

ISLAM & DEMOCRACY

A Closer Look at the Turkish Model

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Islam and Democracy: A Closer Look at the Turkish Model

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Editor
Huseyin Ozen

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ISLAM AND POLITICS IN TURKEY

Berna Turam – Northeastern University

In the wake of the Arab Spring, the Turkish Case is increasingly contested within and beyond the borders of Turkey. On the one hand, Turkey has often been idealized as a model of secular democracy for the rest of the Muslim World. The integration of a strong Islamist movement with a secular state and the market economy has created a vivid image of a more democratic Turkey. On the other hand, Turkey is increasingly spoken of as a country divided over issues of minority, women's and human's rights and violations of freedom, particularly individual freedoms and freedom of expression. It is ironic that a country is able to so rapidly shift between being perceived as a model of democracy, secular democracy, and a torn country divided by all these issues. Therefore, instead of juxtaposing these two problematic images, my work highlights the continuity between them.

Today, I have three main objectives; first, I will discuss two central trends in Turkish politics, the politics of engagement and the politics of contestation between pious Muslims and the secular state, and I argue that the two are inseparable aspects of the same political transition. Next, I will situate contemporary freedom violations within this larger political context in Turkey. Before I begin my discussion, allow me to clarify one issue. Each time I discuss politics and Islam in Turkey, I am specifically asked whether I am speaking

about the Gulen Movement, the largest and the most internationally influential movement in Turkey or the JDP. I receive these critical questions because I happened to analyze both of these groups in my first book. Moreover, there are particular reasons why they both should and should not be analyzed in a single study. The reason that I jointly analyzed these two groups in "Between Islam and the State" is because I was not interested in a particular group but a form of politics, the politics of engagement, which I will discuss today. Further, at that time, during the first term of the JDP (AKP) government, both groups exhibited similar politics of engagement. Their political patterns were converging; they were engaged with the state. However, I highlighted that membership in the two groups rarely overlapped. There is another reason that makes it possible to jointly analyze these two, as I will today in a few minutes, which is their historically specific orientation towards the secular state. Both of these groups are nationalist groups, and their relationships with and ties to the secular public is historically specific and cannot be easily compared to many other Islamist Groups in other countries.

In my first book, "Between Islam and the State", I followed the largest Islamic movement in Turkey, the Gulen Movement, from Turkey to Kazakhstan and to the United States. My goal was to explore the patterns of interaction and negotiation between ordinary Muslims, not the state elite, and the secular state, both within and beyond the Turkish State. In the 1990s, these interactions that I will depict shortly were unusual; they were surprising because the secular Republic of Turkey, founded by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, has consistently had antagonistic relationships with Islam and Islamists. Previous scholarship on Islam during the 1990s juxtaposed Islamists against secular states and the West. Similarly, there were also two prophecies competing in Turkish studies at that time. Either the Turkish state was expected to destroy the Islamist movement, or Islamists were expected to overthrow the Turkish state. However, my work diverged from these two zero sum results. My ethnography provided a different picture. I argued that State-Islam interaction was transitioning from confrontation to engagement. I noticed this shift in the least expected aspects of daily life, such as high school dormitories, university campuses and teahouses, instead of in the parliament. In contrast to the predominant emphasis on the confrontation, I found the Turkish Islamists in the 1990s to be non-resistant and non-confrontational, but most importantly, they were developing nationalistic sentiments. When scholarly attention remained focused on strategic, anti-state Islamic mobilization, I was struck by their elective affinities and effective ties. The Islamists were developing a sense of national belonging to the secular republic. So, what do I mean by the "politics of engagement"?

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I use engagement as an umbrella term to refer to contestation in the area of education. That is to say, negotiating the boundaries between religion and politics; hence the use of the terms secularism, cooperation and alliance in ethnic and gender politics. All these processes are taking place between ordinary Muslims and the secular state. To make this more concrete, allow me to share an anecdote from my fieldwork in Almaty – Kazakhstan, where the Gulen Movement has concentrated its activities in schools. In one of the associations of the Gulen Movement, I noticed a group of gentlemen who visited the meeting place every day and whose visits were transforming this place into a coffee house or a cultural center where they drank Turkish coffee and tea, laughed and joked and discussed politics and their family life. After a few weeks, and to my surprise, I found that these gentlemen were not Turkish Islamists but teachers employed by the Turkish state and sent to Kazakhstan to teach Kazakh children Turkish language, culture and history. Therefore, I realized that the Gulen Movement and the secular Turkish state were not only collaborating outside Turkish borders, but they also shared similar international agendas. Their shared agenda in this case being an attempt to Turkishize central Asia. Therefore, I argued that such international collaborations empowered the pious Muslims of Turkey and helped integrate them into international economic networks and markets. I would like to briefly discuss the unintentionality of this politics of engagement, which differs from strategic mobilization and strategic decision-making, which are the dominant perspectives in studies of Islam and Politics, particularly in political science.

