict the king or dismiss him, as it ousted King Saud in 1964. The Islamic Shariah, or legal code, is the source of law, but rapid development has resulted in the passage of complementary legislation in royal decrees. The royal family includes about 5,000 adult male princes, some 60 of whom are involved in major decisions.

In the 1930s, King Abd ul-Aziz ibn Saud², the founder of modern Saudi Arabia, forged what is today Saudi Arabia, drawing on the teachings of Muhammad Abd ul Wahhab, an 18th-century preacher who developed the puritanical sect that bears his name. Since the founding of Saudi Arabia in 1932, the religious establishment has been accorded special consideration. Now the Council of Ulemas, made up of Islamic scholars, and the (Islamic) Judicial Court sit "to the right of the king," But compromises and trade-offs always take place in the social and cultural realms, not on political or economic issues.⁵

Except for the Shiites living in the Eastern Province, the Saudis adhere to the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam, and the monarch gains legitimacy as the "Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques." Since 1986, Fahd has used this title to emphasize the royal family's commitment to Islam. A \$12 billion development plan for the holy cities, now nearing completion, is an expression of this commitment. The king consults weekly with the ulema, notably those descended from the Wahhabi sect's founder and allied to the ruling family by marriage. These religious advisers influence decisions on education and the judiciary. They also oversee the *mutawa*, or religious police, who enforce shop closing during the call to prayer five times a day,

²His name is Abdulaziz ibn Mohammed, but he is known Ibn Saud. I will use Ibn Saud throughout the paper.

ensure modesty in dress for women, and regulate other forms of Islamic public conduct, including the growing number of ritual executions and other punishments carried out in public afternoon prayers.⁶

Technocrats

Well-educated technocrats who are not members of the royal family head the key Saudi ministries of finance, petroleum, planning, and industry and electricity. The ministers in these technical posts are changed more often than the others, and some Saudis regard them as mere clerks. They serve at the pleasure of the king and the royal family. It included many aging officials who were regarded as ineffectual but still had the ear of the king. New cabinet appointments were made in August 1995 in order to bring in ministers who are not members of the royal family.⁷

II- STATE ESTABLISHMENT:

The coalition between the kingdom and the clerics

The survival and expansion of new religious movements mostly depends on the political conditions in which they were born. The religious movements might seek the protection and help that the institutions of state can offer and, in return, provide these same institutions with legitimation and support.

The Ideology of the Saudi State: Wahhabism

The modern Saudi state was built on the ruins of the system Muhammad established 1400 years ago. In the centuries after the Prophet's death, Arabia drifted away from the rigorous form of monotheism he had introduced, and the center of the Islamic world moved elsewhere. Like the

Prophet before him, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, a wandering preacher, was deeply troubled by the state of affairs in Arabia. Born in a southern oasis in 1703, he studied in Medina, then in Iraq and Iran, and returned home committed to leading a revival. Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's aim was to restore the Prophet's Islam, which meant to him not only rigidity in religious practice but austerity in social behavior. His puritanical views made him few converts, so he set out to find a tribal leader to help him promote his sacred cause.

Early Coalition: In 1744 Ibn Abd al-Wahhab persuaded Muhammad ibn Saud, a tribal chief ruling over a small village, that Islamic revivalism could fuel the latter's ambitions for territory and power. The two men exchanged pacts of fidelity, and Ibn Saud embarked on a holy war against the infidels of Arabia. In a series of military campaigns, the chief and his descendants unified the peninsula, and by the end of the century they had reduced the shrines of the apostates to ruins. The alliance between the two families is the core of the state to this day. The Saudis are the enforcers of Islamic orthodoxy, while the descendants of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab provide them with divine legitimacy. The parallel hierarchies that governed 250 years ago still govern today. In theory the monarchy is the executive and the ulema--the organization of the clergy--the moral guide, but in practice the two are often rivals, each tugging constantly at the other. Yet they understand their mutual dependence.

