

FETHULLAH GÜLEN: KEMALIST AND ISLAMIC REPUBLICANISM AND THE TURKISH DEMOCRATIC FUTURE

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Abstract

To put it bluntly, the claim that liberal democracy is a universal concept is false. Its prerequisites of individualism, equality, secularism, pluralism etc. have a minority status in the world. On the other hand, what can be termed Islamic conservatism does apply to Islamic societies: 1) the past incorporates within it the revelations of God as expressed in the Qur'an as the spiritual centre of gravity; 2) community and family take precedence over the individual and 3) the goal of society is the enjoining of that which is good and the prohibition of that which is evil. Islamic conservatism can also be analytically attached to republicanism as an alternative to democracy. Referred to here is the republicanism of ancient Rome which argues for (a) the limitation of the powers of a strong and benevolent and moral state, (b) an elite pledged to serve the public good (*maslahah*), (c) a citizenry also pledged to serve society, and (d) an embedded law respected and upheld by all.

Kemalism in contemporary Turkey represents the principles of republicanism as formulated in the famous 'Six Arrows', which centred more on the need for a strong centralised state than on the obligations of the state to its citizens. If measured against the four criteria of the ancient Roman republican ideal, the Turkish state clearly falls far short. By contrast, this paper argues, the Gülen movement does, rather remarkably, meet those high standards. As a consequence, there are present in Turkey today, two interacting modes of republicanism that are increasingly beginning to overlap with and resemble one another.

Introduction

The Problem

From the point of view of the study of Middle Eastern politics, Turkey appears so exceptional that it is seldom ever grouped comparatively with the other states of the region. After all, it represented a historically impressive ability under the Ottoman Empire to resolutely pursue the reformist goals of virtually uninterrupted self-directed reform under the Tanzimat from 1839 onwards and then it was also able to resist European colonialism until the end of World War I. Then, under the nationalist leadership of Kemal Atatürk, it denied the occupation of the Anatolian peninsula to the voraciousness of an array of European armies. Turkey subsequently then undertook a successful program of modernization in which the philosophical positivism of Comte and Durkheim established parallel deep roots with a modernizing Islamic theology. The Arab countries of the Middle East, by contrast, have had a far more fractured experience in resisting European colonialism and imperialism. Culturally, they were conflicted by the competing rivalries of Arabism and nationalism and have faltered and slowed in the efforts at a self-modernizing Islam. Riding the wave of these national accomplishments, the Turks also found within themselves, the cultural quiet place of a political Sufism where they could communicate among themselves in even casual and graceful conversation about how to link their hearts to their minds. The preceding remarks suggest the profoundness and depth of their self-directed historical change. The story is even more monumental than what has been said thus far. Present day Turkey, somewhat paradoxically, under the resolute leadership of its mainstream Muslim political organizations is also said to be on the cusp of entry into the European Union. In addition, perhaps the most important summary indication of their political and cultural accomplishments has been their ability to creatively hold to religious belief while at the same time interpolating it and causing it to wax and prosper. Finally, to return to the beginning of these remarks, there is also the continued ability of the Turkish people to face the tyranny of the military which in another country might have led to political polarization and violent conflict, instead has witnessed a sustained level of extraordinary level of civility. As one observes the military itself at this moment in time, it is also possible that the ameliorating views of Fethullah Gülen and those influenced by him has contributed to this level of collective political maturity.

Turkey has achieved what outside powers are continually berating the Arab countries of the region for failing to have achieved, namely democratization. The reason for this success can be attributed to the fact that Turkey has managed to avoid that Anglo-Saxon “disease”, namely subscribing to a liberal democracy whose political cultural assumptions are inappropriate and incongruent to those of a civilization standing outside of the influence of the European Enlightenment. This disease thus consists of attempting to embrace an alien political culture of individualism, secularism, pluralism etc. Instead, as is argued in the present paper, Turkey has subscribed to a version of republican democracy. In addition, for reasons of historical opportunity and gifted political leadership, Turkey also has been able to successfully contest European tyrannical rule when it put in its appearance. Much of the remainder of the Middle East on the other hand permitted itself to be beguiled by the Anglo Saxons to seek an unachievable liberal democracy and for their leaders to be seduced into mimicking the soft corruption of tyrannical, colonial and imperial rulers. This “double tackle” has left the other Middle East players disabled and suffering from numbing brain concussions. While admittedly, Turkey has much about it that is exceptional in its opportunities and its successes, there are, however, important analytical lessons to be learned and applied to the politics of the countries in the remainder of the Middle East. The present paper is organized around the

important distinction of republicanism versus tyranny . This distinction is important for the following reasons:

- i. Political science at the beginning of the Twenty first Century remains without a typology adequate to the understanding of what is still called in some circles the politics of “Third World states” i.e. terminology of a now non-existent Cold War. In the terminology of the present paper, a so-called “Third World state” most often is a tyrannical republican state e.g. Tunisia, Egypt etc.
- ii. The absence of a meaningful and informing typology in fact has been noted in some well known and important scholarly exchanges which in fact are said to also have had a mischievous impact upon politics and policy in the post-World War I era as well. The point is that if one does not possess a rigorous political science typology of regimes, one can not know what the sign posts are to successfully navigate a complex political world.
- iii. What lies at the base of the difficulty of developing such a typology is the intellectual vise grip of a presumed “value free” behavioural social science. This social science is “presumed value free” because in reality it mimics the liberal culturally dominant thought of individualism, equality, pluralism etc. This has interfered with the ability to ask the questions of underlying teleological political values so as to delineate the value direction that is being pursued in political behaviour.¹
- iv. The preceding cosmological question can be brought closer to ground if one is to direct these questions to one particular political region in the world, that of the Middle East. What persuasive political typology has been developed in order to understand this, perhaps the most strategically important and dangerous of the regions of the world? The answer, based on counts of word frequency , might be misleadingly “democracy” and “authoritarianism” instead of the prevalent republicanism and tyranny.
- v. The present paper in the interest of brevity passes over these latter terms in order to join the intellectual debate in the following way. If “democracy” is so illuminating, how is that one does not see more of it? The answer is because “democracy” is in fact distant from the ground in the Middle East and what is close to the ground are the deaths and tortured cries of something old fashioned, called tyranny. If “tyranny” is so prevalent there is a need to address it in a meaningful way. A way to the end of the political domination that cultivates tyranny needs to be developed and a well established historical way in the long history of Western political theory is to accomplish this is via “republicanism”. It is useful to recall , that the historical solutions to achieve this objective are well known e.g. the bloody confrontations and revolutions on the model of those of 1649(England), 1776(America), 1789(France) etc .²

1 When the political science discipline is looked at critically, one discovers that far from being “scientific ‘and ‘objective’” it is in fact joined at the hip ideologically to liberal democracy. The consequence is that political analysis utilizing such a “discipline” becomes an advocate for a liberal democracy that will find little resonating supporting political culture of individualism, equality, secularism etc in so much of the world that has not shared the experience of the Enlightenment. . See James Creaser, *Liberal Democracy and Political Science* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990) for a particularly acute presentation of this point of view.

2 The valuable general sources utilized in the present paper to make the transition from its theoretical concepts to the Turkish case study are, M. Hakan Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity In Turkey* (New York: Oxford University Press, (2005) (See especially p. 32 for a summary historical table of Islamic organizations) and M. Hakan Yavuz

Defining Republicanism

First, however, there is the necessity to define what is meant by “republicanism”:

While liberty is central to republicanism, the key objective of republicanism is not political participation but the more practical imperative of first gaining freedom from domination. One can have liberty without necessarily having democratic representation. The achievement of this freedom depends upon four prerequisites :

- i.** First, the state takes precedence over the individual so that it becomes the “free state” (*civitas libera*) from which the citizen gains his freedom from domination by means of a mixed constitution (*politeia*) accompanied by a system of political checks and balances.
- ii.** The second is that there should be a system of law (*legis*) which is embedded in history and tradition so that its principles are instinctive to its citizens.
- iii.** The third is that the political culture of the state should be one of civic virtue (*virtu*) which results in the welfare of one’s fellow citizens being of first importance.
- iv.** The fourth is related to the foregoing and that is there should be virtuous ruling elite whose privileges in society are earned by its attention to the welfare of the society as a whole.³

This definition is a composite one due to the fact that there is hardly not a single agreed upon definition of republicanism in scholarly literature. Instead, most scholars appear to have adopted a definition that fits their specific scholarly concern . The definition presented here begins and remains true to Rome and especially Cicero, as indicated in the use of technical Latin terms. This careful attention to definition is what is called for in the case of a paper whose theme is the somewhat unfamiliar one of Roman republicanism.

“Republicanism” is used in the present paper as a concept of two analytical varieties. The first variety is the one of self-description which means that an actor or movement begins with a self conscious definition or concept which they denote as “republicanism”. The second variety is the case when a pattern of behaviour begins to implicitly take on the characteristics of “republicanism”. Thus the two varieties are either respectively self-descriptive or implicit republicanism. The first variety in the case of Turkey is illustrated by what has come to be called in effect self-described “Kemalism” . The second variety in the case of Turkey is the implicit one of Islamic republicanism. The self-described version in the case of Turkey actually self-consciously adopts the label of “republicanism”. The implicit variety becomes one whose characteristics approximate those of the Roman republic. Republicanism is also an ideal type as an ideal type that stands for the limitation upon the exercise of political power . It is this latter type of republicanism that in this paper constitutes what is termed “Islamic republicanism”. This paper identifies Fethullah Gülen as the single Turkish leader whose thinking and writing can be said to constitute Islamic republicanism. The republican curbing of the excesses of the exercise of political power might appear to resemble liberalism as some scholars writing about republicanism claim. In fact, however,

and John Esposito, Eds., *Turkish Islam And The Secular State: The Gülen Movement* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2003).

