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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TURKISH AND TUNISIAN SECULARISM

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ABSTRACT

The Republic of Turkey was founded in 1923 after an independence movement, which led to the presidency of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. A few decades later, The Republic of Tunisia gained its independence from France in 1956 with Habib Bourguiba as its new president. Post-independence, both countries sought to follow modernizing policies, which included an aggressive secular campaign to reduce religion's influence on society. They have both become models for whether or not secularism and democracy are compatible in Muslim countries. This thesis is intended to take an in depth look at secularism in Turkey and Tunisia post-independence until the present day while discussing whether or not democracy, secularism, and modernity are compatible in the Muslim world. In the first chapter, various definitions of secularism will be compared, while distinguishing which manifestation of secularism is most congruent with the Turkish and Tunisian style. The following chapters take an in depth look at the top-down approach to secularism implemented by the post-independence governments in both Turkey and Tunisia. It is argued that they followed decisively aggressive secular policies which ostracized a large portion of the devout population, and allowed for very little competitive democracy. The final chapter looks at the rise of Islamic politics in both countries, particularly with the rise of AKP in Turkey and Ennahda in Tunisia, and how these developments have altered the discussion on secularism in both Republics as well as their democratic systems. This thesis aims to explore why secularism has played such a pivotal role for the state authorities in both countries in creating a modern nation. How have they been similar, how have they been different, and what does this mean for the future of the nations? Many people have asked whether modernism and secularism will be able to survive in both countries with the rise in Islamic politics, but is this even a reasonable question to ask, or should the concepts of modernism and secularism be open for more interpretation?

ÖZET

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti, ulusal kurtuluş mücadelesinden sonra 1923 yılında Mustafa Kemal Atatürk liderliğinde kuruldu. Yaklaşık otuz yıl sonra, Tunus Cumhuriyeti 1956'da bağımsızlığını kazandı ve Habib Bourguiba'yı yeni cumhurbaşkanı olarak seçti. Bağımsızlıktan sonra, her iki ülke de dinin toplum üzerindeki etkisini azaltmak için saldırgan laik bir kampanya içeren modernleşme politikalarını izlemeye çalıştı. Her ikisi de, laiklik ve demokrasinin Müslüman ülkelerde uyumlu olup olmadığına dair model haline geldi. Bu tez, demokrasi, laiklik ve modernliğin Müslüman dünyasında uyumlu olup olmadığını tartışırken, Türkiye ve Tunus'ta bağımsızlık sonrasından bugüne kadarki laikliğe derinlemesine bakmayı amaçlıyor. Birinci bölümde, laikliğin hangi tezahürünün Türk ve Tunus tarzıyla en uyumlu olduğunu ayırt ederken, laikliğin çeşitli tanımları karşılaştırılacaktır. Sonraki bölümler ise, hem Türkiye hem de Tunus'ta bağımsızlık sonrası hükümetler tarafından uygulanan sekülarizmi yukarıdan aşağıya derinlemesine ele alıyor. Dindar nüfusun büyük bir kısmını dışlayan kararlı, agresif laik politikaları izledikleri ve çok az rekabetçi demokrasiye izin verdikleri tartışılıyor. Son bölüm, özellikle AKP'nin Türkiye'deki ve Ennahda'nın Tunus'daki yükselişi ve bu gelişmelerin her iki Cumhuriyetteki laiklik tartışmalarını hem de demokratik sistemlerini değiştirdiği, İslam siyasetinin her iki ülkedeki yükselişini inceliyor.

Bu tez, laikliğin, modern bir ulus yaratırken, neden her iki ülkedeki devlet yetkilileri için çok önemli bir rol oynadığını incelemeyi amaçlıyor. Nasıl bir benzerlikleri vardı, nasıl bir farklılıkları vardı ve ulusların geleceği için bunun anlamı nedir? Birçok kişi, modernizmin ve laikliğin İslam politikalarının yükselişleri ile birlikte her iki ülkede de hayatta kalıp kalamayacaklarını sordu ancak bu uygun bir soru mudur, yoksa modernizm ve laiklik kavramlarının daha fazla yoruma açık mı olmaları gerekir?

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ABBREVIATIONS

AKP - Justice and Development Party

CHP – *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (Republican People's Party)

DP - Democrat Party

DRA - Directorate of Religious Affairs

FRP- Free Republic Party

HDP - People's Democracy Party

RPP- Republican People's Party

Key Words: Modernism, Democracy, Secularism, Passive Secularism, Active Secularism, Laicité

INTRODUCTION

In its simplest definition, secularism is often described briefly as 'the separation of church and state.' The terminology used in this simplistic definition itself reveals the bias that secularism, while not exclusively a Western concept, is most frequently associated with Christian Western societies. This notion calls into question whether or not a model for governance most often attributed to Western and Christian countries could be implemented successfully in the Islamic world. While most Western states have incorporated some form of secularism, the Middle East, dominated by Islamic majority populations has a large number of countries with state religions. Some of these countries follow a strict interpretation of the religion, even following Islamic Sharia law, quite the opposite of the concept of secularism. Meanwhile some countries, such as Syria and Iraq have attempted to implement secular policies by authoritarian means. Secularism in the west is often associated with and displayed in democratic countries, but in such Middle Eastern countries, secularism is often forced upon a potentially disapproving Muslim majority population. Iran, once a champion of secularism, turned into an Islamic Republic after their revolution. And perhaps one of the most notoriously Islam centered states, known for its religious police, use of Sharia law and strict Wahhabi interpretation of the religion, is Saudi Arabia, where Islam takes on one of its harshest and most controlling manifestations. However, in stark contrast to Saudi Arabia and other Islamic states, one country in recent history has stood apart from these trends. The first Muslim country to embrace secularism in its constitution, once the heart of the Ottoman Empire, which also served as the seat of the Caliph; The Republic of Turkey. Often referenced as proof that secularism and democracy could indeed prosper in an Islamic society against some claims to the contrary, Turkey has acted as a model of secularism. As the Ottoman Empire came crashing to an end in the early 20th century, the Turkish Republic came onto the scene with its new leader, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. The modern and Western leaning leader Ataturk, often credited with the secular

reforms, was an inspiration for other like-minded leaders to come. One such leader was Habib Bourguiba, who became the first president of the newly liberated Tunisian Republic.

This thesis aims to take an in depth look at the secularizing policies of these two states post-independence and how that secularism has progressed in the following decades. The thesis will explore why secularism played a role for the state authorities in Turkey and Tunisia to be utilized in the service of the political project of creating a modern nation. What are the modes of convergence and what are the points of diverging paths for the two nations? Some critics doubt that the Islamic parties that have risen to power can be compatible with secularism, modernity and democracy. Is there any legitimacy to these doubts, and are the Islamic parties more of a threat to secularism, modernity and democracy than their secular predecessors had been? Both countries are very important players in the Middle East today, and recent years have seen many changes in both nations. The rise of AKP in Turkey has led many to hail it as the model country for Islam and democracy, and it has given inspiration to people all over the region. Recently, however, the country has undergone many changes and the future of their democratic model is at stake. Tunisia, meanwhile, has gone through momentous changes as it led the way for revolutions around the region, which have upended much of the status quo. Such events have made both countries the center of attention, and scholarly focus about the future of the region. They have a great deal of influence on how the region is perceived as well as what unfolds throughout the region in years to come. In light of recent events, both countries and their futures are of extreme importance for the region and for the world at large.

The information in this thesis is primarily drawn from research of secondary resources: books, and articles from journals as well as some primary resources such as transcripts from political speeches. The two countries similarities as well as differences since their independence will be compared. Both are countries that fought for their independence from Western influence, and came out of the fight with much loved charismatic revolutionary leaders as

presidents who were ready to modernize, westernize and secularize their countries. While a few decades apart, Bourguiba was greatly influenced by Kemalism and implemented similar, though not identical reforms. The Turkish Republic was founded in 1923 after the fall of the Ottoman Empire and a war of independence. The first president, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, quickly set about enacting reforms in order to modernize the country. He wanted to align the country with the Western powers, and distance it from the Eastern countries as well as the Ottoman past. One of his principle policies was to create a modern secular nation. A few decades later in 1956 Tunisia officially gained independence from France. Their first president, Habib Bourguiba, was a hero of the independence movement; much like Ataturk had been in Turkey. Similar to Ataturk, he also wanted to create a modern secular nation that would be more in line with Western values than those of the East. However, the word secularism could be contested in both cases due to the degree to which Islam was actually controlled or even manipulated by the state for political gain. Rather than simply controlling matters of the state and leaving religion to the people and religious authorities, they used their positions to change the way Islam was practiced. Both men tried to curb the degree to which Islam influenced everyday life through such measures as banning the headscarf, making polygamy illegal, giving greater freedoms to women, and encouraging people to ignore the holy month of Ramadan's requirement for fasting. They even took some aspects of the religion under the control of the state, such as trying to change the *ezan* into Turkish, and translating the Koran, as well as taking religious institutions' independence away and placing them under government control. Both countries have deeply religious majorities, and have had much resistance to the reforms. While Tunisia is an Arabic country, it could also be argued that they were also similar in their desire to move further away from Arabic influence. Ataturk sought to reform and vernacularize Islam in order to make it more compatible for the new national sentiment and reduce the influence of the Arab world in Turkey. Meanwhile, Bourguiba emphasized Tunisia's unique Mediterranean

and Franco-Tunisian heritage, rather than highlighting their Arabic lineage. Much like Ataturk moved away from the use of Arabic and Persian vocabulary and changed to the Latin alphabet, Bourguiba had a long-term objective of creating a modern society with French as a dominant language.

In order to compare secularism in these two states, secularism must first be defined. The simplicity of the definition of secularism, which was given at the beginning of this chapter, belies the complexity of its implementation. Secularism is much more complicated than the explanation would have one believe, and its definition is often contested and divided into many different forms. For this reason, the first chapter will be dedicated to defining secularism and comparing its various manifestations. Two distinct and often cited forms of secularism in the west can be seen with that of the United States and France. The United States tends to follow what can be described as a passive secularism. One in which religion is protected from state intervention, and left to the social realm. In contrast, the French secularist model also referred to as laicism, works to protect the citizens from religion. This is an active incarnation of secularism, in which the state may act to enforce policies related to religion as they see fit for the good of the republic. Turkey and Tunisia are known to have followed more closely the French model of laicism, and this distinction is at the heart of the debate on secularism today. As both countries are facing a new reality, which sees active Islamic parties taking control of government, some may see secularism at risk. However, it will be argued that it is not the existence or non-existence of secularism, but rather what form of secularism should be practiced which is being disputed. The active form of secularism in both countries, in which the governments have often manipulated religion to their bidding, has often left many of the Muslim majority population feeling excluded or even persecuted at the hands of the government. The thesis will argue that the state utilized religion and implemented secularism as well as changes to religion through top down policies. Despite its radical secular reforms the

states were in fact controlling religion rather than separating religious and political life in order to further control society. This led to discontentment for many citizens and resulted in significant limitations on modern freedoms and democratic practices.

For Turkey and Tunisia to be defined as secular states, despite the governments' active role in the implementation of religion, it must be pointed out that there are different definitions and forms of secularism. Definitions will be offered for variations of secularism; where rather than being separated completely from the state, the role of religion may be continually defined by the state. Secularism in its more aggressive form in which the state controls religion, known as laicism, is more apt for both countries. In this sense, it is understood that the religion would be separated from certain fields of government, while still controlled by the government to some extent, whereas secularism or passive secularism can be defined as having a religion free state. These two states were in fact not strictly secular if we define secularism as a complete separation of religion from politics. In order to classify them as secular we must look to laicism in which the state and religion are never completely separated, but rather intrinsically linked. While it is possible that Ataturk and Bourguiba had genuine desires to completely separate religion from politics, they recognized that they could not ignore the religion that played such a large role in the majority of their citizens' lives. In Turkey, Islam had played an important role in the revolution against the foreign occupiers, and the Kemalists could not completely ignore the Muslim nationalist fervor, so they sought to incorporate these ideas into their fold for greater leverage of their control. Both leaders may have been trying to tame Islam, using it for legitimacy and control of society. By incorporating Islam in policies, they could use it to eliminate political opposition by delegitimizing Islamists' complaints against the government while simultaneously reforming Islam in order to catch up with the west.

Following an in depth analysis of secularism, the second chapter will explore the historical developments in Turkey after its founding in 1923. The independence movement led

by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, resulted in his role as the first president of the republic. In an attempt to modernize the country in a western fashion, Ataturk and his government implemented several reforms, such as introducing the Latin alphabet in 1928, granting more rights to women, and instilling European laws. Under his leadership, the caliphate was abolished in 1924 and Turkey was officially designated in its constitution as a secular republic in 1937. Rather than taking a passive role of secular government, this thesis will argue that Turkey followed a hands on aggressive approach, as they established a Directorate for Religious Affairs, barred the use of the headscarf in educational institutions, delegitimized Alevi places of worship, and attempted to change the language of the call to prayer. Many more examples of such top down changes will be explored and the notion that religion, rather than being sidelined and left to the civic sphere, was in fact used as a modern nation building tool in order to bring the population together under one homogenous banner of Sunni Muslim and delegitimize potential Islamic opponents. The government would be able to retain a strong hold on society, while people were simultaneously encouraged to lead a more western style life as visual signs of westernization such as drinking and dancing in public were often displayed by elites and even the president himself. As Turkey progressed from an authoritarian regime under Ataturk into a Democratic Republic, the Kemalist ideas of modernism and secularism were upheld by the Military who would not hesitate to interfere in the democratic process if Islamists seemed to be gaining too much ground. The military became a Kemalist institution determined to ensure the survival of Kemalism.

The third chapter will look at the historical developments in Tunisia, which gained its independence from France in 1956 and became a free Republic. Habib Bourguiba, a big player in the Tunisian nationalist movement and subsequently the first president of the republic, is said to have been a staunch follower of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. Following Ataturk's example, he made many controversial reforms in order to modernize the country. In an attempt to usher in

a more modern era, he sought to do away with Islamic customs such as Ramadan and the wearing of the veil, introduced more rights to women and outlawed polygamy. Unlike Turkey, secularism was not included in the constitution. In fact, Islam was written as being the religion of the state, and the constitution stipulated that the president of the republic should be a Muslim. Nevertheless, Bourguiba and his government implemented secular reforms and much like the Turkish government attempted to commandeer the religion to suit their nationalizing purposes. Islam was used in an effort to instill morality in children through the education system and create national solidarity, while citizens were encouraged to lead a more western life. Like Turkey, Tunisia followed not the passive secularism similar to the United States, but rather a more aggressive form of secularism as seen in France, in which religion was made subservient to the state and used as a nation-building tool. As Bourguiba continued to rule Tunisia for several decades, democracy had trouble taking hold, and another authoritarian leader, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, took over the country and continued a secular agenda in the country that was even more aggressive than his predecessor's had been.

The fourth and final chapter will look at both Turkey and Tunisia and how the legacy of Kemalism and Bourguibism have evolved in the two countries into the 21st century as well as the rise of Islamist parties. The two republics were established a few decades apart, but implemented secularist policies in similar fashions. Turkey made a transition to a multi-party system, while Tunisia stayed under authoritarian rule for several decades. While both countries began their first years as a Republic with charismatic leaders at the head of a single party system, one was to stay in power much longer and solidify his authoritarian rule. Ataturk passed away after a little over twenty years in power and a competitive multi-party system was able to flourish after his passing, although with some limitations. Meanwhile, Habib Bourguiba clung to power after 30 years even as his health was fading, which paved the way for Ben Ali to take power from the ailing leader. As he promised a democracy to the people, he gained the citizens'

support, but it soon became clear that he would not usher in a new age of democracy in Tunisia. Tunisia had been hailed as the most likely candidate for becoming a democracy in the region with its progressive policies. However, it would be over two decades before Tunisia was given another opportunity to fulfill its democratic aspirations.

In 2011, a new wave of protests broke out across the Middle East. It all began in a small town in Tunisia called Sidi Bouzid. Since then a modern democratic constitution was implemented and Tunisia became a symbol of hope, promising to pave the way for Arabic countries to overthrow their authoritarian regimes and lead the way to democracy. Through democratic elections, the Islamic party, Ennahda, was able to win electoral victories. While the party has long claimed to be committed to democracy, their presence on the political scene has made secularists worry about the intentions of an Islamist party. In 2014, they helped to allay some critics' fears as they peacefully passed power to the secular modernists, Nidaa Tounes.

Turkey had developed quite a robust democracy over several decades, although occasionally the military has stepped in by undemocratic means in order supposedly to protect that very same democracy. The military has acted as a protector of the constitution and Kemalist secularist ideals have been safeguarded by the military. Despite their protection of secularism, a new Islamic party was able to slowly rise to power in Turkey. Founded in 2001, The Justice and Development Party (AK Party or AKP) has gained favor with a large portion of the electorate, and risen to the highest seats in the country. Like Ennahda in Tunisia, many secularists in Turkey have doubted the AKP's commitment to secularism and democracy. Yet around the world, people have pointed to Turkey as an example that a democratic country can have an Islamist party at the helm that works with democracy rather than threatening its democratic foundations.

In 2005, fresh out of university, I had an amazing opportunity to do an internship in Tunisia. It was the first Muslim country I would live in and I did some research before I went

which reassured me that Tunisia was a modern and democratic nation. I read about the first president of the Republic and the amazing reforms that he had implemented and I also read about a man who he had admired, Ataturk. At first glance, it seemed like a relatively liberal and open society. However, while I was living in Tunisia, the stifling presence of the police became clear. Whenever a conversation started to veer towards anything political, my Tunisian friends would point to normal civilians and say, he's probably a police officer, we shouldn't talk about this. Some Tunisian friends of mine were even grabbed by police officers once while talking with me and a few other foreigners in the street because the police feared that they were robbing us. I never understood how a casual conversation could be interpreted as such, but it opened my eyes to the constant repression my new friends were living under. I became particularly close to one family who had welcomed me into their home. Every *Iftar* meal during an entire month of Ramadan, my Muslim-American roommate and I would go to our friend Emin's house and enjoy a delicious *Iftar* meal with his mother and two teenage siblings. I was also partaking in the month of fasting in order to immerse myself in this new culture and better understand the people. It gave me an unforgettable experience in getting to know this wonderful family. Not long after leaving the country, I learned that the father of my 'Tunisian Family' was finally being released from jail after 16 years. A political prisoner. Most likely an Islamist, although I never had the courage to ask. I had assumed that he had passed away when the children were very young because they never spoke about him in the present tense, and I had only seen one photo of him, which was in fact a photo of the two younger siblings as children holding a photo of their father. At the time, my understanding of the situation in Tunisia was very limited, but it left a deep impression on me. Years later, I found myself living in the very country that had given inspiration to the Tunisian leader. I began to see what an impact Ataturk and his secularizing reforms had had on Turkey, but also how much division there was within Turkish society. It struck me that while Ataturk was hailed as a great reformer, his legacy didn't seem

to be appreciated by everyone, though people would be hard pressed to admit this given the laws against insulting him. Like many other people in Turkey, I came to admire this great leader as well once I learned more about how much he had done for Turkey. Although something about the way these reforms were pushed on society did not sit well with me. It didn't seem that it was a sustainable way to modernize and reform a country, or a great way to bring people together. It wasn't until the Gezi protests of 2013 that I really started to get an idea of just how divided this nation was. I began to reflect more on the current situation in Turkey, as well as the recent revolution of 2011 in Tunisia, and what these current events showed about the two countries' histories of modernization. How had these two great nations, leaders of modernity in the Islamic world, reached this current state of affairs? How had their secular paths led to this point?

The Islamic parties active today in both Tunisia and Turkey have been shaped by the secular and democratic values of the countries. While Tunisia has not had as much time to form a strong democracy as in Turkey, democratic ideals have formed in many of its citizens, and the Jasmine revolution has brought their democratic aspirations to the forefront. Ennahda must work within this framework if it is to gain popular support. Tunisia also proved to be a model against authoritarianism in the region after it successfully overthrew its autocratic ruler in the 2011 revolution. Turkey, meanwhile, has long been seen as an example of liberal democracy within the Middle East, while also proving with AKP's rise to power that a state could be both Islamic and democratic simultaneously. AKP came to power in a country with a strong democratic foundation, and they have had to work within that framework. Many have perceived the democracy as being threatened in Turkey in recent years as AKP has garnered more power. Unfortunately, there are many who would interpret such a failing of democracy in this model Islamic country, as a failure of Islam and democracy to exist together. It is yet to be seen whether Tunisia will develop into a strong democracy retaining secular policies while allowing

Islamic parties to take part in politics, as well as whether or not Turkey will remain loyal to its secular foundations. However, it would be a mistake to use any failure on the part of these two examples as proof that Islam and democracy, or Islam and secularism are not compatible. Their experiment with democracy post-independence has occurred in a relatively short amount of time and it may take many more years before a solid democracy develops. Although to compare these cases to any Western form of democracy in its current state would be a mistake, given that each country has had a long, rocky, and uncertain path to democracy. There was a time when scholars doubted Christianity's compatibility with democracy as well.

Turkey and Tunisia have both been examples of secular countries in the Islamic world. However, both are made up of primarily Muslim citizens, many of whom are deeply religious and conservative. The countries have had a lot of division within society on the secular policies forced on them. The headscarf, for example, has been a very divisive subject for both societies. The two countries also have popular and successful parties active today which find inspiration from Islam: AKP in Turkey and Ennahda in Tunisia. Both have secular elites who firmly oppose such parties. This thesis will look at how secularism has developed in both countries post-independence and the legacy that Kemalism and Bourguibism have left behind. It will also explore how those policies may have influenced the current trend towards more Islamic governments. Were they instrumental in leading to the current rise in Islamic politics? Has the rise of Islam in politics been a reaction to secularism itself, or rather a reaction to governments that had monopolized the right to interpret and implement religion freely? Does this rise give legitimacy to the theory that Islam and secularism or Islam and democracy are not compatible with one another? The first step for answering such questions will be to take a look at what secularism means, and how it is manifested in different ways. By examining the broad range of secularist definitions one can see that how secular or non-secular a country is, is largely open to interpretation and open to change.

CHAPTER I: DEFINING SECULARISM

> Know that you can have three sorts of relations with princes, governors, and oppressors. The first and worst is that you visit them, the second and the better is that they visit you, and the third and surest that you stay far from them, so that neither you see them nor they see you (Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazzali, B. 1058 AD, cited in Casanova 1994, p.48)

This quotation by a twelfth century Muslim Theologian summarizes three basic relationships of religion and worldly politics. One in which the 'world' or government controls religion for its own legitimacy and for its own purpose. In this case, the head of state is also supreme leader. The second and more preferable according to al-Ghazzali is a theocracy where the 'world' is controlled by the religion. The danger being that "the more religion wants to transform the world in a religious direction, the more religion becomes entangled in "worldly" affairs and is transformed by the world" (Casanova 1994, p.49). The third and most preferable is separation; "distance, detachment, and separation, is the one which ultimately tends to prevail and which both religious and worldly people tend to prefer, since it protects the world from religion and religion from the world" (p.49). Al-Ghazzali seems to advocate secularism, where religion, which is otherworldly, and world politics do not mix. The spiritual domain may be protected from political institutions as political institutions may be protected from spirituality. This set of three possible relations is of course far too simplistic and unrealistic, as it does not deal with the mixing of religion and politics in all of its various manifestations, its failures, and its successes. This chapter will explore various definitions and manifestations of secularism in the modern world while finding a vision of secularism, which may be useful throughout this thesis while discussing the particular manifestations of secularism in Turkey and Tunisia.

Defining What Secularism is and the Difference with Laicism

In al-Ghazzali's time the word secularism did not exist yet as it was not coined until 1851, yet the concept existed and had existed as far back as the Greeks. It wasn't until protestant movements and revolutions in Europe began to seek more separation between their governments and their religious institutions that secularism really took hold. Thus, modern

secularism has its roots in Europe. Protestants wanted to protect their religion from the governments' control, and it is in protestant countries where the word secular is most used, while Catholic countries such as France tend to use the word laicism. The word, coming from Greek is related to 'laos' or people and 'laikos' the lay, which leads to the word laicism. After the French revolution, people wanted to protect their government from the influence of the Catholic Church, and untangle political institutions from the hold of religion:

> While the underlying emphasis in the word "secularism" is on the idea of worldliness, the term "laicism" emphasizes the distinction of the laity from the clergy. Both terms, however, refer to two aspects of the same thing. They were used in connection with the problems of duality, opposition, or separation of church and state (Berkes 1998, p.5).

While there are some differences between the two values, which will be explored more, the basic concept of separation of state from religion are the same:

> Secularization or laicization meant the transformation of persons, offices, properties, institutions, or matters of an ecclesiastical or spiritual character to a lay, or worldly, position. It has been usual to designate as "secularized" or "laicized" any institution withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the religious authority (Berkes 1998, p.5).

Secularism as a modern concept has its roots in the west and is associated with the west and particularly Christian countries liberal concept of separation of church and state, but it is not restricted to the west today:

> Although this principle originally referred to the specifically Christian conception of the church, liberal theorists today use it to designate the separation of the state and religious institutions of any character, and thereby they aspire to give the principle a universal scope, since the assumption is that religious institutions are present in any society (De Roover 2002, p.4051).

While there are also critics of secularism in general whether it be in the west or the east, there are those who doubt more specifically the validity of secularism in Islamic countries given their distinct historical differences.

According to the civilizational approach, which explains religion's sociopolitical influence, Islam is distinct from Christianity in its relationship with the state. Islam provides a set of rules to be followed by society which state institutions are able to utilize. Like in much of the world, European countries had been controlled by religious institutions for centuries;

however, there was a precedent even in the bible for religion and state to be separated: "Redde Caseari quae Sunt Caesaris, et quae Sunt Dei Deo. Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, and unto God that which is God's" (Matthew 22:21 cited in Yilmaz 2007, p.479). Jesus is said to have told this to his followers, thus offering a biblical answer to separating the state; Caesar, and religion; God. Whereas Samuel Huntington points out "in Islam, God is Caesar (…) The separation and recurring clashes between church and state that typify Western civilization have existed in no other civilization" (Samuel Huntington, cited in Kuru 2007, p. 574-575). In practice, throughout the Christian world, such a separation has not always been observed as seen by numerous religious wars throughout the ages, kings and rulers claiming they were ordained by God, and current debates on issues ranging from abortion to gay rights. The Koran is full of examples of pious rulers, mixing religion and politics with authoritarian leadership, while "As for mixing spiritual and temporal authority, Catholic popes combined religious and political power for centuries in a way that no Muslim ruler has ever been able to achieve" (Zakaria 2004, p.4). Yet the precedent for it and the legitimacy given to potential separation by the holy book itself is there for reference by secular supporters in the Christian world.

This guideline for a separation of what belongs to the religious sphere and what belongs to the state is not the case for Islam in which there is no distinction. The two concepts are rather melded together: "the state was conceived as the embodiment of religion, and religion as the essence of the state" (Berkes 1998, p.7). Critics and skeptics of secularism in Islamic countries have argued that while there is indeed a precedent for secularism in Christian countries:

> Islam, in diametrical opposition to Christianity, was first launched by state-makers. There was no state, in the Weberian sense of the term, in the Arabian Peninsula at the time when the Prophet Muhammad and a few followers of his began spreading the Islamic creed (…) conditions were ripe for the establishment of a central and ethnically homogeneous state (…) The founding fathers of Islam aimed at building a central authority that would exercise its power over the various tribes of Arabia (Yilmaz 2007, p.480).

Yilmaz maintains that while Christianity had its beginnings in society, Islam started within the state, which accounts for the dualism of politics in Christian countries versus the monism in

Islamic states. The state gained its legitimacy through its commitment to Islam, and utilized the principles of Islam for its laws and regulations; "if one root of Islam was branching out into society, the other root was firmly embedded in the state" (Yilmaz 2007, p.483). For Islamic countries, changing to a secularized government means changing their source of legitimacy as well. Religion is often replaced with nationalism for this purpose.

While opponents may reject secularism as a western ideology, advocates recognize that the origins of secularism do not limit its global possibilities. To say that secularism is therefore not compatible in the Islamic world ignores the fact that many majority Muslim countries today purport to be secular, and some form of separation between religion and the state have been implemented to varying degrees for centuries in the Muslim world:

> Religious and political institutions in the Muslim world have been separate since the eighth century. At that time, independent Sunni schools of law, Shia sects, and Sufi orders, in addition to secular military and administrative rulers, challenged and replaced the institution of the caliphate, which claimed to represent both political and religious authorities (Kuru 2007, p.576).

In fact, a report on forty-four Muslim countries by the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom claims that a majority of the population in the Muslim world is currently living in a state which professes to be secular or which makes no declarations regarding Islam as the official religion of the state (Stahnke, T and Blitt, R, cited in Kuru 2007, p.576). Of course, how true to the secular ideology these countries are and how that secularism is enforced may be a contentious subject. Coming from a different traditional and historical background, however, some room for adjustment of the particular meaning of secularism may be needed. Even within the Christian world secularism is practiced differently, so it would be a stretch to expect a Muslim country to have the same standard of secularism when there is no one standard being followed in the west.

While it may seem counterintuitive that France and Turkey both implement similar versions of secularism which are distinct from that in America or England, this seems to be the

case. As mentioned before, Catholic countries tend to use the word laicism as opposed to secularism, and France is a prime example of this ideology:

> Laïcité is a historically rooted and exclusively French concept that emerged as an analytical category in opposition to the Catholic clergy (…) However diverse theories tracing the emergence and genealogy of laïcité as a concept may be, there is little doubt that it is a singularly French idea (Ben Ismail 2014, p.1).

