DEFINING AND REDEFINING SECULARISM ALLA TURCA

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Abstract: The paper captures the evolution of the Turkish understanding of secularism by emphasizing its specificity. Turkish secularism was designed by the Kemalist elite which instead of avoiding the interference of the state in religion, subjected Islam to tight control by creating the Directorate of Religious Affairs responsible for managing every aspect of faith and religion. This understanding of secularism differs from its contemporary definition according to which the state must keep an equal distance from all religions, granting them freedom of belief, and avoid imposing a state system based on religious rules. If at the beginning of the 20th Century Westernization was a central feature of the Kemalist project, excluding religion from the public sphere and promoting a top-down governance, a century later, due to its liberalization and opening, Westernization became the ally of the Islamic-rooted actors, providing them with freedom of religion and belief, and therefore, redefining secularism.

Keywords: secularism, Turkey, Islam, Kemalism, religious freedom

Heir of Atatürk's nationalist and secular project, successor of a multicultural and religious Empire, situated between East and West, Turkey is the land of paradoxes and exceptions. An identity "buffer zone" where apparently conflicting ideas mix up in order to create what we call Turkish identity. Turks are Muslims, their private life and moral standards being influenced and guided up to a certain point by Islam. In the meantime many Turks are secular, having a profound respect for their founding father's, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's secular principles, rejecting the involvement of religion in politics. We cannot deny any of these realities, and contrary to the general belief, the barrier between them is gradually fading away in the light of new interpretations and understandings.

Secularism: An idea(l),many interpretations

Before discussing the specificity of "Secularism *alla turca*",I shall define the very meaning of "secularism".A broad definition is provided by Elizabeth Shakman Hurd:"Secularism identifies something called 'religion' and separates it from the'secular' domains of the state, the economy and science. The 'secular', then,is associated with the worldly or temporal. It carries no overt references to a transcendent order or divine being."[1]According to Charles Taylor secularism has three dimensions: the first one consist in the separation of the church and state or the absence of God from politics; the second dimension or understanding is related to the status of religion in the public sphere, the later being „emptied of God(s)" and the void left being filled with „rationality", whether we talk about economy, culture, education, profession or recreation, a interpretation which brings secularism close to atheism. Last but not least secularism is defined also by the condition of

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[1]Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *The Political Authority of Secularism in International Relations*, in „European Journal of International Relations", 2004, vol. 10, no. 2, available athttp://faculty.wcas.northwestern.edu/~esh291/Elizabeth_Shakman_Hurd/publications_files/EJIRfinal.pdf (last visit: October 1, 2014)

faith in society and requires the transition from a society in which belief in God is axiomatic, undoubted to one in which faith is an option among others[2]. A similar distinction is made by José Casanova, according to whom we can talk about secularization as the „*differentiation of the secular spheres*(state, economy, science), usually understood as "emancipation" from religious institutions and norms", secularism as „the *decline of religious beliefs and practices*" and about secularism as „*the privatization of religion*", a precondition for liberal modern democracy[3].

The concept of „secular" preceded by several centuries its contemporary meaning. The adjective secular (from the Latin *saecularis*) was used in the thirteenth-century's Europe,often with a quite negative connotation,to distinguish between the religious clergy who lived in monastic seclusion and the secular clergy living in the wider world. Three centuries later „secular" lost its meaning of „Godlessness"or „profane" and too „secularize" meant to make „secular", „wordly", to transfer the religious institutions and property to civil use and possession[4].

An important step towards secularization was made by the Reformation, which reduced the role of the Church by making the individual directly responsible for the interpretation of God's will. Martin Luther challenged the authority of the pope by claiming that „The pope is not the head of all Christendom (...) the pope is only the bishop and pastor of the churches in Rome."[5]He also developed the doctrine of two kingdoms which distinguished „the temporal (kingdom), which governs with the sword and is visible" and „the spiritual, which governs solely with grace and with the forgiveness of sins."[6]The consequence of the Reformation was the liberation of the individual from the Church's control and support[7]. The religious wars against the Catholic Church ended with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, by „giving the Caesar what belongs to Caesar" and even more by enacting the principle of *cuius regio eius religio* of 1555, according to which every sovereign has the right to determine the religion of his state[8]. Since Westphalia religion has been privatized and marginalized, in order to secure the international order[9].