3 Sources on republicanism: Philip Pettit, *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997); Quentin Skinner, *Liberty Before Liberalism* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Maurizio Viroli, *Republicanism*, Translated from the Italian by Antony Shugar (New York, New York: Hill and Wang, 2002); Cicero, *The Republic and The Laws*. Translated from the Latin by Niall Rudd (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1980).

its objective of limiting political domination predates liberalism by some 2000 years. Note, for example, the typical haste with which proponents of liberal democracy proclaim the universal importance of the later concept of democracy with little attention to the intermediate steps necessary to its achievement. From this perspective, there is something akin to a “miraculous birth” of democracy resembling the concept “miraculous birth” in Christianity! In practical, down to earth terms, it is not democracy that urgently imposes itself upon peoples, but rather something as simple as the security and safety of home and hearth. The key assurance of republicanism is that it stands for freedom from domination but it does not necessarily stand for political representation. The latter expectation, for example, might very well be undertaken by a responsive “free” state or by a socially virtuous ruling elite. Thus the definition of republicanism can be elegantly defined as a political system that assures that the individual be free from domination and this is to be achieved by a mixed constitution of checks and balances, a system of law that originates in the tradition of the people and a ruling elite and citizens possessing a culture of civic virtue and collective responsibility.

Republicanism has a polar opposite and this is the typology of “tyranny”. Tyranny is nearly as elusive to define as republicanism.⁴ One reason for this is perhaps due to the fact that political science is as much out of practice in utilizing this concept as it is in the instance of republicanism. This is a concept which has shared a similar political science fate of neglect as that of republicanism itself. Perhaps the best definition remains that of Aristotle who points out that tyrannies resemble the single person rule of the monarchy but it is without the accompanying political constraints of law or tradition.⁵ He points out that there are two varieties of tyrannies: The “bad” variety in which the ruler rules self indulgently and the “good” variety in which the ruler rules with the welfare of the people in mind. An example of a good tyranny might be the case of tyrannical republican military rule in Turkey that also rules without the constraint of law or tradition, but does so with the self-justification of doing so in order to benefit the Turkish people. In the West, tyranny like republicanism also was delivered a conceptual coup de grace by the European Enlightenment. In the passions and exhilaration of la Terreur and the apparent end of monarchies, the time of tyrannies seemed to have come to an end, to be replaced by democracies. In addition, in the theories of Hegel and Comte, the state was not to be a tyranny but rather was to be neutrally bureaucratic as part of the optimism of the anticipated process of modernization. Instead of the tyranny of the state, one now used the term in a rather trivializing fashion e.g. “the tyranny of the minority” or “the tyranny of public opinion”. One consequence of this was that when the repressiveness of Russia and Germany put in an appearance in the 20th Century, instead of instantly recognizing these political forms as tyrannies to be resolutely opposed, the West instead dawdled about debating the merits of the so called new ideologies. Meanwhile, this was occurring while European peoples were brutally conquered and abused while settling upon the self descriptions of the regimes themselves as “communism” and “fascism”. The “new” labels of “communism” and “fascism” were to lead to further conceptual confusions with the advent of the Cold War. Additional terminology such as “totalitarianism” was to

4 “Authoritarianism” would seem to claim some equal status to tyranny as a concept, but whereas tyranny is a previously prominent concept in political science, “authoritarianism” appears to be an afterthought. Note, for example, that in an edited book containing contributions from a number of well known scholars, and with “authoritarianism” in its title, Marsha Pristine Posusney and Michele Penner Angrist, Eds. *Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Regimes and Resistance*(Boulder, CO: Lynne Reiner, 2005), the concept is not even defined, let alone utilized in an illuminating and suggestive fashion. It turns out; the book is really about the failure of democracy in the Middle East.

5 Aristotle, *Politics and the Constitution of Athens* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

lead to the paradoxical confusing and sometimes even irrelevant intellectual nuances similar to those directed to fascism and communism. Clearly, the so called “Third World states” were in fact tyrannical regimes resembling those accompanying the advent of communism and fascism. Time and millions of lives were lost as a consequence. History was to repeat itself more recently in Bosnia and the Balkans and the repetition of the debates of the interwar period.⁶

More so than many Middle Eastern countries, the political appearance of Turkey belies its political reality. The appearance is one of a fierce patriotism which is evident in the ocean-like flood of the blood red Turkish flag that flies everywhere from the highest natural and man-made elevations. In addition, religiously, the flag is accented by the symbolism of a white crescent and the star of Islam. Perhaps the greatest indication of the strength of commitment to Islam is that, in contrast to many other Muslim countries, there is the sheer enormous numbers of persons committed to a variety of local Sufi organizations. The most popular of these was the Naksibendi order, including the enormous number of followers of Said Nursi(1881-1960) and now those of Fethullah Gülen (1938-)who is the subject of the present paper. The scale of Sufi activity can be underestimated given its “invisibility” as a consequence of the humbleness and humility of its practice, perhaps most often in the home of friends and not in a physical lodge(tekke) . This is reinforced symbolically by the extraordinary gentleness of voices in group meetings of the movement’s adherents. Conversation in these groups possesses the quality of hushed respect to God and to one’s brothers. The result is therefore neither argument nor elevated voices, but rather the intentness of focused appreciative listening. It is also the case, however, that Kemal Atatürk as the great militant secular founder of the Turkish republic, pursued his secular and republican goals relentlessly and aggressively. Therefore, there is an accurate preconception about Turkish politics which recognizes that there exists a gulf between the secular policies of the state on the one hand, and the pious sentiment of the majority of the population on the other. This preconception, however, can also be exaggerated.

In fact, it is the thesis of the present paper that Kemal Atatürk’s (1881-1938) “republicanism” and the secularism associated with the term that creates the religious divide in the society. Nonetheless, in fact this division also contributes to a surprising degree to the linkage between the two segments of the society. Thus, when analyzed dialectically, patriotic Kemalism and pious Islam may be said to operate in discernable and interactive parallels with one another. In fact one can even detect evidence of a degree of a convergent trend towards the possible synthesis of the two. It remains the case, however, that a great deal of subtle theoretical and empirical analysis has yet to be undertaken in order to support this assertion .

It is the case that Turkish politics are commonly understood to be beset by an authoritarian republican state led by a military elite upholding the secularism of Kemal Atatürk against an increasingly strong Islamic resurgence, one of whose most important leaders is Fethullah Gülen . The argument advanced here, however, is somewhat to the contrary. Rather than Kemalism and Gülen being separated by republicanism , it is arguably the case that they are possibly joined rather than separated by the concept.

While the foregoing sets the Turkish stage for what follows, this paper also locates its argument within a second, broader analytical social frame work which itself is novel and

6 For a critical discussion of the concept of “tyranny”, see Mark Lilla, “The New Age of Tyranny”, The New York Review of Books, October 24, 2002, XLII, No 16, 28-9.

challenging. This story begins by noting that the political science utilized in the study of Middle Eastern politics is severely handicapped by the absence in the discipline of even a single significant post-Enlightenment intellectual figure who even approaches the eminence of those scholars found within other social sciences in the formative two hundred years period since the Enlightenment. Note, for example, the cascade of the eminent names of those from adjoining disciplines: Smith plus Marx in economics; Comte plus Durkheim plus Toennies plus Weber in sociology; Fustel de Coulange plus Radclyffe-Brown in anthropology, plus von Gierke and Vinogradov in history.⁷ There is not even a single political scientist who appears among them and therefore, there is also not a single American scholar. What this qualitative penuriousness illustrates is the tardiness of this discipline to make the intellectual transition from political philosophy to becoming a social science. As a result, there is an absence of a universal typology of regime types in political science that might otherwise illuminate global or regional politics such as those of the Middle East. In the Middle East, a political scientist visiting from Mars would be led to believe that the widespread references to “democracy” is because it is a classification that is authoritatively revealing of the political process of that region. Similarly, he might think the same about the prevalence of the Cold war concept of “totalitarianism”. In fact, it is tyranny that more accurately describes the widespread bloody repression and political injustice of the region. But, as already noted, even the concept of tyranny is absent from political science. Thus in spite of the fact that the Middle East is awash in political injustice of the cruellest variety, tyranny seldom appears as a concept employed by the Middle East analyst. If tyranny is therefore the Middle East norm, than a more accurate label to apply to Turkey is in fact not democracy, but rather “republicanism”. As will be noted, however, Turkey also has its own familiarity with tyranny. This is due to the fact that it appears to be a quite appropriate label to describe the fact of not only four major military coups of the government by the Turkish army in the Twentieth Century, but also the manner in which the army has statutorily written into regulations its own ability to continuously interfere in Turkish politics whenever it sees fit to exert political influence. Thus, the casual outside observer of Turkish politics little appreciates the nearly constant interference of the Turkish military in Turkish politics.

Turkish democracy, however, also eludes an accurate and appropriate political science label. When political science asserts that “democracy” has a universal application, once again, a conceptual error is being made. The “democracy” applied by the discipline is in fact “liberal” democracy. It is an ethnocentric concept expressing the liberal philosophy of the West that was itself only developed in the two hundred year period since the Enlightenment. The alternative and more accurate label developed in the present paper is that of republicanism and republican democracy. It is the latter concept that is in consort with Middle Eastern political and Islamic culture. Individualism, secularism, equality etc and the principle of liberty of non-interference with the individual are virtually absent in the Middle East. What is present in the Middle East instead is the moral authority of religion anchored in the past, the community and the family preceding the individual and the societal goal of prohibiting that which is evil and promoting that which is good. In addition, the criteria of republicanism also presents the opportunity for Turkish religious leadership to join in the pursuit of a religiously based republicanism whose criteria rather remarkably resemble those of the ummah. The principle of liberty of republicanism is founded in the “free state” (*civitas libera*) to which the individual surrenders him/herself. The ruler of the republican state safeguards the welfare of the citizen, the republican political class does the same, and most of all, the state is also the guardian of

7 See Lilla, *Ibid.* for this discussion of the intellectual weakness of political science.

a system of secular law and potentially of religious law which is also committed to the same objective. The principle is that of the freedom bestowing republican “free state” preventing a basic political domination and not necessarily that of the assurance of the more ambitious and perhaps theoretically unachievable liberal “free man”.