The French word for laicism is laïcité, which is then translated in Turkish to laiklik. This is the word which is used in regards to Turkish secularism, and it has many similarities to French laïcité:

> The core meaning of laicism, drawn from the French experience by the Kemalists, implies lay control over religion. Secularism, at least in Anglophone contexts, does not connote exactly the same meaning (…) in English-speaking contexts, the term "secularism" as a constitutional concept may imply the separation between religion and the state, whereas, laicism may mean lay hegemony over the state (Davison 1998, p. 181-182).

While Turkey is often referred to as a secular country, this can be quite misleading without looking at the difference between laicism and secularism. In the Anglophone context, religion and state are separated so that religion is free from the controlling hand of the state, but in the French example of laïcité religion is subject to laws and regulations put forth by the government. While not identical, secularism, or rather laicism in both Turkey and Tunisia have shown similar traits to the French counterpart as will be seen throughout this chapter. Referring to Turkey or Tunisia as secular without making any distinction between secularism and laicism may cause skepticism over their claim to secularity, however, if we remain open to different interpretations of secularism, or rather laicism, then the claim remains valid:

> For even in modern secular countries the place of religion varies. Thus although in France both the highly centralized state and its citizens are secular, in Britain the state is linked to the Established Church and its inhabitants are largely nonreligious, and in America the population is largely religious but the federal state is secular (Asad 2003, p.5).

In each of these three countries, the states relationships with the religious institutions varies greatly, so that in order to attest that all of these countries are indeed secular one must be flexible with the meaning of secularism. "Such a commonplace concept as secularism, with which the man in the street is so familiar and so used to, tends to acquire the character of a riddle, a puzzle,

an enigma amongst intelligentsia" (Sankhdher 1992, p.1-2). Secularism is a fluid notion, which cannot be described with merely one example or one simple definition.

Passive Secularism

A useful differentiation between two distinct manifestations of secularism has been put forth by Ahmet Kuru, which he refers to as active and passive secularism. Simply put, passive secularism could be likened to secularism, while active secularism more closely resembles laicism. According to Ahmet Kuru, France, The US and Turkey, three countries which he focuses attention on, are in fact all secular states based on "two main criteria: (1) their legal and judicial processes are out of institutional religious control, and (2) they establish neither an official religion nor atheism" (Kuru 2007, p.569). Although each country adheres to secularism in different manors, most notably on the legality of the headscarf as well as education. Kuru points to education as a key battleground for secularist and religious struggles in these countries in an effort to shape the minds of the new generations by opposing groups. Therefore, issues such as religious dress, religious education, prayers in school and funding of private religious schools are often subject to debate. Here The U.S. is distinct from France and Turkey. In The United States, religious dress is tolerated and "One Nation under God" is recited by students, whereas France and Turkey take a less tolerant approach to such overt displays of religious sentiment. The same is true for the government in which "sessions of the U.S. Supreme Court start with the invocation: 'God save the United States and this honorable Court'" (Kuru 2007, p. 571). France and Turkey do not allow such visible public use of religious discourse.

The United States, where more tolerance is shown in public displays of religion is the prime example given for passive secularism. Here the government takes what Kuru refers to as a passive role regarding religious practices. A passive secular country, in which the "secular state plays a 'passive' role in avoiding the establishment of any religions, allows for the public visibility of religion" (Kuru 2007, 571). The state remains neutral to religion and more tolerant

towards public religious displays. Passive secularism is further divided into two sub-groups, which Kuru refers to as accommodationists and separationists. The Republican Party in the United States is representative of what he calls accommodationists. This group advocates for legality of religious activities such as prayer in school, keeping God in the pledge of allegiance and government supported vouchers for public religious schools. For accommodationists, interactions between state and religion are acceptable and do not negate secularism because they do not create the establishment of a particular religion for the state. Separationists on the other hand are what Kuru uses to describe the liberal and Democratic Parties' approach to secularism. For separationists, such interactions between religion and the state are a violation of the First Amendment, and separation of church and state should be a complete separation. Organized prayer and other religious activity should be kept out of public schools. According to Kuru, despite having opposing preferences, they are both committed to passive secularism and opposed to the assertive secularist act of excluding religion from the public sphere. Both groups remain disapproving of policies such as the ban of headscarves in public school by both Turkey and France for example. The disagreement between accommodationists and separationists lies within the spectrum of passive secularism.

Assertive Secularism

Contrasting with passive secularism is assertive secularism, which is embodied by the French and Turkish examples. The banning of religious garments in schools in both France and Turkey is a key example of assertive secularism in action. Further examples in Turkey include prevention of non-Muslim minorities' ability to work as state officers, closing of Sufi lodges and banning of the headscarf from public institutions. All of these actions constitute what Kuru describes as active or assertive secularism, in which "the state excludes religion from the public sphere and plays an 'assertive' role as the agent of a social engineering project that confines religion to the private domain" (Kuru 2007, 571). Assertive secularism seeks to push religion

out of the public sphere. Besides just pushing religion from public life, public displays of non-religious activity such as drinking in public, unveiled women and mixed gatherings with both men and women were encouraged in Turkey. Such outward displays of non-religious behavior are not uncommon with secularists in Muslim countries who wish to prove their modernity:

> In this sense, assertive secularism can also be described as a performance, while passive secularism is more about indifference and non-action. Performative secularism is peculiar to Muslim societies as the visible symbols of drinking alcohol or unveiling women do not constitute any distinctive point as to whether one is secularist or anti-secularist in a Western society. These symbols are preferred by people who want to assert their secularist political view in a way similar to the headscarf preferred by Islamists to show their political identity (Topal 2012, p.6).

By sidelining religious displays and making a show of non-religious behavior, the secularists push their secular agenda onto the public.

Passive secularism comes from a consensus between the secular and the religious groups. In passive countries, it is more likely according to Kuru that the secular groups are not anti-religious and the religious groups are not attempting to adopt an established state religion. On the other hand, assertive secularism arrives when the two opposing groups, secular and religious cannot find common ground. In this case, the secularists are anti-religious and the religious groups seek to maintain power. Furthermore, Kuru contends that the presence or absence of an ancien régime, which melds together the state and a hegemonic religion, influences the outcome of passive or assertive secularism.

The American story began with citizens of other countries moving to a new land in order to seek a different future including religious freedom. In the US, there were competing groups of Protestants who saw secularism as a means to practice their religion freely so secularism was not largely debated and passive secularism was able to flourish. France and Turkey, on the other hand were creating new Republics on the ashes of the old ancien régimes, which had merged the monarchies and hegemonic religions together. In France, there were people fighting to create a new Republic after the French Revolution and who saw the Catholic Church as standing in the way of the peoples' Republic ambitions. In 1905, new secular laws were passed which

were condemned by the French clergy as well as the Pope, and an assertive secularism became dominant in France. In Turkey, after the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the start of a new Republic, Islam was seen as an impediment to the modernization projects of the new Republic and the Islamists sought to retain control while the founders of the new Republic opposed Islam's influence over society, and so a more assertive secularism came to pass. The principle of secularism was added to the constitution in 1937 to solidify the secular reforms. Such reforms were pursued in the face of Islamic opposition. "In this regard, the domination of assertive secularism in Turkey emerged as a result of the conflict between these two groups and the former's victory over the latter" (Kuru 2007, p. 589). In Turkey, the secularists have often been more aggressive than those in France. Under French democracy, assertive secularist policies have been challenged by democratic means, and the two sides have had to compromise on decisions. However, in Turkey:

> Assertive secularism was established by an authoritarian regime in the early twentieth century and has been defended since 1950 by several military coups d'état against conservative governments. Under the shadow of the Turkish military, it has been much more difficult to oppose assertive secularist policies. Turkish assertive secularists, therefore, have very rarely accepted policy compromises (Kuru 2007, p. 591).

While Tunisia was not ruled by an ancien régime before their 1956 independence as Turkey had been, it had its history of Ottoman control, and under French colonial rule, they were subject to French ideological influence. It will be argued in this thesis that Tunisia followed a similar assertive secularist path to Turkey. Like Ataturk in Turkey:

> President Bourguiba pursued an aggressive secularization program aimed at entrenching his power and currying favor with Western allies. His government sought to imitate Western secularist models by marginalizing Islam. Sharia courts were abolished, the Zaytouna (a renowned center of Muslim learning) closed, headscarves banned, and the ulama debilitated (Hurd 2012).

For Bourguiba Islam was Tunisia's past and the west was its modern future. Assertive secularism was needed to push this agenda much as it had been used previously in the new Turkish Republic. Assertive secularism has long been the dominant force in the Turkish Republic under the Kemalists' influence. However, it is argued that Islamic conservatives

would like to implement a more passive secularism, which allows more freedom to the religious population. The debate in Turkey over secularism is often framed by Kemalists as either for or against secularism, whereas it may be more accurate to say that it is a matter of passive versus assertive secularism.

Different Paths to the Marriage of Secularim and Islam

Semiha Topal argues that contrary to what is often believed, the debate in recent years in Turkey over secularism is not about whether to be a secular nation or not be a secular nation, but rather over what type of secularism should be implemented. The French laicism or assertive secularism, which Kemalists most closely followed, or the Anglo-Saxon model of passive secularism supposedly advocated for by the AKP:

> The Kemalist interpretation of religion seeks freedom *from* religion, while AK Party—representing the conservative and devout people of Turkey—seeks freedom *of* religion that would allow religious people to share the power that had been denied to them by the Kemalist bureaucratic elite (Topal 2012, p.2).

Like the Protestants in the west, the religious conservatives of Turkey and also in Tunisia want to protect their religion and freedom to practice their religion from state control. Whereas, the liberal elite could be seen as breaking away from the control of the Caliph as the French had broken from the Catholic Church and working to protect the new state from religious institutions. The Anglo-Saxon form of secularism, which one could argue is what Islamist groups in Turkey and Tunisia would like to see in their countries, is based on a defense of religion or a need to protect their religion from state intervention after the protestant reformation. Whereas, laicism as in France was meant to secure the citizens fidelity to the new Republic, and break them from the bonds of the Catholic Church.

Secularist policies in Turkey are most often attributed to the French model, yet it cannot possibly be implemented in the same manner as in France. Turkey is a Muslim country, which had had a six-century history of Islamic governance. With this in mind, it is clear that neither

the French nor the American ideology would be the exact model for Turkey or also Tunisia, even if this were the inspiration for the founders of the post-independence republics. In Turkey:

> The abolishing of the caliphate, the closure of all madrasas (Islamic higher education institutions) and tariqats (Sufi religious orders), and the adoption of European codes of law were all designed to serve this aim of separation between state and religion. On the other hand, the establishment of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, and the state project to offer an "official Islam" to the public by cutting off the power of autonomous religious organizations, and educating all the religious officials by the state's hands do not fit into the separations paradigm, as it includes a direct intervention of the state on religion—specifically Islam (Topal 2012, p.4).

In Turkey, and it will be argued that in Tunisia as well, the state could not leave religion to the individual and to completely independent religious institutions. Islam was needed as a nation-building tool for the new Republic. Therefore, Turkish secularism's primary role was not to privatize religion, but rather to put the clergy directly under state control. The new government of the young Republic wanted to reduce the influence of religious institutions on the public, but also needed that religion to reach the people and help secure its legitimacy. Religion was still an important part of the social life, and by controlling the religious institutions, they were better able to control the population.

Elizabeth Hurd has described the two opposing forms of secularism thus; one is "a laicism trajectory, in which religion is seen as an adversary and an impediment to modern politics, and a Judeo-Christian secularist trajectory, in which religion is seen as a source of unity and identity that generates conflict in modern international politics" (Hurd 2008, p. 23). Hurd uses the term Judeo-Christian secularism, where others may use Anglo-Saxon secularism. Hurd further describes laicism as shutting religion completely out of politics and leaving it in the private sphere, while Judeo-Christian values are given a space within the political sphere. This idea that laicism forces religion out of politics seems contrary to what is seen in countries such as France, Turkey and Tunisia where rather than being shut out completely religion has been controlled by politics. Political control of religion such as banning of religious clothing; however, cannot be seen as a way of embracing the religious values. It would be more apt to say that laicism is used in politics, which seek to control the religion in order to keep it out of

politics, while Judeo-Christian or Anglo-Saxon secularism seeks to neither control it nor push it out completely. In this secularism, religion can even be given a place at the heart of politics without being a formal part of the political institutions. Certainly, in America, the prime example of such secularism, religious values are always at the core of debates with politicians wearing their Christianity openly as a badge of honor to entice the voters and prove that their Christian values will serve them to follow the religious principles of their constituents if elected. But these two dual definitions "French Laïcité/separationist/against religion vs. Anglo-Saxon secularism/accommodationist/for religion…should be considered more like ideal types rather than a single binary (…) these two models are not mutually exclusive but exemplary models to choose at necessary situations" (Topal 2012, p.4). Certainly, throughout the Christian world, secularism has seen different outcomes of the ideology which have been shaped through the particular countries' history and vision of secularism, and it is only natural that outside of the Christian world, even more variations of secularism would be seen:

> The particular developments in the western nation-states should not be thought of as the rise of an all-encompassing principle of the separation of politics and religion. In fact, the 'secularism' which is attributed to these states is to be understood in the specific terms of the historical consensus that has made the peaceful co-existence of a limited number of communities possible, and not in the general terms of some universal political tenet (De Roover 2002, p.4052).

Throughout this thesis, Turkey and Tunisia will both be compared to the French laicism or assertive secularist models, yet this does not imply that they are both exactly the same as one another in their secularist implementation, nor are they the same as the French secularist model. This is merely an encompassing term that can be used to describe their general inclination as secularist countries, but is by no means concrete.

If it was in fact the assertive secularists' goal to sideline religion in the hope that it would no longer be a threat to political institutions, or take part in public life, then this has surely failed as can be seen by the recent successes of Islamic political parties in both Turkey and Tunisia:

> Did not some of the most brilliant minds of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries tell us that, as the processes of modernity take hold, religion would either fade away or enter the private

> conscience as new public, ethical moralities superseded theocentric ways of being in the world? (Davison 1998, p.2).

Indeed, contrary to receding from public view, religion seems to be making a comeback in the public arena posing the question of the validity of assertive secularism. "Religion's role in the organization and constitution of public life has not diminished inexorably, as many believed it would. The once-clear process of secularization now looks more complex than previously thought" (Davison 1998, p.2). From a passive secularist viewpoint, this revivalism is not a threat to secularism itself, nor a threat to modern democratic society so long as the religion does not act authoritatively as has been a common experience throughout history. If religion can take a part in public discussions as a moral compass without wielding power or forcing religious conviction on the general public:

> The secularist concedes that religious beliefs and sentiments might be acceptable at a personal and private level, but insists that organized religion, being founded on authority and constraint, has always posed a danger to the freedom of the self as well as to the freedom of others. That may be why some enlightened intellectuals are prepared to allow deprivatized religion entry into the public sphere for the purpose of addressing "the moral conscience" of its audience—but on condition that it leave its coercive powers outside the door and rely only on its powers of persuasion (Asad 2003, p.186).

Assertive secularists are more likely to fear that a religious resurgence would lead to the authority and constraint that impede the freedom of self, while the passive secularists would accept the possibility of religion to take a non-authoritative participatory role.

In Public Religions in the Modern World, Jose Casanova coins the phrase 'Deprivatization of religion' to talk about the re-entry of religious traditions which had been marginalized by the modern trend towards secularism into more public roles. He describes this use of the word deprivatization as religion's refusal to stay privatized and accept marginalized roles which had been given to religious traditions by theories of modernity and secularization. He acknowledges that it is nothing new, as some have resisted the marginalization of religion from the beginning, but states that the 1980s saw a particularly widespread trend among various

religious groups all over the world to reconnect with the political and public sphere in order to protect their place in society:

> Religions throughout the world are entering the public sphere and the arena of political contestation not only to defend their traditional turf, as they have done in the past, but also to participate in the very struggles to define and set the modern boundaries between the private and public spheres, between system and life-world, between legality and morality, between individual and society, between family, civil society, and state, between nations, state, civilizations, and the world system (Casanova 1994, p.6).

Casanova recognizes that religions are here to stay and urges his readers to rethink the role of religion in the modern world, and not to abandon secularism but rather to reformulate the concept. Admittedly, this re-entrance of religion into the public sphere is cause for concern for many secularists who fear for the future of secularism in their countries. While the Islamists fear for Islam, the secularists fear Islam and the future of their secular way of life. For secularists, the emergence of political parties such as AKP in Turkey and Ennahda in Tunisia threatens the very foundations of secularism. They fear that as the parties gain power, they will slowly chip away at the secularist system and by association democratic system and replace it with an Islamic one. Speaking on militant and Islamic groups such as Hamas in Palestine Fareed Zakaria claims that although such groups:

> Speak the language of elections, many of the Islamic parties have been withering in their contempt for democracy, which they see as a Western form of government. They would happily come to power through an election, but then would set up their own theocratic rule. It would be one man, one vote, one time (Zakaria 2004, p.2).

In many countries, an aggressive implementation of secularism may have led to resentment by the oppressed religions who feel that they have been forcefully kept out of the public sphere. A return to religion in politics is not only a sign of rising fundamentalism but also resistance by an oppressed population. Yet AKP in Turkey and Ennahda in Tunisia both claim to be pro-democracy as well as secularist. Given the chance to partake in national elections as both have been in recent decades, they may well prove the fears of the secularists wrong. They may lead the countries towards a more passive secularist path on which both sides will be able to come to terms with the other's existence and work together successfully. In the early days of the

republics, assertive secularism may have seemed like the right choice in order to free the countries of their previously dominant religious structures. It seems that the concepts of secularism and democracy have been firmly engrained enough within the countries over the last decades so that it is now possible to have a passive secularism that allows religious groups to partake in politics without threatening the very foundation of the political structures and secularist systems.

We have seen some of the differences between laicism or aggressive secularism and passive secularism, and also acknowledged that there are no one size fits all secularist models. Ali Agrama offers a view of secularism that is an ever fluid and changing concept and is subject to the states perception and interpretation of what is religious as well as the history of the country in which it is being implemented. He claims "secularism itself incessantly blurs together religion and politics, and that its power relies crucially upon the precariousness of the categories it establishes" (Ali Agrama 2010, p.495). In regards to Egypt, Ali Agrama says that it "is still incompletely secular, and that is why it has religious-secular conflict, and Egypt has secular-religious conflict, so that is evidence of its being incompletely secular" (Ali Agrama 2010, p.498). It is a cyclical pattern, whereby incomplete secularism leads to conflict and conflict leads to being incomplete. The same description could be applied to Turkey and Tunisia where the place in secular society for religion is still a point of debate. By Ali Agrama's criteria, we may be able to categorize Turkey and Tunisia as only partially or precariously secular, as he has said about Egypt.

Instead of analyzing a country's secularism based on normative standards, one must look at the historical and social context of the country that is said to adhere to secularist ideology. Secularism should not be tied to one strict interpretation, but should be flexible with the time, place and historical context. Ali Agrama claims that to question Egypt's secularism cannot produce an answer. There is no one clear definition or model of secularism and it is

followed in many different ways so that to say one country is secular and another is not because they are different would be misleading. Yet to say that two countries are secular while they practice the ideology differently could also be misleading, while not making the claim false. This question of secularism "it is rather a question whose persistence, force, and irresolvability expresses the peculiar intractability of our contemporary secularity" (Ali Agrama 2010, p.499). Ali Agrama views secularism not as a firm separation of state and religion but rather a system where ability to control and intervene in religion is part of the state's sovereignty: "secularism involves less a separation of religion and politics than the fashioning of religion as an object of continual management and intervention, and the shaping of religious life and sensibility to fit the presuppositions and ongoing requirements of liberal governance" (Ali Agrama 2010, p.499). Thus "Secularism, supposed to separate religion from politics hopelessly blurs them; ideally a principle of peace, it fosters political-religious conflict instead" (p.521). As we have seen with laicism or assertive secularism, the state takes an active role in controlling religion so that the two are never completely separate or free from each other.

Throughout this thesis, it will be shown how Turkey and Tunisia have both deliberately taken an active stance on religion's role in society. Post-independence both countries needed control of religion in their nation building ambitions. The governments wanted to limit the influence of religion within society, but also needed the legitimacy presented by religion. Both Turkey and Tunisia followed a French laique style in which "radical state elite sought to adapt the religion of the majority into a new religion of the republic as an instrument in socializing well-disciplined republican citizens. Religion was not eradicated, but subordinated to the state and absorbed into its revolutionary mission" (Webb 2013, p.19). Throughout the decades following independence religious parties were discouraged, sometimes forcefully, from taking part in politics. However, more recent years have seen a rise in successful political Islamic parties in both countries. Many secularists fear Islam's return to politics as a threat to the secular

systems, yet religion has never truly disappeared from politics in either country. By controlling the religious institutions and role that religion may play in the new Republics, politics and religion have been blurred together throughout the entirety of both of the Republics' histories. This blurring of religion and politics does not necessarily mean that neither state is secular:

> The processes by which secular doctrine is implemented incessantly generate the very question that doctrine aims to answer, namely, where to draw a line between religion and politics. That is, the processes by which that line is drawn work to unsettle that very line. And thus, what best characterizes secularism is not a separation between religion and politics, but an ongoing, deepening, entanglement in the question of religion and politics, for the purpose of identifying and securing fundamental liberal rights and freedoms (Ali Agrama 2010, p.502).

If religion and politics can be intertwined in secularism, then where does one draw the line between the two and is it possible to completely extract the two from each other? Where does one draw the line between what constitutes secular and what does not? If a government can control religious institutions, dictate aspects of religious practice, and call itself secular, then why would religious political parties taking part in politics negate the secular ideology?

Turkey was the first Muslim country to put secularism in the constitution, yet no clear definition of secularism was given, conveniently leaving it up to interpretation:

> But formal constitutions never give the whole story. On the one hand objects, sites, practices, words, representation—even the minds and bodies of worshipers—cannot be confined within the exclusive space of what secularists name "religion." They have their own ways of being. The historical elements of what come to be conceptualized as religion have disparate trajectories. On the other hand, the nation-state requires clearly demarcated spaces that it can classify and regulate: religion, education, health, leisure, work, income, justice, and war. The space that religion may properly occupy in society has to be continually redefined by the law because the reproduction of secular life within and beyond the nation-state continually affects the discursive clarity of that space (Asad 2003, p.201).

The use of assertive secularism in Turkey during the early years of the Republic have led to polarization of society as both sides have been unable to agree on the terms of their secular identity. The conservative base has often felt oppressed and resentful of the secular elites. The recent success of the supposedly Islamic AKP has further divided society as the conservatives finally feel it is their chance to take back control of their religion and their country, while the secularists fear that secularism and democracy are being slowly eroded in the country.

Tunisia on the other hand followed supposedly secular policies while also leaving a place for Islam in the constitution, claiming Islam as the religion of Tunisia. This of course is in direct contrast from Turkey, which put secularism into the constitution. In Tunisia, Islam's presence in the constitution was vaguely construed in order to leave it open to interpretation much like secularism in the Turkish constitution. One would be able to interpret it merely as referring to the people of the country rather than the government itself. The ability to interpret it different ways would satisfy a variety of people presumably and spark less debate. In Ennahda's journal al-Fajr, Shawqi Bu-anani, an academic wrote in April 2011 that "there are two sorts of secularism: the first, which he accepted, separated the state and the religious institution; the second was "radical" and sought to eliminate religion from the public space and from life altogether. For Bu-anani radical secularism could only produce dictatorship." (Bu-anni, cited in Zeghal 2013, p.264). The head of Ennahda's party, Ghannouchi sees secularism as "a specific set of procedures that would allow different ways of life to develop and, perhaps, compete, but does not accept it as a "philosophy," that is as what could become the foundation of a way of life he disapproves of" (Zeghal 2013, p.265). Both seem to be accepting of secularism, so long as it does not hinder religious belief and practice.

In this thesis, it will be shown how both Tunisia and Turkey have implemented secularism in similar but not identical fashions while one made a special place for it in the constitution and the other did not. Aggressive secularism was the dominant ideology in both situations and led to the religious institutions and many of the religious population feeling oppressed and looking for a way to take back control of not only the religion but also public policy. Both countries tried to limit religion's role in politics, yet both have seen a resurgence of religious political activity. Turkey with the rise of the AKP, and Tunisia with the recent successes of the Ennahda party after the Jasmine revolution of 2011. Rather than fearing for the future of secularism, the secularists in both countries need to reanalyze their approach to

secularism and open themselves up more to the possibility of passive secularism. We may conclude that Tunisia in fact is not as secular of a state as Turkey, Bourguiba himself once said that it could not be described as such, yet there is little doubt that secularism and the active control of religion has played a large part in both countries' early years as Republics. As Turkish laiklik is often translated as secularism in English, and indeed, in Turkish the two concepts are often fused together, the word secularism will be used most often throughout this thesis. This does not necessarily mean, however, that it is referring to secularism as opposed to laicism. Differentiation will be clarified where necessary, or the use of the term aggressive or assertive secularism will be used in reference to laiklik throughout this thesis.

CHAPTER II:
SECULARISM IN POST-INDEPENDENCE TURKEY

After the Turkish War of Independence and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the hero of the independence movement, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, became president of the new Turkish Republic in 1923. Ataturk and his government quickly set about enacting rigorous reforms with the aim of turning Turkey westward and creating a secular, modern state free of what some considered the backwards traditions of the Ottoman Empire. Ataturk is loved by many for the reforms which have made Turkey a more modern nation, and is hailed as the father of modern day Turkey; hence the name Ataturk which was given to him meaning 'Father of the Turks.' However, under the new government, the new rules imposed in order to modernize the country were often too heavy handed for many of the nations' pious citizens. In the government's efforts to secularize the country, rather than leaving religion alone to be managed by religious leaders, the new government chose a top-down strategy in order to reform religion to fit the mold of their vision of a modern state. This chapter will look at these modernizing and secularizing reforms and how they shaped the new republic.

Under the Ottoman Empire, religion and state were intimately intertwined. The new regime wished to distance itself from the Ottoman past, and enacted many rules to that effect, yet they were unable to differentiate themselves in this aspect: "The Republican era started in the context of a nation state that turned its face to the West; therefore, no Islamic justification was needed in westernizing the country. However, the new state was still built upon the Ottoman state tradition and the symbiotic relationship between religion and politics was not abandoned altogether" (Yilmaz 2007, p.6). While their goals towards religion may have differed, and the institutions had been changed, the practice of controlling the institutions was not abandoned by the new government: "The Republican regime inherited and exploited a long-standing tradition of institutional relations between the state and religion in the Ottoman

Turkish context. The characteristic features of this relation were integration and subordination. Religion was integrated into the state but ultimate sovereignty and authority, including over the scope of religious power, rested with Ottoman palace officials" (Davison 1998, p.140). Rather than integrating the religious institutions in an effort to protect religion and serve the pious, the new regime integrated and changed the institutions seemingly in order to reduce religion's threat to the modernizing aims of the government.

Modernizing Reforms

One of the first secularizing moves made by the new government was to abolish the caliphate on March 3rd, 1924. As the caliphate made the Ottoman Sultan also the head of the Islamic world, this move was well in line with the secularist paradigm of separating religious institutions from the government. As Ataturk himself put it:

> We must put an end from now on to the delusion of imagining ourselves the masters of the world. Enough of the calamities to which we have dragged the nation by our ignorance of the conditions of the world and our real position in it and by our following the fools! We cannot carry the same tragedy while knowing the realities (Kemal, M cited in Berkes 1998, p.460).

By abolishing the caliphate, not only was he separating the state from religion, but he was also separating Turkey from its aggrandized role in the Islamic world and turning it more inward; or rather, westward. This also meant the abolition of the Şeriat courts, which was another clear secularist move: "The abolition of the Caliphate implied the abolition of the Şeriat as a law of the state because, once the traditional temporal and political power had been rejected, its legal basis and structure was bound to fall too" (Berkes 1998, p.467). Kemal's resistance to the caliph was of course contested by supporters of the Caliphate claiming, "The Caliphate was a matter transcending the Constitution of the Turkish Republic. It was "a link between Turkey and the Islamic world." It was "a priceless treasure" for Turkey, enabling her to obtain moral and material support from all the Muslim nations" (Berkes 1998, p.457). However, this was only the beginning. After the Caliphate was abolished in 1924, medreses, and tariqas were also abolished. Tombs and shrines of saints were also closed by the introduction of law no. 677 in

1925. The ulema was brought under state control, and properties of pious foundations were expropriated. Imams, hodjas, and preachers were only allowed to wear their clerical clothing while performing duties. These new directives, rather than showing a clear separation between the religious and the political institutions were a sign of the state taking control of what was and was not allowed in the religious realm.

Furthermore, rather than simply abolishing the caliphate, in 1924, they then replaced it with a new religious institution under the state's control, the Directorate of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet Işleri Reisliği*), which was to be the highest religious office in the Turkish Republic. The head of the DRA would be appointed by the President himself, and he would be in charge of communication of all things relating to beliefs and rituals such as administration of all mosques, appointment and dismissal of imams and other religious leaders, the call to prayer, religious endowments, and the upkeep of mosques and cleric remunerations. The DRA even went so far as dictating the content of the sermons to the imams for their Friday congregational prayers on certain occasions (Yilmaz 2007, p. 489). Therefore, the Caliphate was abolished and replaced with an institution more 'appropriate' for the new Turkish Republic:

> The existence of the *Diyanet Isler' Reisligi/Baskanligi* is counter evidence to any claim that Islam was disestablished through laiklik. To the contrary, the new state's religious institutions were "designed" largely, as Keyder has stated, to "control from above all aspects of religious life" (…) interpreters of laiklik might want to downplay the status of these offices, for example by identifying the head of the *Diyanet* as a "mere director-general of a department," but they cannot discount the reality of the control relations in which it exits (Davison 1998, p.140).

