Islamization in Turkey: Political Parties, Civil Society Groups, and Radical Islamist Organizations

Based on Birol Yeşilada’s analysis with substantial revisions
Mark O. Hatfield school of Government
Vocabulary of Islam in Turkey

• Tarikat—religious orders or “fraternaties” associated with particular teachers or sect leaders.
  – Nurcu, Nakşibendi, Ticani

• Sufism—mystical version of sunni Islam, these are the source of whirling dervishes.

• Alevi—Shiite Turks, kurds and arabs. Very eclectic religiosity (viewed as apostate by Iran, and Sunnis). They are strongly pro-laicism because of treatment by sunni radicals. In 1993 a crowd set fire to a hotel hosting Alevi conference killing 36.

• Fetullah Gulen: teacher, businessman, a leader in the Nurcu sect by dint of widespread following and resources. Based in the U.S. Owns Zaman paper, and several t.v. stations.

• Sait Nursi—Sheik kurdish cleric and islam reformist of the 1930s source of Nurcu movement (followers of the light.) Moved abroad with guest workers.

• Necmettin Erbakan—Creator of Milli Görüş. Founder of National Salvation (MSP), Prosperity or Welfare (Refah), Virtue (Fazilet) which split to become AKP (adelet ve kalkima) and Felicity (saadet) parties.

• Nakşibendi—Sunni dervish order. A source of resistance to early republic. The order of membership of Ozal, Erbakan, and members of MUSIAD
Perception of Islamist Threat in Turkey

- Religious orders, known as tarikat, provide organizational networks for followers of different congregations.
- Their goal is a global JIHAD that dates back to 1976 Sharia Congress in Pakistan.
- In Turkey, their agenda took off in the 1980s when Turkish Islamists collaborated with the Saudi and other Gulf countries to bring Islamist capital to Turkey.
- They use safe places like the US and Western European countries to expand their financial empires.
- These groups are engaged in dissimulation until they eliminate secular groups’ and TGS’s power in Turkey.
- Current President, Prime Minister, cabinet members and top bureaucrats are members of radical religious orders and reject “laicist” nature of the State.

Wednesday, June 1, 2011
What’s fueling rising religiosity Islamism in Turkey

• The society is already conservative and increasingly suspicious of outsiders (esp. Westerners).
• Dissatisfaction with traditional political parties.
• Economic and financial crisis of 2001.
• EU policies towards Turkey.
• US policies in the region.
• Ability of the Islamists to come to the political forefront since 1982.
• The role of Islamic capital in Turkey.
• Anti–US conspiracy theories promoted by these groups.
Political Islam in Turkey

- Early reversion against secularism led by CPP in 1950. Outreach to Naksibendi order, and relaxation of imam hatip controls.
- DP reached out to Ticani and Nurcus.
- Erbakan’s NSP participates in governments in 1970s, then as Refah (welfare) and Virtue (fazilet) in 1990s.
  - Banned in 1997 after speech in Ankara suburb.
  - Sursuluk incident also undermined TPP–Refah coalition in exposing role of “deep state” in PKK struggle. This is the idea that a secret organization of government leaders, security services, and organized crime used Hizbollah, and hit squads to attack PKK (and rival mobs) supporters in Turkey and elsewhere. Bodies of Kurdish TPP minister, Security general and rightwing terrorist found in wreck. They were returning from a meeting with Interior minister.
Political Islam in Turkey

• Mid 1990s shift
  – rise of MUSIAD industry on back of exports and European and Saudi investment houses.
  – Split from Milli Görüş ideas
    • Erbakan inward looking and nationalistic
    • Dissidents from Anatolia and Erdoğan + Gül support liberalization and exports/engagement.

• Mayors like Gül and Erdoğan were successful anti-corruption and distanced from extremist acts of early 1990s. Had their own power base and support from Musiad and abroad.

• Refah and Fazilet associated with Wakifs that had success legitimacy in rural areas, but also in gecekondo communities of major cities. They provided aid and maintained networks while others operated outside.

• AKP is oriented toward European Union.
Political Economy of Islamic Politics in Turkey

• Mid 1990s shift is important because
  – rise of MUSIAD industry on back of exports and European and Saudi investment houses.
  – Shift to Export-Oriented production and infrastructure in Anatolia
  – Economic base of AKP is commercial and outward oriented.
    • Outward toward middle east
    • Outward toward Europe, U.S. and far East (trilateral countries with all the rich consumers like us.)

