Helpdesk Research Report: Religion and Democracy in Secular States
Date: 06.04.09

Query: Please provide a short bibliography of resources on democracy and religion in secular federal republics. Please highlight any information on how legal frameworks in these countries have been developed to support religious tolerance.

Enquirer: DFID Ethiopia

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1. Overview

The issue of the relationship between religion and the state has attracted much attention over the years. Surprisingly, there was little readily available information on the wider legal frameworks used to promote religious tolerance. Most of the resources found on this issue focus on the theoretical dimensions of the relationship between religion and the state. These highlight the increasing role that is being played by religion, both domestically and internationally. Indeed, recent empirical research (see Fox 2006; Fox and Sandler 2005) has shown that across the world separation of religion and the state is the exception (with only the US fulfilling that description), and that government involvement in religion is the norm. For many commentators, the key question is: given that the principal assumption behind the received wisdom of the separation of religion and politics - i.e. that the importance of religion would decline with increasing economic development - has been proven incorrect, should the principle still hold sway?

Some commentators argue that a break with secular constitutional traditions in a multi-religious country can have disastrous consequences. In Nigeria, efforts by Islamic politicians to assert Shari’a law have driven Muslims and Christians to confrontation (see Harnischfeger 2008). The concern is that the increasing diversity of religious persuasions makes it difficult for citizens to share basic assumptions about law and morality. Political demands motivated by religious convictions are often couched in absolute terms, making compromise and negotiation difficult. For this reason it is crucial to maintain secular government and protect the political system from religious competition.

What is clear from this debate, however, is that the emergence of religion in public domains across the world means that the management of religious and cultural difference, and the treatment of minorities, has become a key element of successful governance. The literature which does address the ways in which legal frameworks protect the status of religious communities or minorities, focuses mainly on constitutional provisions, some of which are detailed in the case studies below. These include articles which provide for the secular nature of the state; the equality of all citizens before the state; the right to religious freedom; the right of religious communities to establish and run their own educational institutions; protection against being compelled to worship; as well as a prohibition against the state collecting taxes.
for spending on religious activities. An increasingly common strategy adopted by secularist power-holders in countries with growing divides over the role of religion in politics has been to transfer ‘religion and state’ questions from the political realm to the constitutional courts. Whilst there are considerable differences in the interpretive approaches and practical solutions adopted by high courts in dealing with core religion and state questions, these courts have emerged as important guardians of secular interests in these countries (Hirschl 2003).

There is however considerable debate about the link between religion and democracy. Whilst there are many who assume that the two are incompatible, others argue the opposite. Currently, the most contested issue is whether Islam and democracy are compatible. One study finds that predominantly Muslim countries encompass a variety of constitutional arrangements - ranging from Islamic republics with Islam as the official state religion, to secular states with strict separation of religion and state (Stahnke and Blitt 2005).

The literature also notes the various approaches that have been adopted by democracies in dealing with the relationship between religion and the state. These range from excluding religion as a political force altogether (such as in Turkey); to constitutionally privatising religion (such as in France and the US); through to recognising the communal nature of religion (such as in Israel). The main criticism of states which fail to recognise religious diversity and plurality is that these states nevertheless espouse a majority view which is posited in opposition to non-ruling, minority religious cultures. The conflict that this produces is in evidence in countries such as England, France, Germany, India, Israel, Netherlands, Turkey and the USA, where the extent to which the state institutionally and financially supports religious cultures is a subject of intense debate.

In light of these changing trends, the commentators cited below propose a variety of models through which the increasing demands of religious communities might be accommodated.

2. Key Documents

This article is available for purchase from Sage Journals Online: http://cps.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/39/5/537

This study examines the extent of separation of religion and state (SRAS) between 1990 and 2002 in 152 states using the Religion and State database. There are three particularly important results from this analysis:

- First, in 2002, more than a century after the founders of the social sciences began to predict the demise of religion in modern times, SRAS is the exception and government involvement in religion (GIR) is the norm. Using the strictest interpretation of SRAS – no support for religion and no restrictions on religious practices – only one country, the United States, has no GIR. Furthermore, even using a looser interpretation of GIR, less than 22% of states have even marginal SRAS. However, even in the United States, one can find isolated examples of state support for religion such as the “in God we trust” inscription on U.S. currency.