1902-1932 Era:

Ibn Saud, revived Wahhabism to expand and consolidate his rule. He further stressed the traditional right of his family to govern the area, and used his charisma to support his claims. According to Al Yassini, "In employing religion and the religious establishment to enhance his

political objectives, Ibn Saud adopted a two-pronged policy. On the one hand, he founded and promoted religiously inspired institutions that provided him with general support; created group consciousness; and promoted a common identity that cut across ascriptive ties, offered symbols that linked society to the Saudi family, provided an organizational network to control and direct society, and offered the ruler a loyal fighting force that enabled him to expand his rule. On the other hand, he prevented these institutions from constituting independent centers of power lest they challenge his authority in the future. The political structures and relationship that evolved shattered the hopes of the religious establishment to keep the king united to them by a common cause in return for maintaining their autonomy in the determination and transmission of values and dogma to the populace."⁸

Arab Tradition

Ibn Saud used the Arab tribal tradition to establish his Kingdom. Like traditional sheikhs, he shrewdly pitted external and internal enemies against each other, and influenced friends and foes by disbursing generous gifts. He made strategic marriage alliances, and conferred with his subjects at the majlis, or council, in which his subjects could speak their minds, ask for favors or judgements, or simply partake in his generosity.⁹

Islam

Arab traditionalism is one of the two roots of the al-Saud's legitimacy. The other is Islam, specifically the al-Saud's vow to protect it and the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia remains a theocracy with little distinction made between religion and politics. The country's constitution is the Shariah, or Islamic law, and the al-Saud take care to couch all political decisions in religious terms. The al-Saud also have the ulema sanction

especially in controversial or weighty decisions including the invitation extended to non-Muslim troops in August 1990. This reliance on Arab tribalism and Islam means that a Saudi king, besides being the head of state, is also viewed as the leader of the tribe, as well as the imam or religious leader of the Kingdom's faithful. Interestingly, the al-Saud's two links to legitimacy may complement each other but they can also conflict. The Arab tribal link demands obedience and loyalty to the family and tribe above all else. Pre-Islamic Arabs had no other compass than kinship and tradition by which to navigate. Islam, being a universal religion, reduces the importance of kith and kin, and sets up an ideal of brotherhood and unity that is alien to the tribalism of the Arabian peninsula. The two factors of tribal fractiousness and Islamic universalism provide two different tactics used by the royal family. Fractiousness allows the al-Saud to appeal to the self-interest of small groups, while Islam permits the royal family to appeal to all these groups on a different and higher level. This enables the royal family to distribute favors to different regions and groups in order to weaken opposition to themselves, while at the same time using Islamic calls for unity to weaken the individual groups whose favor they have been currying.¹⁰

The Ikhwan

Ibn Saud realized that the bedouin could become a powerful fighting force if the means could be found to motivate them. Wahhabism became the ideology, *jihad* became the instrument, and the Ikhwan were Ibn Saud's warriors. In the early 1900's, during his wars against al-Rasheeds and other tribes in Saudi Arabia, Abd ul Aziz supported and armed a religiously zealous group of bedouins that called themselves the "Ikhwan" . These bedouins were Wahhabis and adhered to the very strict Islamic rules of that sect. They fought alongside Abd ul Aziz with a vengeance and

a savagery that struck fear in the heart of their enemy. After conquering of *Hejaz*, Ibn Saud no longer need the Ikhwan as a fighting force, and religious fanaticism became a potential threat to his regime.¹¹ He had no choice but to destroy them. Ibn Saud and Ikhwan confronted each other on March 31, 1929. The deciding battle was fought at Sabillah, and the Ikhwan, outnumbered and out gunned, were crushed in less than thirty minutes. The Ikhwan rebellion, which nearly succeeded, left a lasting impression on Abdulaziz and his sons. Never again would the al-Saud create any institution or group that could challenge their power.