• Commercial business and financial base and new outward world view expands AKP appeal beyond far and religious right.
• The commercial base, and mass appeal constrains AKP’s Islamist tendencies, party discipline against overly radical members.
Changing Values
Religiosity 1990–2009
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Religious faith; Obedience</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Determination, perseverance/Independence</th>
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<td>18.70%</td>
<td>31.60%</td>
<td>31.40%</td>
<td>16.50%</td>
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<td>18.40%</td>
<td>30.70%</td>
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<td>28.80%</td>
<td>20.80%</td>
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<td>33.40%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>22.10%</td>
<td>39.10%</td>
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<td>28.70%</td>
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<td>2.20%</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5.80%</td>
<td>16.60%</td>
<td>28.00%</td>
<td>28.40%</td>
<td>21.20%</td>
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So?

• The two countries that display strong traditional values and strong survival values are Poland and Turkey.
  – In both countries secular values are significantly lacking even though Poland was ruled under a communist system for four decades and Turkey has had a laïcist political system since 1923.

• Furthermore, in both cases values associated with economic and physical survival dominate.

• Results from Turkey confirm findings of Ersin Kalacioğlu on rising religiosity in Turkey since 1994 and that the entire electorate shifted to the right of the ideological spectrum highlighting major voter realignment in this country
<table>
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<th>how important in your life: religion (Q1F)</th>
<th>how much confidence in: church (Q63A)</th>
<th>how much confidence in: armed forces (Q63B)</th>
<th>political system: strong leader (Q66A)</th>
<th>political system: experts making decisions (Q66B)</th>
<th>political system: the army ruling (Q66C)</th>
<th>political system: democratic (Q66D)</th>
<th>political view: left-right (Q57)</th>
<th>how often attend religious services (Q25)</th>
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<td>-.029</td>
<td>.042</td>
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<td>-.061**</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>-.188**</td>
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</table>
Islamic Capital in Turkey: How it started
This is the center of all Islamic finance and future investments in Turkey. Today, the Islamists capitalists are known as the Anatolian Tigers and have control over a vast empire that extends around the globe.

Wednesday, June 1, 2011
Islamists action plan

Capture the State from within:
– Support center-rightist political parties at elections in return for protection and easing of secular restrictions.
– Educate the masses at the mosques and dormitories
– Place graduates in State institutions and esp. the police
– Build an economic support base,
– Establish political parties when economic based is sound.
– Enter into coalition governments and place followers in key positions
– Infiltrate the Turkish military.
– Change the constitution.
Long road ahead: Patience is Virtue

SCHOOLS & EDUCATION

FINANCIAL NETWORK
Domestic and International

CENTRAL ORG TARIKAT OR COMMUNITY

POLITICAL ALLIANCES
Other Tarikats AND Secular Actors

STATE INSTITUTIONS

SECURE SYMPATHY OF POWERFUL INTERNATIONAL ACTORS (i.e., EU, USA)
Changing political landscape in Turkey

Turkish public was becoming more right wing (ideologically) over the last two decades. The traditional center had collapsed and the entire voter bloc had moved to the right supporting ultra nationalist and Islamist political parties. The latest wave of data shows a shift back towards the center.
Changing political landscape in Turkey

Wednesday, June 1, 2011
which political party would you vote for (Q75a)

- TR – Justice and Development Party AKP
- TR – Motherland Party ANAP
- TR – Republican People's Party CHP
- TR – Democrat Party DP
- TR – Demokratik Sol Parti DSP
- TR – Nationalist Action Party MHP
- TR – Felicite Party SP
- TR – Social Democrat People's Party SHP
- TR – Other
which political party would you vote for (Q75a)

 reliurope leaders should not influence government decisions (Q41B)
Which political party would you vote for (Q75a)

- TR – Justice and Development Party AKP
- TR – Motherland Party
- ANAP
- TR – Republican People’s Party CHP
- TR – Democrat Party DP
- TR – Demokratik Sol Parti DSP
- TR – Nationalist Action Party MHP
- TR – Felicite Party SP
- TR – Social Democrat People’s Party SHP
- TR – Other

It is alright to live together without getting married (Q47D)
Intolerance toward Neighbors

- people of different race
- immigrants/foreign workers
- drug addicts
- homosexuals
- jews
- gypsies
- christians

Justice and Development Party AKP
Republican People’s Party CHP
Democrat Party DP
Democratic Society Party DTP
Nationalist Action Party MHP
Felicite Party SP

Wednesday, June 1, 2011
### National Election Results in Turkey, 1987-2007

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<td></td>
<td>% votes</td>
<td>Seats</td>
<td>% votes</td>
<td>Seats</td>
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<td>23.3</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>550</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Democracy satisfaction

Not at all: %44

Ave. 4,3

Very satisfied: %30

Ave. 1,30
Religiosity (Q: How religious are you?)