- Second, this study’s results show that modernisation and economic development is associated with higher GIR. Chronologically, between 1990 and 2002 there has been a slight rise in GIR. ‘If the predictions of the founders of the social sciences regarding religion’s demise in modern times were correct, we would expect the opposite to
have happened—that is, a decrease in GIR between 1990 and 2002 and for economically developed states to have lower levels of GIR." (p. 562)

➢ Third, although there are variations between other religious traditions, one religious tradition that clearly stands out as being different from the others is Islam. Muslim states are shown to have significantly higher levels of GIR than any other category of religious tradition examined, generally in the form of support for Islam. Christian states have lower levels of GIR. None of the top 25 scores on the overall GIR measure belong to Christian states, but Christian states include 16 of the lowest 25 scores. “These results are important because they run counter to two pieces of conventional wisdom. First they directly contradict the assumption that religion is disappearing in modern times or at least moving from the public sphere to the private sphere. Because the variables in this study specifically measure the influence of religion in the public sphere, this study’s results unambiguously show that religion has not disappeared from the public sphere.” (p. 562)

On this last point, the authors highlight that many argue that for a variety of reasons, modernisation is causing religion’s importance to increase. “Two factors in particular, among the proposed causes of religion’s modern resurgence, help explain why more economically developed states tend to have less SRAS: a religious backlash against modernization’s undermining of the traditional community and an increased ability of both religious and political institutions to involve themselves in more areas of life and cause greater clashes between them. It is precisely in those states where modernity has most undermined the traditional community that religious elements within the state are most likely to try and legislate religious morals and traditions that were previously enforced at the social level. Similarly, it is precisely the most modern states that have the greatest ability to interfere in the daily lives of their citizens, including the regulation of religion.

The second assumption contradicted by this study is that democracies need SRAS to function. This piece of conventional wisdom is disputed. Some argue that democracies are involved in religion […], religious institutions often have incentives to support democracy […], and religion can provide an essential normative component for democracy […]. Yet the finding that full SRAS is nearly nonexistent among democracies and even marginal SRAS does not exist in a large majority of them likely comes as a surprise to most. Furthermore this is also true of nondemocracies. Accordingly, this finding in particular should be the basis for further research. In sum, the findings here challenge basic assumptions made by major elements of social science and political science theory. They are sufficiently unequivocal and strong to warrant a major reconsideration of our assumptions regarding the role of religion in modern times in general and the role of religion in democracies in particular.” (pp. 562-563)

Fox, J. and Sandler, S., 2005, ‘Separation of Religion and State in the Twenty-First Century: Comparing the Middle East and Western Democracies’, Comparative Politics, Volume 37, Number 3, pp. 317-335
This article is available for purchase from Jstor: http://www.jstor.org/pss/20072892

This article re-examines the relationship between religion and politics using the Religion and State (RAS) dataset. The focus here is on domestic politics, specifically the extent or lack of separation of religion and state in western democracies and the Middle East. The authors examine the correlation between religion and democracy through the comparison of the Middle East, the world’s most autocratic region, with western democracies, the most democratic states in the world. Theoretically, this study also asks whether the predictions of eighteenth and nineteenth century philosophers like Voltaire and Nietzsche that religion’s influence on public life would decline in modern times have come true.
Accordingly, the study examines five aspects of the separation of religion and state: the structural relationship between religion and the state (the existence of an official religion or the legal position of religion within the state); the status of minority religions (restriction or banning of or provision of benefits to some religions but not others); discrimination against minority religions; regulation of the majority religion; and legislation of religion. It finds that most western democracies do not have full separation of religion and state. Only the US has no government involvement in religion. The authors argue that liberal democracy is thus compatible with religion, and the separation of religion and state in the US seems to be the exception rather than the rule.

The authors also explore the relationship between Islam and democracy and find that: "religious democracy, including Islamic democracy, is possible. Several hundred years ago western democracies were mostly authoritarian states with high levels of entanglement between religion and state. All western democracies other than the United States have some entanglement between religion and state and are nevertheless considered democratic. The same is possible for Islamic states. Christianity found a way to accommodate democracy, and Islam has within it doctrines that can be used to legitimize democracy. The true test will be the performance of Islamic political parties, like Turkey's Justice and Development party, which come into power through democratic means. However, it is important to remember that the existence of a potential for democracy within Islam does not mean that this potential will be realized. It is possible that Islam's more authoritarian interpretations will prevail." (p. 330)


This study analyses the constitutional provisions in 44 predominantly Muslim countries which address the relationship between religion and the state, freedom of religion or belief, and other related human rights as measured against recognised international human rights standards. The study finds that predominantly Muslim countries encompass a variety of constitutional arrangements - ranging from Islamic republics with Islam as the official state religion, to secular states with strict separation of religion and state. Key findings of the survey include:

