

POLITICAL ISLAM IN TURKEY: ARE OUTSIDERS BECOMING THE ESTABLISHED?

The November 2002 general elections in Turkey transformed Turkish politics by bringing a new political party to power with almost two-thirds of the seats in the parliament. The Justice and Development Party (AKP) was new and untested, having never before competed in Turkish national elections. But many of its leading faces were not new. Rather, the face of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the AKP's leader was almost universally known in Turkey as that of the Islamist former mayor of Istanbul.

The AKP emerged from a tradition of Islamically oriented political parties that have challenged the religious policies of the Turkish state. Previously Islamic oriented parties in Turkey were successively banned from politics, but reemerged after a period in which they reframed their message in response to their perceived opportunities and constraints. The AKP has gone a step further than its predecessors, dramatically highlighting a process of institutional change and ideological moderation that has occurred in Turkish political Islam.

The increasing moderation of the Islamist movement is the result of several institutional factors. First the movement has been given the freedom to make strategic choices in a political system that rewards political entrepreneurship with credible opportunities for power. Second, the presence of robust institutional constraints (judicial, military, civil society) on the Islamist movement's behavior, and incentives for the movement to provide politically costly signals about its intentions made its moderation self-enforcing. This moderating transformation occurred only through repeated interaction between Islamist leaders, their constituency and the state, allowing Islamists to gather new information about voter preferences and state constraints.¹

¹ Yaacov Vertzberger, *The World in Their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition, and Perception in Foreign Policy Decision-making*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), Chapter 6, 296-341.

The AKP is led by a one-time Refah hard-liner Recep Tayyip Erdogan who stated in 1994: “You will be either Muslim or a Secularist. These two cannot exist together.”² In 1996, he was quoted as saying: “Is democracy a means or an end?... We say that democracy is a means, not an end.”³ Yet by the late 1990s Erdogan had moderated his stance. As AKP chairman, he described himself as “a man of the middle path,” and suggested that the AKP would work to serve as a bridge between traditional and modernizing Turkey. The AKP pledged to respect religious belief and support moral values, but within the context of a secular state. The party made it clear that it stood for a market economy and would push for Turkey’s admission into the European Union.⁴

The Legacy of Secularism since the Early 19th Century

The differences between the secularists and the Islamists regarding interpretations of the Ottoman Empire and Turkish nation-state have a central role in contemporary relations. During the 18th century a number of attempts were made to reform the empire to enable it to compete with the emerging Western nations. In 1839 the reform process accelerated with the *Tanzimat* period, during which some of the Sultan’s powers were delegated, Western law replaced Islamic law and secular education was introduced. Some of the reforms were overturned as the power balance within the empire swung between the modernizing secularists and the Islamic traditionalists. The empire sought to imitate the West but was politically unable fully to challenge Islamic institutions. So, as Binnaz Toprak remarked, this led to the existence of Western secular institutions without secular systems.⁵

After Kemal Ataturk’s establishment of the republic in 1923, Turkey’s modernization project aimed at a state-led emulation of Western social structures and cultural practices. The

² Quoted by columnist Hasan Cemal, *Sabah*, July 8, 1998.

³ *Milliyet*, July 14, 1996.

⁴ See: Haldun Gulalp, “Political Islam in Turkey: The Rise and Fall of the Refah Party,” *Muslim World*, 89:1 (1999), 24-36; Ergun Ozbudun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics: Challenges to Democratic Consolidation* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

⁵ Binnaz Toprak, *Islam and Political Development in Turkey* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1981).

Kemalist leadership had declared the national goal to be “the achievement of contemporary civilization,” a formula that equated modernization with Westernization. In this perspective, Islam was considered to represent a “set of traditions, values, legal rules and norms which were intrinsically non-Western in character” and hence an inherent obstacle to be overcome.⁶

A clear shift had occurred in the power balance and the new “established” were the republicans. This shift was emphasized throughout society, in particular the urban areas, through a number of symbolic and pragmatic changes ranging from individual appearance to language and the introduction of the Latin script, which replaced Arabic. Those among the former educated elites who could not adapt themselves to the new conditions, were disempowered, and lost their social status and authority.