Liberal democracy has its origins in the West and specifically in the European Enlightenment. It therefore is attached organically to liberal political philosophy.

Republicanism, on the other hand, dates from Roman times and the pre-Enlightenment and has the label of philosophical conservatism underpinning it. Philosophical conservatism is a subject far more complex than liberalism for the reason that unlike the latter, conservatism tends to be more of a minority point of view and it also tends to contain a greater variety of ideas within it. Liberalism and Marxism are two bodies of thought which are firmly anchored in the Enlightenment. Conservatism, on the other hand, is significantly defined as being pre- or counter-Enlightenment. Conservatism can be defined as: 1) respect for the past as the source of the tradition and the religious revelation that guides society, 2) the ascendancy of the family and community over the individual, and 3) the goal of society is the seeking of social virtue or, enjoining of the good and prohibition of evil.⁸

Thus far, republicanism and conservatism have been suggested as alternative typologies to those of liberal political science (liberal democracy and liberalism). In addition, the concept of tyranny has also been suggested as a contrasting and contesting concept to republicanism. Tyranny has been defined as the exercise of abusive political power outside of legal and constitutional restraints. It has also been said that Turkey is a rare instance of democracy in the Middle East. Therefore, how and in what way might one speak of tyranny in the Turkish case? One can do this by carefully noting the attachment of the label of “republicanism” to Kemalism on the one hand and what can be termed “tyranny” to the interventionist militarism of the Turkish army on the other hand. As the “founder” of the modern Turkish republic, Kemal Atatürk succeeded in articulating an ideology of “republicanism” “from the time of the “war of independence” to his death in 1938. In the years since his death, however, the gradual development of a political party system began to reduce the ability of the army to rule directly and therefore when the army seized direct political power at intervals of several or more years; it also had less of an opportunity to develop ideological republicanism. This was accompanied also by the moribund ideology of the Republican political parties prepared to support the army’s point of view. Therefore, when the army took power in a military coup it did so accompanied by the ideological dead hand of its military bureaucratic instincts and its ruling by military decree. Therefore, on the one hand, “Kemalism” has remained as a patriotic sentiment of republicanism to which all patriotic Turks can commit themselves with national pride. On the other hand, however, the army and its militaristic principles, has been left exposed as an uninspiring tyrannical institution. In other words, arguably, what might be called Kemalist and Islamic democratic republicanism have much in common whereas the army’s tyrannical republicanism tends to alienate it from society.

In what follows, the theory of republicanism and tyranny is more fully elaborated. This is

8 The ordinary definitions of “conservatism” are said to also to date from the Enlightenment in what is conventionally termed the “counter-Enlightenment” and in the respect for tradition. For an accessible presentation of this approach to conservatism by a leading conservative American scholar, see, Robert Nisbet, *Conservatism* (Minneapolis, MI: University of Minneapolis Press, 1986). The definition utilized here is adapted from the conservative scholar, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel the *Philosophy of History*. Translator. S. Sibree (New York: Dover, 1956) and his philosophical method of dialectical analysis, pp. 8 ff.

followed by an analysis of the republicanism of the Kemalism of Kemal Atatürk and by what is argued to be the republicanism of Islam in general and to the teachings of the two great Turkish Islamic intellectuals, Said Nursi and Fethullah Gülen. This paper presents this as a dialectical process in which the republicanism of Islam and of Fethullah Gülen interact with that of Kemalism to achieve succeeding stages of synthesis. In the process, both varieties of republicanism can be observed as drawing closer to one another. One can therefore draw a speculative conclusion that developmentally, Turkish republicanism in general may be proceeding in a politically and socially mutually reinforcing manner.

In light of the foregoing, while the chief political problem of the Middle East is widely said to be the absence of democracy i.e. the so-called “democratic deficit”, is this the question, is it really the priority problem, or is the most important problem that of the tyranny of repression, torture, imprisonment and death elsewhere in the Middle East and political repression in Turkey? When the legions of policy makers and scholars spotlight the alleged priority problem of democracy, it never occurs to them, that their version of what they term a universal theory of democracy is that it is in fact an Euro-centric liberal democracy. The latter is a theory of democracy whose preconditions are individualism, equality, secularism and pluralism. These preconditions are the ethnocentric ones of the European Enlightenment and those areas of the world intensely exposed to these values; North America, Western Europe, India, Australia etc. Once said, the obvious difficulties of these preconditions are instantly apparent. In addition, it is paradoxically notable that when critics speak of the “democratic deficit”, they pass over, often without comment, the exceptional cases by their criteria, of the label of democracy in Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine and Iran. This absence of systematic comment is perhaps also further evidence of the inadequacy of their liberal democratic label. Is it possible that these efforts at indigenous democracy are further illustrations of possible republican and not liberal democracy?

There is however an additional less apparent factor that is more directly relevant to the problem of tyranny and that is the underlying theory of change of liberalism. Liberalism’s theory of change is one of incremental pluralism and gradualism, commonly expressed as reformism. Whether expressed academically as in the so-called theory of “transition to democracy” or in policy by the members of the so-called “community of democracy promotion” by the U.S. Government, liberal theory is silent on the subject of revolution and internal coups as means to end tyranny. Even the present activism of the Bush administration in advocating violence to end tyranny has its own limitations. How many countries will the United States invade in order to democratize them? Can “coercive democracy” work?

If liberal democracy has these shortcomings and limitations, what might be an alternative? Isaiah Berlin has pithily and influentially summarized the alternatives. He defines liberalism as a doctrine of being left alone, as non-interference. As an alternative to what he terms this type of negative of liberalism, he suggests there is a philosophy of freedom which stands for something i.e. positive liberty. He, and other scholars in interpreting his ideas, suggests that positive freedom contains within it what he terms the “harmonization” of ideas. By this he means that all human thought that was part of the European Enlightenment possesses a residual commitment to an intellectual monism and not the pluralism that is customarily assumed to be attached to the Enlightenment. This challenging proposition is made even more challenging by a further consideration. He has hinted in his writings and other scholars have gone further in their commentary on his ideas that this monism is in fact a “harmony” of agreement on the pre-Enlightenment importance of religion. As a result, Enlightenment influenced thinkers therefore assume that all are involved in a dispute that can be expected to respond

to reason and end in a compromise of differences, even in the matter of religion and secularism. Berlin, and other scholars have speculated that Western thinkers can begin a political encounter that can be pursued because of the fact that because they all share Enlightenment values, a comfortable compromise can be arrived at. This is the basis of the claim that democracies do not make war on one another. What is overlooked however, is that when the adversary is a non-Enlightenment state, the West will fight to the last man e.g. as presently in Iraq.⁹ Berlin also speculated, however, that in addition, his principle of latent monism might also be applied to the very question of religion that provoked the long wars of religion prior to the Enlightenment. He, and others, have also noted that while the Enlightenment has held firmly to religious secularism, it was also the case that many Enlightenment thinkers who were overtly secularist, also reserved their judgment to the effect that the existence of God in fact was attested to by the scientific principles of positivism. In other words, in nature, God is everywhere. A further observation is that Kemal Atatürk held to the tenets of scientific positivism, but it also has been said that that he also identified with the scientific proof of the existence of God in what is known as Deism.¹⁰ It is important to also note that Gülen has referred to nature as a scientific “book” which can be “read” to validate the comprehensiveness of the authority of God. This suggests a possible further way in which two of Turkey’s greatest figures have something possibly in agreement with one another.

In the case of the Middle East and much of the Asian world, popular political culture is communal and not individualistic. This emphasis upon community also exists in Western political theory from at least the Roman republic forward. There is, of course, also the persistency of republicanism as in the Italian city state system of the Renaissance. Even the Holy Roman Empire as the earthly rule of the Papacy kept important ancient Roman values and institutions intact until its dissolution in 1804. This is a philosophy that is intent to control the state on the one hand and to use it for the social good on the other. This quality is by and large consistent with Middle Eastern political culture. And, as argued in this article, it is also consistent with the values of Islam.

Republican democracy begins with the fact, as is the case of the tradition of the Ottoman state in Turkey, that it is the state that controls society and not the other way around. It is the case, however, that the state that controls society is created in the first instance by the voluntary surrender of the individual to the state. The control of the state by republicans can originate in revolution as in the cases of the regicide of King Charles I in England in 1649, in America in 1776 or those of Turkey (1923), and Iran (1970), or by coup d’etat in other Middle Eastern states or as the outcome of civil war as in the case of Lebanon. The point is that struggle, violence and warfare as suggested by Dankwart Rustow is even the customary mid-wife of democratic rule.¹¹ These demonstrated historical examples are what politically dominant Western liberal democracy chooses to forget about from within its own political traditions. It is not only “revolution that comes out of the barrel of a gun” but so can politically meaningful democracy. The current political impasse in Iraq illustrates this as well.

9 Berlin first laid these ideas out in a famous lecture series at Cambridge University, Isaiah Berlin, *Two Concepts of Liberty* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1958). They were subsequently and critically elaborated upon in John Gray, “The Case for Decency”, *The New York Review of Books*, July 13, 2006, LIII, No. 12, 20-22. For further analysis, see Mark Lilla, Ed. *The Legacy of Isaiah Berlin* (New York City: New York Review, 2001).

10 It has been said that the prominent American revolutionary founders, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, and Alexander Hamilton and others were Deists. For a comprehensive collection of authoritative writings on Deism, see Peter Gay, Ed. *Deism: An Anthology* (New York, NYC: Van Nostrand, 1968).