Another crucial step towards secularization was made in the time of the Enlightenment, when the „reason" liberated the men from superstitions, from the Church and the aristocracy. „Reason" replaced religion and became the main tool for the search of the truth. Liberty and equality become universal rights in the light of the French Revolution of 1789, while „ration" was strongly related to secularization seen as„'the disenchantment of the

[2]Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*,The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2007, pp.1-4.
[3] José Casanova, *Rethinking Secularization: A Global Comparative Perspective*, in "The Hedgehog Review", Spring &Summer 2006, p. 7, available online at http://www.iasc-culture.org/THR/archives/AfterSecularization/8.12CCasanova.pdf (last visit: October 7, 2014).
[4] John Keane, "Secularism?", in David Marquand and Ronald L. Nettler, *Religion and Democracy*,Series: Political Quarterly Special Issues, Blackwell Publisher, Oxford, 2000, p. 6.
[5]Timothy F. Full., *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 1989, p.510.
[6]*Ibidem*, p. 138.
[7] Alberto Martinelli, *Global Modernization Rethinking the Project of Modernity*, SAGE Publications, London, 2005, p. 6.
[8] Fareed Zakaria, *Viitorul libertăţii. Democraţia neliberală în Statele Unite ale Americii şi în lume*, Polirom, 2009, p. 38.
[9] Elizabeth ShakmanHurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2008, p. 3.

world', the emancipation of civil society and scientific knowledge from religious control, and the privatization of faith."[10]

But in the post-Westphalian context the European states lost their legitimacy granted before by the divine law. The quest for legitimacy created a new political subject, the citizen, and a new entity which is the nation. The newborn nation was legitimized by the development of a feeling of belonging and uniformity (later called nationalism), which opposed and alienated the "other". Paradoxically religion could be often found in the "nation-building recipe" as a significant "ingredient". Consequently, secularism came as a guardian of the religious "others" or minorities by promoting tolerance towards the latter.In other words secularism was seen as a guarantee of tolerance[11].

Despite this evolution the European history has encountered many varieties of secularism, which can be divided into two main traditions: the French or "Jacobin"laicism and Anglo-Saxon secularism,[12] although many people tend to use the two concepts as synonyms.Laicism comes from the French *lai* or *laique* (lay people in English), meaning „of the people", and distinguishes between lay members of the church and its clergy, the former being empowered vis-à-vis the clergy[13]. The concept „laicism" refers to an anticlerical worldview[14] originated in the Enlightenment critique of religion, according to which religion is an impediment to modern politics and provides for a strict separation of state and religion by pushing the religion in the private sphere.On the one hand, religion is excluded from the public sphere and banned from politics and on the other hand the state refrains from interfering in religion[15]. The only constitutionally laicist states in Europe are France and Portugal, in France, for example, no religious symbols are allowed in the public sphere, both crucifixes and headscarves being banned in public institutions and schools, and no religious groups are supported by the state[16].

In Anglo-Saxon secularism, religion is considered a source of identity and is not expelled from the public domain[17], religious symbols being tolerated[18]. The secular state keeps an equal distance from all the religious groups, without restricting their activity.

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[10] Alberto Martinelli, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

[11]Akeel Bilgrami, *Secularism: Its Content And Context*, Social Science Research council (SSRC) Working Papers, 2011, available online http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Secularism_Its_Content_and_Context.pdf (last visit: September 20, 2014).

[12] Elizabeth ShakmanHurd, *The Politics of Secularism…, cit.,* p. 23.