After Sabillah, only the religious scholars posed a threat to Abdulaziz. Not surprisingly, they remained loyal, largely because they were fearful that open opposition risked a further erosion of their power. The ulema had other reasons as well: al-Wahhab had preached obedience to earthly rulers unless they stopped following Islam's dictates. For his part, Abdulaziz sought to avoid open confrontation with his clerics and strove to maintain the pretense of the old alliance in which the ulema were the moral arbiters of the state and which gave him legitimacy. He continued to have daily consultations with his scholars following sunset prayers. He also sought to co-opt them, and paid their salaries, effectively making them civil servants. In addition, he tried to alter the composition of the ulema by lessening the influence of the al-Sheikh and by promoting families more dependent on the al-Saud. Abdulaziz also allowed them their small victories, especially in the fields of religion and education, and listened to their complaints about some of his innovations. The difference was a subtle one: although the Saudi ruler did not accept the ulema's traditional right to rule on his policies, he did seek their approval on selected issues. This struggle would continue throughout Abdulaziz's reign and those of his successors. The discovery of oil and the subsequent arrival of thousands of non-Muslims, the introduction of

army uniforms and bugles, and the growth of schools would all create tension between the al-Saud and the ulema, but the latter never seriously challenged the ruling family.¹²

1932-1953 Era:

During this period Ibn Saud ruled personally and informally. Saudi Arabia survived without any elaborate administrative institutions. He governed the country as a gigantic personal household, not allowing power to be concentrated at any point in the system.¹³ The discovery of oil in 1938, and the tremendous inflow of petro-dollars after World War II, initially had minimal impact on the Saudi political system. To administer the new wealth, the aging Abdulaziz oversaw the creation of several new ministries. The Ministry of Defense was formed in 1944, joining the existing Finance and Foreign Affairs ministries, and the Ministry of Interior was created in 1951. Several other ministries, including Communications, Education, Agriculture, Commerce, and Health were created two years later. What motivated the increasingly feeble Abdulaziz to begin the bureaucratization of his administration is open to conjecture. Equally perplexing was the king's decision to create a Council of Ministers, signing the decree just a few weeks before his death at the end of 1953.¹⁴

The expansion of the oil-extracting industry in 1950s and the subsequent increase in government revenues, however brought about an increasing complexity in governmental institutions and the expansion of government jurisdiction over a large number of societal areas.¹⁵

It led to the creation of a complex administrative structure to implement these policies. In turn, the expansion of jurisdiction and the corresponding increase in role differentiation between the religious and political spheres resulted in the bureaucratization of the ulema. Indeed, the

ulema in the current Saudi state are dependent on the state for their survival. They are paid civil servants whose activities are determined by the needs of the political sphere. Ulema leaders are appointed by the king, and ulema activities regulated by state laws.

Following the introduction of secular laws to regulate the many state activities, the role of ulema became confined to the interpretation of the civil and criminal aspects of the shariah, whereas commercial, labor, and international laws are formulated and interpreted by secular-educated individuals. The state took over religion for the purpose of restructuring to bring its beliefs and institutions into conformity with national objectives. In effect, the political sphere enhanced its legitimacy through the rationalization of policies in religious terms. The emergence and increased role of secular-educated individuals in the system reflects the overall position of the political sphere in relation to the ulema: While religion remains an important sources of legitimation, the ulema's traditional role in evaluating government policy and activities has been reduced.¹⁶

The death of Ibn Saud in 1953 was not followed by the disintegration of the state he had founded. Instead, his successors (Saud, 1953-1964; Faisal, 1964-1975; Khalid, 1975-1982; Fahd, 1989-present) have continued to establish modern administrative structures to enhance governmental performance that complement the traditional base of the regime's legitimacy.