Therefore, it is clear that the state wanted to separate itself from the religious traditions of the past, such as the Caliphate and Şeriat law, but they were unable to allow religion to be completely separated from the government. Instead, they chose to create a religious institution to control religion, which could then be controlled by the highest levels of government. This instrumentalist approach allowed the Kemalist government to control the public display of Islam through the use of the new DRA. "It is impossible to account for the history of the subsequent politics within Turkey's laiklik politics without understanding both the separation

and the control dimensions of laiklik. The conceptual tension between separation and control has provided the dynamic focal point for the debate over laiklik in Turkey since 1923" (Davison 1998, p.175). With the creation of the DRA, the state was able to monopolize "religious instruction, and the suppression of the autonomous institutions and manifestations of Islam acted as an effective check against the formation of an autonomous Islamist intelligentsia which would interpret Islam in such a way as to produce a political ideology out of it" (Yilmaz 2007, p.489). Bringing religion under the government's control, they were able to manipulate the religious conversation. If the state had merely abolished the caliphate and left it at that, the religious might have made the claim that the government was trying to erase religion altogether and may have also attempted to play a more active political role, which would have been more than undesirable for the secular government. With the creation of the DRA, they were able to show an image of a government that still saw the importance of religion in Turkish life, however manipulative it may have been: "For Kemalists, secularism did not contradict the continuing control over religion and the existence of a religious apparatus within the state mechanism" (Azak 2010, p.2010). Yet this control of religion was certainly more congruent with assertive secularism as opposed to a passive secularism as has been seen previously in this thesis. Religious institutions were never separated from, but rather put under control of the state: "In the Kemalist reforms, the state may have been freed from religion, but the reverse was not true" (Davison 1998, p.135). The new secularist state was one that would change the religious discourse throughout the country through top-down reforms affecting almost every aspect of religious life. "The Kemalists articulated a new interpretation of Islam and constructed new institutions for that interpretation. As a result, Islam has never been fully privatized in Turkey" (Davison 1998, p.158). These new institutions were crucial to Kemalist reforms of society. Another crucial reform was education. By both controlling as well as reducing religious education, the government was able to further implement their vision of secularism.

Reforming Religious Education

Like the abolishment of the Caliphate and the subsequent creation of the DRA, the government managed to pull off a policy of both separation and control of religious instruction in post-independence Turkey with the simultaneous closing of certain religious institutions such as the Medreses and the opening of other forms of religious educational institutions. In 1924, the Ministry of Education was given control over all teaching through the Law of the Unification of Education. Schools were opened by the Ministry of Education in order to train ministers and preachers (*imams* and *khatibs*) in order to replace all the medreses that were closed (Berkes 1998, p.477). Religious education was replaced with another form of religious instruction. Thus, religious education was not completely abandoned or ignored:

> It may also be pointed out that the abolition of the medrese system did not entail removal of state-sponsored religious training and instruction for the state's religious establishment. The medrese of the Suleymaniye complex in Istanbul was to be replaced by the Faculty of Divinity at the nearby University of Istanbul administered by the Ministry of Education (Davison 1998, p.152).

Furthermore, the *Diyanet Işleri Reisliği* began offering Koran courses as a form of replacement for the mekteps in 1934, thus continuing a symbiotic relationship between the government and religious instruction. As for primary schools, religious classes continued to be part of primary school education at the beginning of the Republic, but starting in 1927, classes on religion were offered by parents' request only. "It was not until RPP consolidation over the state was complete in 1928 that the RPP implemented national education excluding religious theory and practice" (Davison 1998, p.164). Religious classes in urban primary schools were dropped in 1930, and in 1931 for middle schools. However, this was not enforced in the villages until 1933. Religious schools were not prohibited, but secular primary education was mandatory until the age of twelve, which would make religious schools more difficult to form.

Language Reforms & Vernacularizing Islam

Another significant change to education was the switch from the Arabic script to the Latin, which was adopted in 1928. Henceforth, teaching of Arabic as well as Persian lessons would not only not be compulsory but would also be prohibited:

> The replacement of the Arabic script by the Latin script in 1928, the purification of the Turkish language from Persian and Arabic influences, and the recreation of the ozturkce (pure Turkish) language secured by the establishment of the Turkish Linguistic Society, Turk Dil Kurumu in 1932, created a radical break with the Ottoman past and the Ottoman elites. The Turkish language became compulsory in national education, and the use of "foreign" languages, other than Western ones, was forbidden (Gole 1997, p. 49-50).

This change in language helped the government to move the country more westward, break their ties to the east and to consolidate secularism by distancing the Turkish people from the language of the Koran. Furthermore, the new government maintained that the use of Arabic in religion kept many Turkish people in the dark about the true meaning of their own religion. Purportedly for this reason, the government made significant efforts to vernacularize Islam in Turkey so that the true meaning of the religion could be understood by all. They hoped to save religion from 'corrupt clerics' who prevented people from accessing the Koran for themselves, and to prevent against supposed superstition and backwardness.

The efforts of the government to vernacularize the religion is a clear example of their heavy-handed approach to religion. Rather than remaining passive to the religious instruction and implementation in the new Republic, they chose to alter and control how the religion would be disseminated to the people: "The aim was to reform Islam in order to create a national Islam unaffected by the Arab language and cultural traditions. The Kemalist urge to reform Islam by vernacularizing it was to a great extent inspired by the history of vernacularization in Western Christianity" (Azak 2010, p.60). The government commissioned the translating of the Koran into Turkish, although this was a controversial move since the original language of the Koran is Arabic and many people believed that changing the language would take away from its purity. On translating the Koran, Ataturk observed that "The Turk believes in the book but he does not

understand what it says to him. First of all, he himself must understand directly the Book that he so seeks" (Ataturk cited in Berkes 1998, p.486). He hoped to reform religious life through reason and wanted the Koran to be read in Turkish so that it would be accessible and understood by everyone, rather than being followed by blind belief without true understanding. "According to Kemalist intellectuals, then, secularism had to reform religion through the elimination of superstitions in order to secure freedom of conscience. Accordingly, the only way to liberate religion from superstition was to enhance the people's direct access to the holy book by translating it into Turkish" (Azak 2010, p.79). Kemalists believed that it was their duty and the duty of secularism to reform the religion rather than avoiding religious meddling by the government. Unlike Christianity, Islam had never seen a reformation period, which led to the enlightenment of the European Christians. They thus felt that they needed to spur such a movement within Turkey to launch them into the modern age. To make such changes as they desired for their new Republic, they could not remain passive to Islam in society, so they chose an assertive approach, which was bound to be controversial.

Particularly controversial was the banning of the Arabic Ezan in 1932, and the replacement with a Turkish translation. Ataturk himself personally saw to the assignment of some hafiz to recite the Koran in Turkish on the second day of Ramadan in 1932:

> The *ezan* was recited for the first time in Turkish by Hafiz Rifat from the minaret of the Fatih Mosque on 30 January 1932. The state promoted the Turkish *ezan* and its nation-wide recital in the following months. The directorate of Religious Affairs sent an edict to all mosques in the country on 18 July 1932, determining the obligatory Turkish version of the call to prayer (Azak 2010, p.56).

Any *müezzins* who refused to recite the Turkish version would be penalized. Not surprisingly, this reform was not welcome by everyone. After an incident in which the *ezan* was rebelliously recited in Arabic at the Ulu Mosque in Bursa in 1933, for example, one dissenter shouted, "What is this! Why do they unlawfully oppress us, while Jews can worship freely in their synagogues and Christians in their churches?" (Azak 2010, p.59). A rather reasonable complaint against a government which claimed to be secular, while controlling the everyday practice of Islam.

While the official stance was that they were trying to make the true meaning of the religion available to all, it could easily be argued that the Kemalist were using Islam to further their nationalist priorities. Through their top down approach to religion, the government was able to control the content of the sermons, which were only given by state-appointed preachers. All texts and religious works needed to be approved by the state through the DRA. Friday prayers became like state propaganda:

> The Turkification of the admonition parts of Friday sermons in the mosques was critical in the transmission of the republican state's messages to the people. The official imams of the DRA used these Friday sermons to convey messages such as emphasizing the importance of national service as a holy duty or making calls for donating alms (zekat) to the Aviation Society (Azak 2010, p.51).

Nonetheless, the Kemalist government upheld the claim that their mission was merely to free the Turkish people of the ignorance perpetuated by the use of Arabic in religious teaching. The use of Arabic by teachers who often had a poor grasp of Arabic themselves, and then taught to lay people who had even less knowledge of the Arabic language kept the population in perpetual darkness about their own beliefs which could lead to a backwards interpretation of religion, thus potentially resulting in a reactionary form of Islam. Hence the justification for the government's assertive secular policies.

Preventing *Irtıca*

As a response to this potential for reactionary Islam, the Kemalist regime attempted to create an alternative Turkified Islam; one that was more suited to the Turkish people and free of the Arab and Ottoman influence of the past. An Islam that was more compatible with Turkish nationalism. To this end, the government made such attempts at Turkifying Islam, such as translating the Koran into Turkish, prayers into Turkish, and most significantly creating the Turkish Ezan, which lasted from 1932 until the ban on the Arabic Ezan was amended in 1950. The Kemalists attempted to alter the national form of Islam so that it was more Turkish and free it from the Arabic influence, which they perceived as contributing to backwards, and superstitious beliefs. If it were changed to Turkish, they argued that it would be more accessible

to Turkish citizens, and they would see the rational side of Islam. Addressing a delegation of teachers in 1922, Ataturk proclaimed:

> Ideas full of irrational superstition are morbid. Social life dominated by irrational, useless, and harmful beliefs is doomed to paralysis. We must begin by purging minds and society of their very springs. . . . Our guide in political, social, and educational life will be science. . . . Progress is too difficult or even impossible for nations that insist on preserving their traditions and beliefs lacking in rational bases (Ataturk cited in Berkes 1998, p.466).

In short, Kemalists wanted the country to be relieved from the burden of tradition and to reach westward to become an enlightened nation. They aimed "To reach the stage achieved by the civilized nations! That became the motif of the new ideology. The reforms to be undertaken would imply nothing but a total revolution—the appropriation of Western civilization" (Berkes 1998, p.463). In order to survive in the new modern world, they had to become a modern nation. To become modern, top-down approaches would be necessary in almost every aspect of life, even if that meant government control over religion rather than passive secularism. According to Ataturk:

> Surviving in the world of modern civilization depends upon changing ourselves. This is the sole law of any progress in the social, economic and scientific spheres of life. Changing the rules of life in accordance with the times is an absolute necessity. In an age when inventions and the wonders of science are bringing change after change in the conditions of life, nations cannot maintain their existence by age-old rotten mentalities and by tradition-worshiping. . . . Superstitions and nonsense have to be thrown out of our heads (Ataturk cited in Berkes 1998, p.464).

The change from Arabic to Turkish in religious practice, according to the new regime, would help to bring about a change in such superstitious nonsense and help them to march towards the future. Hans Kohn wrote that the RPP:

> Is imbued with the spirit of secularism and liberalism which is making such headway today in all the countries of the East, fulfilling everywhere the same task as it did in Europe a century and a half ago, the task of overcoming the darkness of the religious and feudal Middle Ages. . . . It is as in a stuffy room the windows were suddenly thrown open (Kohn, H, cited in Davison 1998, 177).

With the windows thrown, or rather, forced open and a more enlightened public, the Kemalists believed that they could help to mitigate the threat of the reactionary Islam, which they referred

to as *Irtica*. Those who did not adapt to the ways of the new Turkey would be seen as backwards and even viewed with suspicion.

The concept of *Irtica*, or reactionary Islam, had been presented and manipulated by Kemalists and the media to the public in order to create fear in society of a 'reactionary' Islam. The RPP positioned themselves as the sole party who could protect the country from such a threat. This threat was often used as an excuse to alter religion as they saw fit, and significantly, also to delay democratic reforms: "The Kemalist tradition of sacrificing the ideal of democracy for the sake of "enlightenment of the ignorant masses" was combined with the fear that the latter would be manipulated by fanatical Islam. This elitist fear led, however, to a further politicization of Islam" (Toprak cited in Azak 2010, p.114). *Irtica* was a crucial feature of Turkey's fight against what the government saw as a radical Islam against which they had to defend the country. Islamic movements that did not fall under government control were seen as 'reactionary movements' by the Kemalists and thereby subject to governmental scrutiny. Often times this threat was exaggerated in an effort to stoke fear as well as to bring the people around to the government's cause.

In her book on Islam and Secularism in Turkey, Umut Azak discusses in detail two important events presented by the government as examples of *Irtica*. The first of these events is the 'Menemen Incident' of 1930. In the aftermath, the Menemen incident was used to create a national hero who symbolized the ideals of the new secularist state. The event, which involved a small rebellion led by a man who claimed to be the Mehdi, Derviş Mehmed, resulted in the beheading of a local officer who was claimed to be dedicated to secularism. Kubilay and his tragic death were used as propaganda by the government to gain sympathy and a bond with the secular regime. They used this to perpetuate fear against reactionary Islam, or *Irtica*. It was also used as an excuse to suppress and delegitimize the opposition: "The story of beheading revived the fear of reactionary Islam and served to create an emotional bond with the secular regime.

The Kemalist regime used this event in the service of its fight against *irtica* as well as for suppressing the opposition" (Azak 2010, p. 22). The victim, Kubilay, was turned into a national hero, and reactionary Islam was portrayed as the villain. The government further used this event to go after the Naqshbandi Sufi order, who they claimed were behind the rebellion, despite the lack of evidence to support this. They also made claims that the FRP party, which had a significant amount of supporters in Menemen, were somehow related to the event, and used it as an excuse for delaying democracy lest it be compromised by fanatics or enemies of the regime using religion for political means. Even the freedom of the press was attacked by the RPP as a contributor to the Menemen incident, giving the government a premise for limiting such freedoms. On the other political spectrum, the Islamists claimed that the whole ordeal was in fact orchestrated by the RPP to give them the green light for going after the Naqshbandi order and Sheikh Esad as well as the FRP opposition. The opposition had gained popular support in Menemen, which led to the RPP leaders and other commentators to infer that this reactionary uprising was somehow linked to the FRP (Azak 2010, p.24). The Menemen incident as well as the previous Kurdish Rebellion of 1925, after which the single party system was consolidated and the 'Maintenance of Order' (*Takrir-I Sükun*) law was passed, were shown as proof that the opposition parties had abused Ataturk's attempts at democracy, and democratic reforms were delayed in order to supposedly protect the country from such reactionary events. Furthermore, the incident shows how the state was willing to use Islamic language in their nationalist agenda. They referred to Kubilay as *şehadet "*This use of the concept of martyrdom (şehadet), which referred to death in the service of Islam, showed how the Kemalist elite successfully adopted Islamic concepts in order to use them in the service of the new national community, redefined as a secular nation" (Azak 2010, p.40). They often adopted such terms and concepts and used them to strengthen the bond with the new secular nation.

Another important episode is the Malatya Incident of 1952. A failed assassination against Ahmet Emin Yalman, a journalist who was formerly a supporter of the DP, Democratic Party, but became more disillusioned by them as the DP became more sympathetic to Islamists. This event brought back up the fear of *Irtica*. Like the Menemen incident, the Malatya incident years later was also used as an excuse for why unlimited freedom of speech was in fact bad for the freedom of the country: "The Malatya Incident had confirmed in their view that an unlimited and misused freedom of conscience could harm the more general principle of freedom of thought and secularism" (Azak 2010, p.99). Furthermore, even the DP started to adopt the RPP's fear of *irtica* and tried to rid their party of their more Islamic members after the event. Azak discusses how a polarization within the country was being highlighted by these events, as city elites began to discriminate against the migrants from the villages. They saw the peasants with their backwards village habits and Islamic practices as reactionary Islamists, and saw themselves as the bearers of a truer, better 'Turkish' Islam. The effect which this discrimination towards new migrants to cities might have had on the peasants and how that might have further divided the population must have been great; leading steadily to a more polarized society.

Outlawing the *Fez* and Modernizing the Wardrobe

Writing on the image of the villagers in the 1950s, Azak describes how fanatics were often depicted as dark-faced bearded men carrying prayer beads, or as women covered in a veil. More recent published photos of covered women or peasant men in their traditional clothing walking in city centers sparked alarm amongst the urban elite of a rise in fanaticism. These "visual images were in fact expressions of the urban elite's trauma caused by the increasing visibility of traditional symbols of Islam in the big city centers. Especially disturbing for the urban elite were women with *çarşaf* in modern cities. The fight with the çarşaf was conceived as a very important duty of female citizens" (Azak 2010, p.111-12). In the 1930s and 40s, people who were not deemed appropriately dressed were not allowed to hang around in the new

city centers, which were dominated by the secular elite and their new 'civilized' dress and behaviors. All others were made to feel unwanted. Such exclusion of their own citizens from public life showed the societies own inferiority complex towards the west and was a demeaning act against the people, most assuredly not creating a feeling of inclusion, but rather exclusion; sowing the seeds for future strife. The government's stoking of the fear of *Irtica* belied the real struggle between the two faces of Turkey. Rather than embracing all the citizens of the country, their policies rather ostracized those who did not conform to their new standards.

Many steps were taken towards making the country appear more in line with Western culture in day-to-day habits. European clocks and the Gregorian calendar were adopted in 1926, European numerals in 1928, and European measures and weights in 1931. These were "reforms which limited the future generations' links with the Islamic world and their access to the immediate Ottoman past. The elimination of the influences of Islamic/Arab culture by adopting Europe as a model was the primary goal of Kemalist nationalism" (Azak 2010, p.11). Another such important reform was the dress code of 1925, which made the western brimmed hat compulsory and the traditional *fez* forbidden. Ataturk wanted the people of Turkey to dress more like the 'civilized' people of Europe, and saw the *fez* as a symbol of backwardness. Regarding the 'Hat Law' Kemal said:

> It was necessary to abolish the *fez*, which sat on our heads as a sign of ignorance, fanaticism, or hatred to progress and civilization, and to adopt in its place the hat, the customary dress of the civilized world, thus showing, among other things, that no difference existed in the manner of thought between the Turkish nation and the whole family of civilized mankind (Davison 1998, p.149).

Of course, there were cries of opposition, claiming such regulations as unconstitutional and just a way to imitate the west while taking away their national character. Sentiments and accusations of the reform being unconstitutional and hostile to Turkish tradition while trying to imitate the west were of course not limited to the dress code. This did not deter the government, which continued its westernizing reforms.

Emancipating the Women of Turkey

Yet more controversial than the banning of the *fez*, or traditional men's headwear, were of course laws related to female headwear and beyond. In 1924, a law was passed banning both hats and veils for public servants. While this law was limited to women working in state institutions, headscarves were generally discouraged throughout society in an effort to promote more liberty for women. Changes in laws and behavior towards women did not stop there. Women became a marker of Turkey's new modern identity. Their emancipation was a symbol of Turkey's emancipation from the backwards traditions in place prior to the Republic:

> In Turkey's modernizing program, women were depicted as the builders of a "new life," a modern way of living both in the private and the public spheres. The representatives of this modern life appeared in photographs as unveiled women, women in athletic competitions, women pilots, women professionals, and women with men, both in European clothing (Gole 1997, p.51).

Even beauty contests were organized, further stoking the anger of the conservative classes, who saw this western idea of 'emancipation' of women as debasing the moral fibers of society. The conservatives

> Rhetoric marked women and their sexual liberty as the source of cultural degeneration (*yozlaşma*). Their critique of modernizing reforms was thus centered on the (negative) image of the modern, Westernized woman who transgressed traditional boundaries. The beauty contest was furthermore seen by conservative nationalists as the total destruction of traditional and moral values as well as of the national honor (Azak 2010, p.97).

However, such visibility of women's emancipation was central to the government's push towards a modern secular lifestyle, and showed a turn away from the traditional Islamic way of life. With the new civil code of 1926, monogamy was enforced, rights were given to women over inheritance and property claims, and divorce by repudiation was banned thus contributing further to female liberation. Such rights were in line with the RPP's idea of a more contemporary civilization. However, these changes would remain primarily limited to educated elite women, and women in urban centers as the changes were not overwhelmingly welcomed by society. The issue of women's clothing, in particular, would continue to be a contentious topic for decades to come.

Secularizing the Turkish Constitution

While it was undoubtedly the goal of the Kemalists to secularize the new Republic, they were not able to make this official immediately with the first constitution of the New Republic. The first constitution of the Republic was drafted in 1924 and at that time, Islam was still written as the official religion of the Republic in Article 2 of the constitution. It was actually introduced to the constitution not by the Kemalists, but by the Khilafatists who wanted an Islamic state. Mustafa Kemal was originally elected president of an Islamic Republic; "Nothing could have been more uncomfortable for Mustafa Kemal than to be President of an Islamic republic, just as nothing could appear more unbecoming than this to the Khilafatists" (Berkes 1998, p.457). It wasn't until 1928 that religion was finally stripped from the constitution. From 1928 until 1937, there was no mention of religion or secularism in the document. That only changed when the principle of secularism was made an official and non-amendable article in the constitution of 1937. Further significant changes for the status of secularism in the new Republic were the introduction of the Penal Code in 1926, which was based on the Italian Criminal Code of 1889, and of the Civil Code based on the Swiss Civil Code in 1926. The Civil Code signified a major transition from the Ottoman traditions and put an end to the intermingling of religion and the law: "Above all, the Code signified the unmitigated secularization of civil life. The men of religion lost their function, not only in civil procedure, but also in the administration of the law. The idea of having civil codes and separate courts, secular or ecclesiastical, for each religious community was rejected definitively" (Berkes 1998, p.472). Under Ottoman Rule, Şeriat courts were the main dispensers of justice, while minority groups were allowed to have separate courts pertaining to their community. This change in law was an important step in the right direction towards making Turkey a truly secular Republic: "Beyond education, there is perhaps no policy more fundamental in the history of laiklik practices in Turkey than the abolition of religious law to govern civil affairs, and its replacement with a modified version of the Swiss Civil Code"

(Davison 1998, p.166). Furthermore, the new Civil Code would help to lead the country towards a more modern future. Laws derived from religion do not change from the past. Rather than leading to a modern society, they hold the society back tying it to a distant history. The new Turkish Civil Code would be more reasonable, as it would be developed in line with the times, and inspire a more rational and intelligent society. Further solidifying the new secularism, Article 163 of the Penal Code was designed to protect constitutional principle of secularism: "This article, to which even more severe measures were added with a 1949 amendment, imposed prison sentences for the founding of associations which aimed at applying religious principles to the social, political, or judicial systems. It also spelled out sanctions for abusing religion as a means of political propaganda" (Azak 2010, p.86). With secularism finally in the constitution, and backed up by the Civil and Penal Code, the new Turkish Republic was on the way to becoming a secular nation.

In their efforts to ensure the sanctity of the secular ideals, as we have seen, rather than completely separating itself from religion, the government under the RPP chose top-down approaches to changing the practice of religion and the daily habits of society. Modernity and secularism were top priorities for the Kemalists, whereas democracy, often coupled with modern society, seemed to be less of a priority. As shown with the events in Menemen and Malatya, the government often used the possible threat that reactionary Islamists might pose to the new secular nation as an excuse to postpone democracy. It was not until the late 1940s, and well after the death of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk that a multi-party electoral system was finally established.

Rise of the Multi-Party System and the Shift in Modernizing Reforms

Previous attempts at forming opposition parties to the RPP had failed after rebellions and large rallies of supporters for the opposition "provided hard-line RPP representatives with a national security pretext for cracking down on the (opposition). They passed the Law on the

Maintenance of Order, which gave the government broad authority to shut down any organizations or publications judged to be a threat to order in the young republic" (Angrist 1999, p. 743). Indeed, the 1924 constitution was democratic in spirit, yet democracy was not allowed to flourish in reality until after 1945. It was a single party, authoritarian system in practice until then: "Turkey remained a one-party dictatorship until 1945. All opposition movements, including those in the form of political parties, had been outlawed" (Erdodan 1999, p.378). It was under President Inonu's leadership that opposition parties were finally allowed to form, leading to a multiparty government. The opposition Democrat Party (DP) was allowed to form in 1946, and competed against the RPP in the free elections of 1950, which handed power to the DP in a victory; "an episode that represents the Muslim Middle East's only long-lived transition to competitive party politics" (Angrist 1999, p.732). This democratic transition from the RPP to the DP after their victory signified a critical change in the secularist dialogue within Turkey. The RPP had paved the way for secularism in Turkey. Their secularism however, was far from the relaxed passive secularism implemented in countries such as America. They had implemented sweeping changes in religious institutions, and strongly encouraged social behavior and dress contradictory to that with which the conservative religious people were comfortable. The DP on the other hand advocated for more respect towards religion and more restraint from government meddling, stressing the importance of religious freedom. In fact, the first move taken by the new DP majority parliament was to lift the ban on the Arabic *ezan*. This attitude towards religion likely helped the DP to secure the vote of the conservative people and gain their victory:

> The DP program merely demanded greater respect for religion and less government intervention in religious affairs. Nevertheless, as so often in the past, this proved sufficient to mobilize large segments of the population and incorporate many Islamic elements. The DP's popularity forced the RPP also to court the religious vote. In 1949, the government established official courses for prayer leaders and preachers. It introduced optional courses in religious education in elementary schools and approved the establishment of a faculty of theology later in the same year. In effect, the decade of DP rule (1950-60) saw the expansion and consolidation of Islam's place in official political life of the country. Once again the call to prayer could be read in Arabic (Margulies & Yildizoglu 1988, p. 13).

Now, with the introduction of legitimate democratic elections, rather than being able to force unwanted change onto religion it was important to court the religious vote as well. The controversial Turkish *ezan* was reversed, and religious leaders were again allowed to call followers with the traditional Arabic *ezan.* The introduction of the DP, and their initial success, forced the RPP to reconsider their platform on religion and to change their tone in order to pander to the voters: "At its congress in November 1947, the RPP moved even closer to the DP programme (…) It also tried to counter the way in which the Democrats played the religious card and decided to allow religious education in the schools" (Zurcher 1993, p,216). This move seems to have been instigated as a strategic move in order to counter the damage done to their party by the DP. While striking a more conciliatory tone with religion, DP did not completely separate religion from government supervision. The DRA, for example, continued to be kept under state control. This continued intermingling of government and a major religious institution begs the question of how secular the state truly was.

Nonetheless, a national dialogue on what kind of secular country Turkey should be was now open to discussion. During a speech to the Grand National Assembly, one of the founders of the DP, and then Prime Minister Adnan Menderes said:

> We will respect the necessities of the freedom of religion and conscience. This is how we understand the meaning of true secularism. As it is also expressed clearly in our program we understand that true secularism requires the lack of any relation between religion and state politics and the absence of influence of any religious idea on legal arrangements and practices (Menderes cited in Azak 2010, p.73-74).

Nonetheless, he did not condemn the previous secularizing reforms. He justified the use of such tactics in the past by the previous government as a necessary precaution against the reactionary threat, but said that they were no longer necessary. To continue such bans would limit the freedom of conscience unnecessarily. The DP continued to present itself as a defender of secularism and Kemalism rather than a liberator of Islam, but they professed to represent a different kind of secularism that offered more freedom to religion. They presented themselves

as the next step and a more tolerant leader of the secularist movement in Turkey. The aggressive secularism of the past had been necessary to mitigate the threat of reactionary Islam, but now the party could lead the country towards a more tolerant or passive secularism. While still not a passive secular model, it was at least becoming less aggressive in its approach and more open to dialogue about what secularism entailed. Particularly comparing the Kemalist version to that of the DP, which was now in power after the transition to a multi-party democracy. As Turkey changed to a multi-party system, Azak argues that "the transition to democracy did not lead to a period of decay for secularism, but that it initiated a pluralist setting where secularism began to be redefined, a redefinition which challenged the assumptions of Kemalist secularism about 'Turkish' and 'reactionary' Islam" (Azak 2010, p.62). The RPP had often acted authoritatively imposing changes on society and religion, which were unwelcome by many people, causing discontentment and often conflict between opposing sides. "However, the nature of interaction between the regime and Islamist groups changed after the transition to democracy in 1950, evolving from violent confrontation towards peaceful negotiations. The role of the state in the eyes of Islamist groups was gradually transformed from that of an 'antagonist' to an entity that could be negotiated with to acquire more religious liberties." (Göksel 2016, p. 253). The ability for religious factions to take part in the democratic process helped relieve much of the discord within society contributing to a more moderate show of Islamism. After years of the Kemalist dominating the national discussion and implementation of secularism within the new Republic, a new multi-party era was finally ushered in that would allow more dissenting voices and alternative views on what Turkish secularism should look like. Unfortunately, this democratic inclusion proved to be short lived.