The state’s secularism dismissed the people’s religious beliefs as obscurantist superstition, but did not challenge the religious traditions held in many areas and was, therefore, unable to prevent the intergenerational socialization of norms, values and behavior that conflicted with the perceived dominant Western ways. Large parts of the population were resentful of the establishment’s patronizing attitude towards them, which they could not understand; consequently they did not significantly alter their beliefs.

Yet, especially with the shift to multi party politics in the late 1940s, governments began to make concessions to Islam. Thousands of new mosques were built, Islamic radio programs started and in schools religious education was introduced. All the changes were seemingly superficial, aimed at practicing Islam in the private sphere. The secularists, albeit more sympathetic to Islam, remained the established, firmly in control. However, these concessions, made to attract political votes, unintentionally started the process that has resulted in the outsiders growing in numbers and influence; it was at this point that the established secularists unwittingly changed the power balance with the outsiders.

⁶ Toprak, *op.cit.*, 40.

From 1960 to 1971, power relations between the established and the outsiders remained fairly constant. Concessions were made to the latter in this period mostly because Islam was seen by the established as a powerful defense mechanism against communism that concerned the republic then. After 1971, the most interesting development was the establishment of the National Salvation Party (MSP), which had broken away from the major conservative Justice Party (AP). The MSP did not promote an Islamist agenda. Yet it did raise the profile of Islam, and as a junior party in various coalition governments was able to install many of its supporters into significant positions within the state bureaucracy.

The post-1980 military junta (1980-1983) continued this process by being more congenial on the issue of religion, assuming that the believers would side with the military in its fight against Marxist militants. This notion led the junta to introduce compulsory religion courses for all levels of education up to the last grade. The implementation of religion within the national curriculum, the mushrooming of *Imam Hatip* schools (secondary schools to train Imams) and the earlier decision to allow graduates from these schools to attend university have had unintended consequences for the growth of resurgent Islam that they were partly designed to prevent.

By the time civilian government was restored in 1983, a new constitution was in place that was designed to eliminate the politicians and the parties of the 1970s from Turkey's political future. Erbakan's movement managed to re-emerge in the 1980s, however, redefining itself as a party for radical change as opposed to the more timid religious National Salvation Party.

Although Refah was a strong proponent of social justice, it was not a militant organization as the relatively obscure militant Turkish Hizbullah, which was implicated in assassinations of prominent figures of the secular establishment in recent years. Nevertheless, Refah did clearly differentiate itself from mainstream political parties. Major themes of

Refah's campaigns included the importance of social justice, Turkey's exploitation by the West, religious freedom, an end to "state corruption," and denunciations of an "imperialist Zionist system" that threatened Turkey's national security.⁷

By the late 1990s power relations between secularists and the Islamists had changed. The former have been, and remain the dominant force in Turkey, but the power balance is shifting because many Islamists now hold positions of power, or have access to political groups and movements. Meanwhile, the ideological divide has solidified and in some cases grown. This is partly because of stigmatization. Both groups can be clearly identified by ideological beliefs and practices and often appearance. It is ideology that is used in a similar manner to praise and gossip that strengthens the group beliefs and self-identity while reinforcing, often deepening the negative other-images.

Ataturk's views on the inherent superiority of secularism remain dominant within the thinking of contemporary secularists, who use this ideological framework as both a source of group charisma, and as a means to propagate group stigma about outsiders based upon their religious actions. These are interpreted according to their ideological framework and reduced to stereotypical images based on violent extremism, fundamentalism and ignorance, replicated in the pro-establishment media. Yet, despite this dominance, the activist potential of Islam was never lost and has recently grown in force. The outsiders have also developed group charisma around their shared beliefs in the perceived superiority of Islam, and, conversely, have stigmatized the secularists based on an identification of their irreligious behavior.