[13]Ayhan Kaya, *Laicism, Secularism, Religion and the Myth of Tolerance*, paper presented at The SecondInternational Conference on Religious Freedom"Tearing Down Walls: Achieving Religious Equality in Turkey", Berlin, December 4-5, 2013, available athttp://conference.archons.org/presentations/-/asset_publisher/cplG8Kxvongt/content/prof-dr-ayhan-kaya-laicism-secularism-religion-and-the-myth-of-tolerance-in-turkey- (last visit: September 22, 2014)

[14]Cemal Karakas, Turkey*: Islam and Laicism Between the Interests of State, Politics and Society*, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) Reports, No. 78, p. 7, available at http://www.hsfk.de/downloads/prif78.pdf (last visit: September 28, 2014).

[15]Erdal Safak,*Laicism and Secularism in Turkey*, in „The Journal of Turkish Weekly", May 30, 2005, available at http://www.turkishweekly.net/op-ed/1180/laicism-and-secularism-in-turkey.html (last visit: September 18, 2014).

[16]Cemal Karakas, *op. cit*., p. 8.

[17] Elizabeth ShakmanHurd, *The Politics of Secularism…, cit.,* p. 5.

[18]GulceTarhan, *Roots of the Headscarf Debate: Laicism and Secularism in France and Turkey*, in "Journal of Political Inquiry", 2011, no. 4, available at http://www.jpinyu.com/uploads/2/5/7/5/25757258/roots-of-the-headscarf-debate-laicism-and-secularism-in-france-and-turkey.pdf (last visit: October 4, 2014).

Moreover its reponsibility is to assure the freedom of belief, and therefore, to "protect the free exercise of religion"[19] and to abstain from favoring a particular sect[20]. Consequently, secularism lays special emphasis on the concepts: the freedom of religion and tolerance, neutrality and impartiality. This version of secularism can be called liberal.

Lâiklik: History and Meaning

The history of the Muslim word is often blamed for the lack of secularism in this area, the Islamic countries being deprived of a secular tradition. During the Ottoman empire the sultan was considered not only the ruler of the state but also the Caliph of all Muslims. However, the preservation of the empire was the duty of a group of secular officials. Moreover, the Ottoman empire had a second source of law besides Islamic law (*Şeriat*),which was the secular imperial law*(örf* or *kanunnânme)*. This dual secular-Islamic state tradition (*din-u-devlet*) is regarded as the root of the Turkish separation of religion and politics[21].

The 19th Century's *Tanzîmât* movement (1839)[22] played an important role in the empire's secularization.The *Tanzîmât* reforms begun with the Edict of the Rose Garden (Gülhane Hatt-i Serifi), whichinter alia guaranteed the equality of Muslims, Christians and Jews before the law[23]. Although the *Sharia* was not completely abolished, its sphere of action being limited to the family matters of Muslims, the Ottoman law was secularized.In 1843 a new penal code was introduced, which recognized the equality of Muslims and non-Muslims and introduced mixedtribunals for commercial cases involving foreigners. Moreover, a year later the death penalty for apostasy from Islam was abolished, a new commercial code (1850) inspired by the French commercial law and a maritime trade code (1863) were introduced. Starting with 1867 foreigners were allowed to owe land in the empire and from 1869 on they were judged by secular courts, called *nizamiye.[24]*

The secularization process continued in the field of education. Secular state schools were created in order to educate the future administrators, diplomats, writers, doctors and academics, of the empire, regardless their religion. Jewish, protestant and catholic foreign missions were even allowed to establish their own schools in the empire, attended by Muslims too[25].