11 Dankwart Rustow, “Transitions to Democracy: Towards a Dynamic Model” *Comparative Politics*, 2(3), April 1970, 337-363.

Even the republicanism of the French Revolution remains present in the establishment of a law on the model of the law of the Roman republic that now has nearly universally adopted (called the Code Napoleon or Code Civil) world wide. This includes the Swiss Civil Code adopted by Kemal Atatürk as the present Turkish law. The counterpart of this near ubiquitous law elsewhere in the world is that of Islamic law (shari'a). What is striking about republicanism in Turkey is the apparent consensus about the fact that where one might anticipate that the shari'a or Islamic law might be insisted upon as a prerequisite for adopting republicanism, in fact this is not only not the case, but one can also speak of a plurality of such laws.¹² It is the defence of this law that marks the republican and intensifies his commitment both to the restraint and the safe guarding of the state. It is said that in a republic, the citizen looks the ruler straight in the eye.

The present framework begins by noting that in order to correct the problem of the absence of a typological framework for a viable political science, at this, the beginning of the 21st Century, it is necessary to return to the 19th Century and earlier. When this is done, one can return to more politically relevant historical political philosophical foundations.

The necessity for this, as already noted, is what is sought is a typology that possesses the universality absent in those of the parochial 20th Century such as authoritarianism and totalitarianism. Such more genuine universal political typologies begin with the fact of the existence of universal and teleological goals (illustrating this are Aristotle's typologies in his Politics). The quality of universality in political typologies is found in their political philosophical foundations. Therefore the first distinction to be made is between liberal and republican democratic regimes i.e. between individualism, equality, secularism, pluralism on the one hand and a free state, a socially responsible ruler and elite, and the rule of law on the other hand. In the case of the Middle East and the present study of Turkey, the typology to be employed is that of republicanism of either a democratic or tyrannical variety. This suggests the combination of some degree of political accountability in the former on the one hand and the common phenomenon of abusive political rule on the other. This permits one to consider the possibilities in the case of Turkey of a democratic republicanism to apply to the Gülen movement and by extension to the Turkish state. This could apply also to what appear to be the increasingly democratic Kemalist political parties as well versus the tyrannical republican army on the other hand.

He who subscribes to republicanism also subscribes to democratic elitism. This is clearly stated in terms of the criterion of the need for socially responsible elite. This also dovetails with de Tocqueville's suggestion that all political systems can be said to be "dual societies".¹³ The dualism consists of an internal division consisting of a political state and a social state. The political state is where the ruling elite is located. It contains the important national political institutions and it is where wealth is concentrated. The dual state begins with the assumption that in many if not most states, power and authority is concentrated in the top of the political system and authority is directed downward. The political state in Turkey has meant that this is the location where the intra-elite competition between the beneficiaries of Kemalist republicanism has met the newly mobilized Anatolian Islamic republicanism. The consequence is that in viewing present day Turkish politics, it is the Kemalists who have had

12 See Ihsan Yilmaz, "*Ijtihad and Tajdid by Conduct*" in Yavuz and Esposito, pp. 208-237.

13 This distinction arose in Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, 2 Vols. Translated by Harvey C. Mansfield and Delba Winthrop. (Chicago, IL. University of Chicago Press, 2000) as he grappled with the challenge of generalizing about American politics. He began with Chapter Three as the "Social State of the Anglo-Americans" pp.45 ff. See also Louis J. Cantori, "The Dual Arab State and Islamic Radicalism", August 29, 2002.

to vigorously work to gain the electoral support of the social state. This suggests that the social state and its masses is now increasingly integrated into the political process. There is in effect a varying distance between the political and the social state. The more democratic the state, the closer the proximity of the two segments. One assumes that a democratic state is more closely knit, whereas in the conservative republican state the political distance can be great. The dual state is also, however, an organic society. This suggests that such a state is a clientelistic or corporatistic state which is functionally organized according to the division of economic labour in the society.¹⁴ Thus the concept of the dual state is increasingly important in permitting an estimation of the democratization of Turkish politics.

Republican democracy had its origins in the opposition that developed in the Roman Empire against arbitrary rule. As Shakespeare's Julius Caesar tells us in dramatic form, the idealists of the virtue of Roman rule, struggled valiantly against the oppression of imperial rule in this case, the person of Caesar. They were struggling to uphold the virtue of the Roman citizen as expressed in Roman law. The persons engaged in the struggle were, moreover, patrician members of the Roman elite struggling for justice on behalf of Roman plebeians. In other words, not only does republicanism stand for the justice of the state, but it is also the responsibility of the few to do this on behalf of the many. In the case of Julius Caesar, this meant that under Roman law, the republican elite had the obligation to resort to tyrannicide in order to relieve the Roman citizens of the burden of Caesar's tyranny. Therefore the features of republicanism so far elaborated upon suggests the centrality and not the marginality of the state, the need for both the constraint and the support of the state, the compelling of the state to abide by the law and the fact that the democracy implied in this is top down with the expectation of an elite prepared to provide democratic responsibility and leadership.

These were the features of republicanism that were to echo down through the centuries until Machiavelli adopted them in his political philosophy of the Italian city states of the sixteenth century. It was to be the French philosopher Montesquieu who was to take them up again in the seventeenth century and influence the thinking of the regicides of 1649 and the Glorious Revolution of 1688 in England. Equally important, he was to influence the Founding Fathers of the United States, especially Alexander Hamilton and James Madison in their Federalist Papers as well as George Washington. It was in these events, however, that republicanism in America began to mix with and was eventually eclipsed by liberalism. It is the experience of Turkey and the resiliency of these ideas, however, and their potential resonance in Middle Eastern political culture and especially possibly in Islam, that is central to the present article. It also is the case that the political cultural underpinnings of Turkey and the Middle East are such that republicanism will remain the appropriate concept to be used in the analysis of the region's politics.

Republicanism and Kemalism

The Pragmatic Beginning of Turkish Republicanism

The origins of republicanism as an expression of the reforms of Kemal Atatürk lies more in the venue of revolutionary praxis than in ideology. The reason for this rests with the nature of the practical challenges that Atatürk faced in the two phases of his determination to first set his country free from foreign military occupation and then second, to modernize it in

¹⁴ This subject remains unaddressed in the present paper due to space limitations, but reference here is to the attraction of Durkheim's functionalism and corporatism to Kemalism. This leads analytically to the internally organic nature of the republican state.

order to achieve the national military strength necessary to protect the success of his military achievement. It is the combination of inspiring leadership and political pragmatism that is the hallmark of his success. It has been pointed out that it has been tyranny rather than democracy which has been the priority challenge to the other states of the Middle East. For these states, tyranny was never identified as a first objective and instead the distracting issue of liberal democracy was permitted to confuse the priorities of the indigenous political leadership. Tyranny as the challenge for the Turks, on the other hand, was very clear and consisted of a widespread European invasion that presented itself as a clear cut nationalist issue within a limited time framework due to the effectiveness of Atatürk's military and political leadership. After securing the military success of his two phased military objectives (to defeat the European invaders and then to compel these defeated nations to agree to the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne that assured Turkish sovereignty over the regained territories), he turned to a program of the modernization of the country. Just as his military successes showed his ability to work pragmatically towards his goals, so too was the case with his modernization program.

His program consisted of what he termed the "Six Arrows", the first of which in presumed priority order was in fact "republicanism". The reason for presuming this is that there is other evidence indicating this priority. In addition, however, it is noteworthy that not only did he wish political power to be concentrated in the centre in the "top down" republican model, but he also had "nationalism" and "étatisme" as two additional political "arrows" suggesting that he understood that his modernization program was predicated upon political authority being concentrated in the political centre. The question was, of course, towards what specific objective was this concentration of political power to be directed? Essentially what occurred is that Atatürk was able to capitalize upon the institutions and cultural achievements that the Ottoman Empire had created in its own drive towards a significantly successful defensive modernization program in the preceding century. This had unfolded in three phases. In the first phase, there was the success of the creation of the institution of an authoritative autonomous Ottoman state. This was a state that was not dependent upon single ruling family nor was it dependent upon a socially cohesive ruling class. In fact, it has been pointed out that the nature of the Turkish state was such that it was the state that validated and constructed the Turkish nation. This is the opposite of what is said to occur in the case of other instances of nation building. This had the effect of continuing a state institution to which Turks were able to direct their loyalty, free from parochial ethnic and local loyalties. It is precisely this objective that significantly motivates Gülen to make the Ottoman state and its accompanying culture as the cornerstone of the new Turkey. Instead, the state possessed an administrative structure staffed by modern educated bureaucrats. In fact, it was to be the establishment of modern professional schools that were to not only serve the empire well but also were to provide the education of the members of the Modern Turk Movement /Committee of Union and Progress that was to initiate a modernization program of its own prior to WW I and to provide the modern military education of the Turkish army that Atatürk was to so brilliantly lead in the war itself. The result was that at the war's end, Atatürk was able to smoothly adopt the state as an institution around which the nation could be rallied. There was an additional attribute of the state that was advantageous as well. The Islam of the Ottoman Empire was the Islam of what has been termed "frontier" Islam. This was itself also a pragmatic attribute that began with the establishment of the Ottoman Empire in 1299. The formation of the empire was predicated upon its cosmopolitan ability to negotiate the incorporation within it a diversity of ethnic and religious groups as it expanded its political boundaries. Therefore, when the secularist Atatürk faced the successive challenges to gather to himself Muslim Turks, he

was able tactically to do so on the basis of nationalist secular loyalty to the state. In doing so, he was already recruiting the Turkish people to rally to the nationalist cause that was in fact his primary objective. Likewise, when after 1923 he now wanted to appeal to Turkish patriotism, he was able to do this as well. From this beginning, there was to develop the ideological basis for him to rally the Turkish people to him in the name of Turkish patriotism. This latter appeal was to be synonymous with a far more comprehensive modernization appeal that was to preoccupy him and his immediate successors in the period 1923-1950.