Clear support can be found for the socio-dynamics of stigmatization between the established and the outsiders as they are interwoven in a reciprocal relationship. However, because of the nature of the outsiders' beliefs no support can be found for the outsiders adopting a negative self-image. On the contrary, religious socializing experiences have proved

⁷ See: Haldun Gulalp, "Political Islam in Turkey: The Rise and Fall of the Refah Party," *Muslim World*, 99:1, pp. 24-36. **HANGI YILDA YAYINLANMIŞ**; Ergun Ozbudun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics: Challenges to Democratic Consolidation* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

to have had a greater impact upon identity formation than the opposing secular influences. The changes in identity formation can be linked to socialization processes evolving primarily from the responsibility of the family, who generally tended to follow traditional practices in the private sphere, to state institutions.

Main Objectives and the Theoretical Framework

The Islamist resurgence in Turkey and other parts of the Middle East has been well documented. But, there have been few attempts to develop a comprehensive analysis that both highlights the relational nature of the resurgence between the Islamist outsiders and the established local, national and global relations and does not rely on the secularization framework of explanation.⁸

The academic focus on Islamic resurgence has tended to be on traditional outsiders according to the modernization paradigm.⁹ Thus research on the appeal of Islam has concentrated upon the excluded, for instance peasants and migrants, and those who feel threatened by modernization, such as the *bazaaris*, or small merchants. The reasoning provided for the appeal of these groups can be traced to the generic secularization argument that religion in the modern world appeals to the unsuccessful and the vulnerable, and is a reactionary, short-term consequence of modern progress. There is clear evidence that Islam does appeal to a significant number of these groups.¹⁰ The main problem with these generic claims is that the socio-economic and cultural conditions that are seen as the causal factors in the growth of political Islam have existed since at least the 1960s. However, Muslim resurgence is a phenomenon in Turkey since the 1980s, and gained momentum in the 1990s.

⁸ For examples of secular reasoning see: Umit Sakallioğlu, "Parameters and Strategies of Islam-State Interaction in Republican Turkey," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 28 (1996), 231-251.

⁹ See: David Martin, *A General Theory of Secularization* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978; Brian Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society* (London: C. A. Watts, 1966).

¹⁰ See: Metin Heper, "Islam and Democracy in Turkey: Towards a Reconciliation," *Middle East Journal*, 51 (1997), 32-45.

Consequently, the structural factors that are outlined in the secular modernization paradigm cannot explain the contemporary nature of political Islam in Turkey, because these factors predate the latter's resurgence. These structural factors also cannot account for the appeal of Islam to the educated and members of the middle class who are forming part of challenging counter-elite that is well-educated, and in the case of the former group, often employed by the state in important positions. Therefore, these Muslims are neither culturally nor economically threatened, nor are they excluded, and hence they do not meet the criteria for being attracted to religion under the secular paradigm. They could be viewed as part of the established, but they do not view themselves as such. On the contrary, they argue that they are outsiders who need to challenge the established secular system.¹¹

Although the theoretical frame of my project belongs to the larger social identity and social categorization theories that are the most prominent theoretical accounts of inter-group relations,¹² it is originally inspired by Norbert Elias and John L. Scotson's well-known account of the social dynamics of community relations, which uses the related concepts of the "established" and the "outsider" to show how a conflictual dynamic between groups at the community level emerges and develops.¹³ Their study has some parallels with earlier sociological work, such as that by William G. Sumner, and has formed the basis for others seeking to extend the framework beyond the community level to analyze wider group conflicts and also interstate problems.¹⁴ The established-outsiders thesis uses a set of concepts and themes, which will allow me to focus on the way secularization was introduced into

¹¹ See: Hasan Huseyin Ceylan, ed., *Erbakan ve Turkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri* [Erbakan and Turkey's Major Problems] (Ankara: Rehber Yayıncılık, 1996), 153, 231.

¹² See: Richard D. Ashmore and Lee Jussim, eds., *Self and Identity: Fundamental Issues* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

¹³ Norbert Elias, John Scotson, *The Established and the Outsiders: A Sociological Enquiry into Community Problems* (London: Sage, 1994). The first edition of this book was dated 1965. (London: Frank Cass).