- More than half of the world's Muslim population (estimated at over 1.3 billion) lives in countries that are neither Islamic republics nor that have declared Islam to be the state religion;
- Countries in which Islam is the declared state religion may provide constitutional guarantees of the right to freedom of religion or belief that compare favourably with international legal standards;
- Countries in which Islam is the declared state religion may also maintain constitutional provisions protecting the related rights to freedom of expression, association, and assembly - or the rights of equality and nondiscrimination with regard to, inter alia, religion and gender - that compare favourably with international standards; and
- A number of constitutions of predominantly Muslim countries incorporate or otherwise reference international human rights instruments.

This article is available for purchase from Project Muse:
http://muse.jhu.edu/login?uri=/journals/world_politics/v059/59.4kuru.html
This article aims to address the question of why secular states pursue substantially different policies toward religion. The United States, France, and Turkey are secular states that lack any official religion and have legal systems free from religious control. While the French and Turkish states have banned students' headscarves in public schools, the US has allowed students to wear religious symbols and attire. The author argues that state policies toward religion are the result of ideological struggles. In France and Turkey the dominant ideology is "assertive secularism," which aims to exclude religion from the public sphere, while in the U.S., it is "passive secularism," which tolerates public visibility of religion. For Kuru, whether assertive or passive secularism became dominant in a particular case is the result of the particular historical conditions during the secular state-building period, especially the presence or absence of an ancien régime based on a combination of monarchy and hegemonic religion.

This article is available for purchase from Project Muse: http://muse.jhu.edu/login?uri=/journals/human_rights_quarterly/v028/28.3amien.html

This article provides an overview of the South African law reform process regarding the legal recognition of Muslim marriages in the context of South Africa’s constitutional commitments. With reference to the proposed draft legislation, it explores the conflict between the right to freedom of religion and women's rights to equality that arises as a result of the proposed recognition. Despite the conflict, it is argued that legal recognition of Muslim marriages is necessary for the protection of women's rights. After considering the ways in which the conflict has been dealt with at legislative and judicial levels, the author offers recommendations to overcome the conflict so that women's rights to equality are not compromised.

3. Alternative Theoretical Models

Bader, V., 2007, ‘Secularism or Democracy?: Associational Governance of Religious Diversity’, Amsterdam University Press
A preview of this book is available at Google Books: http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=mUcWH0oT3cIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=legal+constitutional+religious+freedom+secular+state&lr=&source=gbs_summary_r&cad=0

In this book, the author argues that policies dealing with religious diversity in liberal democratic states – as well as the established institutions that enforce those policies – are increasingly under pressure and that “(p)olitics and political theory are caught in a trap between the fully secularized state and neo-corporate regimes of selective cooperation between states and organized religion” (abstract). The author proposes an alternative approach to problems of governing religious diversity – “associational governance” – as a way of overcoming the inherent deficiencies of the predominant models.

“Associative democracy (AD) rejects constitutional establishment. It supports the legal, administrative and political recognition of organised religions. It balances strong guarantees for individual or ‘inner’ religious freedoms and strong guarantees for associational or ‘outer’ freedoms of religion and provides maximum accommodation to religious practices, constrained only by minimal morality and basic rights. In addition to tax exemptions for organised religions, it provides public funding for faith-based organisations in all sorts of care and education, given public scrutiny and quality standards. It provides opportunities for these
organisations to be even-handedly involved in standard setting and governance of these services. Recognised religions are not explicitly allowed to play a public role, they should be given specific information rights and corresponding information duties with regard to contested issues on an even-handed basis with other weltanschaulichen organisations (based on ‘philosophical ways of life’), they should be given rights and opportunities to participate in public for a and hearings, and they should be included in advisory ethical councils.” (p. 20)

The book is divided into four parts. The first offers a critical assessment of the concepts of secularisation and separation of the church from the state. The second outlines the author's conceptualisation of minimal morality while part III aims to show how maximum accommodation by the state of religious diversity can be achieved through minimal but tough moral and legal constraints. Part IV discusses different institutional models of democracy and religious governance and further explores the author’s claim that “institutionally pluralist arrangements provide better chances for minorities and, at the same time, for increasing the actual degree of relational state neutrality and for finding more fair and even-handed solutions” (p. 25).