The idea of separation of religion and state was promoted by prominent figures among the Young Ottomans and later among the Young Turks. For instance Mustafa Fazıl Pasha, financer of the Young Ottoman movement who later was forced into exile, blamed Islam for the backwardness of the empire and called for a secular state[26].Ahmet Rıza Bey, the founder of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), the branch of the Party of Union and Progress in Europe, wrote against the interference of religion in politics, but without

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[19] José Casanova, *op.cit.*, p. 11.
[20]Erdal Safak,*op.cit.*.
[21]UmutAzak, *Islam and Secularism in Modern Turkey.Kemalism, Religion and the Nation State*, I.B. Tauris, London, 2010, pp. 2-3.
[22] Robert Mantran, *IstoriaImperiuluiOtoman*, Bic All, București, 2001, p. 390.
[23] Alan Palmer, *The Decline and Fall of the Ottoman Empire*, Barnes and Noble, 1994,pp.106-107.
[24] Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey. A Modern Hıstory*,I.B. Tauris, London, 1993, p. 61.
[25]*Ibidem*, p. 62.
[26]TuncaySaygın, Mehmet Önal, *"Secularism" From the Last Years of the Ottoman Empire to the Early Turkish Republic*, in "Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies", 2008, vol. 20, no. 7,p. 29.

antagonizing Islam[27]. Probably the most influential thinker of the CUP was Ziya Gökalp, who believed that the empire must turn into a secular Islamic nation in order to become part of the West. Although his solution seems to be contradictory (calling for both an Islamic and secular nation, moreover for an Islamic nation integrated in the West), it was not. In his opinion Islam was part of the Turkish national identity but should have been reduced to a private matter and separated from politics[28].

The greatest step towards secularization was made by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the "father" of modern Turkey. Secularism is one of the six principles of the new state's ideology, Kemalism,[29] named after its founder.The secularization of the Turkish state had evolved in three phases. The first phase was the symbolic secularization in which sacred symbols of Islam were transformed into profane by adopting the Latin alphabet, Western styles of clothing, the Gregorian calendar, introducing of Western music in school and making Sunday instead of Friday the weekly holiday. The second phase was the institutional secularization, which aimed to diminish the role of Islam in the state by abolishing the Caliphate on March 3, 1924, the Sufi orders and the religious movements. The third phase, functional secularization, aimed to change the education and law by adopting the Swiss Civil Code and unifying all the educational establishments under the control of the state[30].Moreover, secularism was introduced in the Constitution as an irrevocable provision[31].

Yet Turkish secularization was not complete in its Western sense.Sunni Islam as a system of beliefs dissociated from its practices became one of the pillars of the national identity, aiming to unite, homogenize and discipline the citizens, while other religious groups, including Alevis, were excluded from the nation.Only a day after the abolition of the Caliphate, a new religious institution, the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Diyanet), was created in order to deal with the issues of faith and ritual of the citizens. Diyanet has been playing an important role in religious education, organizing Quran courses, pilgrimages to Mecca, forming the imams having even the power to decide the content of the sermons[32]. According to Ali Bardakoğlu, the president of Diyanet, the Directorate "promotes authentic knowledge; it strives to educate people about their religious belief and practices in the light of sound knowledge and scholarship."[33]Of course the authentic knowledge of which he talks about is Sunni Islam in its form promoted by the state.

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[27]*Ibidem*, p. 33.

[28]Üner Daglyer,*Ziya Gökalp on Modernity and Islam: the Origins of an Uneasy Union in Contemporary Turkey*, in "Comparative Civilizations Review", Fall 2007, no. 57, p. 58, available at
https://journals.lib.byu.edu/spc/index.php/CCR/article/viewFile/13052/12913 (October 7, 2014).

[29]Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, Routledge, London, 1993, p. 63

[30]TalipKucukcan, *State, Islam, and Religious Liberty in Modern Turkey:Reconfiguration of Religion in the Public Sphere*,in "BYU Law Review", 2003, no. 2, pp. 487-488, available
athttp://digitalcommons.law.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2156&context=lawreview(last visit: September 28, 2014).

[31] Art. 2 and Art. 4, in *Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, available at
http://global.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/constitution_en.pdf (last visit: October 7, 2014)

[32]Radu Gabriel Safta, CălinFelezeu, *TurciacontemporanăîntremoştenireakemalistăşiUniuneaEuropeană*, CA Publishing, ClujNapoca, 2001, pp. 65-66.