Kemalist Republicanism

Atatürk's "republicanism" does not appear to have had any kind of indigenous ideological depth to it, or, alternatively, the adoption of a particularly well worked out set of borrowed ideas.¹⁵ What is known about it is that the concept appeared coincidentally with the passage from the scene of particularly monarchical systems of government in the politically tumultuous post -World War I period, including the Ottoman Empire itself. . Thus, for example, the first nation in at least the 20th Century to appear with the name "republic" was the Republic of Azerbaijan in 1918, also a Muslim state. . This was a period of political instability and even radicalism, for example in the case of the Russian revolution and of the failure of the Republic of Hungary revolution in 1920 . The characteristics of republicanism can be summarized as consisting of four elements. The first is the existence of a strong state as an institution. This is of course very much the case of the pre-existence of the Ottoman Empire. The state should be a "free state" taking precedence over the so-called "free man" of liberalism. This signalled that in exchange for the surrender of the individual to the state, the state would set the individual free , very much as Fethullah Gülen has also described the relation of the state to the Turkish people. In addition, there was also the desirability for a mixed constitution and political checks and balances. The second is that there should be a system of law embedded in history and tradition so that its principles are instinctive to its citizens. The code of law of the new Turkey was the adopted one of the Swiss Civil Code. This law was an especially clear instance of the Code Civil as a direct descendant of the legal system of the Roman Republic. This legal code is one which places the welfare of the republican state above that of the individual. It was widely adopted in Europe in the aftermath of the Enlightenment. It has already been noted , that the path away from the potential controversy of an insistence upon implementing religious/shariah law was already avoided.¹⁶ The third is that there should be a political culture of civic virtue(virtu/maslaha) . The fourth is that there should be a ruling elite whose privileges are justified by its attention to the welfare of the people. This is the importance of the Islam in Turkey which of course was opposed to by Atatürk's secularism while at the same time, however, he also called for civic self-sacrifice . As will be noted, while initially Atatürk stood firmly in support of secularization during the turbulence of the period of the imparting of republicanism, by the 1940's, Kemalism began to relent on this principle. The effort to introduce republicanism in Turkey met some violent resistance such as for example in revolts that occurred in 1925 and 1930. By the late 1930's there began a policy of relenting some of the cascade of requirements that had been levied on Turkey. This relenting was preceded however, by a strenuous attack upon traditional Islamic institutions and figures at the local level . This was accompanied by the eventually unsuccessful effort to create substitute state sponsored organizations at the local level e.g. the failed effort of secular "Peoples Houses" to substitute for dissolved local religious bodies. What was in fact occurring at the local level in this first period of republicanism,

15 For a succinct account of Kemalism as a program of political and social reform, see, Yavuz, pp. 46-58.

16 Yilmaz in Yavuz and Esposito, pp. 208-237.

was that Kemalism was in effect repressing traditional Islam at the local level, and in the process inadvertently preparing the way for the creation of more spontaneous and vigorous opportunities for the emergence of modern Islamic organizations such as those of the neo-Nur movement.¹⁷ This in effect was the opportunity for the establishment of intermediary religious discussion groups of Said Nursi and of the Naksibendi Sufi organizations. These groups plus the later ones of Fethullah Gülen's movement became equivalent Islamic republican organizations.

What is clear is that Atatürk had pragmatically adopted the loose but effective framework of republicanism as a guide to focus and concentrate the political energy of the nationalism of the Turkish people in the pursuit of modernization.

Republicanism and Islam

Republicanism, Islam and Political Sovereignty

All political analysis begins with the question of political sovereignty i.e. where does political power and legitimacy lie? In liberalism, for example, it is said to reside in the individual in what is termed popular sovereignty. In both republicanism and in Islam it also lies in the individual but only in combination with a communal solidarity that is expressed ultimately in the state or the ummah. In republicanism this is the result of the philosophical conviction that it is the citizen that is its repository with it being locked, in effect, within the republican state. The citizen brings this sovereignty to the political table and by surrendering to the state, he/she is then able to share in the guarantee of the liberty of that state. Islam reinforces this process in the fact that sovereignty is theologically mandated. This results from the fact that God deputizes the individual to be His vicegerent (khilafa) and to express the will of God in all that he does. When the individual engages the state, the state then becomes legitimate and gains its power from the citizenry. The state therefore undertakes activities to serve the needs of the citizen and at the same time, the state serves God. It is also the case both in republicanism and in Islam that while the individual citizen possesses sovereignty, there are those who gain greater moral merit as members of the elite who have a particular responsibility as the social few to act on behalf of the many.

There are a number of key concepts of striking similarity in republicanism and Islam. Perhaps the most fundamental of these is that of conservatism. It is this conservatism that further distinguishes republicanism from liberalism. While republicanism may differ from liberalism in this respect, its resemblance to Islam is striking. This can be seen in a review of the three principles of conservatism:

Tradition in republicanism represents the past where its guiding values are located in history and myth. Its path inspires its future. The tradition of Islam can be said to begin with the concept of *asala*, meaning the roots of religious and social identity. In Islam this begins with the revelation of God's word in the Quran and the sunnah of the sayings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad. This tradition is also divine so that what occurred historically in the past continues to the present and transcends into the future. Its resemblance to republicanism lies in the role of history and myth in setting the goals of the republic.

- i. In republicanism, the individual is in a subordinate relationship to family and community. In modern day Europe this relationship is preserved in the system of law derived directly from the Roman Republic called variously, Code Civil or Code

17 Yavuz, p. 54.

Napoleon whose principles put the needs of the community before those of the individual. In Islam, the individual is defined in terms of his obligations to family and to the community of believers (ummah). In behavioural terms, this is expressed as patrimonialism in an organic society. It is the family and the community of believers that defines the individual, not the other way around. There is a further expectation related to the preceding one and that is maslaha or the duty of promoting the welfare of the community by the elite (virtu is the Latin equivalent in Roman republicanism). The symbolic expression of this is the orderliness of prayer (salah) in which the individual is submerged in the prostrations of the community of believers.

- ii. As already noted, the ethical and moral principles of virtue or social responsibility in republicanism represent its moral compass. The moral purpose of Islam is evident everywhere in the Quran. This is summarized in the concept of khilafa or the “vicegerency” of God. This means that every Muslim understands that he has a personal responsibility to carry out the teachings of God in his daily life just as this is also the guiding moral principle for the state, hence the advisory role of the clergy discussed above. In the case of the state, it is written that it is expected “To enjoin that which is evil and promote that which is good.”

There are additional shared features of republicanism and Islam. Even the word republic (res publica) has a close Arabic and Islamic equivalent, jumhur (republic). Res publica or public things has virtually the same meaning as jumhur, also public things. But the deeper meaning is also nearly the same, in both cases, the management of public things by the privileged on behalf of the many. Jumhur is not only a prominent technical term, but it is also an active and contemporary political one as well. In the analysis of representative contemporary Islamic writings below, it will be noted that the term appears frequently sometimes as a contested term. Increasingly, it appears in the formal names of states along with the name Islamic e.g. The Islamic Republic of Iran. The name of the latter country was adopted after a popular referendum. Even more telling, is the case that in the latter country, there was also a popular slogan, Nah Gharbinah Nah Sharqi, Jumhuriy-ti Islam (“Neither Eastern nor Western, But An Islamic Republic”) that was adopted by referendum of the Iranian people.

Whenever democracy is broached as a subject in contemporary Islamic discourse, there are two fundamental concepts that are invariably addressed, sometimes in a somewhat misleading way. These are shura and bay’a. Shura has the meaning of consultation. The Quran in fact has a surah or chapter bearing this name. As a consequence it is widely held in the Muslim world that all political authority should be exercised on the basis of the receiving of advice from what is now increasingly common in the Islamic world, a consultative council (majlis al-shura). Such councils are elected or appointed and consist of persons of some particular functional expertise e.g. law, medicine, engineering etc and persons of political importance. The representatives on these councils are from the social elite (tribal leaders, family leaders etc or members of the educated elite or ayyan) and they arrive at decisions according to the principle of consensus or ijma’a. These representatives engage in an oath of allegiance to the ruler called a bay’a. This allegiance extends ridwan or “felicity” to the ruler, contingent, however, on the ruler exercising authority in an expected manner. Otherwise, the bay’a can be withdrawn. This tradition dating from the time of the Prophet himself is a powerful one, and all proposals for democracy in the Middle East begin with these specifics or the principles upon which they are based. What is often misleading about this linkage to democracy, however, is that these concepts are frequently interpreted as the shura meaning

a representative body of individuals and the bay'a is interpreted as an expression of individual want or desire. The more accurate interpretation is that these two concepts resemble more the practice of communal republicanism rather than individualistic liberalism. What is important here is that either shura or republican representation is not the representation of liberalism. Liberal representation sets as an ideal the priority of individual wishes over those of the community. Shura and republicanism on the other hand is predicated on the role of an elite on behalf of the masses. As a consequence this theory of representation is more directly collectively political than individually representational. The elite in Islam and especially in republicanism expect to share in ruling. It is this political avidness of the few that contributes to the executive authority of the state and the containment of the power of the state. This is a theory of democracy and politics from the top down. It is one in which the citizen insists on having an important voice in order to direct the state in a proper moral direction. It is this insistence that results in the containment of the state.