The creation of complex administrative institutions has led to two fundamental changes affecting the traditional relationship between religion and state in the Saudi kingdom. First, it has increased role differentiation between the religious and political spheres. Second, it has routinized state control of a broad range areas that were formerly dominated by religion and the religious establishment. Subsequently to this routinization, the ulema lost many of their

traditional functions and became a pressure group limited to exerting influence over the government's activities and policies but never acting as an autonomous center of power.¹⁷

III-RELIGIOUS CRITICISM OF THE REGIME'S POLICIES

Although religion legitimates Saudi rule, religious opposition began to emerge in last two decades, demanding the overthrow of Saudi rule and the creation of a real Islamic state. Islamist discontent is not new in the Kingdom: it dates back to the early days when Abdulaziz had to crush militarily the religious/tribal levies, the Ikhwan, who challenged his authority and his restraints on their behavior at the battle of Sibilla in 1929. The tension between societal modernization and strict Wahhabi Islam has produced violence before in Saudi Arabia. In some ways, a 1929-30 civil war revolved around the struggle. King Faisal, Fahd's brother, was assassinated in 1975 by a mentally disturbed youth said to be upset at the sight of women on television.

Neo-Ikhwan Movement

The 1979 takeover of Mecca's Great Mosque, which precipitated a two-week siege that left hundreds dead, was staged by Islamic zealots who proclaimed the royal family unworthy to control the holy sites at Mecca.¹⁸ Their leader, Juhayman, and his followers rationalized their seizure by means of a hadith that suggests that the Mahdi will appear at the Ka'ba at the turn of an Islamic century in the period of tyrannical kingship. Faced with the insurrection, King Khalid mobilized the support of the state ulema. He convened the Higher Council of Ifta', headed by shayk Abd al-Aziz al-baz, requesting the issuance of the *fatwa* supporting Al Saud and

authorizing military intervention in the sacred sanctuary. The ulema complied with the king's demand and noted that there would be a Mahdi, but that he would appeal- with clear signs and in opposition to a corrupt ruler. The Saudi government, they further noted, enforces the dictates of the Shariah, and rebellion against its ruler is treason. Having secured the ulema's support, Saudi forces managed to dislodge the insurgents on December 3, killing the proclaimed Mahdi in the process and capturing the military leader.¹⁹

The seizure of the mosque underlined the government's vulnerability to attacks from religious elements. It underscored Al Saud's dilemma in accommodating traditional Wahhabism to present-day realities.²⁰

The Reasons for Rise of Islamist Opposition

Saudi Islamic zealotry is in some measure a scourge of the state's own creation. Islamic universities have loomed disproportionately large in the phenomenal growth of Saudi education, awarding Ph.D.'s by the hundreds for flimsy dissertations. This is creating a professional religious class that is largely unemployable and, thus, a pool of natural recruits to any subversive cause that can advance them.²¹ The Saudi Afghans, volunteers who fought the communists in Afghanistan, constitute another disturbing new force in society. Though they have not taken to terrorist violence as some of their counterparts in Egypt and Algeria have, they have strong views on issues such as Bosnia and consider the official Saudi stance to be weak.²²

The Impacts of the Gulf War

Signs of a rise in Islam-based political opposition surfaced soon after the Gulf war. At first, it took the shape of underground tapes of sermons by fundamentalist preachers decrying corruption, Westernization and the presence of foreigners on Saudi soil.²³ Most Saudis agreed the trouble started when the government brought in American and other foreign troops to fight the Gulf War. The royal family, they felt, thereby defaulted on the basic compact of the state, under which the many lesser tribes have pledged their fealty to the Sauds, a strong tribe, in return for protection. The deal, rooted in desert tradition, has given Arabia nearly two and a half centuries of relative stability, and lies at the heart of the Saudi autocracy. In the war and its aftermath, Saudis turned a critical eye on the system. Despite the ultimate victory, the war left a shadow over the Saud family's political legitimacy. Saudis were very angry at being unable to defend themselves.²⁴

As stated before, Islamic dissidence is not new in the country, but this time it is different than before. The radical Islamic message has found particular resonance now because an economic slowdown has started to pinch the Saudi middle and lower classes for the first time since the 1970s explosion of oil prices. Blaming the ruling family for corruption and the United States for pushing high-priced weapons on the financially strained kingdom provides a facile explanation.²⁵