[33]SinemGürbey, *Islam, Nation-State and Military: A Discussion of Secularism in Turkey*, in „Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East", vol. 29, nr. 3/2009, p. 10.

In order to become compatible with the Kemalist project, Islam was also subjected to modernization.In 1928 a committee was established for this purpose, its chairman, Mehmed Fuad Köprülü claimed that: "In the Turkish democracy, religion should also manifest the vitality and progress which it needs…(…) Religious life, like moral and economic life, must be reformed on scientific lines, that it may be in harmony with other institutions."[34]

The „reformed" Islam was used in the Kemalist rhetoric in order to develop the soldiers' patriotic feeling and devotion to the state. The Islamic conception of martyrdom played a significant role in this process: those who defended the secular Constitution of the state, the sacred interest of the nation were promised a reward in heaven. This "function" of the military service was disseminated by the Diyanet through the *Askere Din Kitabı* (Book on Religion for Soldiers) in 1922[35]. The secular state was, therefore, defended by pious soldiers. Considering the low rate of literacy in Turkey, the army was engaged also in the national identity formation process, being called by Atatürk the "grand national school of discipline", which had to fight not only political but social, economic and cultural wars as well[36].If the Sufi orders and other Islamic groups survived the regime, as long as they were invisible in the public sphere, the Islamist political parties,anti-secular and anti-Western movements which tried to politicize religion from below were banned.Kemalist secularism was an authoritarian and assertive secularism, the state excluded religion from the public domain and played „an assertive role as the agent of a social engineering project that confines religion to the private domain"[37]

In spite of and probably due to assertive secularism Islam remained a significant actor in the Turkish social and political context. Since the 1950s political parties used religion in order to mobilize the electoral support of conservative voters. Islamism emerged from a democratic system and officially entered the Turkish political scene in the 1970s with Necmettin Erbakan's *Milli Görüş* (National View), an anti-Western, Islamic and nationalist political movement[38]. The movement established several parties but eventually were all banned from politics.In 1995 Erbakan succeeded to form a government for a short period[39], until the army forced him to resign. The military junta, assumed the role of guardian of secularism and carried out coups whenever secular nature of the state was threatened[40].

Cemal Karakas calls the Turkish secularization process a "Kemalist Tripod" of religion, nation and laicism. He argues that the fusion of religion and nation was an outcome of the Turkish War of Independence (1919-1920), when Mustafa Kemal enjoyed the support of both Sunni Muslims and Alevis, Muslim identity being used as a unifying force, even

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[34] Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Oxford University Press, London, 1968, p. 414.

[35]SinemGürbey, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.

[36]*Ibidem*, pp. 13-14.

[37]E. Fuat Keyman, „Assertive Secularism in Crisis: Modernity, Democracy, and Islam in Turkey", in Linell E. Cady, Elizabeth ShakmanHurd, *Comparative Secularisms in a Global Age*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p. 144.

[38]Ihsan Dagi, *Transformation of Islamic Political Identity in Turkey: Rethinking the West and Westernization*, „Turkish Studies", 2005, vol. 6, no. 1, p. 5, available at http://www.policy.hu/dagi/leftmenu/files/Transformation%2520of%2520Islamic%2520Political%2520Identity.pdf (last visit: October 7, 2014).

[39]AsefBayat, *Post-Islamism: The Changing Faces of Political Islam*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2013, p. 10

[40]Michel Bozdémir, *Turquie: entre Islam et Europe*, Ellipses, Paris, 2007, 62-63.

though, soon after the proclamation of the Turkish Republic the display of religious symbols in public was[41].