Islam like republicanism and unlike liberalism views the state positively. For Islam, the state supports the social structure and organizations vital to Islam. It also provides the administrative structure for the Islamic law whose celebration represents freedom in republican democracy. This does not mean, however, that the Islamic state is monolithic and fails to make a distinction between religion (din) and the state (dawla). This is the Western stereotype and not the reality. According to this stereotype, the Islamic state is said to be intrinsically non-democratic. Scholarly research is increasingly proving this to be incorrect. From the time of the Prophet Muhammad in his constitution of the city of Medina (622-634AD) until the present, what is remarkable is that the state under Islam has not had a structure that gave religion a predominant role. Instead, Islamic political theory, underdeveloped as it is, has stated that the state exists to collect taxes to assure the stability and maintenance of order under which worship can occur. In other words, political order and stability in Islam goes beyond a universal human desire for these conditions, to the desire for them as a precondition for worship. This illustrates the collective importance of the republican principle of non-domination to Muslims. This concept of disorder (fitna) which is considered so objectionable in Islamic society is a reinforcing factor in the strength of the unacceptability of disorder in present day Turkey in the words of Gülen and presently also in Iraq. Order is religiously mandated. What is important to understand, however, is that as far as the formal role of religious clerics are concerned, these are to remain indirect in the exercise of power. Their expected political role is advisory. The Islamic state must be one in which Islamic law and practices must be upheld. In order to achieve this, the ulama or clerics are expected to form an advisory council to the ruler. The struggle for democracy in the modern period often centres on the rules governing the role of this council. Thus, for example, in the informal discussions that have occurred already in the new Iraq, this council is expected to be formed but its role is also expected to be circumscribed. This issue is most dramatically at work in present day Iran. From the time of the Iranian revolution in 1979, the Ayatollah Khomeini promoted the doctrine of velayet-e faqih or "The Counsel of the Jurisprudents". This idea drawn from Shiite Islam provided for near total authority of the clergy. A substantial political struggle has been waged since 1979 between those who support this vision and those who in large numbers opposed it at one time under the leadership of democratically elected President Khatemi. This issue is intensified because of the particular principles of Shiism, but the point is that this is also an unresolved issue within Islam more generally. This contest regarding the proper political role of the clergy in Islam, while far less important in Sunni Islam can also be viewed as an expression of the constraining role of republicanism.

Turkish Republican Islam

Foundations of Contemporary Turkish Islam

There are a number of special characteristics of Turkish Islam that are important to understand in terms of the strength of its appeal and its ability to endure the tyrannical repression of a heavy ideological secular military regime. One point is the fact that from the year 1229 AD and the founding of the Ottoman Turkish Empire, what has become modern Turkey developed what is termed “frontier” Islam. The meaning of this results from the fact that the empire was to expand outwards from what was initially a smaller geographical bounded area. This meant that as it expanded to all four compass points to what was to become a gigantic regional empire, it had to in effect negotiate this expansion with the diverse practices of Islam that it encountered. Therefore Turkish Islam tended to be a pragmatic, cosmopolitan and perhaps a bit of a “political” faith. Turkish Islam has carried this cultural imprint down to the present age. It is also the case that Turkish Islam is also a pious and religiously resilient faith. The explanation for this is due to two of its defining characteristics. The first is a more or less conventionally organized Islam at the local level consisting of religious schools and the religious authority of its ulama. What reinforced this localism, however, has been the density and vibrant nature of Sufism in the form of the Naksibendi Sufi order. Sufism gave Turkish Islam a liveliness and durability that served it well during practically the entire life of the Ottoman Empire.

Turkish Islam also benefited from the fact that while Kemal Atatürk shared the secularism of one segment of the Young Turk’s Movement, it was he who also rallied the Turkish people to rise up against the invasion of Turkey by the British, the French and several other foreign armies in the aftermath of World War I and he did this successfully due in no small measure to his appeals to an Islamic inspired Turkish patriotism. The Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 brought this fighting to a successful conclusion which then permitted Atatürk to direct his full attention to what was to become an aggressive policy of secularism. His objective was to rigorously strip religion entirely from representation in the new Republic of Turkey. In fact, the name “Republic” was chosen in order to signal that secularism in Turkey was to be the draconian one of the French revolution and would not be the negotiated Anglo-Saxon one of Britain and America.

The policy of secularism also, however, unintentionally benefited the resistance to secularism as well. This was due to the fact that Atatürk’s policy was so aggressive that he tore up the organizational roots of Islam at the village level to such a degree so as to make the work easier for their being supplanted by what was to become the educated leaders of the Islamic resistance. These leaders were in effect to come from the Sufi orders who could far more easily than what might have been otherwise the case to introduce modern, дешанes, readings of Islam which were to become the basis for resistance to Kemalism. Unlike the modernization of Islam in other Muslim countries, the educated elite was to possess a high degree of agreement with one another while at the time they were able to communicate their ideas for reform to an emerging, increasingly better educated middle class. In effect, the modernization of Islam was able to skip an entire generation in the drive for an Islamic modernity. In addition, while Atatürk was in effect creating his own opportunities for his Western formula of modernization, in fact Islam was in effect “neck and neck” in the race for its version of modernity. It is perhaps nearly unique in the case of Middle East that in Turkey there was this near equality of historical opportunity for intellectual secularism and religious modernization. In other words, consistent with the theme of this paper, while Kemalist republicanism

supported secularism and Islamic republicanism did not, the latter, however, was intent on the pursuit of the modernization of Islam. In other words, both republicanism were intent on the pursuit of what was significantly a similar agenda of national modernization.

As already noted, organized Islam and especially the Naksibendi Sufi orders in Turkey historically has shown evidence of its steadfastness to the defense of Turkey whether it was in the war against Russia in 1878 or the “War of Independence” led by Kemal Atatürk from 1918-1923. Therefore, Turkish Islam has never had to stand nationalistically apologetic on the sidelines while it pursued a political agenda possibly different from that of Turkey’s ruler, Kemal Atatürk. Instead, Turkish Islam, unlike Arab Islam, has also been in the forefront of defining that which is modern for Turkish Muslims. As a result, Turkish Islam has faced the challenge of countering the more limited, single issue Kemalist program of secularism rather than the totality of what have been a far more complex and larger modernization agenda. In other words, Turkish Muslims have had the intellectual self-confidence to sit at the same table as secular intellectuals and debate the content of the meaning of modernism for Turkish society.

The Islamic response to modernization has had two important intertwined dimensions. The first was the fact that the efforts of Atatürk to modernize the society had the effect of causing rural to urban population movements that became the beginning of the creation of a modern educated urban bourgeois class. This class, moreover, tended to re-establish their rural bonds in the city and thus as intact local/mahalle and extended family units sought to continue their religious commitments. In short, the rural to urban population movement preserved the solidarity of the bonds of rural society. The retention of this degree of sociological solidarity appears to have assisted in the modernization transition from the oral celebration of Islam to a written one. The written one was able to smoothly establish itself in the new urban environment. At the same time, this historical *deshanes* tradition also became the vehicle within which the teachings of a remarkable theologian and intellect, Said Nursi (1876-1960), came to be read. The combination of this *deshanes* tradition and the appearance of Nursi and other thinkers like him also benefited from a further cultural persistency and that is the “interior” or highly personalized nature of the Sufi spiritual experience. In addition, whereas the village practice of *deshanes* took place in a *tekke* or special meeting place, now this was being done socially in private homes. Thus, just as Kemalism was aggressively Westernizing the country, a counter religious message of cultural modernization was also being pursued.

The Advent of Party Politics

With the death of Atatürk, “Kemalism” lost its charismatic leader and the person who also possibly had the intellectual capacity to change and adapt to new political challenges. Perhaps due to this or more simply due to a generational ideological change in the search for a more intellectually coherent statement of Kemalism, there next occurred an experiment with the creation of a multiparty system. This served as an opportunity for the Islamic opposition to attempt to pursue its own political objectives. Meanwhile, what came to be called the Nursi movement after Said Nursi in turn spawned a new generation of similarly inspiring religious leaders, among whom was Fethullah Gülen (1941-). This in turn came to be called the neo-Nur movement. What became apparent from the 1960’s onwards were the ideological weaknesses of Kemalism. Kemalism always has had the army to rely upon politically in extreme circumstances, but as a movement its ideological appeal was largely restricted to its Turkish patriotism. As a movement, it consisted at first of a single official party which then underwent organizational and ideological change with decreasing electoral appeal., backed

always, however, by the army. Its ideological appeal continues to be the nostalgic one of the veneration of Kemal Atatürk. Beyond that, however, is little in the way of the appeal of sophisticated ideas. When the army has imposed its authority, it has done so by edict and force and not by persuasion.

With the military always lurking in the background and nearly always prepared to exert influence or to physically intervene, Islam has had to search for spaces and opportunities in order to gain political representation. One can see camera instances of this in each of the military inventions that occurred in 1960 and 1980. In 1960 the military felt that the Democratic Party (DP) was making too much of an opening to Islam, so it intervened and cashiered 2000 officers and finally introduced the revised constitution of 1961 which gave the bureaucracy authority for policy decisions and also favoured interest groups rather than political parties. In the 1980 coup it sought to control religion not by repressing it but by co-opting it in schools it controlled etc. Its fears, however, were more from the political left, so the army actually created opportunities for religion to be used against what it considered the Marxist left. It sought therefore to co-opt and manipulate religion.

The preceding suggests that the republicanism of Kemalism is defective. To begin with, the fact of the free license that army exercises in its interventions is sabotaging of the possibilities of political freedom. The situation is made worse by the regularity with which the army not only does this, but does so also with a similar regularity of tearing up and rewriting constitutions. Under these conditions, there can be no possibility of the containment of political power developing from checks and balances. The army in effect has a veto power claim on this possibility. The Turkish system of law is that of the adopted one of the Swiss Code of Law. This “foreign” code of law has in fact had a perhaps surprising high degree of acceptance. The reason for this acceptance may be because it is itself indirectly adopted from the system of the law of the Roman Republic i.e. it originated as a republican system of law in which the state takes precedence over the individual. Finally, while a self-consciously Muslim society is governed by the social responsibility of *maslaha*, once again, the army’s intervention tends to restrict this quality to itself. In short, Kemalism fails to achieve the liberating goals of republicanism. Instead, certainly, militarism, if not Kemalism, is an example of tyrannical republicanism. The pattern of the preceding is clear, politics in Turkey were becoming more complex and far more difficult for the military to control.