After the 1960 military coup, opening to Islam continued within limitations: "The constitution of 1961 offered a framework for a liberal-democratic polity with guaranties of civil and political rights (…) But those guaranties did not embrace religious activities, especially

those political activities inspired by Islam. Religiously affiliated civil and political associations were prohibited" (Erdodan 1999, 378). Under this prohibition, the National Order Party was found to be in violation of constitutional secularism and subsequently banned. The National Order Party was an Islamic leaning party founded in 1970 but banned shortly after in 1971. It was followed by the National Salvation Party, which became the first party to openly embrace Islamist political philosophy. They opposed secularism only as far as the law would allow. They were even permitted to stay active until the military intervention of 1980. After the 1980 coup, however, "The military prepared an entirely new constitution in 1982, one that fully restricted civil and political liberties such as freedom of the press and freedom of association" (Göksel 2016, p.259). While the 1982 constitution "was sympathetic to the concept of "nationalized" Islam, in practical terms, it failed to provide Islam with a place in public and political life. This constitution defined religious belief as a "feeling," a private matter of individual conscience. In practice, this meant that the right to organize in public and political life was denied to devout Muslims. They were allowed to practice Islam only in private venues" (Erdodan 1999, 378). In fact, the military in Turkey has long been the protector of Kemalist ideals in the country. Its power has often been used to intervene in cases where it was believed that secular principles were being flouted by political parties, even if the intervention was at the expense of democracy. Much like with Ataturk and the Kemalist regime, secularism took priority over democracy for the military in the new Turkish Republic. The threat of a military coup in the name of protecting secularism from an overtly religious political party would continue to hang over the democratic process for decades to come.

Ataturk and the Kemalist regime post-independence supposedly led the path to modernization and democracy in Turkey. He was dubbed as the father of the Republic and is loved by many for the rights he brought to the people, but not by all. Secularism is often thought to go hand in hand with modernism and democracy, yet the irony of the Turkish form of

secularism is that its survival was in fact used as an excuse to suppress democracy under the Kemalists. Yet, the legitimacy of the secularism itself is debatable. “Two myths have sprung up and become established concerning the nature of the secularism emerging from the Kemalist Revolution. One is the belief that this secularism meant the separation of religion and state after the fashion of French laicism; the other is the belief that it was a policy of irreligion aimed at the systematic liquidation of Islam” (Berkes 1998, p.478). However, the two were never actually separated completely and Islam was never completely ostracized from society. Rather than liquidating religion, the government appropriated it and attempted to change religion to fit their modernist mold. As for French laicism, the overbearing presence of the government on religion shows a different interpretation of secularism from the French model which does not seek to control religious institutions such as the DRA. Yet, certain aggressive secularist policies, such as dictating religious dress codes, do make them more similar than more passive secularist models:

> Rather than Anglo-Saxon liberalism, French Jacobinism, with its highly centralized model of change became the prototype for reform of Turkish modernists. Hence, secularization itself became part of that process of social engineering rather than an outcome of the process of modernization and societal development. Although Turkish secularism is inspired by the French “laïcité,” or the separation of church and state, religious affairs in Turkey are regulated by the state (Gole 1997, p. 48-49).

Indeed, while there are significant differences between the French laicism and Turkish laicism, they do bear similarities that show the inspiration from which the Turkish came. The Turkish government attempted to deprive religion of its place in political power, which it had previously occupied and put it where it justly belonged in a secular system; in the private sphere:

> The basis of the Kemalist religious policy was laicism, not irreligion; its purpose was not to destroy Islam, but to disestablish it—to end the power of religion and its exponents in political, social, and cultural affairs, and limit it to matters of belief and worship. In thus reducing Islam to the role of religion in a modern western, nation-state, the Kemalists also made some attempt to give their religion a more modern and more national form (Lewis, B, cited in Davison 1998, p.185).

Ataturk has often been acknowledged for having brought about a modern and western state that separated the religious institutions that are so closely linked in a traditional Muslim state, including under the Ottoman Empire. However, as we have seen, this was not entirely the case:

> Religion was guaranteed freedom and protection so long as and insofar as it was not utilized to promote any social or political ideology having institutional implications. In such terms, to understand the Kemalist secularism as a matter of separating church and state is also erroneous and irrelevant. To put it in a nutshell, Kemalist secularism was nothing but rejection of the ideology of Islamic polity (Berkes 1998, p.499).

In the Turkish case, it seems that the government decided that simply separating religion and politics was not enough. They needed to control and alter religious habits within the country in order to make it adapt to the new Turkey in the modern age. Leaving religion to its own devices would mean allowing the so-called backwards, superstitious religious beliefs to continue, thus making the population ill prepared for modernism and jeopardizing the ambitions of the state.

CHAPTER III:
SECULARISM IN POST-INDEPENDENCE TUNISIA

As Turkey was making its transition to a multi-party democracy, Tunisia would finally gain its independence from France in 1956; over 30 years after the emergence of the Republic of Turkey and the commencement of the secular reforms of the Kemalists. The leader of the revolution and the first president of the new Tunisian Republic was known to be inspired by Ataturk and the secularizing and modernizing reforms that he had instigated in Turkey, and would attempt to follow his example with reforms throughout Tunisia including radical reforms on religion. Much like in Turkey, the aggressive secular reforms would prove to be controversial and unpopular with a large portion of the population, and lead to Islamic opposition and a stark divide between secularists and Islamists. While Ataturk passed away fifteen years into his presidency and one-man rule, and slowly multi-party democracy was able to develop, Bourguiba would live much longer and cling to power until his overthrow by Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in 1989. Bourguiba's one-man rule would last twice as long as Ataturk's and was followed by another repressive leader, which would hinder the development of democracy in the Tunisian Republic until the Jasmine Revolution of 2011. Under both Bourguiba's and Ben Ali's rule, an aggressive form of secularism, reminiscent of the French Laïcité and Kemalist secularism would be implemented, stifling the voices of Islamic opposition and commandeering religion to suit the needs of the state. This chapter will explore such changes made by the post-independence governments in Tunisia.

Tunisia is a predominantly Muslim Arab country, yet it has also been exposed to more secular western schools of thought throughout its history. In 1881, it became a French protectorate and was introduced to a French education system as well as many French values, which would continue to influence the nation throughout the early days of the Republic and until today. It finally gained its freedom in 1956 and was subsequently led by the charismatic

and secularizing leader, Habib Bourguiba; a staunch follower of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk who endeavored to create a modern, western leaning state in a majority Muslim country. As a co-founder of the Neo Destour party, Habib Bourguiba was a big player in the Tunisian nationalist movement, which would eventually lead to independence in 1956. Upon independence, he was a natural choice for the first president of the newly formed Republic. With nearly full support from his people, he "engineered nation and State building, turning the impoverished North African country into an outpost of stability and moderation. Bourguiba's affection was in recognition of the people's unquestioning endorsement of his leadership, especially during the first 20 years of his rule" (Sadiki, 2002, p.74). Bourguiba's political system focused on "cultural modernity, humanistic transformation, ideological change and social adaptation according to a gallicised model of progressive development and modernization" (Entelis, 1980, p. 141-142). His was a reformist ideology that was committed to "rational and scientific as well as humanistic resolution of the development dilemma confronting Arab life" (Entelis, 1980, p. 145). In his effort to usher in a more modern era, he instigated radical reforms, minimizing the influence of Islamic customs such as Ramadan and the wearing of the veil, often shocking his compatriots over his dismissal of Islamic customs; "after independence, drinking a glass of orange juice during Ramadan to dramatize his campaign against fasting" (Brown, 2001, p. 49) to name one such instance. He also introduced more rights for women, both in the work place as well as in family life, outlawed polygamy and retained the use of French in the classroom from the days of colonialism, making Tunisia's a bilingual education rather than fully embracing Arabic as some had hoped.

Modernizing Reforms in Tunisia

While sometimes controversial, for the most part, his reforms were welcome both at home as well as abroad in the early days; "In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Western observers saw Bourguiba as belonging to that all-star roster of nationalist leaders pulling together their

nation in an ultimately successful struggle against colonialism" (Brown, 2001, p.49). Bourguiba wanted to lead his country onto a more modern and western style path, which led him to make drastic westernizing reforms, and to attempt to secularize the Republic through aggressive measures, as had been seen in Turkey in previous decades. In his attempt to move Tunisia more westward he has been notably compared to Mustafa Kemal Ataturk; "both knew exactly what they wanted for their country…. They saw their task as a race against the clock. There was no time to wait for the last straggler to catch up. A forced march to modernization was the order of the day" (Brown, 2001, p. 57). Much like Ataturk in Turkey, Bourguiba has been revered in Tunisia as a great leader of the newly founded republic. Unlike Ataturk, who died 15 years into his presidency which gave the chance for more movement towards a democratic system, Bourguiba stubbornly held on to power for almost three decades, consolidating his one man rule and making the chances for democratic reforms less likely, slowly disillusioning the public which had supported him so much in his earlier years in power; "It is poignant that the man who accomplished so much stayed on too long and thus contributed to the unraveling of his masterwork" (Brown, 2001, p. 57). A great charismatic leader, he gained much love and respect from his people and left quite a legacy. Yet his capacity to rule faded over the years as his presidency continued unapologetically until 1987, leaving little chance for a democratic transition. Though he had started as a great figure, by the time he was overthrown by Ben Ali, the people were growing tired of his authoritarian rule. Many were left disillusioned with his modernizing reforms and some even looking towards Islam as an alternative.

Before independence, Bourguiba had spoken in favor of Islamic traditions, which were a symbol of Tunisian Arabic and Islamic identity. However, after independence Bourguiba spoke of an urgent need to modernize and develop the fledgling Republic and quickly acted to reform the practice of Islam throughout Tunisia, curbing its influence on society. His rhetoric on Islam would fluctuate throughout his years in power, from secular reformer to protector of

Islam, to discouraging outward displays of religion; it is unclear which side of the secular debate Bourguiba's true beliefs lay and whether or not they truly changed with his outward expression of such beliefs:

> In the years preceding Tunisian independence, Bourguiba was both the secular reformist and *al mujahid al akbar* (great warrior) who had guided the people in a holy jihad against the French occupation (…) However, once independence was gained, Islam was confined to the rhetoric; for Bourguiba the faith could yield little influence in a nation that would look northward, to France, for stately inspiration (Gandolfo 2015, p.19).

Following independence, Bourguiba would restrict religious activity, and promote an Islam that would be more compatible with his image of a secular and modern state in a style reminiscent of the early years of the Turkish Republic.

On the founding of the Tunisian Republic, Bourguiba set about reorganizing the structure of the religious institutions and leadership. As Ataturk had abolished the caliphate and sharia courts, and created the DRA bringing the religious institutions and voice of religion under governmental control, so too did Bourguiba in Tunisia. Similar to Turkey, there was a "distinct challenge to the power of the clerical elite. To Bourguiba's mind the ulama had failed to stand up to the French colonial power and failed to reinterpret Islam to adapt to modern necessities" (McCarthy 2014, p.735). The government worked to bring the religious institutions under its control by making the Imams subservient to the government, so that in Bourguiba's Tunisia "Imams are recruited by the state, governed by the "Direction de Culte" attached to the Prime Minister's office, and receive a modest monthly salary for their services" (Waltz 1986, p.656). As in Turkey, the state began to prepare sermons to be preached by the Imam's in the mosques throughout the country, and "the mosques commenced an often involuntary capitulation to the reinterpretation of the faith, as the 'imams of the mosques [were] paid for and controlled by the state [and] enclosed themselves within the limited framework of the official discourse'" (Zghal cited in Gadolfo 2015, p.22). Further injuring the autonomy of the religious institutions, public Habous land, charitable lands given for religious purposes, was confiscated and then nationalized in 1956, followed a year later by private Habous. The two sharia courts, Maliki

and Hanafi were then absorbed into the judicial system in order to concentrate judicial power under the new regime (McCarthy 2014, p.736). Bourguiba repeatedly criticized Islamic scholars and religious traditions publicly, and in a speech in 1956 he criticized the sharia courts as being 'decaying institutions' which desperately needed reform, and they were abolished shortly after.

Much like the penal code and civil code introduced in 1926 in Turkey, Tunisia also introduced a new Personal Status Law of 1956, which would overturn many religious traditions that had hitherto been accepted in the country, greatly expanded women's rights, and represented Tunisia's secular nature. The Personal Status Law of 1956 abolished polygamy and "deprived the husband of the right to divorce his wife arbitrarily and, in general, instituted a social revolution in the direction of women's liberation" (Brown 2001, p.56). In addition to banning polygamy, it granted women the right to divorce and to approve arranged marriages for themselves, set a minimum age for girls to be married, and increased the mother's rights for child custody. "The Personal Status Code (1957) altered the state's stance on women's rights through divorce and marriage law reforms, and the reinterpretation of Islamic *fiqh* (jurisprudence) concealed the first step that would undermine the ulema" (Gadolfo 2015, p.20-21). Bourguiba further suspended the sharia courts and denounced the former obligations to fulfill certain religious duties. While trying to present himself as the defender of religion in Tunisia, such acts betrayed his purported support for religion and painted him as an enemy of religion to many conservative practitioners who began to see the new President as "a kaafir, a dictator, an anti-Islamist [in an] impious Bourguiban state" (Geisser and Hamrouni cited in Gadolfo 2015, p.21). In September 1956, 13 members from two sharia courts denounced the Personal Status Code as being contrary to the Koran and the Sunna in a new fatwa (McCarthy 2014, p.738). Many of those members either were forced to retire or were dismissed from their posts. Bourguiba was also able to get enough support from clerics to confront the fatwa. However, the Personal Status Code did not completely sever the country's ties to Islamic law,

leaving laws such as those relating to inheritance largely intact. Indeed, it was a long way from being the secular model that the Swiss Civil Code and Penal Code of Turkey had presented. The new government recognized, that to completely break from religious tradition would have been an unpopular decision and possibly ruinous to the new government. They needed to work within the confines of the society and recognize the religious sentiments of the citizens of Tunisia:

> Bourguiba explicitly rejected a secular model of Muslim statehood in which the state was 'ignorant' of religion and citizens followed their own conscience and forfeited national solidarity. Ahmed Mestiri, the justice minister at the time, argued that the newly independent government could not risk divorcing the reforms entirely from religious reference: 'Would it have been wise, while we were engaged in reforms and building the basis of a new society, to consider cutting the people off from their roots?' (Mestiri 2011, cited in McCarthy 2014, p.736).

This attempt to respect the religious sentiments of the citizens was; however, quite limited in scope and Bourguiba did not hesitate to discredit various religious traditions. One such notable tradition that Bourguiba attempted to curb was fasting during Ramadan.

A Jihad on Ramadan

In 1960, three weeks before Ramadan, Bourguiba called a sort of economic Jihad, or a Jihad against under-development. He encouraged his citizens to avoid the traditional Muslim period of fasting in order to tackle under-development, claiming that fasting was an obstacle to the desperately needed development of the country. Thus, we have the president calling on his people to abandon their religious tradition, a rather secular act, all the while using religious terminology and justification. He even found religious backing through the support of the mufti of Tunisia, Abdelaziz Jait. Speaking to the people of Tunisia, Bourguiba maintained that; "During Ramadan, work stops. At the moment when we are doing the impossible to raise production how can we resign ourselves to seeing it collapse to almost nothing? We cannot do it. I dispute that religion can impose such a demand…It is an abusive interpretation of religion…Religion is for mitigating the difficulties of life, not increasing them" (Bourguiba cited in McCarthy 2014, p.737). Four years later, he drank orange juice on television during the

hours of fasting just to stress the importance of forgoing the fasting period. While this act of encouraging Muslim people not to observe an important Muslim tradition appeared to be counter-Islamic, he shrouded the request in Islamic terminology, coining it as a Jihad against under-development. Ramadan was counterproductive for the economy and he portrayed this as a means to combat poverty by limiting or abstaining from fasting. There were of course objections, which were then countered by the government: "When the grand mufti issued a fatwa declaring that fasting could be excused only in cases of illness or military jihad, counter orders were given by the government instructing boarding school directors to ensure their students ate as normal" (Gadolfo 2015, p.21). Bourguiba even ordered restaurants to stay open during fasting hours. However, the Ramadan of 1989 showed an observance of just over 90 percent (Halliday 1990, p. 26). This shows that Bourguiba's attempts at limiting the influence of Ramadan had not been very significant. Or at least, there was a backlash against such measures in later years: "In an excess of zeal, brought on in part because there has been no religious education in Tunisia under Bourguiba, many believers fasted even when Islamic codes say they should not— pregnant women, children, people such as diabetics or kidney patients who should eat and take medicines regularly" (Halliday 1990, p.26). Today, it remains common practice for employees to only work half days during Ramadan month, proving Bourguiba's argument that it is counterproductive for the work force.

Reforming Education

In Turkey, the government had taken control of religious education and placed it under the supervision of the government by means of closing independent institutions and opening new forms of religious education. In the new Republic of Tunisia decades later, a prominent sight of religious learning, Zaytuna mosque-university's independence was taken away, and it was placed under the Ministry of Education with a moderate reformist, Moahmed Tahar Ben Achour as the head of the institution. In 1961, it became the faculty of theology for the

University of Tunis. Under Bourguiba "only state imams had given instruction in the Qur'an—at local kuttabs that pointedly scheduled classes on Sundays' which Bourguiba named the official day off to bring Tunisia into conformity with Western customs" (Cavatorta & Haugbolle 2012, p.24). The scheduling of religious classes on Sunday, the holy day for Christians, rather than Friday, the holy day for Muslims, must have been a particularly bitter blow for traditionalists.

Bourguiba's vision of Tunisian education was laid out in his manifesto *Nouvelle conception de l'enseignement en Tunisie* of 1958. Rather than extracting religious education from schools, they would be synchronized with civic education in order to create good Tunisian citizens. The manifesto shows how the state uses religion and education to shape its citizens; "the child will be placed in a spiritual climate that will tend toward making him fully aware of the role and value of his religion (…) after the duties of a good Muslim, the child will learn, through a natural connection, the qualities and virtues of a good citizen" (Nouvelle conception cited in Webb 2013, p.26). This move demonstrates the use of Islam for state building purposes in creating good and loyal citizens. As the children grow older and pass through their years of primary school, the time spent on religious education during school time gradually decreases and becomes more focused on the tenets of being a good Tunisian citizen:

> As they put off childish things, they grow from the private religion of hearth and home into the civic religion of the Republic, the purified, rationalized morality that transcends revealed religion by distilling its socially useful essence. This rationalization and nationalization, the weaning of children from the mother's milk of revealed religion onto the citizen's solid food of science, rational social morality, and patriotism, is at the heart of the Jacobin educational model (Webb 2013, p.34).

The education is meant to indoctrinate good citizens with a desire to act appropriately and rationally, thus the need for religious teaching, based on the states interpretation of religion, in order to create more well-behaved citizens. It further shows the state's desire to take out ignorance from religious beliefs; "thus it will no longer be a case of having the child learn mechanically sacred texts whose meaning might often escape him, but to explain those texts to

him and show him their applications in the practical life of the believer and the citizen" (Nouvelle conception cited in Webb 2013, p.26). Thus, one can see a parallel to the Kemalist desire to eradicate ignorance, which was also a prominent driving factor in reforms in Tunisia. These reforms were carried out without the necessity of changing the language religion was taught in, but with a need of interpretation or explanations of the texts rather than mere memorization. Here again, we can see that the government's role was not in repressing religion entirely, but rather altering it to fulfill the needs of the new government. The state's role in religious education was not a passive role, but rather that of an assertive and dominant player. Furthermore, the language of religion was usurped by education and various terminology was used in history classes for secular purposes: "Within the history curriculum, Islam has become 'heritage,' Islamic terms such as *umma* and *salaf* are secularized to mean simply 'nation' and 'ancestors.' The shift in vocabulary in a secular direction is stark and striking. How can this be reconciled with earlier elements of the curriculum? In fact, the civilizing project attempted here sees no contradiction" (Webb 2013, p.31). The government recognized the utility of religion and saw the potential for it to be used against them if they did not take the precautionary steps to mold the practice of religion in the country. Therefore, they took the necessary steps to encompass religion into the nation-building program through education and through the creation of a rationalized and a national form of Islam.

Unlike Turkey, which attempted to change the practice of Islam to a vernacular Islam in Turkish, Tunisia did not need to change the language of religion to fit its nationalist agenda as the language of Islam already coincided with the Tunisian language. For Tunisia, it was a matter of returning to the mother tongue in day to day life and distancing itself more from the French language; the language of the colonizers. However, French continued to be widely taught in Tunisian schools. In fact, French continued to be encouraged in Tunisian education as a means of bringing Tunisia more in line with the Western world; "Language has been a

particularly delicate issue for the regime, albeit pursued with great fervor and determination. There have been several policy changes, but the long-term objective has been to achieve the dominance of French since this is believed to be more harmonious with the demands of a modernizing and technologically advancing society" (Entelis 1974, p.558). While Turkey began to vernacularize education, abolishing Arabic and Persian, in order to bring Turkish citizens closer to their own identity and to distance them from the east, Bourguiba tried to move more towards French education and further away from their own Arabic identity, which links them with the Arab countries to the East. In Turkey, while vernacularizing religion proved difficult, the change from Arabic and Persian in education to Turkish was not so unpopular as it brought them closer to their own language and away from a foreign language. In Tunisia, however, the change of focus from Arabic to French was a move towards a foreign language. This idea was rejected by many, who believed that Arabic was perfectly capable of being used in a modern and technologically advancing society.

Modernizing Islam

Nonetheless, Bourguiba, like the Kemalists before him saw the need to move the country more westward. Keeping strong ties with the French language, would link them more closely to modernity. Like Ataturk, he viewed strong links with the East and with their Islamic traditions as keeping the country shrouded in superstition and backwardness. In a rather telling account of his views on this matter, once "When asked what separated him from an Islamist, Bourguiba responded, 'Fourteen centuries'" (Gadolfo 2015, p.24). Calling to question religious traditions such as polygamy and the Islamic establishment, Bourguiba "accused the ulama of having 'closed the door of ijtihad' and, challenging the practice of polygamy, warned that the nation should not be held back by 'false taboos invented by false ulama'" (Bourguiba 1974 cited in McCarthy 2014, p.746). This depiction of the religious establishment being out of date and bogged down by religious superstition reflects Ataturk's ideas a few decades earlier.

Bourguiba "represented moderation, an attachment to specifically Tunisian as opposed to Arab-Islamic virtues and possibilities, and had the support of educated, gallicized, western-trained elites from the Sahel and Tunis, that is, from society's more modernized sector" (Entelis 1980 cited in Angrist 1999, p.750). In Tunisia, Bourguiba would prioritize reason and modernity and, recognizing the indispensable nature of Islam in his society, a more modern version of Islam as well. Secular or not, Islam was a key component of the identity of the Tunisian people as in the rest of the Islamic world and could not simply be tossed aside: "Even the arch secularist Bourguiba was shrewd enough to use Islam to his advantage throughout his leadership" (Pargeter 2009, p.1038). He advocated for reason in interpreting religious scripture, stressing that "the Muslim religion is not a doctrine of intellectual asphyxia" (McCarthy 2014, 737). This strategy of the government interpreting Islam to fit the modern and secular state, and defining what that secularism entailed was prevalent throughout both Bourguiba's rule and would continue to be through Ben Ali's rule as well: "Under the regimes of Bourguiba and Ben Ali, the state officialize the "modern" way of life: "feminist" and "westernized," as well as "authentically Tunisian." The authoritarian regime stigmatized and repressed the "Islamist" way of life" (Zeghal 2013, p.266). For Bourguiba and Ben Ali, Islamism in its traditional forms was the opposite of modernity and progress; therefore, Islamic institutions and narratives needed to be regulated by the government to create a more modern and progressive form for the new Republic. If Islam were to remain a part of the Tunisian Republic, it must conform to this new reality.

As in Turkey, women in Tunisia became central to the battle between Islamic traditions and Modernity. A prime symbol of this, the veil, would prove to be equally controversial in Tunisia as in Turkey:

> In the battle with the regime for the soul of Tunisia, women were of course strategic terrain—with the veil or headscarf the immediate objective. A 1986 decree stated that it was forbidden to wear the veil in public. The ban was kept in force by the regime with regular campaigns directed against women who defied it. The controversy over the headscarf came to a head in 2006. That year, during Ramadan, the president and minister of religious affairs declared that

> the veil was out of keeping with the Tunisian cultural heritage and national identity. Police stopped veiled women in the streets and told them to bare their heads. Many women kept on wearing the headscarf, however, presenting an increasing challenge to the regime (Cavatorta & Haugbolle 2012, p.23).

The first assault against the veil came in 1957 when "the headscarf, regarded as an "odious rag" inflicted on children through "the stubbornness of parents," was banned in classrooms" (Gadolfo 2015, p.21). In 1981, Circular 108 was introduced which placed further restrictions on the veil, prohibiting its use in state offices. This was extended in 1985. It was subsequently reinforced by Ben Ali in 1991 and again in 1992 when civil servants and educational institution's staff were banned from wearing the headscarf, and then also for the public health sector staff in 2003 (McCarthy 2014, p.745). This would eventually culminate in Law 102, passed in 2007, which banned the headscarf as a sign of extremism. Similar to the attempts to limit fasting during Ramadan, the veil would also reemerge in large numbers in defiance of the government's attempts to have it banned: "The resurgence of the veil was a distinct challenge to the state's intervention in religious affairs. It began on university campuses and increasingly drew strength from civil society and the political opposition" (McCarthy 2014, p.746). Just as it is wrong to impose the veil, it is also not right to ban it. Speaking against the ban on the veil a feminist and former leader of Femmes Democrates, a woman who is not an Islamist, Bochra Belhaj Hamida said, "We have always thought the state under Bourguiba and Ben Ali had its grip on the question of women. For us that's a problem, that's paternalism" (Hamida cited in McCarthy 2014, p.747). In an attempt to 'liberate' women, it is true that they were granted many new rights by the government, which was an admirable quality of the new Republic. However, their right to choose what to wear was taken from them. In order to truly provide liberation, women could have been given the choice of whether or not to cover themselves; however, the government took it upon themselves to impose their views of traditional clothing onto the women of Tunisia.

L.B. Ware claims “Bourguibism has never been hostile to Islam. Bourguiba himself has always fought for the Arabo-Islamic character of the Tunisian state as a dimension of its national personality. But he has repeatedly opposed the insistence of fundamentalists that Islam should comprise the central axis of Tunisian identity” (Ware 1985, p.29). In fact, Islam was written as the religion of the state in the new Republic’s constitution, but the purpose for such a move may have been more to appease the opposition than to prove that Bourguibism was not hostile to Islam. One could argue that his attack on Ramadan was proof of Bourguiba’s hostility to Islam; however, he shrouded this move in religious terminology, an economic jihad, making the true motive behind it ambiguous. Furthermore, he subordinated the institutions of religion to the state: “During the struggle for independence Bourguiba applied his considerable political skills to the absorption of Islamic institutions and their replacement with a secular imamate or leadership” (Ware 1985, p.29). Such moves, while they were not an outright attack or show of hostility to Islam, were certainly not congruous with a passive secularism, which separates the state from religion and religion from state. These moves were intended to subordinate the religion to the state, as had been seen previously in the aggressively secular Turkish Republic.

Ware continues that Bourguiba’s aim was “to defend Islam from Western contamination through a selective borrowing of Western values in the context of a modern state system. Bourguiba has made the values of human dignity, the perfectibility of man, confidence in human solidarity, and belief in the supreme power of reason the founding principles of the Tunisian state and its social harmony” (Ware 1985, p.29). Was he really protecting Islam from Western contamination, or was he protecting the state from Islam as has been seen in the description of aggressive secularism? Yet Ware goes on to concede that the jailing of the Islamic movement’s leaders by the government was a violation of the government’s stated objective of encouraging political pluralism (Ware 1985, p.30). Bourguiba’s secularist policies were never designed to separate religion and politics, but rather to make religion subservient to the state

and utilize and "recast the symbols of that religion to expedite national development and modernization. Perhaps Bourguiba truly wanted an evolution of Islam, as some have argued. But also he sought political legitimacy. Controlling an official version of Islam was fundamental to this: it defined the Tunisian nation and mobilised support" (McCarthy 2014, p.738). Whether he was hostile to religion or not, he was certainly not practicing a hands off version of secularism that was passive to the practice of religion in Turkey. This was, at the very least, an aggressive form of secularism.

Religion in the Tunisian Constitution

The first constitution of the Turkish Republic in 1924 stated that Islam was the religion of the Republic. It was not until 1928 that this was removed from the constitution, and eventually replaced with secularism in the constitution of 1937. In Tunisia, like the first constitution of the Turkish Republic, the first constitution ratified in 1959, stated in Article 1 that Islam was the religion of Tunisia:

> The constitution, which we could read as an expression of the new regime's ideological intentions, defined the religion of Tunisia as Islam, though not quite explicitly identifying that as the religion of the state (Article One stated: 'Tunisia is a free, independent and sovereign state. Its religion is Islam (*al-islam donna*), its language is Arabic and its type of government is the Republic') (McCarthy 2014, p.736).

The ambiguity of the first amendment was intentional from Bourguiba's part. The constitution claims Islam as the religion of Tunisia, but in what capacity? A former minister from Bourguiba's regime in reference to Article 1 in the Tunisian constitution stated in 2011 that "'it is entirely legitimate to write that the state's religion is Islam in the Constitution. It does not matter, because it does not mean anything. You can also add that the state has two feet and two hands, it does not make a difference'" (cited in Zeghal 2013, p.260). It had different interpretations to different people, and thus it did not cause any conflict. For Islamists, it could be cited as a victory, but for secularists it was non-threatening, as it made no requirements for religious practice. Unlike the Turkish constitution, which would change with time, the Tunisian

constitution's Article 1 would remain in place declaring Islam the religion of the state, while aggressive secular policies continued to make Islam subservient to the state:

> The constitution declares Islam the state religion, but since independence in 1956, Sharia courts have been abolished, the state prepares sermons to be preached in the mosques, the Code of Personal Status is based on a liberal interpretation of Islamic law, and religious education itself has been secularized with the establishment of a Faculty of Theology to replace the Zaytuna (Zitouna) Mosque (the Tunisian equivalent of al-Azhar) as the center of Islamic learning (McCarthy 2014, p.735).