  As showed above the Kemalist secularism or *lâiklik* although inspired by the French laicism, is different from both laicism and Anglo-Saxon secularism. According to Turhan Feyzioğlu Turkish secularism meant"taking religion out of politics while keeping the state involved in religious affairs."[42]Consequently, religion was not disestablished but placed under state control, used and reinvented in the national interest[43].Banning religious symbols in public space and seeing religion as an obstacle to modernizationare the only things Kemalist secularism and French laicism have in common, while understanding religion as a source of identity is the only aspect that brings Turkish secularism close to its Anglo-Saxon counterpart.Unlike French laicism, Kemalist secularism did interfere in religion. It was far from being neutral and impartial, as it favored Sunni Islam. Moreover, Kemalist secularism did not guarantee the freedom of religion.

Redefining Secularism

  The Kemalist interpretation of secularism was challenged in the 1980s. Besides the emergence of religious actors on the political and social scene, the army itself adopted moderate Islam in order to unite the divided society. Islam was used "as an aid to populist legitimation and popular control"[44], in a process called by Cemal Karakas "re-politicization of religion from above" through the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis[45], according to which Turkish culture was the result of pre-Islamic and Islamic elements.Still, the headscarf met the army's opposition and paradoxically, the 1982 Constitution banned it from higher education institutions for the first time since the creation of modern Turkey, leading to protests and politicization of the headscarf[46].

  The pro-Islamic evolutions and liberalization process of the 1980s paved the way for change. The Kemalist definition of secularism was contested by the Justice and Development Party (AKP), a self-proclaimed conservative democrat and pro-European party which rose from the ashes of Erbakan's Welfare Party[47].Since 2002, when the AKP came to power, the party has been suspected of having a hidden Islamic agenda, both by domestic and international observers. This suspicion was strengthened by the party's attemptin 2008 to lift the veil ban in universities[48]. The AKP was accused of trying to impose the headscarf on women and to turn it into a political symbol.As a response to its critiques the AKP party

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[41] Cemal Karakas, *op. cit*., pp. 8-9.
[42] Turhan Feyzioğlu, "Türk İnkılabının Temel Taşı: laiklik," in Ethem Ruhi Fığlalı, *Atatürkçü Düşüncesinde Din ve Laiklik*, ATAM, Ankara, 1999, pp. 137–198 cited in M. Hakan Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, Cambridge Uniersity Press, Cambridge, 2009, p. 37.
[43]*Ibidem*, p. 38.
[44]William Hale, *Identities and Politics in Turkey*, Paper prepared for the „International Affairs Laboratory" (IAIR9822), Turkey Group, Istituto Affari Internationali, Rome, June 1998, p. 3.
[45]Cemal Karakas, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.
[46]GulceTarhan, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
[47]E. Fuat Keyman, Ziya Öniş, *Turkish Politics in a Changing World. Global Dynamics and Domestic Transformations*, Istanbul Bilgi University Press, Istanbul, 2007, p. 19.
[48]Valorie K. Vojdik, *Politics of the Headscarf in Turkey: Masculinities, Feminism, and the Construction of Collective Identities*, „Harvard Journal of Law and Gender", 2010, vol. 332, no. 2, p. 671, available at http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/jlg/vol332/661-686.pdf(last visit: October 8, 2014)

defended its position by claiming that the ban was discriminatory and violates the freedom of religion. Although the Constitutional Court rejected the AKP's proposal[49], many universities did allow the access of students wearing headscarves after the ruling party promised to support them in case they would encounter problems[50].

The party continued to fight for the right of pious women to wear the headscarf, backed by the majority of citizens, considering that 70% of Turkish women wear headscarves[51] and only around 30% of Turkish citizens opposed the measure[52]. The headscarf ban in public offices was finally lifted on the 30th of September 2013[53]. A year later another controversial measure was adopted, the government allowed young students (starting from the fifth grade) to wear headscarf while on the other hand banned make-up, tattoo and piercings in public schools[54].