What stuns the royal family is the dissidents' Islamic claims. The Sauds' legitimacy is founded on their championship of a particular brand of Islam and their adherence to its strictures. They would never describe their foes as fundamentalists because they reserve that term to describe themselves. Their tactic is to denounce the dissidents as fanatics who are degrading the faith for impious ends. They cannot, however, conceal their pain, for the dissidents have put

them on the defensive in their own game.²⁶ Prince Nayif, King Fahd's full brother, is angry that a Muslim would challenge the Saud family's statecraft. As minister of the interior, Nayif is the kingdom's chief law enforcement officer. "But the reforms Audah and Hawali called for are not legitimate, and by exposing their petition to the world they embarrassed us. That was unacceptable. The public also believes that their bringing their cause to the mosque was a violation of Islamic principles. Ours is an Islamic state, and our family does not need such people to tell us about Islam."²⁷

Critics and Demands of Islamists

The main criticisms of dissident groups -though it is very loosely defined and with many disparate strands - have been: first, economic and financial mismanagement; second, lack of Islamic purity and acceptance of cultural degradation; third, dictatorial behavior by the rulers; fourth, too small a role for the ulema; and fifth, too close ties with the USA and consequent regional weakness especially as regards Israel. Like the 'liberals', they call for greater participation in power sharing at national level. Mas'ari protests Saudi Arabia's poor human rights record, its lack of free elections, and bans on freedom of speech, assembly, and association. The groups are seizing the opportunity to argue over other aspects of life, ranging from banking practices to the size of the military.²⁸

The opposition was not satisfied with king's proposal of establishing a consultative assembly. Apparently it is not what the opposition understand the Shura to mean. "We understand the Shura in light of what Sheikh Khalid explained,"one opposition member notes, referring to an article by Islamic scholar Khalid M. Khalid in the June 24, 1985, edition of Al-Ahram. Sheikh Khalid defined the Shura as, "democracy as we see now in the democratic

countries. It should include the following elements: the umma (the people) as the main source of authority; separation between authorities; the umma choosing its representative and its president; a multiparty system; and freedom of the press. These, my brothers, are the principles of Islamic governance without addition or omission."²⁹ The criticism is of special concern to the House of Saud because for generations it has staked its legitimacy on upholding Islam.

Activities of Islamists

In May 1991, the king was presented with a petition signed by scores of Muslim clergymen and religious scholars and approved by Saudi Arabia's top cleric, Abdullah Bin Baz. This was the most daring challenge to royal authority since the occupation of Grand Mosque in 1979. It set out a number of what they dared to call demands. "In what one critic sees as 'an evident and almost public challenge to the government's authority,' the signatories clandestinely circulated copies of their letter, which urged the creation of the majlis, advocated more equal distribution of the country's wealth, called for a drive against government corruption, and proposed a stronger military. The letter also demanded that banks stop charging interest, which is forbidden by the Koran, and that all laws be revised to ensure they conform with Islamic tradition."³⁰ Saudi Islamists also attempted to formulate a common program in 1992 in a manifesto drawn up by 109 theologians, academics, and others. In it, they called the administration inefficient, obsolete, and corrupt in its upper reaches and demanded the formation of an army of 500,000 to defend the country. It is here that the Islamists reach out to a constituency beyond their own, to the apolitical majority and the secular liberals.³¹

Government's response

The current wave is taken very seriously by the rulers. Since 1991, they have used the country's supreme religious figure, Sheikh Bin Baz, to attack the Islamist opposition. They have also cracked down on critics by removing many of the senior ulema and locking up activists.³² The Saudi government has denounced the CDLR³ to the West as religiously intolerant; inside the country the government labels CDLR founders as foreign-inspired, un-Islamic renegades. All the parties - the Saudi government, its appointed clergy, the CDLR, and independent Islamists - base their positions on a strict interpretation of Sunni Islam. The government attacks are based on CDLR's advocacy of a reform program calling for limits on royal authority, and for real political participation. With its solid religious credentials, CDLR is capable of questioning the king's authority - namely, upholding the true interpretation of Islam. Equally threatening is CDLR's effort to report human rights violations, in defiance of the government's resolute determination to keep news of rights abuses hidden from the outside world.³³

The Saudi government has been quietly fighting extremism inside and outside its borders and also attempting to block use of Islamic charity organizations as channels for infiltration by militants."Ten major charities in Riyadh were suddenly dissolved and ordered to stop their activities by a direct order from Prince Salman, the governor of Riyadh."