This policy brief outlines ten steps explaining why and how AD is a plausible way to overcome the deficiencies of today’s predominant models in practical politics and policy: http://www.imiscoe.org/publications/policybriefs/documents/PB8-religiousdiversity.pdf


A preview of this book is available at Google Books: http://books.google.co.uk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=PZry-N5CN5UC&oi=fnd&pg=PA392&dq=legal+constitutional+protection+religion+nigeria&ots=nG--_15JOb_&sig=NG3jI5JWXPlLUygSRUiMwalrbJo#PPA392,M1

In this essay, the author argues that while the principle of separation of religion from the state has been adopted in many democracies, a careful analysis of modern politics, law and society will show that religion still enjoys an “irreducible significant role”. It is still prominent as a socio-political and legal force and remains conspicuous despite of and even in reaction to modern secular rationality. The author thus proposes a ‘critical communitarian approach’, suggesting that religious communal practices should be seen as compatible with democracy. In fact, “religion and law are inseparable and interchangeable within power and in conflict with power in various, sometimes contradictory, socio-political interactive spaces”. (p. 393)

The author argues: “Conflicts between liberalism and nonliberal (nonruling) religious communities are common among many democracies. Since liberalism pretends to privatize religion, locating faith and religious practices in the individual sphere, and due to its fundamentalist claim for nonreligious virtues, it threatens to infringe upon rights of nonruling collectivities that aim to preserve and maintain nonhegemonic religious cultures. These minorities’ religious cultures are perceived in modern liberal legality as confrontational to majoritarian cultures. Such a conflict between self-asserted liberal state law and nonruling religious collectivities is articulated through cultural legal conflicts in, inter alia, England, France, Germany, India, Israel, Netherlands, Turkey and the USA. The conflicts are palpable even in states where a formal liberal separation between state and religion exists, like in France, Germany and the USA. Whether the state should institutionally and financially assist nonruling religious communities is under public and legal contentions in these political regimes; the dominant constitutional stand of state courts is against such facilitation due to the principle of freedom of religion. Subsequently, an advantage is practically granted to the hegemonic religions and churches in these regimes.” (p. 394)
The author goes on to argue: “Liberalism has failed in comprehending the complex practices in which religion is part of state power foci and a component in modern legality. It has privatized religion as a matter of individual right and hence it has not offered constitutional and political avenues of including nonliberal religious minorities in contemporary multicultural societies […] The essay also deals with and advocates the critical communitarian argument for inclusion of religious communities in democracies through evolvement of collective rights for protecting and empowering religious minorities that challenge hegemonic concepts of modernity, rationality, secularism” (p. 394)

The author also outlines some strategies that have been used by nation states to delineate religion and the state:

1. by excluding religion as a recognisable political force, as in modern Turkey during the 1920s and 1960s: this has “often resulted in resistance and aggravation of religious dissent and violence among minorities (Turkey) and in various localities (China).”

2. by constitutionally privatising religion, as in France and the USA since the 18th century, and in Germany after World war II: “Such a legalistic strategy has resulted in national attempts to ignore the religious collective demands and needs of nonliberal (nonruling) religious communities.”

3. by formally recognising the communal nature of religion: “though it has used it for negating other collective identities of the very same nonruling community. Israeli law has to some extent followed the Millet (community) system of the Ottoman Empire. Israeli Arab-Palestinians were recognized in state law as religious minorities (Muslims, Christians, Bedouins, Druze), and then they were denied collective rights as a Palestinian (national) minority. Thus religion has largely become a means to procure national control and governance.” (p. 396)

The author outlines the various facets of attempts by states to subdue religious nonruling communities:

- Religious practices have been interpreted as irrational acts. “There are two types of accustomed mistakes concerning religion and rationality. It is mistaken to profess that religions are irrational. It is based on the evidently erroneous presumption that believing in anything is good, but believing in God/Goddess is evil. It is also erroneous to avow that liberalism offers a free choice between religions. In every political regime there is hegemonic religion; therefore people who have been born into religious minorities are often discriminated against because of their faith and practices.”

- “In countries where formal separation of religion from state exists, funds for education in religious communities have been conceived as encouragement for segregation. Furthermore, religious acts of nonruling communities that have been part of cultural preservation have often been conceived as coercive and jeopardizing the “rule of law”.