Another less ambiguous aspect of the Tunisian constitution demanded that the president of the Tunisian Republic must be a Muslim. Overall, the Tunisian constitution would not explicitly denote Tunisia as a secular state as the Turkish constitution had done. In fact, even Bourguiba, while seemingly implementing secular reforms, would not categorically refer to the republic as secular: "Habib Bourguiba himself, in a famous interview with a French journalist—already obsessed with laïcité at the time—explained that the Tunisian state could not be described as laique: "It is a state that is at once Muslim and progressive, this is what constitutes its originality"" (Ben Ismail 2014). His motive for ambiguity both in the constitution and in his own actions remains uncertain to this day. Whether it was a move to appease the Islamist opposition or a testament of his own religious sentiment and lack of commitment to secularism is unclear.

Islamic and Secular Reactions to Reforms

Of course, not everyone was happy with Bourguiba's attempt to curb Islam in society or his attempt to appease the Islamists. Under his rule, political opponents; particularly Islamist opponents, were repressed or outlawed. Bourguiba's repression could be excused by supporters because of the effort to modernize and offer rights to women, yet secularists did not speak out for the rights of Islamists, further exacerbating tensions between the opposing sides. In the later years of Bourguiba's rule, with the economy and social institutions in disarray, some

> Islamists invoke(d) a re-valuation of the role of Islam in society and question(ed) the secularization of cultural life, social practices antithetical to Islamic precepts, and the implementation of positivist law. Especially condemnable is the influence of Western society,

> held responsible for having carried Muslim society far from the basic tenets of organic Islam (Waltz 1986, p.651).

Islamic movements in Tunisia began to take shape towards the end of the 1960s as an apolitical movement with the aim of Bringing Islamic practices and morals back to society. They became more political during the 70s and particularly during riots in 1978. Towards the end of the 1970s a group of Islamists, called the Movement of Islamic Renewal (Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique, MTI) led by Sheikh Rachid Al-Ghannouchi, presented itself to the public as an alternative to the secular regime. This group would later become Ennahda, meaning renaissance, in 1989.

The government responded by presenting itself as the protector of Islam, attempting to associate the Islamist movement with intolerance and tying it to the Khomeini revolution. In response to the governments' intolerance of the Islamic movement, the party only grew in popularity. Its support was notably strong among the secularly educated youth. The party became quite active at the University of Tunis by the 1980s. Even educated women, who should have been enjoying their freedom under the current regime, were drawn to the MTI. Rather than buying into the government's portrayal of the MTI as intolerant, the followers of the MTI saw it as a path towards greater freedom of expression. In an effort to explain the appeal, R. Hair Dekmejian "cites seven 'crises'— crises of identity, legitimacy, elite misrule, class conflict, military impotence, and modernity and culture—that inspire Islamism in the contemporary Middle East" (Waltz, 1986, p.659). The population was growing frustrated with the growing authoritarian nature of Bourguiba's government and the Islamic movement was becoming their only viable alternative:

> Tunisia's Islamic movement, which emerged as an important political force in the 1980s, can be understood in part as a product of the lack of effective channels for political protest under ND hegemony. The rival parties that emerged in the late 1970s and early 80s to challenge ND rule could not persuade the ND to allow other players into its political game. The Islamic movement gained strength as ND obstinacy became clear, and it represents a much graver challenge to the ND because it questions the very legitimacy of the secular republican polity that Bourguiba and the ND created (Angrist 1999, p.757).

From the 1970s, Bourguiba's government slowed down on their reforms effecting Islam in an effort to appease the Islamists, and to show that he was in fact Islam's true protector: "From the 1970s there was a growing debate within Tunisian society about the place of religion and the nature of Tunisian identity and the Bourguiba regime acknowledged this and tried to adapt to and reflect the changing social conversation" (McCarthy 2014, p.738). Reminiscent of the DP's desire in Turkey to speak more to the dissatisfaction of the religious population due to the previous government's harsh policies against religious tradition, Bourguiba also sought to win over Islamist supporters. In 1969, a newly trained corps of teachers was sent across Tunisia to reinforce morality, and the regime made plans to build new mosques and provide better religious education. Working hours in schools and government were adjusted to accommodate a fasting population during Ramadan and cafes and restaurants were forced to close during fasting hours. This was a drastic reversal of previous policies. Rather than try to suppress this religious reawakening, the government sought to commandeer it. Bourguiba claimed that as president he was also the 'supreme leader' or imam who demanded the loyalty of his people and the right to interpret the religion for the needs of the time. "In April 1979, Prime Minister Hedi Nora tried to claim it was the ruling party that had always been behind the re-awakening of Islam and the preservation of Tunisian 'islamite'" (McCarthy 2014, p.740). The party set up a Commission of Islamic Reflection and Religious Orientation with the mufti of Tunisia in an effort to "ride the wave of what the regime now acknowledged was a growing 'Islamic awareness" (McCarthy 2014, p.740). Such reforms were brushed off by the MTI as opportunistic.

Naturally, the secular elites were critical of such reforms and warned of a rise in intolerance. Moves such as the closure of cafes during fasting time were seen as forcing people to adhere to religious practices, and were quickly criticized. Bourguiba was forced to walk back some of these reforms, and was left with little credibility by either the secular or Islamic camp.

Shortly after this reversal of policy, the government made another quick reversal and the MTI was targeted by government repression. As many as 61 supposed fundamentalists with links to the MTI were arrested, and by late 1981, the MTI leadership was jailed. They would remain imprisoned until Ben Ali took over power and freed the political prisoners temporarily in 1987. In 1988, their name was changed to Ennahda, or "al-Nahdha," meaning renaissance. They hoped that a less religious name would help grant them legal authorization. Yet it was not until March 2011, after the fall of Ben Ali, that they were finally legalized (Zeghal 2013, p. 258). None of its members were ever able to participate in political elections until after the Jasmine Revolution of 2011. Well organized, it had huge followings from the beginning in the 70s and 80s; however, it was brutally repressed by Bourguiba's regime and then again by Ben Ali's regime in the 1990s.

In 1981, three events had occurred which inspired the government to act more aggressively against the Islamic movements. The first was the student unrest in the spring of 1981 in which students who were members of MTI organized to discuss complaints against the government. During this time "educational equipment was destroyed, some professors were attacked, and a university dean was held hostage" (Waltz 1986, p.653). The second, was when a Club Mediterranean resort was attacked by Islamists after Israeli tourists had been heard singing the Israeli anthem. The third happened when people in a town called M'Saken took it upon themselves to try to replace a state-appointed imam. These events were followed by the arrest of the 61 people identified as leaders of the MTI, and "government edicts had suspended publications, banned Friday afternoon "lessons" at the mosques, and forbidden *lycée* students to wear Islamist garb" (Waltz 1986, p.654). In Turkey, events such as the Menemen and Malatya incidents gave the government concrete examples of what they referred to as *Irtica* to point to as they implemented a systematic crack down on religious opposition. Likewise, in Tunisia, these three events were used to similar effect. This crackdown culminated in the

displeasure of the people being demonstrated in the 1985 'Bread Riots.' "Street demonstrators not only showed their displeasure at announced government policies; they also indicated support for the Islamists. This effect was not limited to the young. For many ordinary Tunisians of the independence generation, repressive measures used by the government in the 1978 and 1984 unrest were shocking" (Waltz 1986, p.656). This dissatisfaction with the authoritarian regime and aggressive secularism would continue throughout Bourguiba's rule and into that of Ben Ali as well.

Bourguiba's relationship with Islam was not as straightforward as Ataturk's and the Kemalist regime, though there were certainly similarities between the countries secular paths. Both sought to interpret the religion and make it subservient to the government, but Bourguiba's stance was less consistent than that of Ataturk's. If the first few decades of post-independence in both Turkey and Tunisia are compared, there is a similar trend of repression and subordination of religion, followed by an attempt to appease religion before yet another greater crackdown on religious opposition. This was true throughout the first few decades under Bourguiba's rule in Tunisia, while in Turkey the change in direction took place under DP leadership following their move to multi-party democracy. Had Ataturk lived to rule Turkey for three decades, the trajectories may have been more similar under both regimes, and Ataturk might have shown more inconsistencies as Bourguiba had done. As it was, however, both countries wavered in their repression of Islamists within their first few decades, though in Tunisia it happened only under one leader, while in Turkey this change came about under different regimes. Tunisia would not see a regime change until 1989 with the ousting of Habib Bourguiba by Ben Ali.

The Continuation of Reforms under Ben Ali

By 1987, Bourguiba had been declared unfit to rule, physically or mentally by a panel of medical experts. Habib Bourguiba had been the first president after independence and took his

country on a path towards modernization and economic liberalization and secular reforms. Under his tutelage, much to his credit, education and economic achievements were made, and modern and democratic ideals were nurtured, but his grip on power tightened over the years as his rule became increasingly authoritarian and he established a presidential monarchy. Bourguiba continued to hold onto power as he aged and became senile. While he had been popular for much of his time in power, the citizens of Tunisia were tiring of his increasingly authoritarian rule and were ready to see their leader sent into retirement. On November 7th, 1989, he was overthrown by General Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in a bloodless coup in which not a single shot was fired. Ben Ali was welcomed by a large part of the population as a source of renewal in the democratic process. He presented himself and was thought of as an interim leader who would help the country get back on track towards democratic reform before stepping aside and allowing for a more democratic system. However, that did not turn out to be the reality:

> We accepted Bin Ali for the greater sake of national reconciliation. But we treated his presidency as one step to be followed by other steps, other phases for laying out a comprehensive democratic agenda involving all political forces. We were hoping for genuine renewal, new leadership and a real chance for Tunisia to develop. Bin Ali had other plans.... monopolizing power (al-Ghannouchi cited in Sadiki 2002, p.61).

His first three years in power, he made a great show of putting the country back on the path towards democracy, and he made the people believe that he was committed to democratic reform: “In his first three years of power consolidation, Bin Ali deployed the grammar of democracy and human rights, co-opting leftists, human rights activists, Islamists and intellectuals. In so doing, he outsmarted all those who gave him the benefit of the doubt. He recruited them as allies in order to legitimize his take-over, buy time and build a power base” (Sadiki 2002: 72). Throughout his reign, Ben Ali’s government held regular but not so fair elections. The elections were mostly viewed as illegitimate, fixed and fraudulent. In the 2000 elections for example, his party, the Democratic Constitutional Rally (RCD), won 195 out of 257 municipalities, and all city council positions. It was widely seen as a democratic 'blockage'. In the 1999 presidential elections, Ben Ali was opposed by two handpicked candidates, who

had not even volunteered themselves for the post. Those who had volunteered their candidacy were prevented from running. Ben Ali won an unrealistic 99.4% of the vote. In 2004, he won by 94.49% and in 2009 he won by 89.52%. Sadiki explains the democratic process under Ben Ali as a choice between Ben Ali and Ben Ali: "A Tunisian, speaking to Le Monde about his support for Bin Ali, states: 'I do not support him. I vote for him; that is different. The other day … one of my friends went to the bank to apply for a loan. He was asked for his voting card; and you want us to have [political] choice'" (Sadiki 2002, p.68). Furthermore, according to the constitution, the president can only hold office for two consecutive terms. He surpassed this in 2004. The democracy was a sham.

In the 80's Tunisia was named by Samuel Huntington as the Arab countries' most likely candidate for the "third wave" of democratization. At the outset of his rule "Tunisia rode the leading edge of what many hoped would be a wave of democratic transitions in the region" (Alexander 1997, p.34). In fact, Ben Ali never allowed this to occur. He held a tight grip on power as well as the media. Media was 90% state owned, and largely praised the government. Newspapers regularly had front-page stories praising the president's recent affairs. In 2010 Reporters Without Borders ranked Tunisia number 164 for press freedom, with a score of 72.5, placing them just above Cuba and Vietnam, and right after Uzbekistan. At the time of Huntington's claim, Ben Ali was showing a sign of political liberalization with competitive elections:

> However, following the gains achieved by the Islamist *Ennahda* party, he quickly backtracked, crushing the Islamists, and eventually all other independent voices as well (…) No one could have predicted that the self-immolation of a struggling 26-year-old vegetable seller in a dusty, provincial Tunisian town on December 17, 2010, would set in motion the earthquake that it did. Still Huntington's prognosis was, on the whole, on target, and developments since Ben Ali's overthrow seem to confirm this (Maddy-Weitzman 2011).

It soon became clear that Tunisia would not immediately fulfill Huntington's predictions and be at the lead of the wave of democratic transition, at least not while Ben Ali remained in power.

> Since the 1960s, scholars had held up the small country as one of the region's best hopes for democratic politics. Tunisia's tradition of reform and openness, its Western-oriented elite, and

> its progressive social policies suggested the kind of trajectory that would culminate sooner or later in multiple political parties, competitive elections, and respect for human rights (Alexander 1997, p.34).

This proved to be much later. Tunisia would not be able to live up to these high expectations until 2011.

In the early days of his presidency, he did in fact make a show of being a leader who would support Islam within the country, giving Islamic groups hope for more of a voice in society: "Immediately after seizing the presidency in a coup on 7 November 1987, Ben Ali took a number of quick, public steps to re-position the state's use of religious symbols. He adapted the official interpretation of Islam for his own purposes: to consolidate his power, ease the confrontation with the Islamists, and establish legitimacy for his new rule" (McCarthy 2014, p.741). Some of his first moves included returning autonomy to Zaytuna mosque, allowing the call to prayer to be broadcast on state radio and television, and going to Mecca for a pilgrimage, which would be widely covered by state media showing himself as a humble Muslim. "The first months after Habib Bourguiba's overthrow in November 1987 witnessed an ambiguous honeymoon between the new regime and the Islamists" (Halliday 1990, p.25). A 1989 amnesty even gave Ghannouchi and thousands of political prisoners' freedom as he sought to create a dialogue with the Islamist movement; "By trying to demonstrate his own commitment to religion and religious traditions, Ben Ali was seeking to undermine any popular appeal the Islamists might be able to make" (McCarthy 2014, p.742). Having gained favor by the opposition and notably MTI, the Islamic party, Ben Ali convinced them to sign a National Pact in 1988 which outlined the new political system, the policy on foreign relations, the needs for development in the country and also changed the rhetoric regarding religion: "Tunisia's identity was now defined as 'a specific Arab-Islamic identity' with a state based on the 'noble Islamic values' whose national language, it stressed, was Arabic" (McCarthy 2014, p.741). The pact gave Ben Ali control over the new political pluralism he had promised the country. Much like

the conciliatory tone sparked by the DR in Turkey, these warm relations promising an end to the days of aggressive secularism were extremely short lived.

Shortly after the signing of the pact, during elections in 1989, Ben Ali's strategy against the Islamic opposition was to portray them as a threat to Islam and himself as the savior. He proclaimed to the people that " 'there is no other defender of the religion of the Tunisians than the State, the State of all Tunisians, which seeks to preserve and protect the faith, to manage religious affairs, in faithfulness to its sublime teachings,' " and then making a case for taking religion out of politics, thus removing religious parties " 'That is why we say to those who mix religion and politics that there is no place for a religious party' " (Ben Ali 1989 cited in McCarthy 2014, p.743). MTI had changed its name to Ennahda by this point in order to detract from their religious orientation and make them a more viable option for political inclusion. The head of Ennahda, Ghannouchi, restrained from overtly conservative religious declarations. During elections in 1989:

> Ghannoushi demanded that the day of rest be moved from Sunday to Friday, but he was cautious on the question of women: while many Islamists called for the repeal or revision of the family and personal status law introduced by Bourguiba in 1956, Ghannoushi claimed this would not be necessary. (…) There is a world of difference between the calculations of al-Ghannoushi and those of more traditional leaders like Shaikh Muhammad Lakhoua from Tunis, who reportedly called for the return of polygamy and of slavery (Halliday 1990, p.26).

While Ennahda attempted to reach into politics by toning down their religious background so that their message would be acceptable, Ben Ali increased his attempts at making himself and his regime out to be the saviors of Islam in Tunisia:

> The regime has gone some way to presenting itself in Islamic garb (…) posters of Bin Ali during the election campaign showed him in the white robes of a hajji (…) posters for the ruling party showed a set of hands with the slogan "The Hand of God is with the Assembly." Government speeches now begin with an invocation of Allah and end with quotes from the Quran. Religious programs feature on TV, something forbidden under Bourguiba (Halliday 1990, p.26).

Nonetheless, attempts by Islamists parties to be legalized were refused and Ben Ali maintained that there was no place in Tunisian politics for religious parties.

This refusal to legalize political parties soon changed to aggressive campaigns to repress them entirely. Within four years of signing the National Pact of 1988, Ben Ali had jailed thousands of members of the MTI, now known as Ennahda, sent Ghannouchi into exile, and essentially crushed their movement. Ghannouchi went to London, from where he would operate until his return to Tunisia and to Tunisian politics after the fall of Ben Ali in 2011. Furthermore, article eight of the constitution was amended by 1997 in order to ban religious parties altogether. In a return to aggressive secularism, Ben Ali's government set about creating a state sanctioned version of Islam, which would most certainly ostracize those who had different interpretations of the religion. This would be a government set to control the religious discourse through an extremely aggressive form of secularism. While there is little doubt of their aggressive stance towards religion, the secular part is debatable. After angry protests in response to Ennahda's exclusion from politics, the government resorted to crushing the activists through repressive means. Rumors spread of torture and interrogation, and military court convictions multiplied: "Ben 'Ali and other officials pointed to Algeria and Egypt and argued that tolerating any kind of Islamist party would lead only to economic chaos. Better to be done with them quickly and create the kind of stable investment climate that Tunisia's neighbors could not provide" (Alexander 1997, p.35). Ben Ali had entered the presidency as a sign of hope for a more democratic future after the decline to authoritarianism under Bourguiba. He began what seemed to be democratic reforms, and created dialogue with the Islamist opposition. This momentary charade soon gave way to an even more oppressive authoritarian regime that threatened the democratic hopes of the Tunisian people and the legitimacy of the already aggressive secular system.

Comparing Reforms in Turkey and Tunisia

Unlike the role of the military in Turkey, the Tunisian military never actively took part in politics or decision-making. Military coups were also not a part of Tunisia's post-

independence narrative, although Ben Ali, who orchestrated the coup of 1987, had been a General of the Tunisian military. The military was; however, committed to upholding the Bourguibists' ideals, much like Turkey's was devoted to supporting the continuity of the Kemalists' principles: "Bourguiba has striven to insure that the Kemalist ideology of his state—that is, the ideological hegemony of a system of alliances among the different factions in power resting on a common consent to secularism and Westernism—will be maintained in perfect harmony by a military that will act forcefully against violent desacralization of Bourguibist values" (Ware 1985, p.37). There may not have been any military coups in Tunisia as we have seen in Turkey, but this could possibly be explained because the system never allowed any chance for an Islamic party to come to power to test the resolve of the military in protecting secularism as had happened in Turkey in the multi-party system.

Bourguiba's liberal and modernizing policies post-independence implied a turn towards a pluralistic society, and prepared the people of Tunisia for a more open society, but the president failed to deliver on such promises, and eventually the people grew wary of his monopoly on power. "Bourguiba's legacy to the Tunisian people was a modern state, but a one-party state. Political competition occurred within the party, and outside parties never really had a chance" (Geyer 2013). Ataturk before him had also opened the path to a more liberal society, but his monopoly of power and one-party rule in comparison to Bourguiba's, was cut short with his death in 1938:

> Bourguiba was the Arab Ataturk, who ruled Tunisia in a fiercely secular style for its first three decades after independence from France in the mid-1950s. Rather than envision grandiose building projects or a mighty army, Bourguiba devoted generous financing to birth control programs, rural women's literacy and primary-school education. He cracked down on the wearing of the veil and actually tried to do away with Ramadan (Kaplan 2011).

Both men were authoritarian in their own right, but they are both widely praised, though not without debate, as the fathers of modernity in their country. "Yes, he was an authoritarian, but the result of his rule was that Tunisia, with moderate political tendencies and no serious ethnic or sectarian splits, has been poised since the 1980s for a democratic experiment" (Kaplan 2011).

Ataturk's rule ended much sooner and led to an opening of politics and a multi-party democracy which would see tumultuous moments of military coups. Bourguiba's patrimonial rule however dragged on far longer and eventually gave way to another more repressive and authoritarian regime which would plague the country for decades to come. Had his rule ended sooner, before he had a chance to consolidate his power so completely, Tunisia would not have had to wait for a revolution to set the country back on the path to democracy.

It is important to note that "while he is remembered today for some of his vivid political theater around religion—drinking juice in public during Ramadan; forcibly removing veils—Bourguiba was *not* attempting to eradicate Islam from Tunisian public life, but had a more nuanced project" (Webb 2013, p.19). That nuanced approach, Webb goes on to explain, is nationalizing a reformed Sunni Islam. This assertive approach would be criticized later by the leader of Ennahda, Al-Ghannouchi, who said:

> [Arab regimes are] no different in their policy of nationalizing religion and its institutions, in employing religion as a source of legitimacy, in granting themselves the right to dispose with it as if it were their own private property, and in monopolizing the right to speak in its name and interpret it in the way they deem fit in order to fulfill the mission of 'modernising' the state (Ghannouchi 2000, cited in Webb 2013, p.20).

Bourguiba's attempts at nationalizing a reformed Sunni Islam, and using it as a source of his own legitimacy while monopolizing the right to speak in its name was exceptionally reminiscent of Ataturk's approach to Islam just a few decades before. Both of their post-independent regimes' reforms on religion are also often compared to the French Jacobin model of laïcité:

> Bourguiba is sometimes compared to Ataturk, by both admirers and critics. For the critics, state control of religion is the major crime, a deviation from both pluralist Anglo-Saxon secularism and traditional models of state-religion relations in the Muslim world. But Ataturk was not the originator of this approach: it is a basic element of the Jacobin model (Webb 2013, p.20).

The secularism followed by both countries was most similar to the Jacobin model; French laïcité.

Following the French revolution, the revolutionary state nationalized "the properties of the Catholic Church and require(d) religious functionaries to swear an oath of loyalty to the Constitution" (Webb 2013, p.20). A Ministry of Religious Affairs controlled the properties as well as the salaries of clerics and communications with the Papacy. The moves of Ataturk and Bourguiba to bring the religious institutions under the thumb of the government, as has been shown, is very similar to such measures: "Among the first acts of the Turkish Republic in the 1920s was the nationalization of *waaf* properties, the establishment of a Directorate of Religious Affairs under the control of the Prime Minister, and the conversion of religious functionaries into civil servants" (Webb 2013, p.20). Similar measures have been shown to occur in Tunisia as well. Rather than calling it Jacobinism, Ennahda's leader, Al-Ghannouchi prefers to call it a "pseudo-secularism," in which the modernizing elite seeks to 'impose full control over the institutions and symbols of religion, and even monopolizes the right to interpret religion'" (Al-Ghannouchi cited in Webb 2013, p.21). Bourguiba attempted to impose control over the religious institutions and to interpret the religion much like we have seen with the Kemalist attempt at claiming the right to interpret religion, particularly through its attempts at vernacularizing the practice, and taking control over the dissemination of religion through the government appointed DRA: "This particular model of state direction and appropriation of religion as part of the project of modernization is not present in the state churches of northern Europe or the constitutional firewalls and civil religion of the United States" (Webb 2013, p.22). The model of secularism found in Tunisia and in Turkey has been most similar to the French laïcité system or an aggressive form of secularism; or as Al-Ghannouchi stated, a pseudo-secularism.

Bourguiba and Ataturk both approached Islam politically. While trying to create secular, modern state's they saw the need to interfere in the practice of religion to create unity, which in turn led to a questionable degree of secularism and much division in society between those

who followed their lead and those who longed for a more traditional society. Like with Ataturk, "Islam equally could be summoned to consolidate the position of Bourguiba through the positive development of the state. Unfortunately, repeated curtailments on the practice of the faith in the public sphere, as well as unsavory speeches critiquing the faith and its adherents, resulted in further tensions rather than cohesion" (Gadolfo 2015, p.20). Particularly for conservatives, there was a great deal of dissatisfaction with the way Islam was practiced in Tunisia and in Turkey. Devout citizens felt that their religious freedoms were being restricted, and for those who felt that the democracy was eroding, Islam became a demonstration of discontent: "A desire to preserve traditional Islamic values came to be seen as a defense both against foreign cultural invasion and against the westernization of the elites of the region, whose way of life and value system was far removed from those of the mass." (Pargeter 2009, p.1040). Both countries would see a resurgence in religious ideology, and a move to bring Islam into politics. Particularly through the AKP in Turkey and Ennahda in Tunisia.

As has been shown throughout this chapter, the post-independence regimes of the Republic of Tunisia aimed to create a modern and secular nation. Much like the Turkish Republic before it, the secular reforms aimed at controlling the religion rather than completely separating the religion from politics. This form of secularism has been shown to be different from the passive secularism that has taken root in Anglo-Saxon world, and more closely resembles the aggressive secularism of post-revolutionary France. These reforms began under Bourguiba's leadership, and while they were momentarily reversed, the control of religion became more acute during the presidency of Ben Ali. Their strict control over religion has led to much of the religious population feeling oppressed and Islamic politics through movements such as MTI have taken a hold of the country. In 2011, the people would eventually overthrow the repressive regime of Ben Ali, and Ennahda would finally get its chance to partake in the democratic process. Like the secularists in Turkey, this would make many people nervous about

the future of democracy and secularism in their Republic. However, it will be argued that the rise of Islamist political parties, if dedicated to the democratic system, should not be considered any more of a threat to the democracy or the secularism of the countries than their authoritarian modernist founders and aggressive secular policies under those leaders. Giving a religious political party a chance to voice their opinions and rally for the votes of the citizens is surely more democratic than people being jailed for their political and religious opinions under a repressive regime dictating how religion should be practiced.

CHAPTER IV:

THE RISE OF ISLAMIC POLITICS IN TURKEY AND TUNISIA AND THE FATE OF SECULARISM

The previous chapters have shown how the post-independence governments of both Turkey and Tunisia attempted to modernize the countries through an aggressive secular agenda. For both countries, modernizing the country was seen as a priority over democratic reform, and the practice of religion was monopolized by the governments for consolidating their power. In Turkey, Kemalists abolished the Caliphate and Sharia courts, created the Directorate of Religious Affairs, brought the Ulema under state control and even dictated the content of the Imams' sermons. They took control of religious instruction, and passed laws dictating what men and women could or could not wear. Traditional, religious people were viewed as backwards or even worse as fanatics. The military was charged with upholding the Kemalist ideals, and did so aggressively through coups and exclusion of any signs of Islam in political parties. The top-down reforms brought about did not succeed in uniting the country as a new modern nation, but rather divided the country between the secular elites, and the 'backwards' traditionalists who would grow increasingly resentful of the aggressive secular reforms which tried to dictate their way of life. While Turkey did succeed in creating a relatively democratic multi-party democracy post- Ataturk, it was limited in scope as religion remained strictly monitored, and the military coups certainly hampered the democratic process. Out of secular Turkey, the country would eventually see the rise of a moderate Islamic group, AKP, as this chapter will illustrate. The swift rise in their popularity seems to be a response to the oppressive nature of Kemalist Turkey, highlighting a failure of aggressive secularism. In their early days as a political party, AKP committed themselves to upholding democracy and continuing such modernizing steps as leading Turkey on the path to the EU. However, there has been much criticism regarding the party and their compatibility with democracy and most certainly what their party means for the future of Turkish secularism. Does the rise of an Islamic party in

Turkey spell the demise of secularism in Turkey? The party has argued that they do not want to abolish secularism, but rather reassess what kind of secularism should be implemented in Turkey. Aggressive secularism has clearly failed in including all members of Turkey in their modernizing aims, and has left a large part of the society feeling ostracized. It seems that a more passive and inclusive form of secularism would be more suitable for Turkey.

Just over thirty years after Turkey, Tunisia took a similar path to modernization under the direction of Habib Bourguiba who also took a top-down approach to modernization, forcing aggressive secular reforms on a largely traditional society. Under his leadership, religious activity was restricted and the religious institutions were reorganized and brought under government control. Sermons were prepared by the state for the Imams, Sharia courts were suspended, laws were passed to restrict the wearing of the veil and an economic jihad on Ramadan was announced. The government presented itself as the protector of Islam under Bourguiba and then even more drastically under Ben Ali who portrayed the Islamists as the threat to Islam and had thousands of members of MTI jailed. All this changed with the Jasmine revolution in Tunisia, after which Ennahda would finally be released from the brutal repression of the government and allowed to partake in a new Tunisian democracy. The party used AKP in Turkey as a model for their inclusion in politics and successful melding of secularism and democracy.