In 1995, King Fahd created the Islamic Affairs Ministry so that the state can better control and regulate the activities of Islamic preachers, charity organizations, and universities and

³The Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights (CDLR) was formed in May of 1993 by six prominent jurists and university professors, Sunni clerics, Shiites, women's groups and Western-educated liberals.

streamline the work of mullahs whose mission is to proselytize the faith in the country and abroad."Societies that raise money from private individuals abroad cannot operate unless they have a license to do so," explained a Saudi official. The move followed reports from Algeria, Sudan and Egypt that wealthy Saudis were financing extremist movements on their soil. With these moves, the Saudi state has seized the essentially Islamic initiative of taking care of the needy and also of limiting the dissemination of dissident ideas.³⁴

Yet, does this discontent pose a real threat to the regime? It may provoke sporadic terrorism, and Islamist opposition is likely to rise as a result of the current policy of repression which is being pursued instead of incorporation and co-option. However, at most, it will lead to changes in government policy to accommodate Islamist demands, whether they involve attacking Shias, cracking down on immorality or taking a harder line on Israel and the USA. But there is neither the widespread discontent (the welfare state is still a lifeline to most citizens) nor the autonomous organizational framework (the ulema are incorporated into state) that characterized pre-revolutionary Iran. Fundamentalist upheaval does not appear to be in the cards.

Notes:

1Quandt, p. 76.

2Beblawi, p. 11.

3Bahgat.

4Al- Yassini, p. 36.

5Boustany.

6"Sources of Power".

7 "Sources of Power".

8Al-Yassini, p. 39.

9Wilson, ch. 2.

10Wilson, ch. 2

11Al-Yassini, p. 54.

12Wilson, ch. 2.

13Al-Yassini, p. 59.

14Wilson, ch. 2

15Al-Yassini, p. 59.

16Al-Yassini, p. 79.

17Al-Yassini p. 59.

18Cody.

19Al- Yassini, p. 127.

20Al- Yassini, p. 127.

21Hirst.

22Hirst.

23Cody.

24Viorst.

25Cody.

26Viorst.

27Viorst.

28Ford.

29Fandy.

30Ford.

31Hirst.

32"Saudi police arrest reformists, rights group says" Agence France Presse, September 13, 1994.

33Abu Hamad.

34Boustany.

CONCLUSION

Political power is converted into rightful authority; or legitimacy, by being accepted willingly by subordinates. Citizens obey or disobey authority according to their political culture, that is the subjective attitudes, beliefs, and values, prevalent among the diverse groups in the society.

According to Weber, there are three sources of legitimacy: legal-rational, traditional and charismatic authority. Legitimacy is not a static phenomenon but transforms overtime according to changes which occur in political culture, including religious values.

The most popular widespread movements during the last two decades have been organized around religion and ethnicity. The expectation that religion would wither away under the pressure of modernization and secularism has not occurred. Instead, religion is increasingly being injected into political movements around the globe. This has resulted in questioning, "Has there been a return to religion?" When secular governments fail to meet the needs of their populace, religious messages often fill the ideological vacuum. In the Islamic world, this occurred faster than elsewhere because there is little doubt that Islam is inherently political. However, interpretations of Islam differ from country to country and necessarily leads to different results.

In this paper, I have attempted to explore the increasing role of Islam as a source of legitimacy in two extreme but different countries in the Islamic world: Turkey and Saudi Arabia. The role of Islam has been clear in both countries. Turkey has stood alone in the Islamic world as the only Islamic country formally to institute a secular system. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia based its government and social system on a traditional Islamic model.