The Turkish case challenges previous scholarship on Islam and Democracy, which has either applauded Islam and its compatibility with democracy, by highlighting its presumed qualities such as egalitarianism, justice and liberal attitudes, by juxtaposing Islam and Islamists against democracy by arguing these forces were the enemies of civil society, democracy, the secular nation state, nationalism, etc. This literature is highly polarized.

I argue that the engagement between Islam and the state was an unintended aspect of well-organized Islamic activities. Accordingly, the politics of engagement has accidentally facilitated democratization by transforming both the Muslim actors and the secular state. Democratization in Turkey has progressed because of the historical specificities of state-Islam interaction and the national loyalties of Islamic Muslim actors, not because of their liberal and democratic practices and goals. In this respect, the gender politics of the Gulen movement are ... My studies revealed that Islamic male elite and the secular male elite unintentionally bonded over their similar gender politics. There is nothing strategic or tactical in this interaction.

No group of men sits down and conspires about woman and how to exclude them. This exclusion is unintentional. Why is it unintentional? Because both the Islamist and secular male elite resembled and adopted the gender politics of their founding father Ataturk by inserting woman into the public sphere, including them in public spaces and making them visible while simultaneously denying them decision making authority. Therefore, in essence, my research revealed that woman were excluded from the politics of engagement, and I argued that engagement is not necessarily the result of deliberate democratic concerns and actions but often the effect of the shared, illiberal goals of Muslim actors and the secular state. Concretely, both the Islamist and secular male elite collaborated to ban headscarves by compromising women's agency. This conclusion also suggests that research on Islamic democratization must take alternative linkages seriously. What do I mean by alternative linkages? Most research on democratization specifically examines narrowly defined electoral politics, comparative party politics or political institutions. Notwithstanding the importance of these issues, I suggest that alternative linkages, such as the everyday interactions among ordinary Muslim actors, civil society and the state, should be considered. In other words, how these actors interact and negotiate in everyday life should be taken very seriously. With this goal in mind, my current project follows urban sites of contestation, which compliments my previous work on cooperation and engagement. Why have I suddenly become interested in urban sites of contestation? It is probably because most of my colleagues began teasing me that because Islamists are not truly engaged, I needed to begin to consider how to remove them from power. The central paradox came from my field sites in Turkey just as I was becoming somewhat overly comfortable with the politics of engagement. Secular individuals had begun to attack pious Muslims both at the state level and on the streets. At the end of April 2007, the pro-Islamic JDP (AKP) government nominated its own Abdullah Gul to become the first pious president of the secular Turkish republic. This was immediately followed by the government's warning (*muhtira*) in massive, street protests in Turkey's largest cities. Since then, urban contestations and divides have continued to deepen. The current situation in Turkey is alarming. Recently, the arrests and unsubstantiated detentions of journalists, academics and university students have peaked. The jails are full of such persons who are allegedly accused of some sort of terrorist activity or conspiring against the state. There are 1000 cases brought to the European Court of Human Rights. In a response to this crisis, call it crisis of freedoms, two scholarly perspectives have emerged. One camp, which I call the "discontent of Islam", blamed pious Muslims Islamists for this crisis by arguing that Islamists cannot be tamed by the rules of institutional democracy. These actors have