Like AKP in Turkey, they would not be without their critics. Are they truly committed to democratic and even secular ideals? Many say that they are probably not and that they just use democracy as a cover to reach their aims to create a more Islamic society. Whether such criticisms are justified or not, though, is excluding them based on a fear of their lack of commitment really realistic? After all that just might push them more to the extreme, and such tactics often lead to more oppressive authoritarian rule rather than any sort of legitimate democracy. It also seems unfair for the Islamists to be singled out as the sole threat to the

democracy and modernization of Tunisia and Turkey, given that the so-called modernizing regimes before them had a poor record of democratizing reforms and their repression of a large part of society is barely compatible with the democratic ideal of a free and open society. The repression of Islam and often authoritarian one-party rule under post-independence Tunisia and Turkey led to resentment and even a backlash of Islamic activism. Whether AKP and Ennahda are truly committed to democracy, secularism and modernism or not, they need to be allowed to partake in politics in order for a true democracy to exist and for the people to be able to choose their representatives. The voters will be left to decide whether or not they wish the parties to be included in politics or not, and ideally democratic institutions will be securely put in place to hold the parties accountable to the people they represent. As for secularism, the countries need to reanalyze what kind of secularism is needed for their society. Even within the West, there is not only one model of secularism, so it is only fitting that in different countries with different societies and histories that secularism would take different forms. After decades of forced secularism, it is now time for Turkey and Tunisia to move away from their interpretation of the French laïcité and to find one that is more compatible with their unique national character. This chapter will look at the rise of Islamic parties in both Turkey and Tunisia, the criticism mounted against them, and whether or not this dramatic shift in politics should be a legitimate concern for the future of democracy, modernization and secularism in the countries.

The Rise of the AKP in Turkey

In Turkey, after years of unsuccessful attempts by Islamic parties to be included in politics, a moderate Islamic party, AKP, finally rose to power in 2002. AKP (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*) was established by the modernist wing of *Milli Gorus* (National Outlook) in 2001. Their four previous incarnations had been shut down by the constitutional court due to their religious inclinations and supposed anti-secular acts; MNP (National Order Party), MSP

(National Salvation Party), RP (Welfare Party) and Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi*). In fact, before being shut down in 1997 the Welfare Party had won 21% of the vote giving them 158 seats and making them the largest party: "the outcome of Turkey's parliamentary elections in December 1995 underscored the growing domestic strength of political Islam" (Sayari 1997, p.51). This success was not taken lightly by the secular establishment who quickly found a way to shut them down. Their short-lived success taught the AKP to present themselves as a moderate party dedicated to the democratic and pro-Western principles of the country in order to get their foot in the door of politics. AKP embraced conservative but non-religious language in their party policy and defined themselves as conservative democrats. In the November 3rd, 2002 general elections, AKP became the largest party winning 35% of the vote and 363 out of 550 parliamentary seats. They were followed by CHP (Kemalist Republican People's Party [RPP]; *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*), which won 20% of the votes and 178 seats. In 2003, Erdoğan was elected Prime Minister and has remained in power since then. Since the 2002 elections, their success has only grown even as attempts were made to shut them down as the previous parties had been. In 2007, they reached 42% of the vote and by 2011, they had won 47% of the vote, further consolidating their success in Turkish politics and the voice that they would have over religious inclusion in Turkey.

In a country which had spent so many years prioritizing a secular agenda, it may seem surprising to some that an Islamic party was able to come to power so quickly once they were finally allowed to take part in the multi-party democracy which they had largely been excluded from for years. Yet, rather than their swift rise to power being in spite of the secular Kemalist agenda, it seems to be a response to the policies. Despite the attempts to modernize and secularize Turkey, it is still a country with a large conservative and traditional population, many of whom had been made to feel like second-class citizens for decades under oppressively strict restrictions to their faith and lifestyle. This rise to power seems to be a backlash against the

secular Kemalists and a way of taking back control of their country: “A set of top-down, forced modernization, secularization, and Westernization policies by the state - within a short span of time - generated widespread social and psychological alienation and dislocation” (Hashemi 2010, p.334). For people who had felt alienated by the post-independence Turkish regimes, an Islamic political party offered a way of taking back their identity and their religious freedoms from an assertive secular state. Tunisia would see a similar backlash after the Jasmine Revolution, when the Islamic party Ennahda won a majority of the votes in the first elections after Ben Ali’s fall from power.

Indeed, Islam had been on the rise in the 80s and 90s, but was still restricted from politics, and now, given the chance, they were awarded with a stunning victory. It was a welcome victory by many, but certainly not by the secularist elite: “Islamization, therefore, can be seen as a counter-attack against the principles of the Kemalist project of modernization and the vested interests of the Westernized elites (…) Ironically, the new Islamist counter-elites are almost the mirror image of the previous secular Republican ones” (Gole 1997,p.57). For Kemalist elites, controlling religion was a means of consolidating their power, and now for the Islamist counter-elites, religion and its symbols would also be used to consolidate their power. Just as women were an important symbol in the modernizing and secularizing policies of the Kemalists, so too did they become a symbol of the rise of Islam in society: “Ironically, women have played a central role in the rise of Islamism as well; the veiling of women in the 1980s and 1990s has indicated the re-Islamization of personal relations, public spaces, and daily practices” (Gole 1997, p.51). In the years after Turkish independence, women were increasingly shown wearing western clothing and rejecting the traditional headscarf, but now the headscarf was making a comeback and becoming a visible symbol of the return to Islam. Just as the Kemalists had politicized social practices in their attempt to create a modern and secular society, the same was occurring from the Islamic camp with traditional social behaviors:

> Islamic faith and the Islamic way of life have become a reference point for the ideologization of seemingly simple social practices such as the wearing of scarfs for female students at university, the permission for prayer spaces in public buildings, the construction of a mosque at the center of Istanbul, the segregation of the sexes in the public transportation system, the censorship on erotic art, and the discouragement of alcohol consumption in restaurants. All these issues demonstrate the way Islamists have politicized social and cultural practices in order to criticize the 'secular way of life' (Gole 1997, p.53).

The rise of AKP was reflective of people's desire to return to more traditional ways of life. Just as the Kemalists before them had pushed their ideologies on the public and encouraged certain modes of behavior, so too was happening now, but from the opposite end of the spectrum. Despite their traditional values, AKP presented themselves not as a religious party, but as a conservative party. Their origins from more Islamic groups before them however, was well known, and this rhetoric seems to be more for the sake of remaining a legal political force in a well-established Kemalist society in which making the wrong move could have their group shut down.

Due to the repeated rejection of Islamic parties from politics, the new AKP could not publicly flaunt their Islamic ideological leanings. They had to tread carefully and work with the system that was already in existence. AKP took a more conciliatory tone professing pro-Western and supporting Turkey's accession talks and democratic reforms for joining the EU. Taking into account the party's conservative background, many would believe this was simply a strategic move for gaining power. Erdoğan is criticized for having said "that democracy was but a train and that one should get down from the train at the right station" (Yilmaz 2007, p.492), so his commitment to democracy was questionable. Yet, he had a pragmatic approach to democracy and saw that it could and should be used to get the country and his party where he wanted them:

> Once his party took power, the same Erdoğan started to say that he and his party rejected any project of "social engineering," that is to say using political power to change the society according to the precepts of a certain ideology, including the Islamist one. He also started to vehemently deny that his party was Islamist or even that it was a religiously-based party. In a quest for a more appropriate appellation that would better reflect the party's new orientation away from political Islam and towards the center, the party ideologists came up with the term "conservative democrat" (Yilmaz 2007, p.492).

As a testament to the party's pragmatic approach, AKP supporters viewed themselves primarily as Muslim's rather than Turkish as compared with the average Turkish citizens. They were more Eurosceptic than the average of the country. Yet the AKP supported leading Turkey into the EU: "The AKP, right from the day they won the elections, committed themselves to the cause of bringing Turkey into the EU. Hence, the AKP turned out to be a party with the most Euroskeptic and isolationist constituency and the most Eurosupportive and integrationist leadership" (Yilmaz 2007, p.492). It is possible that AKP was merely towing the line so that they would be accepted as a political party and not banned from politics, but AKP also saw more strategic value than that.

Under Kemalism, many basic freedoms of expression had been denied to conservative and religious citizens, and Europe's form of democracy could act as a protection against those suppressive policies. Democracy and modernity were needed in order to create a more inclusive society and to allow religious expressions, which had been suppressed under the Kemalists:

> Europeanizing the Turkish public sphere for it to accommodate the performances of Islamic identity, particularly by passing legislation that would allow Muslim women wearing a headscarf to have a legitimate presence in the universities and government institutions. Here the issue is the compatibility of Muslim identity and European modernity. In this respect, a Kemalist-nationalist understanding of modernity is too restrictive, too exclusive for the desired integration of Islamic identity and modernity (Yilmaz 2007, p.493).

Whether or not their commitment to democracy and even secularism was more than a strategic move which would be forfeited once they had made the necessary gains politically was contentious. The party's cooperation with the west and particularly with the EU led many to think that conservative politics could indeed be compatible with democracy, and many in the west applauded the government's efforts. Nonetheless, many people have worried that the new government's use of democracy to return rights, such as the right to wear the headscarf, would eventually lead to conservative lifestyles being forced on everyone. Some worried, for example, that their move to remove the ban on the headscarf would later lead to the headscarf being a requirement for all women. For decades, the religious majority of the country had felt oppressed

by the Kemalist, but now that they had come to power, it became the secularist who feared that they would be oppressed by the Islamists. These feelings of oppression, whether perceived or real, have helped to create further polarization of Turkish society.

Two notable critics of AKP's use of democracy and commitment to secularism developed as the government was criticized by both the Chief Prosecutor and the military; the defenders of Kemalism: "On April 27, 2007, the military posted an online statement warning the government that the military is not impartial in debates on secularism. AKP took this statement as a *muhtira* (warning), a "quasi-coup" and openly condemned it with a strong emphasis on democracy" (Topal 2012, p.7). In 2007, AKP controversially brought the issue of the headscarf to parliament, and was successful at lifting the ban on the headscarf with a majority of the vote, "However, this triggered the Chief Prosecutor's opening a case for the closure of AK Party on March 17, 2008" (Topal 2012, p.7). In a 156-page indictment against the AKP, The Chief Prosecutor, demanding that the party be closed, accused the AKP of anti-secular acts.

AKP wrote a 98-page response arguing that AKP was not anti-secular, but rather has a different definition of secularism, thus presenting the case as a debate between the definitions of secularism itself:

> Since *laiklik* has no fixed boundaries in the constitution, the issue of secularism has always been a point of debate whether it is in the parliament, on newspaper columns, in courts, at top-state summits, or in the streets. What has never changed in these debates is the fact that no one wants to give up secularism, even the ones who are victimized by the assertiveness of it. Then, how is it possible that secularism is always claimed to be in danger while no one is in favor of anti-secularism? Well, as seen in case of closure against the AK Party that was opened shortly after their second election victory in July 2007, what is thought to be in danger is not secularism, but the *specific definition of secularism* that is adopted by the official state ideology (Topal 2012, p.6).

Chief Prosecutor Yalcinkaya's idea of secularism was in line with that of the Kemalist's; a defense of the French laïcité and assertive secularism, while AKP defended a more passive secularism which would grant more freedom of expression. The case became a debate not only on the secularism or non-secularism of the party but on the meaning of secularism and its

implementation in Turkey. Yalcinkaya explains in the indictment that while the secular state should be neutral towards all religions "'the neutrality of the state does not mean unlimited religious freedom,' which gives the state the right to make regulations and limitations on religious freedoms 'based on the requirements of a democratic society'" (Yalcinkaya's Indictment cited in Topal 2012, p.8). As each state needs to determine the needs of the country and enact secularism accordingly, he proclaims that secularism in Turkey would not resemble secularism in Europe. Defending against the argument that Christian Democrat parties are able to partake in politics in secularist European countries, Yalcinkaya claims that Turkish secularism needs more constitutional protection than Western secularism because

> Political Islam has nothing to do with the Christian democrat political parties in Europe, as their Christian identity does not pose a threat to secularism. Whereas, political Islam has a constitution-like Sharia, which is a system of rules that regulate all aspects of life, without limiting itself between God and the individual. Furthermore, Sharia is essentially totalitarian and anti-democratic as it sees these rules as divine commands (Topal 2012, p. 8).

Sharia leaves no room for criticizing or changing the rules, which are seen as divine. Here Yalcinkaya has made an argument in favor of implementing assertive secularism in Turkey rather than passive secularism out of necessity to protect democracy from a strict interpretation of Islamic law. Indeed, religion's role in protestant life is fundamentally different from that of Islam as well as other religions:

> 'Protestant-like understanding of religion' is characterized by two principle features, neither of which can be applicable to other Abrahamic religions such as Islam and Judaism: first and foremost, the tenet that faith is the relationship of the individual and her or his conscience to a divine being in front of whom she or he stands alone; and second, the migration of religious symbols, rituals and practices away from the public-political into the private and associational realms of civil society (Benhabib 2014, p.350).

The protestant understanding of religion's role with public life also differs from Catholicism, which looks to the Vatican for its direction. Catholicism's predominance in France can help to explain why their secularism differs greatly from that in protestant countries. While some would argue that limiting religious freedoms was anti-democratic, Yalcinkaya and others would agree that limiting religious freedoms in order to protect secularism could not be anti-democratic

because secularism played a key role in democracy. Because Islam had been so all encompassing before, now secularism had to act assertively to compete with religion. To avid Kemalists such as the Chief Prosecutor, "When the opponent or rival of secularism is Islam instead of Christianity, the principles of free speech, democracy, and even basic human rights can be sacrificed to protect secularism against Islam" (Topal 2012, p. 12). On the other side of the debate, AKP in their defense presented secularism as a principle to protect individual liberties and allow different religions to exist peaceably. AKP's vision of secularism is to protect people's freedom of speech, democracy, and human rights in contrast to assertive secularism. Assertive secularism was the threat to democracy rather than religion. "It is clearly seen that the reinterpretation of secularism in Turkey is an important task of the AKP to enable Turkey's integration with the global values of democracy, pluralism, and human rights" (Topal 2012, p.13). As seen by both side's arguments, the Chief Prosecutor saw secularism as a tool to protect freedom *from* religion, while AKP saw it as a means of protecting freedom *of* religion. The final decision on the case was given on July 30, 2008, with a result of a penalty for AKP, but the party was spared from being shut down. They would be able to continue their political path and slowly push for change from within.

As the case shows, the debate in Turkey cannot just be between secularism and Islamism, it is much more complex than that. In recent years, Turkey has been divided between two camps. One camp is represented by Kemalist parties such as CHP (Republican People's Party), the military generals and high court judges who opt for maintaining the status quo on secularism, keeping Islam under state control; and the other side is represented by groups such as AKP and the Gulen movement who opt for public visibility of religion:

> The Turkish state tradition has a very long history of symbiotic relationship with religion, which would render the hopes for shifting into a "passive secularism" in Turkey unrealistic. Neither the Kemalist state nor the conservative democrats of AK Party would prefer to completely withdraw from religious affairs whether their intention is to control or serve the people through religion. Thus, Turkish secularism defies any categorization within the separationist/accommodationist paradigm, as it is both (Topal 2012, p.6).

As seen previously in this thesis, Ahmet Kuru separated passive secularism into two sub categories; accommodationists, who do not see a problem with interactions between religion and state so long as they do not create an established state religion, and separationists, who see any interaction between religion and state as a violation of secularism. Yet, the main examples given for these two forms of secularism are the Republican Party and the Democratic party of the United States respectively. The model for aggressive secularism that Turkey is compared to is France. Though they may have some similarities, it would be a mistake to hold Turkey to the same standards as France or the United States. Each country has its own unique history that has shaped how secularism has formed in the country, and each has a different religion to which the majority of the population adhere.

The role of religion in day-to-day acts also varies from country to country, and often coincides with social actions that need some form of interaction from the government thus making a complete separation from religion and public policy more complex from one society to another:

> From the point of view of secularism, religion has the option either of confining itself to private belief and worship or of engaging in public talk that makes no demands on life. In either case such religion is seen by secularism to take the form it should properly have. Each is equally the condition of its legitimacy. But this requirement is made difficult for those who wish to reform life given the ambition of the secular state itself. Because the modern nation-state seeks to regulate all aspects of individual life—even the most intimate, such as birth and death—no one, whether religious or otherwise, can avoid encountering its ambitious powers. It's not only that the state intervenes directly in the social body for purposes of reform; it's that all social activity requires the consent of the law, and therefore of the nation-state (Asad 2003, p.199).

As was seen in the early years of the Turkish Republic, the state attempted to use their vision of secularism to reform daily life in Turkey, and now that a conservative Islamic group had gained power, they sought to do the same, only in the reverse. Both sides have used religion to consolidate their power and their control over society, yet it is the latter who is most often criticized in the modern world as being incompatible with democracy and modernity. Are either of these polar opposite approaches truly secular as they both defy to a certain extent any form of secularism implemented in the Western world? Are their approaches compatible with

democracy and modernization? It seems those are not the right questions, as Turkey has not followed the same path as any Western nation. It has a history all its own and a path uniquely Turkish, so the question should be what is Turkish secularism and how will it change as the politics change? Also, what is Turkey's path to modernization and democracy? Two opposite visions have been implemented since the country's birth as a Republic, and now it is time to reconcile the opposing sides and find an approach that is more suitable to all of Turkey going forward in the future rather than to try to compare it to its Western neighbors, forcing a potentially incompatible model on the nation.

According to some scholars, perhaps a large part of AKP's success after coming to power was its successful blend of Islamism, Democracy and Neoliberalism. Turkey's neoliberal Islam boosted growth, made Turkey a strong competitor in global markets and gave more welfare benefits to some previously excluded groups. In his book 'Passive Revolution', Cihan Tuğal asserts that: "a huge part of the 'successful Turkish model' rested on urban-based consent. The spoils of neoliberalism were materially and symbolically shared, based on urban spatial strategies to create the image and partial reality of a free market Islam that enriched not only the well-to-do but even the poor" (Tuğal 2016, p.125). Cihan Tuğal speaks of a 'Passive Revolution' in which the anti-system groups, Islamists in this case, were integrated into the system thereby demobilizing the masses. Tuğal observed that former Islamists in many ways embraced western and modern lifestyles while reducing their outward display of Islamic activity, such as prayers and using Islamic terminology and their religious appearance. Just as such acts had been a form of resistance under the staunchly secular regime, these signs were no longer necessary under AKP rule. Islamization seemed to prevent revolution while giving consent to free market and capitalism under the Islamic party. AKP was able to demobilize the Islamists and shore up power by appealing not only to the Islamists, but also to secularists and liberals who saw the AKP as a positive force for the economy, and a new model of Islam which

was sympathetic to democracy and not pushing an Islamist agenda. “What was the Turkish Model? In two words, it was ‘Islamic liberalism’: marriage of formal democracy, free market capitalism and (a toned down) conservative Islam. Global business circles trumpeted it. International media celebrated it. And regional and national elites embraced it” (Tuğal 2016, p. 4). However, Tuğal concedes that neoliberalization and democratization can only work together for a limited time before they undermine each other and the Islamic actors begin to act more undemocratically. He also argues that the system under AKP, while making Turkey a stronger competitor internationally, boosting growth and helping in some cases of extreme poverty, also led to more inequalities and increased unemployment. They were able to counterbalance this by combining civil society with political society. Furthermore, “Islamist politics succeeded to demobilize people against neoliberalism through strategies such as the establishment of social help/charity mechanisms as a religious duty (municipalities channeled more services to urban poor regions and distributed free coal, food, and clothes), community-based solidarity networks and patronage/clientalist relations” (Boyraz 2011, p.159-60). Mona Atia argues that their success depended on ‘pious neoliberalism’ in which capitalism and religious sensibilities are merged together. AKP provided rights to their constituents who had felt marginalized for so long, but over time, it would appear that those rights would not be available to everyone. “Many scholars have argued that the provision of social services was key to their success and the majority of populations, whether they saw it in a positive or negative light, routinely assumed that Islamist parties were the main providers of aid in the country” (Atia 2014). In order to cope with the consequences of neoliberalism, such as high unemployment and a large gap between the rich and poor, Islamic charitable organizations have received support from government under AKP and have become part of the state’s welfare system. “Throughout its tenure, the government has advocated a moral framework built upon a thick notion of Islamic solidarity, tradition, family values, and gender complementarity. This melange of neoliberalism and

neoconservatism is best demonstrated in AKP's approach to social welfare management" (Atalay 2017, p.4). AKP encouraged a flourishing of traditional community based organizations and the number of faith based organizations increased greatly in the early 2000s providing more incentive for traditional lifestyles and values. These organizations focused on traditional forms of welfare, a kind of family oriented welfare system with the family as a social safety net in difficult times. Thus, even while not turning the state into an Islamic government, they were encouraging an increase in Islamic activity in other fundamental ways. This was a bottom up kind of welfare combining civil society with political society, in which such religious and community based organizations were brought into the democratic fold, and given more encouragement and support by the government, which could gain support of the poor by appealing to their religious sentiments. Such a symbiotic relationship between such organizations and the government can greatly influence the religiosity of the population as a whole: "The project with the more developed organization in political society, and with more sustained interactions with civil society and the state, is more likely to determine a nation's fate. The collective making of the religious path a society takes thus depends on the way political society interacts with the state and civil society" (Tuğal 2016, p.117). The continued electoral success of AKP may be reflective of such interactions.

Another boost to the AKP's rise to power was the alliance made with the powerful Gülen movement led by the influential cleric Fetullah Gülen who has been in self exile in America since 1999. This alliance allowed the AKP to secure a majority government for many years and crucially the alliance provided a counter balance to the military and the secular elite. Members of the Gülen movement have been appointed to numerous posts in the government, as well as the police and the judiciary, giving AKP a way in which to decrease the risk of being banned from politics as the Islamic parties before them had been. However, once the threats had been sufficiently limited by 2010, disputes began to arise between the differing groups,

which culminated in the final break in their alliance after the attempted coup of 2016. Fetullah Gülen is suspected of being the mastermind behind the failed coup, and thousands of Gülenists have subsequently been removed from their posts in government and almost all sectors of society. They are also blamed for the 2013 corruption charges brought against several members of AKP, and in 2015 were labeled as a the Gülenist Terror Organization, or FETÖ. With the military essentially detached from their previous role in politics, FETÖ has become the greatest threat to AKP rule, a threat which the government is not taking lightly.

While Turkey has often been compared to Western nations in terms of its implementation of secularism and its modernization and democratization attempts, it has become an example for Middle Eastern and North African nations as a model on how to successfully combine Islam and modernization: "Turkey is commonly portrayed in the scholarly literature on modernization as the 'first modern Muslim country', constituting an allegedly successful model of westernization for other predominantly Muslim societies to follow" (Göksel 2016, p.246). Furthermore, its change from secular Kemalist parties' dominance to the rise of the AKP and a more religious friendly government has given hope that such changes can occur in other countries by democratic means: "Turkey is a unique example in the Middle East where such a radical political change in the nature of the governing elites can take place peacefully and by democratic means. Democracy has been successful in Turkey; it has been internalized as a set of shared values by Turks and has become the norm of political behavior" (Gole 1997, p.47). Indeed, it has even proved to many that modernity, democracy, and Islam are compatible with each other: "Since the electoral triumph of the AK Party in Turkey in 2002, and its successive victory in three electoral cycles, the Turkish case has become the paradigm for showcasing the compatibility of moderate Islam, a multi-party democracy and economic prosperity" (Benhabib 2014, p.356). The jury is still out on the compatibility of these ideologies and whether or not Turkey will remain an appropriate model for other countries.

Turkey has not been without its own crisis of legitimacy in recent years, especially with a rise of social disturbances since the Gezi Park protests in 2013, after which the government began a massive crackdown on dissent and free speech. The crackdown has continued and accelerated since the attempted coup of July 2016. Yet, up until now, Turkey seems to be the best model that the Middle East and North Africa have for such a successful cohesion of ideologies. One country that has been particularly swayed by the Turkish experience in recent years is Tunisia, where talk of the Turkish Model has been prevalent in their post-revolution attempts at democracy, and like Turkey, the attempts of a conservative Islamic group partaking in democracy has not been without its fair share of naysayers.

The rise of Ennahda in Tunisia

Since gaining their independence in 1956, Tunisia became a more modern and economically liberal country. The people became more educated and politically aware, but the political democratization had not kept up with their growing aspirations under Ben Ali's authoritarian rule. The revolutions sweeping the Middle East that came to be known as the Arab Spring began with the Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia. Tunisia was the first country to ignite into protest, with the self-immolation of Mohammed Bouazizi, a street vendor in the small town of Sidi Bouzid. The people of Tunisia came out en masse to demand a new government representative of the people. Bouazizi succumbed to his wounds in January. It was only a matter of weeks after this event that Ben Ali's 23-year reign came crashing to an end. Ben Ali fled the country on January 14th, 2011. This was the spark that began the Arab Spring. Since then, the battle for the future identity of Tunisia has been played out in the new struggle for power. There are the secular French-speaking elites afraid of an Islamic resurgence and the Islamists on opposite sides of the political spectrum. Nouri Gana of the Guardian critically states that the staunchly secular see the possibility of a "return to Islam as the return of the repressed, but it is more accurate to say it is the redressing of the unaddressed. Pseudo-secularist media icons,

intellectuals, critics, and academics have for decades remained silent on the ban of hijab, and the persecution of Islamists and mosque-goers under Bourguiba and Ben Ali" (Gana, 2011). According to Gana, the biggest problem in the new election campaigns is "that it has allowed questions of cultural identity, religion and secularism to override all the other important and thorny issues to do with the economy, unemployment, justice and political reconciliation" (Gana, 2011). This seems to be just one of the many stages of growing pains that the budding democracy needs to go through.

Since the fall of Ben Ali's regime in the Jasmine revolution, Tunisia has adopted a modern democratic constitution, which won 93 per cent of the political parties' support. It has been hailed as "the most progressive constitution in the Arab region, enshrining women's rights, freedom of belief, conscience, and worship, and banning incitement to violence and religions excommunication" (Ghannoushi, 2014). They have also begun the process of free and fair democratic elections. Much to the disdain of the secularist elements of society in the wake of the revolution, the constitutional assembly election in 2011 brought the Islamic Ennahda party, which had only just been legalized in March 2011, to power with 41 percent of the vote; winning 89 out of 217 seats. Another 60 percent of the votes were divided between non-Islamic candidates: "no party except Ennahda, therefore, garnered more than 8 percent of the ballot" (Cavatorta & Haugbolle 2012, p.20). It should be noted that due to a lack of confidence in the electoral process by a population unaccustomed to truly democratic elections, only 53 percent of the population partook. Secularists doubted the commitment to democracy of an Islamic group. The party however has long claimed to be committed to democracy and dialogue with other political forces. It has stated that it would retain such liberal rights as those granted to women in past decades. Many have been suspicious of such claims; however, after their victory in 2011, they did indeed call for a national unity government, and shared their power with two left, liberal leaning parties. Ennahda found itself in a three party coalition with the Congress for

the Republic, a left-wing nationalist party, and Ettakatol, a social democrat party. Hamadi Jebali, secretary-general of Ennahda became prime minister and Moncef Marzouki, the leader of the Congress for the Republic was president, thus protecting Tunisia from polarized ideologies, which have led to less success in the aftermath of neighboring countries' post Arab Spring democracy building.

In October 2014, Ennahda became the first Islamic party in the Arab world to lead a successful democratic transition as they stepped aside in favor of the secular modernists, Nidaa Tounes: "The concession of En-Nahda has led to a transition of power without violent upheaval—a heroic political feat in such a volatile region. Instead of continuing the cycle of violence, En-Nahda's concession gives power to popular state institutions as representatives of the people of Tunisia, and a pattern of respect for democratic processes has emerged" (Kranz, 2015). In fact, it is the secularist Nidaa Tounes, who some fear could turn into another authoritarian government reminiscent of Ben Ali's rule, which the revolution had sought to abolish. Criticized for being filled with former members of Ben Ali's regime, it is predominately made up of leftists and many individuals associated with Ben Ali's party. Furthermore, some claim it shows a notably more authoritarian structure than the Islamist Ennahda party. Thus far, however, both sides seem to be showing democratic values, and respecting the voice of the people in the elections. How far that will go must be determined with time as the country continues its journey of democratization. So far, both the secularists and Islamists have been able to participate in the democratic process;

> It appears that Tunisia has embarked on a path of more genuine democratization and Islamization… the likely outcome as being a kind of "Islamocracy". i.e. the combining of democratic institutions and an active civil society, with some influence of Islamic law and norms on political and social life. The struggle to determining what that exact combination will be promises to be the central issue shaping Tunisia's democratization experiment. *Ennahda* now has the chance to prove that Islamist movements are not, by definition, antithetical to democratic norms." (Maddy-Weitzman, 2011, p. 8).

There are many questions regarding Islam's compatibility with democracy, modernity and secularism; and Tunisia, like Turkey is at a critical point in its history to address such issues.

Having undergone such a rigorous and repressive form of secularism in Tunisia for so many decades, where did this surge in Islamic politics come from?

As was shown in the previous chapter, under the regime of Bourguiba, and even more so under Ben Ali's rule, religion was restricted, marginalized, and used as a political tool by the government. Both governments tried to monopolize religion to consolidate power for political elites, just as had occurred in Turkey before them. The most extreme expression of this aggressive secularist ideology took place in Ben Ali's Tunisia, where gross human rights violations occurred. Samir Ben Amor from the CPR, a secular party, criticized the previous implementation of assertive secularism:

> Each country applied its own version of secularism and I think that the worst model of secularism is the French one, because, actually that model tries to interfere in personal life, personal freedom of citizens and impose a lifestyle on them, therefore, limit personal liberties. The dictatorial system in Tunisia worked to limit all liberties, either personal or collective, including even the most basic freedom of worship. He [Ben Ali] and his system used the slogans of modernity and its values to justify dictatorship. In reality, the regime had relationship with modernity nor secularism because it had no respect to human right and values (Ben Amor cited in Göksel 2014, p.490).