Although the role of Islam as a source of legitimacy has been clear constitutionally, the real interaction between state and religion in both countries is rather complex. Turkey is in the

middle of a religion-fueled identity crisis because the religious Welfare Party(WP) received 21% of votes in 1995 elections and it came to power as a bigger partner of the coalition government. Since then, Turkey has been a site of discussion over the role of religion in social and state realms.

The July 1996 tragic car-bomb explosion in Saudi Arabia-the second since November 1995-impacts the kingdom, and the region in profound ways. It highlights the major struggle underway against the House of Saud by the Islamists. Islamic opposition against the Saudi family has been growing, especially since the Gulf War.

The developments in Turkey and in Saudi Arabia can be understood by reviewing key junctures in the history of the two countries. Turkey is the successor of the Ottoman State but it differs dramatically from its ancestor in state-religion relations. While the Ottoman Empire was a traditional Islamic state, the Turkish Republic is a secular modern democratic state. Although the establishment of the Turkish Republic indicates dramatic changes, the modernization and secularism began in the early nineteenth century as the Ottoman Empire attempted a form of defensive modernization. Saudi Arabia resembles the Ottoman state as being a traditional Islamic state.

Types of authority and the sources of legitimacy

In the Ottoman Empire, authority derived from established tradition. The legitimacy of the Ottoman Sultan depended on his inheriting the throne. Attempts to limit the authority of the Sultan started, however, at the beginning of the nineteenth century with the *Tanzimat* movement. Consequently, the first Constitution of the Ottoman state was adopted in 1876.

Islam was another source of legitimacy for the Ottoman government. Its legal system was based on Islamic law. However, since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the secular courts (*nizamiye mahkemeleri*) began to appear beside the religious courts (*shariat mahkemeleri*).

In the Turkish Republic, conversely, the authority was charismatic at the beginning of the Republic. Atatürk was a charismatic leader. He gained his charisma by leading the War of Independence. This gave him the courage and justification for reforms. He abolished two sources of Ottoman authority, the sultanate and caliphate. He governed the country by his charisma, while establishing a legal authority. The Republic's sources of authority, in contrast to the Ottoman State, were legality, saving the country, establishing a new nation, republicanism and democracy, freedom and equality, modernization and economic growth. The new regime's goal was to elevate Turkey to the highest level of civilization and prosperity. Modernization was perceived as Westernization by the leadership of the Republic and therefore the country tried to imitate European policies.

Unlike the Turkish Republic and like the Ottoman State, Saudi Arabia's authority is traditional authority. Ibn Saud used his charisma and Arab tradition in order to establish his state. Saudi Arabia is governed by an absolute monarchy that depends on the cohesion of the royal family and the support of religious leadership for its legitimacy.

Modernization and the Separation of State and Religion

Turkey and Saudi Arabia went through the modernization processes at different times. The Ottoman State initiated a modernization program in response to the decline of the empire. Saudi Arabia is presently at the stage that the Ottoman Empire was at the nineteenth century.

Although Islam was one of the pillars of the Ottoman State, secularization started within the Empire at the beginning of the nineteenth century. With the Tanzimat, secular law began to be applied alongside religious law. The most dramatic reform at the beginning of the Republic era was, of course, the secularization of the country. Islam was perceived as an obstacle in the path of modernization and, subsequently. An attempt was made to abolish it from the state and social realms. The state, however, continued its control of the religion by maintaining the mosques and by training religious personnel. The Department of Religious affairs was established in 1924. These reforms of Ataturk were called Kemalism and became state ideology by inserting them in the Constitution in 1937. This strict secularism was applied until 1946. Although Turkey stayed secular, with free and fair elections, Islam appeared as a tool to woo religious votes.

In contrast to Turkey, secularism never occurred in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia went the same process in the 1950s which the Ottomans did in the nineteenth century. Islamic law was insufficient to solve the problems which modernization brought. Therefore, secular laws were introduced to regulate activities of the state such as those involved in commerce, labor, and international relations. As a result, the traditional role of ulema has been reduced. The state, however, continued to apply civil and criminal aspects of the Shariah.