- “(R)eligion of majoritarian groups and dominant groups has been conceived as part of nationality, while religion of minorities has been considered as part of primordial culture, which may endanger individuals and the modern state. Since a Western modernity has a narrative of secular progression, any religious resistance to it may be perceived as fundamentalism, even extremism, and may be criminalized in state law.” (p. 400)
4. Case Studies

Nigeria


A preview of this book is available at Google Books: http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=ftfXThvfQHkC&printsec=frontcover&dq=legal+constitutional+protection+religion+nigeria&lr=&source=gbs_summary_r&cad=0

When democracy was introduced to Nigeria in 1999, one third of its federal states declared that they would be governed by Shari’a, or Islamic law. In this book, the author argues that such a break with secular constitutional traditions in a multi-religious country can have disastrous consequences. In Nigeria, the efforts by Islamic politicians to assert their own religious laws have driven Muslims and Christians to confrontation.

The book highlights that the adoption of Shari’a in some states in northern Nigeria has led to accusations of human rights violations. However, for the author, the more dangerous dimension of Shari’a is that it contributes to a decline of the state:

- “By declaring the will of God the highest authority, Sharia politicians have given believers permission to disregard all man-made laws and agreements that are at variance with Islam. This undermined the legitimacy of the Christian president, and it also threatens the authority of the emirs and other representatives of the Islamic establishment.
- The call to shape state and society through the rules of Islam has increased antagonism between Muslims and members of other faiths. Christians and Traditionalists are worried that Islamic law may spread to other parts of Nigeria and that it may pervade more spheres of social life. Where Sharia becomes dominant, non-Muslims are excluded, to a large extent, from political participation, and their social environment is determined by the laws of an alien religion.” (p.15)

The author argues: “There is a growing tendency in multi-religious societies to allow parts of public life to be regulated by religious norms. Yet there is also considerable opposition to it. Influential political thinkers argue that the emergence of religiously diverse Christian-Muslim societies in Europe and other parts of the world makes it all the more necessary to preserve the secular order and shield the political system from religious competition. With the increasing variety of religious persuasions, citizens no longer share basic assumptions about law and morality, so the danger of deep divisions and irreconcilable conflicts rises. Compromises are hard to find, because political demands motivated by religious convictions often pose absolute and hence non-negotiable claims for validity. As ideas about justice and human dignity diverge greatly, it becomes difficult to formulate and realize ideas of the public good. What binds Christians, Muslims and irreligious people together is not much more than the common interest in ensuring that everybody can realize his or her own ideas of a good life [...] If society cannot reach a consensus on how to a just and human social order should look, then the state should refrain from transforming society according to such ideals. It would be unreasonable to use the public’s political power to enforce a religious vision (about which citizens may differ uncompromisingly). Instead, government should be neutral on the questions of good life, [...] respecting persons as free and independent selves, unencumbered by moral ties antecedent to choice. Following this maxim, democracy would develop into a procedural republic, with greatly reduced social functions. Its main aim would be to guarantee the conditions under which Christians and Muslims, believers and non-believers can live side by side, without disturbing each other.” (p. 21)
This article argues that growing popular support for principles of theocratic governance poses a threat to the policy preferences of secular elites in many countries. As a result, an increasingly common strategy that has been adopted by political power-holders representing these secular voices has been to transfer "religion and state" questions from the political sphere to the constitutional courts. By drawing on their disproportionate access to, and influence over, the legal arena, these power holders aim to ensure that their secular Western views and policy preferences are less effectively contested. The result has been an unprecedented judicialisation of foundational collective identity, particularly "religion and state" questions, and the consequent emergence of constitutional courts as important guardians of secular interests in these countries. In this article, the author examines the scope and nature of this phenomenon.

In the first three parts of the article, the author explores the crucial secularising role of constitutional jurisprudence in three countries facing a secular/religious divide - Egypt, Israel, and Turkey. These three countries have witnessed a considerable increase in the popular support for, and influence of, theocratic political movements. At the same time, these three countries differ in their formal recognition of, and commitment to, religious values. “For example, Article 2 of the Egyptian Constitution, as amended in 1980, states that principles of Muslim jurisprudence (the Shari'a) are the primary sources of legislation in Egypt, while Israel defines itself as a “Jewish and Democratic” state; modern Turkey, conversely, characterizes itself as secular, adhering to the Western model of strict separation of state and religion. Accordingly, there are considerable differences in the interpretive approaches and practical solutions adopted by the three countries’ respective high courts in dealing with core religion and state questions. Egypt’s Supreme Constitutional Court has developed its own moderate “interpretation from within” of religious rules and norms. The Israeli Supreme Court has tackled the tension between these conflicting values by curtailing the jurisprudential autonomy of religious courts and tribunals and by subjecting their jurisprudence to general principles of administrative and constitutional law. The Turkish Supreme Court, on the other hand, has opted for the outright exclusion of religious values and policy preferences from legitimate political discourse. Despite these dissimilarities, there are striking parallels in the way constitutional courts in these and other similarly situated countries have positioned themselves as important secularizing forces within their respective societies.” (p. 1820)