AKP, the February 1997 Coup and the Parliamentary Elections of July 2002

The Justice and Development Party (AKP)

The February 28, 1997 military coup was the fourth and most recent of the military corrective actions taken against the Turkish state as an expression of its version of republicanism. The reason given by the coup leaders was that the Kemalist principle of secularism was being violated and the case that the military put forward to support its claims was clear and to the point. The Welfare Party (RP) and its leader Erbakan as prime minister were accused of offending the Turkish “way of life” and jailed i.e. the military had the temerity to advocate a moral direction for the Muslim society. The specific consequence of this was to force a generational change in the leadership of the Islamic political opposition. Erbakan as the perennial leader of this opposition was now replaced by the younger Erdoğan who had established his reputation as the energetic mayor of Istanbul. Therefore, the coup was the opening offensive of a cultural war. The events leading up to the coup, however, were hardly spiritually

edifying in their details. With Erdoğan and the revived RP on the political ascendancy, the military worked behind the scenes to encourage two secular political parties, The True Path Party (DYP) and The Motherland Party (ANAP) to enter into a political alliance in order to marginalize the RP. There were already, however, major accusations of corruption charges against the leader of the DYP but the military agreed to ignore these in their eagerness to achieve their tactical political objective. At first this appeared to succeed, but Erdoğan, saw a political opportunity in the situation and he entered into an alliance of his own with Tansu Çiller, the head of the DYP, thus splitting the army's planned alliance. Erdoğan had pulled off a shrewd manoeuvre of his own, so that the military were now faced with the first avowed Muslim Prime Minister in Turkish history. This was an achievement much appreciated by the Muslim masses of the population, but it was an outcome that the military could not permit to stand. The consequence was the inauguration of a "Roll Back" campaign against Islam launched against not only the RP and Erdoğan, but also the closing of thousands of Muslim educational, business, banking institutions, cultural organizations etc. These decrees were promulgated in the "Eighteen Directives" dated the day of the coup, February 28, 1997. The latter "Directives" were further stark evidence of the arbitrariness of the army in unilaterally rewriting the law of the country at its own tactical convenience. This is a vivid transgression of the law so important to the operation of republicanism. The army went so far as to alter its strategic planning document so that some objectively serious security issues were given less priority and that "reactionary Islam" became the national target. The April 1999 elections were won by right wing parties in an electoral campaign conducted in a climate of national fear and hysteria. One of the unusual outcomes of this was that the Islamic groupings in the country turned wholeheartedly to advocating Turkish entry into the EU in order to possibly gain the protection of European Union civil rights protection. The military had gone so far in this campaign that by the parliamentary elections of 2002, the Islamic party of the AKP under the leadership of the outspoken Erdoğan won 363 seats out of 550. This movement towards the stabilization of republican politics in Turkey was reinforced in the July 2007 parliamentary elections where the Islamic republican AKP was able to increase the size of its popular vote to 47% and the Kemalist republican vote of the CHP and the MHP also increased its percentage slightly.¹⁸ This election then set the stage for successive votes by the parliament which on August 28, 2007 finally elected Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül to the politically powerful position of president. The fact that the army has accepted this constitutionally arrived at outcome and that President Gül has sworn to uphold the constitutional principle of secularism speaks soundly to the continued constitutional development of republican Turkey. The AKP had run the June 2007 parliamentary campaign ironically on the slogan, "The Good Life" with its undertones of religious morality and over tones of moral hypocrisy directed at the military! It is possible to say these parliamentary and presidential elections support the point made at the outset of this paper, namely that Turkey may be witnessing the evidence of an emerging distinction between the democratic republicanism of the Islamic and Kemalist political parties versus the tyranny of the republicanism of the army.¹⁹

18 For an analysis of the July 2007 elections, see Reuters (<http://www.reuters.com/article/world/news>).

19 For a summary of these complex developments, see Yavuz, pp. 244-259. For an analysis of the presidential elections, see, Guardian Unlimited, August 29, 2007.

Fethullah Gülen and Islamic Republicanism

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In the aftermath of the fourth and most recent intervention by the military in Turkish politics on February 28, 1997 in what was called somewhat misleadingly a “soft coup”, it is remarkable that Fethullah Gülen has perhaps emerged as the single most important religious personality in contemporary Turkey. This is especially remarkable in light of his personal history of having been sentenced to prison and in fact going into political exile abroad. This “soft coup” after all was called a “roll back” of “totalitarian” Islam in which Islam had been elevated to the status of a strategic target by the army. The story of how a soft spoken Islamic scholar without any explicitly political organization to support him has in fact weathered this storm and rebounded to emerge politically strengthened is a story of how deeply he has affected Muslims in Turkey and perhaps how representative of religious sentiment he has become.²⁰

Fethullah Gülen is a fitting conclusion to this comparative analysis of Kemalist and Islamic conceptions of republicanism in Turkey. The thesis has been that contrary to the claims of Kemalists and also those of most scholars, both groups are in significant agreement about the meaning and importance of republicanism. A careful application of the concept reveals that Kemalist and Islamist alike find general agreement upon its criteria. The only significant disagreement is Kemalism’s claim to secularism. It is also possible, however, that even this convention of the Kemalist polemic may conceal the possibility of a similarity on this criterion as well. We will return to this admittedly controversial point by way of conclusion.

It is well to begin this discussion of the enormous importance of Gülen to Turkish Islam by noting that his education in Islam occurred in the Erzurum region of Turkey. There he was the beneficiary of the scholarship of Naksibendi Sufi Islam at a time when its already formidable tradition was itself undergoing change as the result of the challenge of Kemalist secularist and modernist policy. This change was initiated by the remarkable intellectual leadership of Said Nursi whose prescience was the quickness with which he supported the newly emerging nationalism of the Young Turk movement prior to World War One. At the same time, however, he began to have reservations about the religious direction of this reformation. Thus, when Kemal Atatürk began his patriotic attack upon the European occupation of Turkey, he was also prepared to support this, while also harbouring reservations about the spiritual direction that reform was moving in. Therefore, when Gülen began his studies in the 1950’s, he like other young scholars, was able to benefit from thinking which possessed a remarkable understanding of the Enlightenment thinking that laid behind the European thinking that Atatürk and the Kemalists was so uncritically borrowing from. Gülen also benefited from the manner in which Nursi’s shift to textual rather than oral discussion undermined the authority of the traditional ulama and placed it in the hands of this new class of Islamic intellectuals. Nursi’s ideas, as a result of political repression, had however, remained “internal” in the tradition of Sufism. Due to the fact that Gülen was appearing later in the historical process, his extraordinarily influential ideas became more “external” and public with the consequence that he was able to target with some precision his audience of young journalists, engineers and members of other professions.

20 For a careful and balanced analysis of Gülen, see Yavuz, “The Gülen Movement: The Turkish Puritans” in Yavuz and Esposito, pp. 19-47. Yavuz’s account is an especially nuanced one in which he notes, as has been argued in this paper, that in Yavuz’s terms, Gülen is not a liberal and strongly implies that he is a conservative.

Consistent with the foregoing, Gülen 's ideas became increasingly practical and applied in nature. His thinking was that of praxis or, in his own terms, that of aksiyon (action). He is thus a bridging figure between being a dominant interpreter of Islam and being an animator of Islamic practice. He always had adhered to the foundational principles of orthodox Islamic theology . So much so, that his theological arguments proceed in the formal logic and building block strategy of classical kalam. What is astonishing about his ideas, however, is that while effectively convincing the reader in this fashion by traditional means, he is then able to turn adroitly to an emphasis upon a supplementary argument of reason and an insistence upon independent and critical thinking. A consequence of this intellectual style is that he has become an authoritative intermediary between the sunnah and the Quran on the one hand and modern Western thought on the other. This intermediary approach (wasta in Arabic) also applied to his practical recommendations as well. For example, rather than urge the building of mosques as a spiritual act he suggested instead, the construction of what has become some astonishing very large scale, internationally state of the art research hospitals or huge publishing and broadcasting enterprises.²¹ A particularly striking further example of this, was his calling to people's attention what he referred to as "the humiliation of materialism" . This statement is an admonition that in the midst of the wealth now being earned by the new urban, modern educated professional middle class, which is his special audience, conspicuous consumption was said to be spiritually humiliating and not something to take pride in. In fact, this modesty of appearance and personal life style is characteristic of his supporters.

In turning now to the subject of "republicanism", it is well to recall what was said at the outset that reference here is to two varieties of republicanism. The first one is the self-descriptive one of Kemalism while the second is the implicit one developed from within the context of the Muslim political opposition. It is also well to recall what was said at the beginning of this paper about how one conceptualizes this concept. The distinction was made between the concreteness of the concept as self-description on the one hand and the implicit abstractness of the concept on the other . The concreteness of the concept is well illustrated in the case of the Kemalists . They begin by using it as a descriptive label. They tend to use it as means to characterize a political system that is non-monarchical and possesses the quality of being an especially modern political form in the era in which it was adopted, . This modernity further implied that it was populist in nature and perhaps even committed to democratic practices. In addition, it is clear that Atatürk intended that the new state would be "étatiste", that is, it would have a strong executive leadership and that it would not be liberally democratic.

The implicit concept of Islamic republicanism, on the other hand, is one that emerges gradually and pragmatically. What is required in this instance is that the definition of republicanism is constructed from the pragmatic approach to politics of the Islamists. It was the discrete and considered choices of Fethullah Gülen that has led to a de facto Islamic republicanism.