¹⁴ William G. Sumner, *Folkways: A Study of the Sociological Importance of Usages, Manners, Customs, Mores, and Morals* (Boston: Ayer, 1940).

Turkey, and then to explore why the process of secular establishment seems to have stalled, given the ongoing Islamic resurgence in Turkey.¹⁵

I will utilize the Social Identity Theory (SIT) as proposed by Tajfel and Turner¹⁶ to explain why people are motivated to join groups. Having conducted minimal group experiments Tajfel and Turner found that random categorization of individuals into in and out groups produced, *inter alia*, amplification of differences between groups and in-group favoritism. These results were essentially expounded with the notion of self-esteem. Tajfel and Turner argued that group membership constitutes a significant share of people's self-esteem. Consequently, people are motivated to achieve and preserve positive self-esteem. One effective way that leads to positive self-esteem maintenance is to perceive the in-group in favorable terms.

This does not mean that membership in groups is interminable. The Social Categorization Theory (SCT), which developed as an offspring of SIT posits that individuals belong to numerous social groups and thus have multiple group memberships.¹⁷ The SCT suggests that the conceptualization of the "Self" that is adopted at a given point in time is largely situation dependent. The categorization of the Self into a particular social group is contingent upon the range and salience of stimuli that are present in a given circumstance. As such, self- categorization is a dynamic process. Thus, theoretically, individual mobility between the established and the outsiders is possible if there were the right circumstances

This project will -- for analytical convenience -- break down the process of "establishment" into the institutional, political, economic, and cultural spheres in order to

¹⁵ For examples of secular reasoning see: Umit Sakallioğlu, "Parameters and Strategies of Islam-State Interaction in Republican Turkey," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 28 (1996), 231-251.

¹⁶ Henri Tajfel, *Differentiation between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (London: Academic Press, 1978). Henri Tajfel, and John C. Turner, "Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior," in Stephen Worchel and William G. Austin, eds., *Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (Chicago: Neben-Hall, 1986), 7-24.

¹⁷ John C. Turner and P. J. Oakes, "Self-Categorization Theory and Social Influence," in Paul B. Paulus, ed., *The Psychology of Group Influence* (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1989), 233-275; John C. Turner, Michael Hogg, et al., *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987).

discuss why successful Muslims do not always adopt secular beliefs, attitudes, cultural codes and lifestyles. This division is necessary because despite becoming formally established throughout the institutions of the country, secularism never became culturally established throughout the nation. However, one further factor needs to be included, namely the changing context of Turkey itself in an increasingly globalized world system of states. It is only by examining the evolving social relations and activities within Turkey, and beyond, that one could identify influential changes that help explain the contemporary power relations between the established and outsiders and thus avoid the generally short-term, “snapshot” approach of the secular modernization paradigm.

The paired concepts of “group stigma” and “group charisma” are fundamental to an understanding of this situation.¹⁸ As part of their social and self-identity, established groups generate group charisma, and a sense of their own superiority, and this forms one aspect of their internal solidarity and sense of community. However, the other side of this is the stigmatizing of the non-established outsider groups. This basic social process is fundamental to group dynamics

Communal “gossip” and everyday conversation are vital elements of how stigma is produced. The established produce “praise-gossip” when discussing their own group, but adopt “blame-gossip” to describe the outsiders. Praise-gossip means that the best elements of the established group form the basis for discussion and evaluation, while negative elements are not openly discussed. Blame-gossip is exactly the reverse, as outsider groups are discussed and assessed in terms of the worst elements. The selective assessment tends to generate

¹⁸ Michael Hogg and Barbara Mullin, “Joining Groups to Reduce Uncertainty: Subjective Uncertainty Reduction and Group Identification,” in Dominic Abrams and Michael Hogg, eds., *Social Identity and Social Cognition* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 249-79; R. F. Baumeister, and M. R. Leary “The Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachments as a Fundamental Human Motivation,” *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 117, No. 33 (1995), p. 497-529.

feelings of mistrust, antagonism and even hatred toward outsiders, which can last over generations.