This article holds the example of India up as a model for religious freedom and pluralism by discussing India’s laws on religion and religious freedom, focussing primarily on the Indian Constitution. The author highlights the provisions which prohibit discrimination between the citizens on the grounds of their religious persuasions [Articles 15-16]. All citizens are equal in the eyes of the State, and all are entitled to equal protection of the laws [Articles 14-15]. The constitution further provides for the religious liberty of individuals, groups, denominations and communities, as well freedom of conscience and of professing, practising and propagating religion. Religious denominations are also given rights to mange their own affairs in religion; establish and maintain religious and charitable institutions; and acquire, own and administer property [Articles 25-26]. Minority communities are also given the right to conserve their own
distinct culture, language or script [Article 29], as well as the right to establish and run their own educational institutions at all levels [Article 30]. While the Constitution prohibits religious instruction in State-run educational institutions, state-recognised and -aided private institutions are allowed to provide religious education and conduct religious worship – however, with the proviso that pupils shall not be required to take part in these programmes without their or their guardians’ consent [Article 27].

However, the author emphasises that there is “no constitutionally erected ‘wall of separation’ there between religion and the State – the former can, and does, play its legally permissible role in the affairs of the latter, and vice versa. What the Indian Constitution and law insist on, unequivocally, is the equality of all religions in the eyes of the State and State’s neutrality to all of them so as not to extend any preferential or discriminatory treatment to any chosen faith.” (p. 56) The State cannot collect taxes specifically for the furtherance of a particular religion [Article 28], however there is no prohibition on spending from the State exchequer on the upkeep of religious places without community-specific discrimination.

**Turkey**


This article aims to use the case study of Turkey to explore the questions of whether Islam and democracy can coexist; how far religion and secularism can be reconciled; to what extent religious liberty, and particularly freedom of religious expression, can be extended in a secular state with a majority Muslim population; and how a Muslim majority addresses the problems of non-Muslim minorities. The paper provides a historical overview of religion’s role in the public life of Turkey in Part II. Part III then looks at the role of religion in Turkey’s current political situation. Part IV concludes that while it is still progressing towards finding an ideal balance between religion and politics, Turkey shows how Islam and modern democracy can peacefully coexist.

The basis for the legal status of religion and religious liberty in Turkey, as well as the nature of the state, are clearly laid out in the Turkish Constitution. Article 2 of the constitution sets out the nature of the state and its relation to religion: “The Republic of Turkey is a democratic, secular and social State . . . .” The constitution also provides for freedom of religion and the government generally respects this right in practice. Article 24 of the constitution guarantees this liberty as follows: “Everyone has the right to freedom of conscience, religious belief and conviction. Acts of worship, religious services, and ceremonies shall be conducted freely, provided that they do not violate the provisions of Article 14.” Article 24 also provides liberty and protection for nonbelievers by stating that “[n]o one shall be compelled to worship, or to participate in religious ceremonies and rites, to reveal religious beliefs and convictions, or be blamed or accused because of his religious beliefs and convictions.” (p. 475)

Nevertheless, despite sweeping reforms leading to the modernisation and secularisation of Turkey, the authors argue that Islamic values remained deeply rooted in Turkish society. “The revival of Islam in Turkey gathered momentum after the 1980s because of the failure of the secular elite’s effort to replace religion with totally modern secular values. Secularization and westernization could not perform the metaphysical function of a religion. Private religious education, the development of Islamic fashion and dress, the production of religious music, and the publication of Islamic journals as aspects of the privatization wave have given Islam a new boost and made it pervasive in modern Turkish society. Social changes such as migration from rural to urban settlement areas, rapid demographic change, multi-party
politics, and economic and industrial developments have all affected the revival of Islam in Turkey.” (p. 506)

In addition, important problems regarding state-religion relations still remain. For example, Turkey has no official separation of state and religion, such as exists in the United States and France. “The state ideology not only permeates public institutions, but it also draws the boundaries of the public domain. Certainly Turkish democracy still requires improvement to become more inclusive and accommodating of religions and to find an appropriate balance between religion and secularism in a nation that is almost entirely Muslim. Nevertheless, Turkey is an exemplary nation that shows Islam and modern democracy can peacefully coexist.” (p. 506)

9. Additional information

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