One can begin with evidence that Gülen very self consciously embraces republicanism by noting his pragmatic references to its four principles . To begin with, he very explicitly embraces republicanism. As one scholar has noted, Gülen and Mehmet Kirkinçi (another

21 What is remarkable about this is that these enterprises appear to be accomplished on the basis of the auftragstaktik or mission order tactics of the German army of World War I and the U.S. Marine Corps. This is devolution of authority in which the subordinate knows what is to be accomplished because he knows the mind of his superior. Therefore, in the Gülen movement, one can have the experience of a conversation with a wealthy business man who has donated possibly hundreds of thousands of dollars or possibly more for a school project, but who has never met Hojaefendi Fethullah Gülen personally. He also did not think that there was anything unusual about this.

neo-Nur scholar) represent a degree of accommodation that has been attained by neo-Nur leaders with republican principles of the state.²² What follows from this commitment to republicanism is very strong additional evidence of support of the further criteria of republicanism. Gülen is quoted as saying that: “ I am always on the side of the state and the military. Without the state, there is anarchy and chaos.”²³ This conservative sentiment seems to apply to the contemporary political era, but it is also explicitly consonant with the theory of the historical Islamic state where Muslims are counselled against the advent of fitna and disorder.

Gülen also strongly upholds the principle of civic virtue as a second republican principle. For example, he makes frequent references to the requirements of hizmet or service; himmet or donations; and ihlas or the seeking the appreciation of God. The latter requirement is especially revealing of this because what is expected is that the individual must engage in spiritual self-scrutiny in order for him/her to be accountable to God. As for the republican principle of law as a third criteria, Gülen on the one hand upholds the principles of the shariah governing human behaviour, but he is also accepting of the Swiss Civil Code as having been accepted by the Turkish people.²⁴

Finally, the fourth criteria of republicanism of the noblesse oblige of the ruling elite is roundly and repetitively upheld by Gülen. What is very clear is that the privileged few must justify their prominence by assuming responsibility for the welfare of society as a whole. In Islamic terms this is termed maslaha and the Quranic phrase supporting this role of the elite is, ahl al hal wa al' aqd (“Those who loosen and those who bind”). A particularly dramatic illustration of this expectation is what he refers to as the education of the “golden generation”.(altin nesil).

Conclusion

Politically, it is the case that unlike other political leaders in Turkey, Gülen has not sought to construct an independent organization.. An interesting point related to the foregoing is the answer to the question of where might he be located in the Turkish political spectrum? There are to begin with his personal political assumptions. There is little doubt that for him, politics is a “top down” process with authority concentrated at the top. He is reconciled to democracy and secularism, but, however, without full democracy and full secularism.. For example, it has been said of him that he is not a liberal. He is intent on building the state, not civil society.²⁵

What is important to understand is that while he does not possess a political organization, in fact years of religious instruction in his informal but authoritative role as Hocaefendi has, however, cast a vast network of hundreds of outstanding world class high schools in Turkey and abroad where his example and the standards of teachers modelled on him, are maintained; a very influential television network has been established and he has a whole series of high quality magazine and newspaper publications.

It is the case that Gülen and his movement have been interwoven with the Turkish political process. Thus in the mid-1980's Özal was able to use Gülen to strengthen his government

22 Rusen Sakir, “Devlet Babanin Nurcu Oglu: Kiiirkincci Hoca, Artheber (Dec. 20.1997: 19 in Yavuz, p. 195, fn.45.

23 Interview with Gülen in Sabah, 27Jan. 1995 quoted in Yavuz, p. 27.

24 His commitment to law is cited at length in “Third Abant Platform Final Declaration, on “Islam and democracy”, (July 2000) as an appendix in Yavuz and Esposito, pp.253-55.

25 Quoted in Zaman, June 21, 1993.

politically while at the same time, enhancing the reputation of Gülen himself. Looking ahead to the mid-1990's on the other hand, Gülen true to his instincts to support the state, stood with the military against Erbakan in the 1997 coup. Suddenly, however, the military in the coup of February 28, 1997 declared the Turkish enemy to be "reactionary Islam". Gülen came to be one of the enemy and he left Turkey to go into political exile. The situation had reached such an extreme, however, that Islamic groups rallied around Erdoğan, a very popular and successful mayor of Istanbul and a new victorious alliance that in 2002 and again in 2007 swept to victory. Gülen, on the other hand, seems to have emerged more prominent than previously, but now in a different role as the spokesman for contemporary reformist Turkish Islam.

It is notable that while other Muslim leaders are playing more overt political roles, he has become the bridge between the modernization of Islam and the robust market driven capitalism of contemporary Turkey. In addition, to anticipate the overall conclusion, this bridge has been constructed from his ability to draw Kemalist and Islamic republicanism ever so closer to one another. In other words, Gülen can be viewed as a unifier of Turkish society.

Conclusion

- i. Why is it that Turkey appears to be so exceptional in the study of Middle Eastern politics? The conceptual explanation is that the study of the Arab countries of the region is dominated conceptually by the ethnocentrism of liberal democracy and the failure to address the question of tyranny and the victimization of the peoples of the Middle East.
- ii. What is clear in the present paper is that "republicanism" better explains the politics of the Middle East because it better accounts for the favour with which the state is viewed.
- iii. In addition, republicanism has perhaps the greater promise of ending the domination of the tyrants in the Middle East. This is, after all, what has historically occurred in the tenacity with which the Turks retained their political independence and the Iranians gained theirs.²⁶ Likewise, the utilization of the concept of "tyranny" better describes the brutal repression and injustice of the region.
- iv. This paper also raises a deeper and more profound question regarding how one studies the politics of the Middle East. What is clear is that the academic political science employed in the study of the Middle East has become intellectually trapped into the liberal biases of individualism, equality, secularism etc from the Enlightenment onwards. In contrast, the sister social sciences of economics, sociology etc originating at the same time are far less susceptible to this. Therefore, this paper critically advances both the study of Turkish politics, Middle Eastern politics and politics in general.
- v. This paper also addresses what has become a perennial and possibly distracting question in the study of Turkish politics, and that is what appears to be a highly polarized conflict between the secularization of Kemalist republicanism on the one hand, and the Islamic piety of the republican masses of the population on the other hand. This paper suggests that this is perhaps not the most useful way of addressing the relationship of the masses of the population and the "Kemalists". This distinction is perhaps too provocative and too confrontational. The more

²⁶ Similarly, Hamas has forced the Israeli settler evacuation of Gaza in 2005 and subsequently gained electoral success in some movement towards Palestinian independence. Louis J. Cantori, "Islamic Republicanism, Hamas and the Emergence of the Palestinian State", American Political Science Association, Chicago, August 29, 2007.

profound question is what amounts to the principle of legitimacy of “republicanism”. Viewed from this perspective, it would appear that “republicanism” is possibly what is called the political and social state in the present paper have in common. “Kemalism” has selected the label of “republicanism” to rally the nation about. In the concepts of the present paper, this has become self-descriptive. It utilizes “republicanism” to denote the state, but at the same time, it has assumed the implicit features of republicanism as well. The consequence is that the features of Kemalism have come to resemble those of Islamic republicanism as well. In the process, Kemalism and Islamic republicanism have come to resemble one another i.e. Turkey is becoming more united politically. To summarize the point, the “republicanism” of the Kemalists and Islamic republicanism have possibly dialectically drawn closer to one another. The consequence is a gradual rapprochement while the military as an institution has become increasingly isolated and defensive in its secularist and less democratic position. Even the latter point could face the possibility of attenuation in the process of possible further dialectical process in the aftermath of the election of President Gül.

- vi.** Perhaps the key facilitator in bringing about this rapprochement of Kemalist republicanism and republican Islam has been Fethullah Gülen. As has been shown, he very dramatically fits the republican profile in terms of his advocacy of the state, his respect for the law, his instructional role in promoting civic virtue, and his consistent emphasis upon the recruitment and formation of the character of the Turkish elite. In addition, his historical importance as one of the greatest of the neo-Nur intellectuals was sufficient to mark him as perhaps the most pre-eminent of contemporary Islamic Turkish scholars. What has occurred is that this prominence has permitted him to bring to bear his remarkable understanding of Western contemporary thought in order to facilitate the advance of the spiritual and intellectual modernization of Turkey. In the process of achieving this, he is also facilitating the greater growth of the cultural unity of Turkey while at the same time, contributing to the diminution of internal conflict on issues of defining what it means to be a modern Turk.
- vii.** Finally, Fethullah Gülen in an alternative venue has generated a most interesting discussion of the “New Islamic Discourse”. In that discussion, Voll has raised the possibility that at the beginning of the new century it is now time to draw the final curtain on the old and intellectually tired subject of modernity and secularization. His point is that Fethullah Gülen is symptomatic of the fact that what is occurring in a remarkably rapidly modernizing Turkey is “desecularisation” i.e. the increase of commitment to religion as a process that sees the expansion of public space for religion and not the anticipated shrinkage of private space. From this perspective, secularism is not innately tied to modernity, but instead, itself has become a separate ideology and belief system. If modernization is indeed a process of equalization and competition, than secularism is thus reduced in significance. He quotes Abdullah An-Na’im as observing that the an implication of this emerging conclusion is that those debating the question of secularism will now be able to perhaps choose their own version of secularism and not necessarily that of Europe. He says that this process will retain an Islamic imperative and will also be in “strict observance of the principle of pluralism and the protection of human rights.” This is an interesting suggestion, but alternatively, the Muslim future of “desecularisation” might well contain within it not the “pluralism” of liberalism, but rather the

republicanism of “conservatism”.²⁷

27 Voll in Yavuz and Esposito, pp. 242-44. The German scholar Stauth has noted similarly that with the “...Islamic revolution in Iran in 1978-79 that Islam has reentered the Weltgeschichte. In good Hegelian fashion he is reminding us that this ideological discussion of secularization also is accompanied by real world events. In other words, by thought and by deed, Islam in the new century will be more insistently requiring serious intellectual attention to the Islamic cultural dynamic. Georg Stauth, Ed. *Islam-Motor or Challenge of Modernity?* (Hamburg, Germany: Lit Verlag, 1998)