The implication of this argument, though, is that it is unlikely that negative stereotyping can simply be eliminated without some movement on the part of the established group's view of itself, an aspect often neglected in normative, political accounts.¹⁹ Established-outsider configurations are underpinned by unequal power relations, without which the labels would not be able to stick. The established enjoy power resources, which give them the upper hand in the process of defining themselves in relation to newer groups. For the outsiders, their obvious lack of power resources, at least initially, leaves them vulnerable to the gossip and stigmatization of the more powerful groups, and over time, the former come to accept and take on the stigmatized form of identity created for them by the established.

This does not mean that outsiders have no power at all. In the situation they find themselves, they cannot initially prevent established groups from imposing their definitions and labels. Over time, however, outsiders may narrow the gap between their own and the established's power chances. One can give some examples in contemporary societies where formerly outsider groups have challenged negative stereotypes, and have created their own positive evaluations in the process. Nevertheless, the changes in the position of women, ethnic minorities, and the handicapped have been part of a long-term process of social change.

The blame- and praise-gossip in oiling the wheels of conflictual group relations at the local level may seem irrelevant at the national and international levels. Instead of focusing on gossip, analysis at the national and international levels needs to concentrate on ideologies and ideological beliefs, especially those which present dominant national cultures as "civilized,"

¹⁹ Yaacov Vertzberger, *The World in Their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition, and Perception in Foreign Policy Decision-making*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), Chapter 6, 296-341; Roger George, "Fixing the Problem of Analytic Mindsets: Alternative Analysis," in Roger George and Robert Kline, eds., *Intelligence and the National Security Strategist* (Washington: CIA, 2004), pp. 311-326.

and others as “barbaric,” or in the Turkish case, as “progressive” (secularist/modernist) and “reactionary” (Islam).²⁰ Actually, ideologies and everyday gossip are interrelated, with ideologies lending “official” support to the valuations of established groups, while everyday gossip keeps ideologies alive and pertinent.

The place of common history to bolster the established group’s identity is somewhat different in the Turkish case. In Turkey, it was secularism which managed to become established in state and society in early 20th century. This meant rewriting the formerly shared history in negative terms, blaming Islam for the country’s failures, picking out the worst aspects of Islamic history and culture, and concentrating on the benefits to be gained from secularization. The socio-dynamics of stigmatization were set in motion that denigrated Islam. This shift was emphasized throughout society, in particular in the urban areas, through a number of symbolic and pragmatic changes ranging from individual appearance to language and the introduction of the Latin script, which replaced Arabic. Those among the former educated elite, who could not adapt themselves to the new conditions, were disempowered, and lost their social status and authority. However, this endeavor was only partially successful because since the 1920s the Islamic groups continued to enjoy an already existing and strong sense of their own cultural worth.

Despite becoming formally established throughout the institutions of the country, state bureaucracies and education system, secularism never became culturally established throughout the nation. Islamic culture was not subordinated at the level of everyday life, and continued to be practiced, with many retaining their belief in Islam as a way of life beyond the private sphere. This means that despite the efforts of the state to portray Islam as a backward, reactionary trend, this form of “blame-gossip” or ideology was unable to penetrate the self-

²⁰ Steven Walt, “Revolution and War,” *World Politics* Vol. 44 (April 1992), 321-368; Michael Freeden, *Liberal Languages: Ideological Imaginations and Twentieth Century Progressive Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

perceptions of many Islamists, who continued to see their own beliefs and culture as valued if not always superior.

Yet, especially with the shift to multi-party politics in the late 1940s, governments began to make concessions to Islam. Thousands of new mosques were built, Islamic radio programs started and in schools religious education was introduced. All the changes were seemingly superficial, aimed at practicing Islam in the private sphere. The secularists, albeit more sympathetic to Islam, remained the established, firmly in control. However, these concessions, made to attract political votes, unintentionally started the process that has resulted in the outsiders growing in numbers and influence; it was at this point that the established secularists unwittingly changed the power balance with the outsiders.