Rather than eradicating the religious movement and religious sentiment, this would only lead to resentment and a rise in sympathy for the oppressed Islamists. In fact, under Ben Ali,

> Tunisia experienced a revival of the daily practices of Islam, in both rural and urban settings, in part because the regime frowned upon displays of religiosity. The regime's suppression of a strong Arab Muslim identity from 1956 onward was carried out in the name of modernization, but Islam's disappearance from public life did not mean that all Tunisians had abandoned the faith as part of their identity (Cavatorta & Haugbolle 2012, p.22).

While secularism need not ostracize religious faith or practice of any kind, the particularly aggressive secularism imposed by the pre-revolution governments was particularly oppressive and would not succeed in embracing Tunisians of all faiths and ideologies. Tunisian secularism was particularly alienating to a large portion of Tunisian citizens. Ennahda's leader Ghannouchi commented that: "I remember we used to feel like strangers in our own country. We have been educated as Muslims and as Arabs, while we could see the country totally molded in the French cultural identity" (Ghannouchi cited in Pargeter 2009, p.1039). Secularism, to many people

seemed like a Western concept, alien to Tunisia. Secularism and modernization had been pushed upon society in an effort to supposedly make Tunisia a more western country. Even as their secularism may have been implemented differently than in the West, the perception remained of it as a western concept:

> The Muslim experience has been marked by a perception of secularism as an alien ideology imposed from outside first by colonial and imperial invaders and then kept alive by local elites who came to power during the post-colonial period. In short, secularism in Europe was largely a bottom-up process that was intimately connected to debates from within civil society, while in Muslim societies secularism was largely a top-down process that was driven first by the colonial state and then by the post-colonial state (Hashemi 2010, p.334).

Secularism has often been perceived negatively in the Muslim world, yet it appears to be more about the aggressive form that it has taken in Muslim countries such as Tunisia and Turkey.

For many people, Ennahda and Islam represented an alternative to the alienating forces of secularism. In Tunisia, the renewed appeal to Islam appears to come from the discontent with the state of affairs, and not necessarily a desire for all encompassing Islam, but a dissatisfaction with how it was being marginalized; "Islam has been made subservient to a secular state and its role in society has been progressively circumscribed. The constitution declares Islam the state religion, but since independence in 1956, Sharia courts have been abolished, the state prepares sermons to be preached in the mosques…religious education itself has been secularized…Islamism is an expression of discontent" (Waltz 1986, p.660). Not only was Islam being repressed, but also the peoples' voices had been repressed politically, and religion became the only response to such repression: "the single refuge that provides an alternative for political expression is the mosque. The more one bars the ways of legal, institutional and organized opposition, the more the religious circuit, remaining open, appears as the only path to take" (Waltz 1986, p.664). Islam was already on the rise before the revolution, but parties such as Ennahda had been suppressed and members had been jailed or exiled, thus silencing their support. After the revolution, the party was finally allowed to partake in the new democracy and people responded favorably by giving them an astounding victory. The people may have

been drawn to Ennahda, not only because of their Islamic faith, but also because of their desire to fight against the repression of the previous decades and to create a new identity for Tunisia. Rather than creating a less religious society, aggressive secularism had stoked feelings of repression and polarized communities between the religious and non-religious, the secular and non-secular. This does not lead to greater freedom or a greater form of democracy. The freedom created by such measures were designed for a specific kind of freedom accessible only to some which impinged on the freedoms of others, leading to a backlash which would eventually swing the pendulum of religiosity in the other direction.

After the revolution of 2011, Ennahda suddenly found itself in a country where it was legally allowed to take part in politics, and unlike AKP in Turkey, it did not necessarily have the looming threat of being shut down for religious ideologies. Yet, like AKP, Ennahda saw the pragmatism in adhering to democratic principles, and was adamant in its assertion that it was committed to democracy and inclusion of all of Tunisian society without forcing its religious values on society. Members of the party have repeated their commitment to inclusion and tolerance in an effort to reassure secular Tunisians and to reflect the views of the moderate factions of the party. As one member, Tirad Labbane of Riadh Ennasr asserts:

> Our commitment to Islam does not mean that we want to impose what we do on others. In that sense, you could say that we are anti-Salafi, because we do not approve of imposing behavior. If you want to wear a mini-skirt, it is not my problem; if you do not want to wear the veil, it is also not my problem. Choices have to be left to individuals; the state cannot impose behavior. From the state authorities we ask only that they let us do our work in peace (Tirad Labbane of Riadh Ennasr, Cavatorta & Haugbolle 2012, p.24).

Ghannouchi himself is undoubtedly a religious man, but professes to believe that religion should not be forced on people through politics or by any other means. People should be free to choose their beliefs and their way of life. The headscarf should be neither forced nor forbidden, as it had been in secular Tunisia. Speaking against ruling over a country through forced adherence to religion Ghannouchi said: “There is no value to any religious observance that is motivated through coercion. It is of no use to turn those who are disobedient to God into

hypocrites through the state's coercive tools. People are created free and while it is possible to have control over their external aspects, it is impossible to do so over their inner selves and convictions." (Ghannouchi 2012). He also remained confident that religion would not disappear from Tunisia, thus negating a need to force it on the people against their will: "In fact, we do not need do impose Islam because it is the people's religion and not the elite's, and Islam has not endured for so long because of states' influence but rather due to the large acceptance it enjoys among its adherents, in fact the state has often been a burden on religion" (Ghannouchi 2012). It is clear through the endurance of religion under the strict secular state, that the state was unable to control the hearts and minds of the people or to permanently suppress religion.

During the elections following the revolution, Ennahda made many references to the Turkish model in its campaign in order to reach their political goals. The "Turkish model was assumed to be a good model of governance and economic development which was also respectful to religious values. It convinced many people to vote for the party" (Tarek Cheniti interviewed in Göksel 2014, p.486-87). It also helped them to garner more support from moderates. They emphasized their similarities to the conservative AKP in Turkey, highlighting the democratic achievements of AKP and their ability to balance Islam and democracy. Tunisians are particularly attracted to the Turkish model because they see that Turkey has been gradually evolving and developing a new understanding about Islam's role in a Muslim society. "A new approach that manages to transcend the old dichotomy of aggressive secularism and radical Islamism is emerging" (Göksel 2014, p.490). Winning much praise for its early successes in Turkey: "The Turkish model is presented to the world as the experience of a moderate Islamic party open to universal values and human rights. It is also presented as a proof that an Islamist movement can govern a state and have good relations with its neighbors and different world powers including the USA" (Samir Ben Amor 2012 cited in Göksel 2014, p.484). Although, since day one, and even more so in recent years, AKP has had to face its own

critics who doubt their commitment to democracy, so such claims might not be reassuring to those people who also doubt the democratic values of Ennahda. For Islamists, they view the rise of parties such as AKP and Ennahda as proof that "political parties with Islamist pasts can successfully integrate into democratic environments and should not be barred from them" (Driessen 2012). According to their supporters, they have upheld democratic and for the most part secular ideals in their given countries though certainly not assertive secularism. For many staunch secularists however, "the only reason Islamist-oriented parties have not established Islamic states in either country is that these parties had first been beaten into submission by powerful and successful secular states" (Driessen 2012). In this view, the aggressive secular tactics taken were successful in preventing Islamic states, at least this early in the game. To their critics, Ennahda and AKP are only playing the democratic game for the moment until they reach their desired level of control, in which case they may begin to show their true colors and turn the countries into Islamic states:

> Guided by Rashid Ghannoushi, Ennahda has long contended that it is genuinely committed to democracy and dialogue with other social forces, as it promotes a modernist-Islamist synthesis, modeled, it says, after Turkey's ruling AKP party. Sadiki characterizes Ennahda's world view as "soft Islamism." This includes a commitment to maintaining the rights of Tunisian women as laid down by Tunisia's personal status law, which among other things is the only in the Arab world which explicitly bans polygamy, in contradiction to Islamic law (Maddy-Weitzman 2011).

None of this; however, is enough to sooth the fears of its critics who are anxious about the role of Islam and secularism in Tunisia's future.

There is a large divide between the secularists and the Islamists in Tunisia. Similar to Turkey, this divide was exacerbated by the aggressive secular policies in decades following independence. While Ennahda points to AKP as a model, this is not reassuring to the opposition who see the Turkish model as one which is attempting to manipulate the system to eventually build a one-party rule in the Islamists favor; basically the opposite of the one-party system which had favored the secular regimes before them. The secularists see the Turkish model as a negative outlook on the shape of Tunisian democracy to come under Ennahda's rule. They see

them as obstacles to progress and argue that a secular state is needed for Tunisia to be a modern state. A member of Ennahda describes the difference between the Islamist and Secularist views:

> 'The Islamist movements are afraid *for* Islam, and the secularists are afraid *of* Islam. And the secularists are afraid for their own individual way of life. They are afraid for their own individual rights. This is not about political rights, or citizenship rights, or religious rights. *They are afraid not to be able to buy their wine at the cafe, not to be able to dress the way they want*' (Ajmi Lourimi cited in Zeghal 2013, p.263).

It is probably not very reassuring to secularists that although Ghannouchi has voiced commitment to democracy, he also sees the state as one that not only frees religion from the state but is working in the service of religion. According to Zeghal:

> The state that Ghannouchi envisions is a civil and democratic state, but it also needs to engage with religion in specific ways: to organize it, but also, to implement it. Ghannouchi's liberation of Islam from the state does not imply a rupture between them. Rather, the state is put at the service of religion, and it is up to those democratically elected to govern and define the ways in which this "service" operates (Zeghal 2013, p.260).

Even among those who concede that Ennahda's commitment to democracy is genuine, some contest that the party has dissenting views within. One critic, a member of the opposition *Afek Tounis* party, professed that "Ennahda has a small moderate faction and a large radical faction, and the radicals are running the show … They have long-term aims of changing the society not by directly imposing *sharia* on them from above but through other means" (Noomane Fehri interviewed in Göksel 2014, p.487). Many sources claim that there are growing disputes and ideological struggles within Ennahda: "Hamadi Jabali and Rachid Ghannouchi, have clashed and disagreed with each other in public as witnessed during the crisis in the aftermath of the assassination of leftist politician Chokri Belaid in February 2013. The most notable division within Ennahda is between the so-called hardliner Islamist wing and the moderate faction led by Jabali and Ali Larayedh" (Göksel 2014, p.488). While it is possible that some within the party wish to work side by side with secularists and make a democracy inclusive for all, there are others working in the party who have more ambitious aims for the future of Islam in Tunisia.

While Ghannouchi was inspired by the Justice and Development Party and Erdoğan, Erdoğan himself is said to have been inspired by Ghannouchi's writings as well. There is a

mutual respect visible in their relationship, and the two seem to have many ideals and goals in common. Both had been excluded from politics and jailed by a repressive government prior to rising to power, which for Ghannouchi led to 20 years in exile where he developed an understanding of western democracy and secularism. Both men led their parties to reinvent themselves as Muslim Democrats, modeling the European Christian Democrats, and avoided talk of bringing back sharia law and other traditional practices to their countries. However, there have also been fundamental differences to their experiences. Ghannouchi was in favor of a parliamentary system for the new Tunisian constitution, while Erdoğan has sought to change Turkey to a presidential system. Furthermore, AKP had two crucial advantages in their efforts to shore up power in Turkey. One was their alliance with the Gülenist, which helped their rise as well as the rise of pious neoliberalism, unlike Ennahda's perceived relations with the Salafists which hurt their claim to being a moderate Islamic party. The second has been the welcome success of the economy under AKP rule.

Whereas AKP in Turkey was able to demobilize the Islamists, the same did not occur in Tunisia immediately following the revolution and rise of Ennahda.

> During the AKP's first ten years, Islamists had already been successfully demobilized (first by military intervention, then by the ruling Islamic party itself). By contrast, the ruling party in Tunisia was operating in a context of sustained mobilization. Unlike the AKP's glory years, even the first few months of the Tunisian Islamists' tenure in government were marked by intensive street mobilization that called for the Islamization of various institutions. These included the state television, the universities, and the ministries. Al-Nahda walked a tightrope: it had to give the message that it shared Islamic mobilization's demands while simultaneously convincing everyone else that it was not building an Islamic state. We can't know at this point how much al-Nahda was able to convince its own base, but the perceived threat of an aggressively Islamizing ruling party led to a consolidation and counter-mobilization of the secularists (Tuğal 2016, p.222).

AKP had successfully demobilized Islamists, thereby also gaining support from non-Islamists, while the Islamists were still mobilized under Ennahda rule, leading to more uncertainty and more backlash from the secularists than AKP received in their early years. Another advantage the AKP had, was that it was able to successfully combine neoliberalism and Islamism, making huge gains for the Turkish economy which had suffered under secular neoliberalism. This

model seemed to appeal to a large part of Tunisian society who wanted to combine economic success, global recognition and religiosity. However, "Ghannouchi and al-Nahda did not have a developed outlook on Islamic economics and a clear stance on development and labour issues. In the 2000s, Tunisian Islamists moved away from a strict adherence to the distinctiveness of Islamic economics, possibly putting them on a Turkish path. However, their commitment to the market never became as clear as the AKP's" (Tuğal 2016, p.129). Before the revolution, Tunisia had in fact been an economic success under Ben Ali's regime, which made Tunisia a model for the IMF and the World Bank. The secular form of neoliberalism had been relatively successful though it was a top down approach which still left vast inequalities and high unemployment. Many Tunisians who had taken part in the revolution cited economic problems as a main motivation for their involvement in the revolution (Tuğal 2016). Indeed, economic improvements was where AKP really outperformed expectations and made vast improvements on the previously poor economy, and was thus able to appeal to a large number of Turkish citizens. For Ennahda, the inability to improve dramatically on the already decent economy of Tunisia may have led to a loss in support after their initial success.

Hamadi Redissi of the University of Tunis is quite critical about Ennahda's commitment to democracy and secularism, referring to the party as a neo-authoritarian regime aiming to create a competitive authoritarian government and Islamize Tunisia. He claims that Ennahda is divided into moderates and radicals, and that they use Salafists to enact their more radical ideas while the party itself is able to claim the higher ground and not take responsibility for the actions of the Salafists. Rather they could point to themselves as the moderates against the Salafist fanaticism: "While the Leagues for Protecting the Revolution are the 'secular' left hand of En-Nahdha, Salafists are its 'religious' right hand. Basically, the trick was to use the Salafist fanaticism just to improve En-Nahdha's self-image as a 'respectable' moderate party" (Redissi 2013, p.387). He refers to the supposedly secular *The League for Protecting the Revolution* as

a violent militia, which has harassed opponents and attacked demonstrators. He also asserts that Ennahda is hostile to the media, "journalists have been subject to 306 physical attacks by militants close to En-Nahdha" (Redissi 2013, p.385). As proof of Ghannouchi's instrumental and manipulative use of democracy while harboring ulterior motives, he points to a video released in 2012 in which "Ghannouchi was asking Salafists to be patient as long as the police and the military are still controlled by seculars" (Redissi 2013, p. 387). While they may be a moderate party, they are still an Islamist party at the core, which showed through in some of their poorly chosen statements: "Ennahda, for all its moderation, was still an Islamist party. Its leaders, despite their otherwise impressive efforts to stay on message, would routinely say things that sounded alarming to secularists, such as when Prime Minister Hamadi Jebali called for a sixth caliphate or when Ghannouchi, in a seeming fit of anger, said that a journalist who had accused an Ennahda cabinet minister of adultery should be flogged" (Hamid 2014, p.198). Despite viewing the party as neo-authoritarian and as harboring malicious intentions towards liberalism and Tunisian democracy, Hamadi Redissi does acknowledge the ability for Ennahda to transfer power to Nidaa Tounes: "Redissi ends on a hopeful, although inconclusive, note since Tunisian civil society has so far been able to negotiate En-Nahda's and Gannouchi's departure from government" (Benhabib 2014, p.351). Perhaps to the surprise and relief of even its fiercest critics, Ennahda did hand power to Nidaa Tounes in October 2014.

It was a historical moment when Ennahda handed power to Nidaa Tounes, as they became the first Islamic party in the Arab world to voluntarily cede power to a secular party. That secular party consists mainly of leftists associated with the former RCD party of Ben Ali. Their secular message may be appealing to many outsiders and secularists within the country; however, they are also suspiciously close to the previous regimes. Nidaa Tounes was founded in 2012 by Beji Said Essebsi, a former politician serving under both Bourguiba and Ben Ali. With this connection in mind, how can one think that they are more likely than Ennahda to usher in the democracy that Tunisia has been waiting for? Senna urges caution in praising the

democratic transition to the secular Nidaa Tounes whose structure is "noticeably more authoritarian than the Islamist Ennahda" (Senna 2014). It may be more logical to worry about Nidaa Tounes returning to the governmental style that the Tunisian people struggled so hard to rid themselves of than to worry about an Islamic party turning Tunisia to an Islamic state. It is yet to be seen if the party will show authoritarian tendencies and a desire to return to the system before the revolution, but people should be cautious to consider it an automatic success once the Islamic party is out of power. The debate has become so focused on Islam vs secularism that this important piece of the puzzle is almost lost in the noise. The reality is far more complex, and should not be framed as a battle between Islamists who want to take over and strip the country of all its secular characteristics, and the enlightened seculars who want to make Tunisia a modern democracy.

Both Turkey and Tunisia as we have seen were led by the beloved heroes of their respective independence who then turned to radical modernizing reforms to reshape their new nations and adapt them to a more western style future. In order to do this, they monopolized religion and enforced aggressive secular policies, which led to the repression of a large portion of society and eventually a religious backlash. In both countries, though more so in Tunisia, democracy had been repressed as the leading regimes consolidated power around their modernizing and secular reforms. Their secular reforms are most often compared to the French form of laïcité. As religious parties have come to power in both countries, their critics have questioned their commitment to democracy and secularism as well as their compatibility with modernization. Whether or not secularism will continue and what type of secularism may be applied going forward is regularly questioned, while comparing to different types of secularism in place in the west. This criticism and analysis of the Turkish and Tunisian systems in respect to western countries overlooks the fact that the secular countries such as France and the United States each have their own unique histories leading up to the secular societies which they have

today. In neither of those examples is religion completely separated from politics nor are their forms of secularism identical to any other country in the western world. While many countries may proclaim to be secular today, they each have their own individual characteristics that are unique to that nation. No other nation can profess to be secular in the same way as the United States, for example. Furthermore, whether or not Islam is compatible with democracy and if Tunisia and Turkey will be able to flourish as democratic countries under the leadership of parties such as AKP and Ennahda is placing all the responsibility for the potential failure of democracy on the Islamic parties and ignoring the democratic failings of the secular regimes. This criticism ignores the fact that democracy had been repressed under the modernizing governments which came before them. The countries' unique histories and demographics make it unrealistic to expect western models of modernization, democracy and secularism to apply directly to the countries in question. While the future of democracy may still be in doubt, this should not be left solely as the responsibility of Islam's political participation. Nor should the definition of modernization or secularization be limited to examples taken from western countries. They need to be given the opportunity to find what works best for them in their society and to shape secularism to their unique model.

Part of the success of AKP and Ennahda can likely be attributed to the oppression that they were faced with under the aggressive secular governments in both countries. Islamic parties are not a 'return to Islam', but rather 'taking back Islam' from government control. Both movements had been particularly victimized by the governments, with the leaders of both parties tellingly having been jailed prior to their parties' finally being legalized. This story of victimization would later be used to their advantage to appeal to the people. In 2012, the founder of Ennahdha, Rachid Ghannouchi argued that:

> The challenge today was 'liberating religion from the state' and constructing a balance that prevented the state from dominating religion while not entirely removing religion from politics. He likened Tunisian secularism to coercion and argued that the state's duty was to guarantee freedom and provide services, while the 'primary orbit for religion is not the state's apparatuses, but rather personal/individual convictions' (McCarthy 2014, p.735).

The governments had politicized Islam and therefore led the way for an Islamic political revival. Indeed, there is much to fear in recent years in a surge in Islamic extremism, particularly in countries such as Turkey and Tunisia, which have seen extremist groups such as IS at their doorsteps and many citizens leaving to join the fight. This does not give merit to any argument to force Islamists out of politics, quite the contrary. Islamists need to be given a democratic platform on which to speak rather than being turned towards more aggressive and illegal means. If involved in politics, there is a need to appeal to a wide variety of people in society. By pushing Islamists out, they would only be opening their doors to more trouble from such groups in retaliation, and to more members of society feeling ostracized and looking for inclusion by different means.

It is not secularism itself which has brought so much strife and resentment, but the implementation of assertive secularism. This form of secularism has pushed large segments of society to the sidelines in their own countries and stoked resentment towards liberal elite:

"In the Muslim geography, from Syria to Tunisia, from Saddam's Iraq to Algeria, what people have experienced has been assertive secularism mainly as a result of French colonial and intellectual influence. Muslim populations may want to rethink secularism if they recognize an alternative mode—passive secularism—that tolerates public visibility of religion." (Kuru 2007, p.594). Moderate Islamists can exist side-by-side secular parties in a democratic environment in which the state's role is not to control but rather to protect freedoms whether they are religious or political. Whether a religiously leaning party is in power or not the state can retain a neutral stance towards religion and not interfere in the practice of individual's freedom of religion and lifestyle choice. Under assertive secular policies of the past, this was not the case. Restrictive and controlling policies were carried out in the name of secularism and modernity. Much needed reforms gave women more rights in the new nations, yet other people's rights and freedoms were restricted. Both sides are afraid that the other will impose their will on the other

side. This is not democracy, secularism, or freedom. Anytime you suppress another group's rights for your own, you are suppressing the whole community's rights. For decades, one side has been dominating the national dialogue and forcing its will upon the other side while hiding behind a mock secularism and modernism. This is not true secularism or modernism, and certainly not democracy. A true democracy respects the rights of both sides and allows each the right to voice their opinions. According to political scientist Alfred Stepan:

> Ataturk and Bourguiba are largely blemishes on the political records of their respective countries, in which religiously oriented political movements were violently and illegitimately excluded from the political arena. Rather than responding to this exclusion with hardline religious politics, however, the political leaders of the present-day AKP — which Tunisia's present-day Ennahda emulates — rose to success by championing democratic reforms, clean politics, and inclusive political platforms (Driessen 2012).

This may be an overly harsh assessment of two leaders who led their countries to independence and brought about many needed reforms, yet it does highlight the fact that their leadership did not bring about perfectly united modern democracies, as some of their glowing reports would suggest. In order to criticize the democratic and secular commitment of the current governments, one also needs to look at the groundwork laid for these in the previous decades.

In conclusion on studies on the compatibility of values between western and Muslim societies, Walzer, Redissi and Hamzawy are all critical of Islam's ability to be inclusive and democratic claiming that "the practices, as opposed to the ideologies, of fundamentalist religious movements, including Islamists, have been authoritarian rather than liberal, exclusionary rather than inclusive" (Benhabib 2014, p.354). Yet, Nader Hashemi points out the hypocritical stance of the west on Islam in democracy asking "why from the standpoint of western liberals there seems to be too much religion in public life of the Arab countries, while neglecting that in democratic-liberal societies religious questions touching on ethical issues such as abortion, homosexuality, gender roles, women's wearing of the hijab still remain deeply divisive issues, undermining political legitimacy" (Benhabib 2014, p.355). Indeed, in the US in particular, religious values are constantly invoked in various matters, and voters often look at

the religion of the candidates, who pander to religious voters by talking about their personal relationship with God on the campaign trail. Many states in recent years have put forth 'Religious Freedom Acts' which essentially give Christian citizens the right to discriminate and turn away potential customers taking part in what they see as anti-Christian activity. Hardly an inclusive and secular law. Rather than justifying Islamist calls for religion to be included in politics, such examples actually give justification to the secularist's fears that religion would indeed diminish democracy and create an exclusionary society. In light of this, critics need to be looking at all religions' compatibility with democracy, rather than just Islam's.

How can we argue about whether or not a Muslim country such as Turkey or Tunisia could be secular and have Islamic parties participate in politics, when we are using countries such as the United States and France as models of different types of secularism? France, the prime example of aggressive secularism, is so preoccupied with eliminating religion in the public sphere that it has become embroiled in controversy over dictating what a woman can wear and where she can wear it. The United States, the prime example of passive secularism, can barely have an election or hold a debate on a contentious issue without religious values being brought to the forefront. By this standard, they are hardly ideal role models for how to take religion completely out of politics. When you have a society that has strong religious beliefs, no matter what that religion, is it really possible or even ideal to remove religion completely from politics? Religion, for many people, plays an important part of day-to-day life. It can become enmeshed in many everyday tasks and issues. Politics also plays an important part of day-to-day life and is involved in daily issues. Because rules passed by governments effect daily life, and people's religion often gives people some guidance for that which politicians are ruling on, it can become difficult if not impossible to completely separate the two as they often overlap. If the government of a country is making a decision on abortion laws, for example, would that government be able to ignore if 90 percent of their constituents

belonged to a religious order which labeled abortion as a sin. If another government were proposing a ban on religious garments and 90 percent of their citizens believed that religion should not be displayed publicly, could that government ignore their voters? That is not to say that laws should necessarily be passed which could potentially hurt the other 10 percent; however, in both situations, it is impossible to ignore the will of the people and to take the religious beliefs of the people out of their decision-making. Having a political party that is outwardly religious should not negate the secular or democratic nature of a nation, but should be seen as giving a voice to all people no matter what their beliefs. In a democracy, the people ought to be able to choose if they want to vote the religious party in to office or not. By excluding the party from even taking part in elections would be to take away peoples voice and therefore, their democracy: "It is pointless to speculate about whether Islamists are truly democratic. What matters is to establish solid institutions that safeguard the possibility of robust public debate. Proportional representation is a good method whereby Islamists can be included in electoral competition while guaranteeing significant pluralities for other political trends within a national assembly" (Marzouki 2011, p.19). It could be that in time if a religious party gained more popularity and power that they may want to consolidate that power further and slowly start stripping away at democratic institutions and make a one-party rule. People could make this assertion about AKP in Turkey, Ennahda in Tunisia, or even a religiously biased party similar to the Republicans in the United States. Without allowing them into the political discourse; however, simply because of a fear of such a scenario before it has even come to light would be a mistake. Ben Ali tried this in Tunisia as the Kemalists had tried in Turkey and it only led to a backlash of religious fervor. Tunisians can look next door to their neighbor Algeria to see what results may come from forcing out a democratically elected Islamic party.

Furthermore, how could one take a stance that allowing religious parties to stand for election could lead down a slippery slope to a one-party rule system when their history has

shown them that it was the aggressively secular regimes that had in fact implemented such a system. By this measure, secular parties such as Nidaa Tounes or CHP could just as easily harbor such intent. It is important that institutions in a country are solid enough to withstand such a scenario, no matter what direction it comes from and this is more the problem than who is included in politics. The institutions in place and their effectiveness to safeguard against such gross overreach of power is what is important to determine the democracy of a country. Power can be corrosive and addictive for any leader, no matter which country, party or faith. Democratic institutions are vital for keeping them in check. In both cases, one can look to the records of democratic stability in the institutions over previous decades to see that there is already a fundamental problem facing democracy in the countries that needs to be overcome. In Turkey;

> The military prepared an entirely new constitution in 1982, one that fully restricted civil and political liberties such as freedom of the press and freedom of association. Even though the constitution has been amended many times since 1982, most recently with the democratic reforms undertaken by the AKP as part of Turkey's European Union accession process in the 2000s, the authoritarian nature of the political and legal system persists today. From the 1980s onwards, a number of deficiencies such as the lack of intra-party democracy, the military tutelage, the excessive restriction of freedom of association, freedom of the press and minority rights have hampered the democratic consolidation process (Göksel 2016, p.260).

In such examples, lack of democracy can be blamed on pre-AKP institutions just as well as more recent moves to restrict freedoms. While AKP still remains in power in Turkey, and the democratic future of the institutions are still in question under their rule, Tunisia is no longer governed by Ennahda. The current president and prime minister both come from the secular Nidaa Tounes, though Ennahda still holds a comfortably large number of seats in parliament. The party had handed over power to Nidaa Tounes in 2014 without any sign of hesitation to honor the democratic process:

> Instead of understanding the results of the elections as secularism's victory over Islamism, then, it seems both more accurate and more useful to see it as the manifestation of the quintessential expression of democratic exercise: alternation in power. In a symbolic gesture, after the first polls confirmed the election's results, the head of Ennahda, Sheikh Rashid al-Ghannoushi, called Nidaa's leader Beji Caid-Essebsi in order to recognize his party's defeat and congratulate his opponent on his victory (Ben Ismail 2014).

This gesture is one of the most symbolic and important parts of the elections, showing a peaceful turnover of power in the new democratic system.

Olivier Roy talked about the failure of political Islam and what he calls 'Post-Islamism' whereby the privatization of religion leads to a secular space in religion but not a decline in religion: "religious movements move from radicalism to moderation and accept the national state and convert to democratic rule" (Redissi 2013, p.382). Ennahda's change in recent years from an Islamist party to a Muslim Democrat Party may reflect this sentiment. Islam rises in politics as a response to the previous authoritarian and repressive regimes, but once that enemy is gone, there is no longer a justifiable need for it "While its rise as an alternative takes a long and disputable time, its decline seems rapid and unavoidable. This is at least the case of Tunisia's En-Nahdha Party" (Redissi 2013, p.382). To talk about Ennahda in terms of a rapid decline seems preemptive given their still large presence in parliament, yet the idea of them as an Islamic party set to take over government and create an Islamic state seems to fit this mold. In Turkey, on the other hand, AKP's power does not seem to be heading towards a rapid decline and the fate of their democracy at the hands of an Islamic party is an important topic of debate. Even in the face of declining relations with the Gülen movement, AKP still seems to have a firm grasp on power. It is yet unclear how these soured relations will effect the future of AKP's popularity and success in future elections.