The headscarf has been a central issue of Turkish domestic politics and a dividing line between the old and the new emerging definition of secularism. While the Kemalists claim that the headscarf ban defends the secular nature of the state by keeping religion out of the public sphere, the AKP denounces it as being anti-secular[55], and calls for the freedom of conscience and religion, in accordance with the European values. Both Kemalists and AKP supporters call themselves guardians of the "true" secularism, but they have diverse views on what secularism is: Kemalist secularism or Anglo-Saxon, liberal secularism. If in the 20th Century the pro-Western rhetoric was used mainly by the Kemalist elite and engaged in the secularization process, today is the legitimizing tool of an Islamic-rooted party's actions.

A question emerges: To what extent is the AKP willing to secularize the society? Steps towards a freedom-based secularism were made, but most of the time the beneficiary of the AKP's secularization process was the Sunni Muslim community. The secularization path the ruling party claims to follow requires impartiality, tolerance and equal rights for all the religious groups, a stage not yet reached by Turkey. Of course, we cannot denied the progress made in this direction, Christians and Jews were promised religious courses[56], the Mor

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[49]MetinToprak, NasuhUslu, *The Headscarf Controversy in Turkey*, in „Munich Personal RePEc Archive", 22 November 2008,p. 48, available at http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/16052/1/MPRA_paper_16052.pdf(last visit: October 8,2014).

[50] Jonathan Head, *Quiet end to Turkey's college headscarf ban*, in „BBC News", 31 December 2010, available at http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11880622 (last visit: October 8, 2014).

[51]Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, *Turkey: Situation of women who wear headscarves*, „UNHCR-The UN Refugee Agency", available online at http://www.refworld.org/docid/4885a91a8.html(last visit: October 8, 2014).

[52]Ali Çarkoğlu, Ersin Kalaycıoğlu,*The Rising Tide of Conservatism in Turkey*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2009, p. 106.

[53]HüseyinHayatsever, *Government takes steps on headscarf, Kurds, electoral system*, in „Hürriyet Daily News", September 30, 2013, available athttp://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-to-lift-ban-on-headscarf-introduce-kurdish-education-with-democracy-package-.aspx?pageID=238&nID=55393&NewsCatID=338(last visit: October 9, 2014).

[54]***, *Gov't frees headscarf for students, bans make-up, tattoos and piercings*, in „Hürriyet Daily News", September 27, 2014, available at http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/govt-frees-headscarf-for-students-bans-make-up-tattoos-and-piercings.aspx?pageID=238&nID=72245&NewsCatID=338 (last visit: October, 9, 2014).

[55]UmutAzak, *Beyond the Headscarf: Secularism and Freedom of Religion in Turkey,* in "Turkish Policy Quarterly", 2013, vol. 11, no. 4, p. 91, available at http://www.turkishpolicy.com/dosyalar/files/vol_11-no_4%20azak.pdf (last visit: October 9, 2014).

[56]***, *Christian students to get their own religion classes*, Turkey's education minister says, in „Hürriyet Daily News", October 9, 2014, available at http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/christian-students-to-get-their-own-

Gabriel monastery was resturned to the Syrian Christians, a university was named in the memory of a prominent figure of Alevism, but there are still many "gaps": the Greek Orthodox Seminary of Halki is still closed, the Alevi places of worship are not recognized and Islam is still subjected to state control[57]. It depends on the AKP if freedom-based or liberal secularism will continue to mark the secularization process of Turkey or if it will turn up to be merely a rhetoric.

Both Islam and secularism are defining features of the Turkish identity. Both were subjected to the interpretation of the ruling class, defined and redefined in order to make them compatible with their political and social agenda. As shown above, Islam was used as a tool of unification in the nation-building process and even as an instrument of secularization in the Kemalist understanding of secularism, while today the idea of liberal secularism is used by the religious conservative elite in order to free religion. In the Turkish context secularism turned into a contradictory idea with several facets and an "object of desire" of both Kemalists and pious Muslims. Serious public and political debates are needed in order to reach a common groundand to transform Turkey into a real secular and tolerant democracy.

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