The post-1980 military junta (1980-1983) continued this process by being more congenial on the issue of religion, assuming that the believers would side with the military in its fight against Marxist militants. This notion led the junta to introduce compulsory religion courses for all levels of education up to the last grade. The implementation of religion within the national curriculum, the mushrooming of *Imam Hatip* schools (secondary schools to train prayer leaders and preachers) and the earlier decision to allow graduates from these schools to attend university have had unintended consequences for the growth of resurgent Islam that they were partly designed to prevent.²¹

By the late 1990s power relations between secularists and the Islamists had changed. The former have been, and remain the dominant force in Turkey. But the power balance is shifting because many Islamists now hold positions of power, or have access to political groups and movements, while simultaneously the ideological divide has solidified and in some cases grown. This is partly because of stigmatization. Both groups can be clearly

²¹ See: Haldun Gulalp, "Political Islam in Turkey: The Rise and Fall of the Refah Party," *Muslim World*, 89:1 (1999), 24-36; Binnaz Toprak, *Islam and Political Development in Turkey* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1981); Ergun Ozbudun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics: Challenges to Democratic Consolidation* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

identified by ideological beliefs and practices and often appearance. It is ideology that is used in a similar manner to praise and gossip that strengthens the group beliefs and self-identity while reinforcing, and often deepening the negative other-images.

Clear support can be found for the socio-dynamics of stigmatization between the established and the outsiders as they are interwoven in a reciprocal relationship. However, because of the nature of the outsiders' beliefs no support can be found for the outsiders adopting a negative self-image. On the contrary, religious socializing experiences have proved to have had a greater impact upon identity formation than the opposing secular influences. This is because the state's secularism dismissed the people's religious beliefs as "obscurantist superstition," but did not challenge the religious traditions held in many areas, and was, therefore unable to prevent the intergenerational socialization of norms, values and behavior that conflicted with the perceived dominant Western ways.

Research Methodology

This project will examine four interrelated phenomena to explain the contemporary nature of political Islam in Turkey. Yet I should mention that this study intentionally refrains from a priori hypothesizing. It seeks to explore and uncover potential relationship. By this way any manipulation of data to prove/disprove a priori propositions will also be prevented.

First, it will examine the causes and the consequences of the ruling elite's encouragement of religious education at secular schools and the mushrooming of religious schools. The consequences to be analyzed include the career paths of the graduates of these religious schools, and their current views on the established versus outsiders tag of war concerning the hearts and minds of the Turkish electorate. In order to accomplish this, I will bring together a group of surveyors to conduct polls in ten major cities throughout Turkey using comprehensive survey methodology. Employing purposive sampling, ten major cities

are to be selected to find out to what extent the graduates have made inroads into the “establishment,” or have remained as part of the “outsiders.” The target population’s age range will be 30-50 since this group includes those who could have taken advantage of the post-1980 concessions to religious education.

300 people from each city will be randomly selected because random sampling will be the best way to avoid any bias. My survey questions will intend to tap the impacts of the religious socializing experiences as opposed to secular influences on the identity formations of the participants surveyed. This will enable me to determine potential correlations between social identity and such outcomes as 1) voting behavior; 2) existence of group charisma; 3) presence of negative/positive self-image and self-concept; 4) proclivity to fundamentalist Islam, 5) views on Turkey’s pro-Western foreign policy, and 6) the Turkish model of secularism.

Second, since the expansion of religious education has taken place since the 1960s, many graduates have already occupied important positions in the bureaucracy. I assume that the career development of these outsiders has partly been based on merit, but also on patronage linked to the periods of power held by such Islamist parties as National Salvation Party (MSP), Welfare (Refah), and the incumbent AKP. My project will inquire whether such a patronage linkage is indeed valid, and how the upward mobility of the self-described outsiders relates to turnover of governments. Once again, using survey methodology, I intend to ask pertinent questions to measure the above mentioned constructs. It is my contention that given the comprehensiveness of the survey I wish to conduct as well as my faith in the validity of my measurements, statistically significant results can be achieved. Questions posed will aim at finding out how (if ever) the respondents benefited from government appointments, state contracts and whether/how their worldviews have been influenced by their associations with Islamist governments. In this section of the survey, I intend to unearth

co-relational as well as co-variational relationships which can later be subjected to regression analysis.