The Role of Ulema

The Ulema had been a strong pressure group in the Ottoman state but had never been fully autonomous. The Ulema were civil servants. The position of the Ulema in Saudi Arabia is somewhat similar to their counterparts in Ottoman Empire, but the Ulema in Saudi Arabia are

more powerful than those in the Ottoman Empire. Although one of the sources of legitimacy was Islam, the Ulema was not part of the social contract. In the Ottoman state, the influence of the Ulema increased until the eighteenth century, and then it began to decline. In contrast, the Ulema in Saudi Arabia have been a part of the social contract. The King of Saudi Arabia has to pay close attention to what the Ulema say, but this has not inhibited the kingdom's strides toward modernization.

When the Republic was established in Turkey, the new regime disposed of everything that reflected the old regime. The Ulema was not excluded from this process. There is no Ulema class in Turkey now. Religious personnel are civil servants and in under the control of the Department of Religious Affairs. The state does not need approval from the President of Religious Affairs, because Islam is not the source of state legitimacy. The state, however, is using some *fetwas* from the Presidency to mobilize its citizens on social issues and get support for public policies, such as birth control, environmental issues, and ethical questions. The reason is based on the republic's inability to create a secular ethic among its citizens. Unlike their counterparts in Iran, religious leaders in Turkey and Saudi Arabia are not self-supporting, have no priestly hierarchy, are not politically organized, and have no history of political activism.

Ideology

Both regimes are formally committed to fundamentally different ideologies. Saudi Arabia professes an ultraconservative version of Hanbali Islam, which is Wahhabism, as its political ideology, while the Kemalist regime that has dominated Turkey since 1923, in contrast is a secular regime.

Religious Opposition

Both countries have religious opposition to their respective regimes. Opposition in both countries have as their goal to seek the creation of a just society that draws on Islamic tradition, political change-liberalization and democratization of the political order, a more representative government answerable to the public, a lessening of corruption, and a more independent foreign policy. But these two differ in their rhetoric, methods, and the extent of being threat to the regimes. Since Turkey is a democratic state, religious opposition has been organized as non-governmental organizations and a political party, known as the Welfare Party. All movements and opinions have the right to be organized as a political party in Turkey. Yet, no party can be created which opposes the state's unity with its nation, its country, and secular republican principles, or which depends on classes (1982 Constitution, para.68). Since establishing a political party based on religion is forbidden by the Constitution, the WP has been careful not to allow itself to be shut down as it happened to the National Order Party in the 1971. So the WP adopted a code that have to be explained to both secularist and Islamists. Just Order (Adil Duzen), the political program of the party, has been claimed that it does not mean Islam, but to party voters "what else can it be?". The goal of the Islamic movement is a subject of controversy. Secular intellectuals say that the Islamists want to impose sharia, strict Islamic law. Secularists see them as enemies of Ataturk's Western-style reforms, bending more toward the Iranian model. Although Mr. Erbakan and other leading Welfare figures refrain from stating publicly that they want shariah, they do advocate changing laws they consider anti-Islamic, such

as the legal prohibition of wearing the head scarf.

Islamists in Saudi Arabia seek the creation of a just society that draws on Islamic tradition, too. Since there is no democracy and freedom of organization, some opposition is organized outside the country such as the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights (CDLR). The Islamists are danger to the regime, not only because of the willingness of some of their most extreme elements to resort to violence, but also because the Islamists attack the regime on the basis of an Islamic critique, one that views the current political order as lacking legitimacy in both the political and moral realms.

Despite the arguments for economic, social, and technological modernization in both countries, Islam will increase its role as a source of political legitimacy and as an important political forces. The Turkish government will have to contend with the Islamic ethos of the masses and mold society and government so that it can be perceived as at least minimally compatible with Islam.

This examination of the religion as a source of legitimacy has led to the conclusion that Islam has been emerging as a source of legitimacy in Turkey and Saudi Arabia. But it is unlikely that religious groups will assume control as happened in Iran.

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