While a number of Tunisian citizens have turned to extreme forms of Islam and even been recruited for terrorist organizations, it is difficult to say that Tunisians have turned their back on secularism and the West as many Arab states have. One can look at their relative democratic progress following the Jasmine revolution, and the Islamist party's willingness to step aside for a secularist party as a clear sign that the people want to move in a more secular direction, while still holding onto and appreciating their Islamic tradition. The words of L.B. Ware, as far back as 1985, ring just as true today as they did then: "It seems certain, then, that

the ruling establishment must strike a balance between the Arabo-Islamic heritage and a modernization stripped of its most offensive Westernizing connotations. Success in this venture may endow Tunisia with a new *authenticity* without, however, forcing it into the militant Islamic camp" (Ware 1985, p.44). Rather than denying the opposing ideologies of the other side, Tunisians must seek to accept and embrace each aspect of society, whether they agree or disagree, as part of the thread that weaves together the unique identity of Tunisia. Repression of the other, whether secular or Islamic, will only bring resentment and extremes. However, if they continue to work together throughout the democratic process, they can find a middle ground that combines all the social fabric of the country. Indeed this sentiment is representative in Ennahda's victory and subsequent relinquishing of power, showing that their inclusion in the process has not led to more strife, but rather to more cooperation. While all members of society inevitably will not agree, as in any country, the promise of a successful democratic process in Tunisia, as well as in Turkey, could give power to all voices:

> If Ennahda and the AKP can develop an authentic brand of religious politics that keeps them and everyone else in the democratic game, they could represent a worthwhile model for the many other Muslim-oriented parties in the region. And in the process they might create a new model of Muslim democracy that does not involve the surrender of their religious identity, but keeps it integrally tied to a firm respect for constitutional norms, liberties, and rights (Driessen 2012).

It is important that critics overcome the urge to classify Turkey, Tunisia or any other country in terms of strictly western models of secularism and modernization: "In analyzing the relations between Islam and modernity it is essential that both are seen, not as clearly defined and fixed entities, but as open to interpretation. Not only there are different modernities, but there are different Islams" (Kaya 2004 cited in Göksel 2016, p.255). There is a growing need to be sensitive to the different histories of secular development and forms of secularism and one cannot assume that what works in the west works everywhere or even that what works in Turkey will work in other parts of the Islamic world. It also should not be assumed that secularism necessarily leads to democracy or that democracy is dependent on secularism: "Democratic

voices that are non-secular and non-theocratic exist across the Middle East today, and not only in Tunisia. Now would be a good time to listen to what they have to say" (Hurd 2012). In today's world where there is so much friction between differing voices and so much misunderstanding and hatred, rather than pushing the other aside and repressing their voice for fear of what they might represent, a dialogue should be opened up to enhance understanding.

The Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Tunisia both began their post-independence with grand goals of becoming modern states, and to this end aggressive secularism was implemented. While there were many notable accomplishments made by their first leaders, there were also a lot of people who were sidelined by the new nations' top down approach. If the goal was to root out religion from society, then their aggressive top down approach proved to be ineffective as can be seen by the recent rise in Islamic parties. As for democracy, while controlling religion and their lofty goals of modernization were used to consolidate power, democracy was put on hold. This calls into question the compatibility of modernization and assertive secularism with democracy, though there seem to be fewer questions on this compatibility than on Islam's compatibility with democracy. In fact, modernization and secularism are more often thought of as being an integral part of a democratic society, though this is often based on cases in the West. While Turkey and Tunisia are both closely linked to the Western world, they are not directly part of it. Turkey is a country straddling the East and the West, while Tunisia sits just south of the Mediterranean in the North of Africa. They both have a religion and a history different from the countries of Europe, different from the Americas and different from each other. Modernization and secularism, which has worked in those countries, may not work in Turkey or Tunisia, but that does not mean that they cannot. They are unique countries with unique societies, and in order to implement any form of democracy or secularism, the countries dynamic make-up needs to be taken into account. It may be that passive secularism will be more suited to the countries, or that there is another option waiting

to be found which does not fit the mold of secularism, which has already been mentioned. However, seeing that the line between religion and politics is not easily distinguishable, even for Western Christian countries where Christianity often plays an important role even in the politics of secular nations, it should not be assumed that Islam and secularism are mutually exclusive. One thing that should be learned from both countries post-independence paths is that top-down approaches do not work in uniting a country or achieving long-term goals. Whether the government is secular or Islamic, their ideals should not be forced upon the other side. Both countries are deeply divided, and to exclude one side from the national dialogue will not help to silence that voice. The new governments, whether Islamist or not, should take note on the importance of inclusion for all. The pendulum has swung from one side of the aisle to the other, and the only way to stop it from going in the other direction again is to find a middle ground. All sides need to be given equal opportunities in an open democratic system. As for how secular or modern the nations wish to be, that should be left to the bottom-up forces of the country, not forced from above. Turkey and Tunisia are both at pivotal moments in their history currently, and the future of democracy and secularism are both precarious. Ennahda and AKP are in a unique position to prove to the world that Islam can in fact be compatible with democracy and modernism, though it is also up to other parties involved to show that they are also committed to an inclusive democracy. The world will be watching to see what becomes of these model democracies in the Islamic world, yet they should be prepared to expand their vision of what secularism and modernism entails.

CONCLUSION

As has been shown throughout this thesis, the religious parties in both Turkey and Tunisia have overcome many obstacles to get to where they are today. They have overcome much adversity and repression, and now are at the helms of power in their respective countries. They are thus at a crucial turning point in their history, and all eyes are watching to see how Islam and democracy plays out in these two model cases, which serve as an indicator for the compatibility for democracy, modernism, and secularism in the Muslim world. Turkey has long been held by Western nations as the example for the possibility of Islam's compatibility with democracy. However, in recent years, this reputation has taken a significant blow as relations between Turkey and the West have begun to decline, and democracy is being pushed to its limits by an ever more powerful AKP. As has been shown, AKP and Ennahda both claimed to be committed to democratic ideals and a modern and liberal society. A modern society in which religion is not controlled by a secular government, in the style of French laicism, but where religion is left free of government interference in a more passive secular nation, thus allowing for more equal respect and dignity, and personal liberty. Yet for critics of both parties, their professed commitment to democracy is shaped by instrumental rationality while they slowly take over the reins of power until they are able to implement their ideal religious government. Recent developments in Turkey have further fueled such suspicions by critics. For all their talk and show about being respectful of democracy, things have been changing in recent years in Turkey.

In 2001, AKP emerged at the center of the Turkish political scene with a party platform that included respect for human rights and freedoms, democracy and rule of law. Their first decade in power saw significant improvements in education, public health and transportation, millions were lifted out of poverty, the rate of enrollment for female students increased, and crucial developments were made in respect for human rights and democracy. The party started

as a sign of a new kind of Islamism, focusing on freedom and democratic ideals. Despite being an Islamic party, they initially argued in favor of changing Turkey to a passive secularism as opposed to aggressive secularism as seen in the case with Yalçınkaya in the previous chapter. In the case, AKP's interpretation of modernism, was not pushing secular behavior on citizens, but rather offering more freedom of religion and freedom of thought. Passive secularism would be more apt for what they argued for than the aggressive secularism of past regimes. With time, however, the party's calls for a more pious nation, efforts to build more mosques and religious schools and strengthen religious influence would undermine their claims to advocating for passive secularism. They pushed through democratic reforms in their first years in power, subdued the army and improved the country's human rights record. These reforms helped to pave the way for EU accession talks, but those are now going by the wayside as their commitment to democracy is being criticized for having taken a turn for the worst and progress in many areas has slowed down, or even worse, gone in the reverse. According to human rights groups such as Amnesty International, today their human rights record is dismal, and freedom of speech has taken a significant blow with the jailing of numerous critics and journalists (Amnesty International 2017). This reversal in democratic commitment has fed claims by critics that AKP was just playing the democratic game in order to shore up power, and once in a position of sufficient enough power was finally able to show their true colors. Using the metaphor used by Erdoğan himself, some fear they were finally in a position where they could get off of the train to democracy at their desired stop.

At the outset of their rule, democracy was in their best interest. Commitment to democracy was a rational choice and worked for their own benefit. However, with time it was no longer so. Democracy started to become more of a hindrance to their ultimate goal as they gained enough power that they no longer needed to play the democracy game. AKP had inherited a government, which was often kept in line by a staunchly secular military committed

to upholding Kemalist principles as well as a secularist judiciary. The EU talks with corresponding criteria provided a chance for AKP to change these institutions all in the name of democratic reforms: "Reforms aiming at complying with the Copenhagen criteria directly targeted the very heart of Kemliast power (namely the military, the judiciary, the Constitution/legal system and the Presidency) and were instrumental in securing the AKP's supremacy" (David 2016, p.482). Through democracy, the AKP was able to neutralize the threats to their existence from the previously existing institutions. Through the guise of democracy, they were able to reign in the military, eliminating the threat to their own power, and only once they had that secured were they able to begin reforming the judiciary and the media.

Many institutions in place were already prone to authoritarian rule, and now they had to reform them to work in their favor. They appropriated the Kemalist institutions, which already had an authoritarian tinge to them. With time, and often through democratic reforms, they were able to successfully commandeer the institutions built under the Kemalist regimes and make them work for them rather than against them. When one party is dominant, incentive for democracy is reduced. Under the post-revolutionary Republic, the Kemalists had a strong hold on power, and thus withheld from introducing a multi-party democracy for many years. Once a multi-party democracy was finally established, it was still an exclusive system designed to hold the Islamists at bay. Once AKP, an Islamist party, was finally able to enter politics, they had to work within the democratic system provided to them, which had been hostile to Islamic politics, until they had enough power to create a system less hostile to Islamic parties. Democracy, therefore, appears not to have been destroyed by AKP, but rather briefly adhered to, utilized and manipulated by the Party. The urge to attribute any failure of democracy in Turkey to Islam is misleading and shortsighted. The failure of democracy in Turkey has less to do with the religion of the current government, than the ability to manipulate the institutions

for one's personal power. Once democracy becomes a threat and enough power has been consolidated, it may be time to disengage for any political party, Islamic or not.

The most visible turning point for the AKP came in 2013 with the Gezi protests. A brief moment in Turkey's history where public will and free speech took over the main square at the heart of Istanbul. At this moment, democracy's commitment to free speech presented a real threat to AKP's legitimacy, and the government had the choice to let democracy reign supreme, or to suppress the people's right to free speech. Many reporting on these events claim that they chose the latter, and this would change their image as a liberal and democratic Islamic party: "The Gezi revolt heralded the end of the Turkish model, which had depended on the marriage of neo-liberalization and democratization through Islam and demonstrated outright the limits, failings, and weaknesses of this model in Turkey" (Yilmaz 2017, p.493). The suppression of the protesters was broadcast worldwide, as the government declared protesters as terrorists and moved to silence all dissenting voices. The Gezi protests were followed by a rise in the popularity of the HDP, People's Democratic Party, which would later be labelled as PKK sympathizers, and many members jailed.

The most recent and the biggest threat to the AKP would be the attempted coup of July 15, 2016. This would prove to be a test on the government's commitment to democracy, a test which by many accounts it is failing. Since the coup, tens of thousands of people from all sectors of society have been arrested on suspicion of being a part of the attempted coup. Anyone who has had any ties to Fethullah Gülen have been put at risk, including police officers, civil servants, teachers and even pilots. Thousands have lost their jobs, and the country has been plunged into a seemingly endless State of Emergency. The following spring, Erdoğan won a referendum on the constitution granting him immensely greater powers as the president. The new system has been sold to the people as one which resembles that of the US, yet critics say

that it fails to offer the same degree of checks and balances, but rather places more authority under the office of the president.

Critics claim that such developments have further increased authoritarian tendencies as the government has moved to suppress opposition, particularly from FETÖ following the failed coup attempt. Forms of dissent are conveyed as a sign of support for the attempted coup. Those who speak out against the repressive hand of the government after the coup are often seen as being supporters of it. Many fear the heavy handed policies the government has implemented in their attempt to crack down on the coup plotters and anyone whom they believe is associated with it. A sense of paranoia appears to have gripped the leaders of the nation, and the perception that their response has been too heavy handed has shattered the image of a democratic AKP, the poster child for Islam's compatibility with Democracy. Erdoğan has been a model for the Islamist world, as a promising leader for liberal reforms who does not overplay his religion. Yet, there are critiques about the AKP's approach to the opposition groups which are not associated with Gülenists as there have been a number of jailed journalists, jailed human rights activists, and thousands of other people jailed since the July 15th coup for various charges related to the coup.

Many staunch secularists assume that it is his religion which is leading Turkey down this path. However, another explanation is that he is merely following the same path as previous governments in consolidating power, and his effort to eliminate obstacles comes out of a reasonable fear that there are those who would like to take away AKP's power and return to pre-AKP days. While such mechanisms may not be at work, given Turkey's history, it is a fair assumption. AKP rode to power while professing to be the victim of the modernization reforms of the Kemalist elite. Indeed, as has been shown in previous chapters, the aggressive secular tendencies of past regimes had excluded religious groups from partaking in the democratic process. Now they were finally able to have their voices heard and used the victimization of

religion to appeal to the repressed masses. However, the days of being a victim have long passed. They now have a strong hold on power, making that argument no longer necessary. It is now time that they recognize that they are no longer the victims, and that they are the ones in charge and no longer with a need to jealously defend that power. Rather than make their opponents feel victims to the new Turkish system, they can now show that they can be democratic and create an all-inclusive Turkey, where all voices may be heard.

As the situation stands today, with the country precariously caught between a democratic system and claims of authoritarianism, Turkey has fallen from grace as the model candidate for Islam in democracy. Power has slowly been concentrated around one man, more liberal members of the party have slowly been pushed aside, and critics and the media have slowly been silenced. Critics of the possibility of Islam, secularism and democracy being compatible may feel vindicated by signs that religion is beginning to play more of an important role in society. Erdoğan has made very clear that it is his intent to raise a more pious generation, and the fruits of his efforts are abundantly clear in the rise of attendance to Imam Hatip schools, which have seen attendance rise from 60,000 students in 2002 to more than 1.1 million, making their students comprise of about a tenth of public school pupils (The Economist 2017). There have been critics about the new curriculum in the primary schools for changes such as removing evolution while adding the concept of Jihad. Prayer rooms are now required to be built in new schools. Under such conditions, a more religious youth as he desires is a strong possibility, a stark change from the aggressive secular tactics in previous decades. Many fear that such moves take the country further away from, not only aggressive secularism, but also secularism in general and more towards an Islamized Turkish society.

Having successfully gained power, only AKP is now in a position to decide which direction Turkey will go. Upon their rise to power, there is no doubt that Turkey was in need of some reforms. Turkey had been in need of changes to bring the country more in line with the

modern world when Ataturk rose to power, but the reforms were exclusionary and unwelcome by much of the population. Once AKP took the lead, they had the opportunity to correct such flaws in the democracy, and at the beginning, that is what they seemed to be doing. As their power grew; however, they seemed to be turning the tables on the secular elites. While some will say that it is the incompatibility of Islam and democracy which has brought about such a political situation, the lack of deeply rooted democratic institutions has certainly exacerbated the problem. It is following the example given by previous governments, and working within a state where democratic institutions are not well grounded. It has monopolized judicial power, jailed multiple journalists, and squashed dissent. This is not the first time in Turkey's history, however, that such circumstances have occurred. This time, in their effort to move away from the aggressive secularist policies of the past, it is feared that they are walking away from secularism altogether and moving towards a more Islamic system. The prospects for democracy in the near future in Turkey are now dependent on AKP's actions. It seems that Turkey needs much more time for opposing voices to find the will and incentive to share power together. In the meantime, the world needs another example for how Islam and democracy can survive side by side in one country.

As has been shown throughout this thesis, Tunisia has followed Turkey's example to some degree throughout their post-independence years. First, it was Habib Bourguiba who attempted to take Ataturk's example in modernizing the new Republic; then Ennahda using AKP as an example of a political party that could remain liberal and democratic, and advocating for more passive secularism as opposed to assertive secularism, while adhering to moderate Islamic ideologies. In recent years there seems to be a change; however, as Tunisia may be taking the lead in representing the model for a modern democracy that has successfully been able to include the participation of an Islamic party in a secular democracy. The post-revolution democracy of Tunisia is still very young and it is too early to say whether it will prove to be a

success, yet there have been promising signs in these early years. There are of course criticisms about Ennahda's commitment to democracy, and their record with the extreme Salafists is still being brought into question, yet they have also adhered thus far to the democratic process. This early in their political participation; however, AKP was still very much dedicated to the democratic processes in Turkey. It may be that with the right amount of power, Ennahda would soon turn in the same direction that AKP has taken. They have yet to achieve such a degree of power.

So far, Tunisia has survived its first few years of democratic transition, though it is still fragile. They are coping with a large number of citizens joining extremist jihadists groups to fight in Syria, Libya and Iraq. They have suffered from political assassinations in 2013 as well as an attack on the famous Bardo museum in 2015 and another attack in the same year on a beach resort in Sousse by extremists, both of which killed a number of tourists and created a negative image for this fledgling democracy. Opponents of Ennahda used the actions of the extremist Salafi groups in an attempt to discredit Ennahda. Some argue that while Ennahda preached reform, indeed they were turning a blind eye to radicals in the country. It appears that Ghannouchi was "advocating a tolerant approach to the violent Salafists of Ansar al-Sharia, even after their tactics shifted from attacking stores that sold alcohol and art galleries to a brazen attack against the US Embassy on 11 September 2012. Ghannouchi believed he could persuade Ansar al-Sharia not to interfere with the political process that he hoped would yield a significant win for political Islam" (Rowsell 2015, p.29). However, a political assassination led to a backlash against Ennahda and the government subsequently banned Ansar al-Sharia from meetings and labeled them a terrorist organization. Whether or not this was because of outrage from their actions or because they had to cover themselves from political backlash is up for interpretation.

In 2016, the party made a historic and conciliatory move to separate their political side from their Islamic branch. They decided to embrace a new identity as Muslim democrats, in the style of Christian democrats in Europe, rather than as an Islamist party. With this transition, they would move away from being a social movement; no longer taking part in cultural and religious activities. Though he stresses, that this does not mean that they have abandoned their religious ideals, as religion will continue to guide them in their decisions. Yet, they would still adhere to secular principles, without pushing their religion on society as a whole. The party was first developed as a reaction to the repression inflicted upon Islamists at the hands of the aggressive secular government, which restricted their personal freedoms. With the end of the authoritarian regime, this response was no longer a necessity. The party also wants to distance itself from the extremist movements, which have gained steam around the world under the distorted banner of Islamism.

In "From Political Islam to Muslim Democracy", Ennahda's founder, Rached Ghannouchi, gives a heartfelt explanation for why Ennahda decided to separate their political arm from their Islamic arm in May 2016, showing understanding of a need to separate the two in order to combat the threat of rising extremism. This shift was supported by 80% of the delegates in the Ennahda Party congress. He states that the necessity for Ennahda to struggle for religious freedoms is no longer existent as all Tunisians are now able to take advantage of the freedoms granted by the new constitution whether they be Muslims, believers of other faiths, agnostics or even atheists. Like AKP, they had been the victim of an oppressive system, but here he acknowledges that this is no longer the case. They need not play the role of the victim or the oppressed any longer. His claim that this separation of Mosque and state will better equip Tunisia in the fight against extremism seems truly genuine as he argues that it is repression of religion and beliefs that leads people down the path of extremism, as they are susceptible to distorted interpretations of their faith. It is through the teaching of true religion that the urge to

follow such strands of faith can be combatted against, and "The genuine separation of mosque and state and the effective governance of religious institutions will facilitate better religious education and reintroduce moderate Islamic thinking to Tunisia" (Ghannouchi 2016, p.64). A passive secular system, according to Ghannouchi, would be more effective than aggressive secularism in giving people more freedoms as well as fighting against extremism. He describes a successful blend of Islam and democracy as a bulwark against secular tyranny; "By showing that Muslim democracy can respect individual rights, promote social and economic opportunities, and protect Arab Islamic values and identities, the successful consolidation of democracy in Tunisia will serve as a rebuke to secular tyrants and violent extremism alike" (Ghannouchi 2016, p.67). Ghannouchi expresses his hope that Tunisia's example can inspire a debate about the compatibility of Islam and democracy and become a valuable model for the Muslim world.

They could very well become the model for the Muslim world, which Turkey had once promised to be, surpassing Turkey's effective combination of Islam and liberal democratic values. Ghannouchi further claims that the party's values were already in line with democratic principles, and their ideals have not changed, with Islam still guiding their actions. While Islam will still guide their principles, he asserts that the religious sphere should be managed by independent institutions, and politics and religion should be separated, thus allowing for a passive secularism as opposed to the aggressive secularism of previous regimes. His argument for such passive secularism seems sincere, yet skeptics still abound. If given the opportunity of greater power, would the party's actions have been different? 'Can he be taken at his word' is the crucial question many have. Ennahda has joined coalitions with secular governments, approved a constitution enshrining democratic institutions and mechanisms, and agreed that sharia would not be used as a source of legislation. In 2014, they graciously ceded power to the winning Nidaa Tounes in the first example of an Islamic party in the Arab world ceding power

to a secular party. These moves seem promising, but without having sufficient power to take control of the government, it will remain unseen whether or not Ennahda would take such an opportunity to consolidate power around their party given the chance. Any party in the world may be tempted, given the opportunity, to take as much power as they can grasp, but the mechanisms of Tunisian democracy and the public support, thus far has kept Ennahda's power at bay. This is in stark contrast to Turkey, where AKP still enjoys a majority of support throughout the country. Tunisia's new political institutions further illustrate an effective method of ensuring Tunisian democracy compared with the Turkish case: "One of the things Tunisians got right was the rejection of presidentialism in favor of parliamentary democracy. Tunisians recognized the dangers of presidentialism in a country with a weak democratic tradition and historic lack of checks and balances. Tunisians also chose proportional representation with a zero-percent national threshold, giving the greatest possible representation to different voices in parliament." (Sezgin 2014). This varies greatly from Turkey, which has recently accepted a Presidential system, and has a ten percent threshold that bars many smaller parties from taking part in the democratic process.

It is true, as has been shown throughout this thesis, that there was a top-down approach to modernization and secularism, which limited freedoms and was pushed upon the people in both Turkey and Tunisia. Often religion was manipulated and circumscribed in order to achieve desired results, and people were made to feel backwards if they were not living up to the new modern ideals. However, times have changed and AKP is now the party in power in Turkey, and Tunisia has achieved a revolution overthrowing the previous regime. The time to be the victim and be subjected to such policies has come to an end, and they now hold significant power. They have a chance to show the moral upper ground by including those who had excluded them previously and to support an all-inclusive democracy. By creating an all-inclusive democracy, which had not been offered to them before, they can show that they are

able to work together with all of their fellow compatriots. In Turkey, AKP had appealed to many people who were not necessarily religious, but who saw in the AKP a new hope for democracy and a party who was being pro-active in making improvements to the country. As they move further from their previous actions they may be solidifying their support from their base, but they are alienating those who would support them not because of their religious leanings, but despite them. For their long-term survival, it is important that they not exclude such vital members of their society.

It is also important that critics do not look at these two cases solely through the perspective of Islam versus democracy or Islam vs secularism. Islamist governments are hardly the only ones seeking to increase the visibility of their religion in their respective country. In Israel, there are prominent parties seeking a more overtly Jewish state, in India the BJP plays to Hindu nationalism, and in America, the Republican Party has introduced so-called Religious Freedom Bills and erected statues of the Ten Commandments on official government grounds. While troubling to some secularists in these countries, none of this is cause for excluding such politicians from democracy. In fact, such exclusion would be contrary to an open democracy. Nor are many observers accusing those religions of being incompatible with democracy. There may be flaws to Turkey's system, but democracy does not always come quickly. Determining Islam as the key obstacle to such democracy would be misleading. There have been flaws in Turkey's system for decades, and these are difficult to overcome. It seems that more time is needed to work out some of these problems, but the public will for a truly democratic system is there, and with time, the country will find the right blend of Islam, secularism, and modernism for their democratic system. Tunisia has had even less time to transition to a democratic system, and so it is still early to speculate about the possible success or failure of their experiment. Thus far, neither party has taken a large enough majority of the vote in order to consolidate power to their will as has happened in Turkey. Therefore, there is no one figure attempting to solidify his

position at the head of the government. Post-Independence, Turkey was saved the brutally entrenched authoritarian regime that Tunisia had in part, because their charismatic post-independence leader did not live long enough to become so corrupted by the weight of his own power as Habib Bourguiba had in Tunisia. The Turkish leader died, paving the way for more democratic openings; however limited. Now Tunisia looks to be the one spared of this fate, without a popular leader such as Erdoğan whose power is becoming further solidified.

AKP has been given a unique opportunity to show to the world Islam is compatible with democracy and modernity. Now, observers are watching nervously as many fear they are as squandering the opportunity and taking a path leading further in the opposite direction towards oppression and authoritarianism. However, it is not too late for them to prove the critics wrong. Though this may take years, they could very well still become the model needed for the Muslim world. There were flaws in the secular implementation in Turkey, and AKP broke through barriers put in their way by the staunchly secular government, offering a chance for a more egalitarian democracy. An opportunity, which it is now at risk of throwing away. The future of Turkey depends on how AKP proceeds in the coming years. If they both continue on the current path, Tunisia seems more likely to be the model for secularism and democracy in the short term. It is still unclear if Ennahda is truly committed to democratic ideals, and Nidaa Tounes as well for that matter, or if they are just paying lip service to liberal democracy due to insufficient power to do otherwise. For now; however, the parties involved in the post-revolution democracy have found the political will to share power and to support secular ideals while allowing for more religious freedom in the country. If it continues down this path, it will surely prove that modernism, secularism and democracy can indeed be effectively combined in a Muslim country. The world anxiously awaits to see what becomes of the Turkish and Tunisian experiences. Yet the fate of Islam and democracy, as well as Islam and secularism should not depend on the results of these two countries alone.

In the beginning of this thesis, it was pointed out that the concept of secularism is most often attributed to Western Christian countries. As such, standards for secularism are often made with a Western bias ignoring the individual country's needs. By the same biased standard, democracy is also often attributed to secular Christian countries, leading scholars to ask the question, 'Is Islam compatible with democracy?' The idea that democracy flourishes in Christian countries while failing in Islamic countries takes a very shortsighted vision of history while ignoring the history of Christian countries with authoritarian regimes, the unchecked supremacy of the Papacy, and the rise of fascism under Christian rule. In fact, even under the Islamic Ottoman Empire, while many Christian nations were under the rule of authoritarian monarchies that gave few rights to minorities, a great deal of autonomy was being provided to minority groups in Ottoman territory.

Asef Bayat astutely argues that "there is nothing intrinsic in Islam, and for that matter any other religion, which makes them *inherently* democratic or undemocratic. *We*, the social agents, determine the inclusive or authoritarian thrust of religion" (Bayat 2007, p,10). He goes on to argue that Christianity used to seem to be incompatible with democracy and that "Early Christian sects promoted loyalty to authoritarian rulers, as long as they were not atheists and did not harm the believers. Obedience was at the heart of Christian political thought, on the ground that higher powers were ordained by God" (Bayat 2007, p.10). Today there are even evangelical Christians who would argue that democracy was going against God's will. People's view of religious teachings is fluid and ever changing, and every religion is up for interpretation. Whether it be Christianity, Islam, Judaism or Buddhism, there are those who will interpret it in democracy's favor and those who will not. Like secularism, any failure of democracy in a country should be viewed not through the lens of religion alone, but through the institutions and the social actors who shape the institutions and the decisions made.

> We need to study even the political party in the context of the broader political society, that is, in its interaction with sociopolitical movements, charismatic eruptions, municipalities, and other

> forms of political leadership. A full analysis of political society should also incorporate how its interaction with civil society reshapes visions of sociopolitical unity, everyday practices, social uses of space, and relations to the economy (Tuğal 2009, p.262).

Too much emphasis should not be made on Islam vs. Democracy, or Islam vs secularism, when there are so many other factors to be considered in the making of a nation. The ruling party and their religion alone do not decide the outcome of the system. Furthermore, Islam, modernity, democracy and secularism all need to be given space for interpretation as there is not one single model of any one of these. Each one has been uniquely interpreted and displayed in countries and societies all over the world without ever being completely identical to another one. Over emphasizing a certain model, usually coming from western civilization, assumes both that the west does not have multiple interpretations of their own and that their systems are not riddled with problems of their own. This would be misleading. An intriguing further study on such a topic would be to compare such models to Turkey and Tunisia. Perhaps taking the United States and France, which are the frequent examples for secularism and laicite. Comparing the attitudes and beliefs of the citizens in the United States and France to those in Turkey and Tunisia regarding such topics as religion, religion's role in governance, the importance of secularism and democracy could help shed some more light on this topic.

It is still too early to say definitively that Turkey has been a failure or that Tunisia has been a success story. Either one could yet turn around and surprise those who are watching. Whatever the outcome in these two examples, even if their experiments fail, it should not be used as proof that Islam and Democracy are incompatible. Just as the believed compatibility of Christianity and democracy has changed with time, so may that of Islam and democracy. Observers are right to watch Turkey and Tunisia with both hope and skepticism, but these two examples alone will not be sufficient. Many more years and many more countries may yet offer proof that Islam, like Christianity, is indeed compatible with both secularism and democracy.

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