Third, there is growing awareness, through improved education and the huge expansion of means of communication of Turkish, regional and global issues. These means of communication include many Islamist journals and more than a few Islamist radio and television channels, which frequently offer Islamist solutions. My project will examine how outsider beliefs are being supported by an interpretation of events via the Islamist media that highlights global problems allegedly caused by secular governance worldwide. This endeavor requires a meticulous effort of case selection and sampling. Using purposive sampling, I will select five major Islamist radio and TV channels and five major Islamist journals and newspapers. I will choose these based on their popularity among the participants I will survey. Applying content analysis, I will try to find out whether: 1) the outsider media tries to eliminate negative stereotyping associated with the outsiders; 2) the outsider media promotes Islamist beliefs and culture as superior to secularism; 3) economically powerful but “culturally-still-outsider“ media conglomerates adopt a reconciling tone vis-à-vis the “established” in an attempt to bridge the existing lack of mutual trust, or work towards confrontation.

Fourth, interwoven with the growth in outsiders, is the commensurate shift in the power balance that has enabled them to challenge the established. This process has been unintentionally initiated and tolerated by the established, as the latter hoped to attract outsider support by making concessions to them. Turkish democracy has, therefore, played a significant role in enhancing the position of the outsiders, though secularism remains firmly established at present. The Islamist AKP rule could in the long run lead to the moderation of the AKP rhetoric and a gradual reconciliation between the established and the outsiders. Yet

the Islamist rule could also lead to the AKP's adoption of a more assertive and self-righteous tone, which could undermine its rapport with the established.

This project will also examine the socio-dynamics of stigmatization between the established and the outsiders interwoven in a reciprocal relationship. I will examine the discourse used by the respective parties by surveying establishment and outsider political publications to determine how the current AKP rule has influenced their respective views of each other. Did they become more accommodative toward each other or more exclusionist, further stigmatizing each other? To achieve this task, I will make use of discourse analysis techniques. I will conduct interviews to certify the validity of the data acquired elsewhere. Moreover, I will use politicians' public speeches as at-a-distance measures and content analyze them.

Work Plan:

Focusing on the four interrelated phenomena I will set aside twelve months to conduct research, polls, and interviews. After this initial phase of my research I will start writing a book in English based on my findings. The writing period is expected to last three months.

For field data collection, my research will be monitored by the Institutional Review Board of the Middle East Technical University in Ankara, where I shall be based. I will abide by universal ethical standards concerning confidentiality, and acquire informed consent of those surveyed and interviewed. Having met the ethical standards of the Review Board, I have already obtained the necessary permit to go ahead with my surveys.

The preliminary table of contents of the book I plan to write is as follows:

The Preliminary Table of Contents

I. Social Identity and Social Categorization Theories: Why Are They Relevant?

II. The Legacy of the Past: The Socio-Dynamics of Stigmatization

- 1) The Late Ottoman Experience: Introduction of Secular Institutions without a Secular System
- 2) The Early Republican Period: Secularism Becomes “Established”
- 3) The post-1946 Era: Concessions to Islam while the Secularists Remain Dominant
- 4) The post-1980 Period: Shift in the Power Balance: The Rise of Political Islam

III. The Causes and the Consequences of the Shift in the Power Balance:

- 1) What Do the Religiously Educated Think?
 - Voting Behavior
 - Group Charisma
 - Proclivity to Fundamentalist Islam
 - Presence of Negative/Positive Self Image
- 2) Career Paths of Outsiders
 - State Contracts
 - Government Appointments
 - Muslim Entrepreneurs
- 3) Islamist Media and Beliefs
 - Outsider Media and Secularism
 - Outsider Media and Negative Stereotypes
 - Outsider Media and Reconciliation with the Secular “Established”
- 4) The AKP Rule: Moderation or Self-Righteousness
 - Established versus Outsider Discourse: Respective Perceptions
 - Issues of Blame and Stigma
 - Outsiders’ Perception of their Own Social Identities

IV. The Prospects of Reconciliation between the Established and the Outsiders