Not at all: \%210

Somewhat not religious: \%50

Somewhat religious: \%110

Very religious: \%180

Very much religious: \%150

\%7

\%16

\%74
Laicist (secular) versus Islamist in Turkey

- Moderate to hard line Islamists (7 – Islamists) represented by 46.8 percent!
- 76 percent oppose an Islamic State and the rule of law based on the Sharia. But 52 percent a mixture – add favor Islamic family law!
- Only 25 percent viewed the military as the sole savior of laicism.
- Among those surveyed, 55 percent firmly believe that the people can defend laicist order on their own.
- These results really fly in the face of the “chicken little” calls of the military.
Key political figures over the years: Turgut OZAL, Recep Tayyip ERDOGAN, Bulent ARINC, Abdulkadir AKSU, Ali SAHIN, Ali BABACAN, Ali COSKUN
Hierarchical Organization of the Gulen Cemaati (Community)

- Istisare Grubu (Governing Group)
  7 members led by Fethullah Gulen

- Dunya Imami (Global Imam)
  selected from the 7 appoints regional imams

- Geographical Regional Imam
  (i.e., Central Asia, East Asia, etc)

- Country Imam
- Country Imam
- Country Imam

- Regional Imam
- Provincial Imam
- Districct Imam
- Neighborhood Imam
- House Imam
dorms and houses
- Students
Institutional Organization of Gulen Cemaati

Fethullah Gulen's Empire
Global Network

MEDIA
Print and Air
Zaman
Samanyolu, etc.

VAKIFs
Domestic & Foreign
(n=200 minimum)

Schools, Classrooms, & Dormitories
Domestic & Foreign
(in over 60 countries)

UNIVERSITIES
Domestic & Foreign

CORPORATIONS
Global
n = 500
56 very large corp.
Key individuals of the Network

- **Leader:** FETHULLAH GÜLEN
- **Top Assistant:** İSMAIL BÜYÜKÇELEBİ & Hüseyin Gülerce
- **Imam for Latin America:** LATİF ERDODAN
- **Imam for Europe:** ABDULLAH AYMAZ (İSMAIL YEDİLER)
- **Media and the Arts Organizers:**
  - GAZETECİLER VE YAZARLAR VAKFI (Writers and Newspaper Editors Foundation) Director HARUN TOKAK,
  - Associate Director CEMAL UŞŞAK!
- **Artisans–Monetary Affairs Controller:** ALİ BAYRAM
- **YÖK–Universities:** PROF. DR. ŞERİFALİ TEKALAN
- **Political Parties:** HÜSEYİN GÜLERCE
- **Publications:** ALAADDİN KAYA
- **New York liaison:** Recep ÖZKAN
- **RUMi FORUM (Washington, DC):** Ali Yurtsever
- **Gülen Institute (Houston, TX):** Dr. Y. Alp Aslandoğan
Centers in the USA

- New Jersey (for N. America?): Necdet Başaran (formerly in Europe)
- Houston, TX: Turquoise (Turkuaz) Cultural center.
- Houston, TX: The Gülen Institute established in October 2007 as a non-profit organization and a joint initiative of the University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work and the Institute of Interfaith Dialog. Also have close ties to Rice University Boniuk Center. Director is Dr. Y. Alp Aslandoğan.
- Portland, OR: Rose Center
- Washington, DC: Rumi Forum
- Ft. Lauderdale, FL: Anatolian Cultural Center
- California: Pacifica Institute
- Midwestern States: Concept Schools & New Horizon Academies

- Emphasis on schools and community activities in order to promote Gulen’s image and acquire legitimacy.
The Hierarchical Structure of the Fethullah Order

- Membership = 3 million +
- Present in 55 countries
- 200+ schools
- 200 wakfs
- 460 study centers
- Outside Turkey:
  - 250 private schools
  - 21 dormitories
- Over 4,000 teachers
- 500+ companies (56 large size). Annual operating budget = 700 million TL.
Main Tenets of the Organization as influenced by Gülen’s Belief System

- Cihad
- Tebliğ (Proselytism)
- Research how to attain a spiritual connection with the person (recruit)
- Know their level of belief and culture
- Gain their trust
- Know Islamic issues very well.
- Follow iḥlas – the sincerity from the heart.
- Your hearts and minds must be equipped with the ideals and teachings of the religious sciences and other studies.

- If your presentation of an issue would raise concern among some, then let others do the presentation who are more acceptable to the milieu.
- If you are faced with a situation you do not know about admit your ignorance.
- He who is charged with İrṣat & Tebliğ (guidance and proselytism) must be strong and prepared to give up everything in the name of Dava.
- Appreciate the fact that these days were granted to us by God. We did not think it was possible 15-20 years ago.
- Our movement is a mass (community) movement that is like other such post-industrial movements that follow democratic means, contemporary views, and tolerance.
Strategies & Tactics: Key Concepts

- *Dava* (Dawa) – To achieve an Islamic Order and to revenge Said-i Nursi.
- *Davet* – Invitation (written)
- *Riddet* – To return to Dava
- *İrşad* – To show guidance
- *Tebliğ* – Proselytism
- *Temsil* – Respectful and Exemplary. Never profess openly the philosophy of Islam.
- *Nabza göre şerebet* (a key foundation of takiyye, to act as demanded by the environment).
U.S. Gülen Movement Organizational Chart

AZ, CA, NV, UT

Gülen

- Dialog Foundation-Reseda, CA → Ertan Salik → Magnolia Schools-SoCal
  ACCORD Institute

  - Dialog Foundation-San Diego → Momentum Middle School
  - Multicultural Arch Foundation? → UT- Beehive Academy

  - Pacifica Institute → NorCal School- Bay Tech / Willow Education
  - Pacifica Institute → NV Schools- Coral Academy

  - Found. for Inter-Cultural Dialogue → AZ Schools- Sonoran Acamedy / Daisy Corp.

AR, CO, FL, GA, IL, IN, LA, NJ, NY, MA, MD, MO, MS, OH, OK, OR, PA, TX, WI, WA

Gülen

- Raindrop Turkish House → Cosmos Foundation → TX-Harmony Schools

  - Atlas Interfaith Foundation → Pelican Ed. Found. → LA Schools

  - Raindrop Turkish House/ Inst. of Interfaith Dialog → Cosmos Foundation → AR-Lisa Schools

  - Raindrop Turkish House → MO Schools

  - Raindrop Turkish House → OK Schools/

  - Niagara Foundation → Concept Schools, Inc. / Niagara Ed. Services, Inc. → IL, IN, OH, WI Schools

  - ?Lighthouse? → NJ Schools

  - ?Lighthouse? → CO Schools?

  - Amity Turkish Cultural Center → FL Schools

  - Istanbul Center → GA Schools

  - New York Dialogue Foundation → NY Schools

  - ?Lighthouse? → MA Schools

  - American Turkish Friendship Assoc.? → MD Schools

  - West Penn. Cultural Center → PA Schools

  - Philadelphia Dialog Forum → Pittsburgh Dialog Foundation

  - Rosegarden T.-A. Cultural Center-Portland, OR → Failed OR School

  - Acacia Foundation-Seattle, WA Inst. of Interfaith Dialog-Jackson, MS. → Future Schools?

*Organizations on the left are what Gülen calls 'Lighthouses'. Question mark indicates no direct link found at this time or absence of the lighthouse name.
KEMAL KAÇAR GRUB

TURKEY
- Schools
- Student Aid
- 1100 association
- 1400 dormitories

OTHER

EUROPE
- Islamic Cultural Center (İKM 400 locations)

USA

ASIA
- Russian Federation
- Ukraine
- Azerbaijan
- Georgia
- Turkmenistan
- Kazakhstan

HÜSEYİN KAPLAN GRUB
Istanbul and Rize

Wednesday, June 1, 2011
Islamist Mobilization in Turkey

- Filled gap in services in cities, and existing outreach to villages.
- Active ground operation
  - linked political and social networks
  - active woman volunteer corps
  - one few accepted activities for islamic women.
- Led to 1994 wins in cities