been in power for a decade, and this crisis is the result. The other camp, which I call the “apologetics of Islam”, accused secular individuals, the followers of Kemal Ataturk, by arguing that secular actors founded this flawed system. They contend that the Turkish political system cannot accommodate the pious majority or any other minorities. I argue that both of these perspectives are the result of political partisanship and are not sufficiently scholarly or analytically sophisticated. My current book, “Democracy without Freedom?”, reveals a different picture. My ethnography suggests that urban sites, such as neighborhoods, university campuses, and Islamic art scenes that seemed to be deeply divided over Muslim politics, actually generate useful contestations and negotiations over civil rights and freedom. Although Turkish citizens are no longer afraid of a top-down, Islamist, Sharia revolution, they are increasingly fearful of a bottom-up process of Islamization. Pious Muslims have become completely integrated into the urban landscape and share markets, malls and neighborhoods with secular citizens, and they share bourgeois life-styles. Secular citizens feel that of their personal privacy and freedom are in jeopardy. The nation-wide debates that Jonathan mentioned, debates on neighborhood pressure, which in Turkish we call “mahalle baskisi”, are symptomatic of these rising fears that lead individuals to contest, claim and occupy, and even occasionally become obsessed with certain urban sites. It is likely that Istanbul, a city that has hosted empires, has never been as difficult to share. This is because ordinary people feel that the state and law provide insufficient protection for their ways of life. The recent turn in world politics, particularly the Arab Spring and the Occupy Movement, have provided substantial support for the locus and focus of my recent work; the increased centrality of urban space in the context of the public’s declining trust in and increasing demands from the state. Turkish studies suffer from persistent and misleading perceptions of both Turkey’s secular state and its religious society. Thus, in sharp disagreement with the two groups I described above, the apologetics of Islam and the discontents of Islam, I argue that the axis of conflict in Turkey has shifted from away from Islam vs. Secularism; specifically, as Turkey has completed the process of including pious Muslims, there is no longer a contest between Islam and secular democracy, with which European countries are increasingly struggling. The contest in Turkey is more concerned with another level of struggle: contestation in the aftermath of inclusion. This is not more Islam, as most European countries are challenged by and have failed in coping with Muslim accommodation. Therefore, contrary to the dominant view that regards urban contestation as a threat to democracy, my findings suggest that it represents a test for democracy and a positive development. Divided urban sites effectively and positively contribute to liberal democracy and a liberal civil soci-

ety that can secure liberties. However, all of this is abstract. Let me offer you an example from my current fieldwork, which I have been conducting since 2007. One of my field sites is a highly divided university campus in Istanbul, which is also the most liberal and academically competitive campus in Turkey. The faculty and students are deeply divided over Muslim politics and issues related to Muslim politics, including but not limited to the headscarf controversy. However, the campus is consistently united regarding freedom violations, academic freedom violations, government’s crackdown on Kurds, or unsubstantiated detentions. And most importantly these campus-wide protests cross the deep fault lines between the Muslim and secular politics, and thereby create new alliances between these formerly polarized groups. This is what I have called contestation within inclusion. Contestation within inclusion is the aspect of Turkish politics. Turkey’s experience is of the greatest relevance to European encounters with Muslim immigrants. I am not a great supporter models, as they often tend to represent the social and political world as ahistorical and static entities. As I highlighted at the beginning of my talk, the Turkish case is distinct and features historically specific linkages between pious Muslims and the secular state. In response to the desires of the Kemalists to control the secular republic and monopolize it, the pious Muslims of Turkey have developed strong allegiances with their State. Religion and politics cannot be studied without considering these historically evolved ties between pious individuals and their State, irrespective of how upsetting this has proven for secular Turks. Thus the burning question regarding Turkey as a model of a secular democracy currently concerns freedom violations. This is the puzzle: while the JDP has been completely integrated into the secular system and the secular political milieu, secularism has provided no guarantee of liberties or rights. I am not the only person who is not surprised by this, as many of us in academia do not confer the importance to secularism that the Enlightenment did. Secularism must be situated within a liberal democracy to provide protections for liberties and rights. In my most recent article in the Journal of Democracy, I argue that liberties and rights are no longer secure in Turkey, but this situation could be temporary situation if addressed rapidly enough. Thus the crucial problem is ignorance. This ignorance is a result of academia’s over-eager celebration of Turkish Muslims becoming secularized. I believe that we must suspend this celebration and focus on the central problem: How can freedoms and rights be institutionally secured during this major political transition that has forced the old Secular elite and new Islamic elite to share power and resources. This is challenging, as both the over-empowered JDP government and its weak secular opposition, the CHP, are equally uninterested in expanding and securing individual freedoms and rights. They are also equally

incapable of discussing, disagreeing on and contesting such issues in parliament. This is why ordinary individuals take the struggle to the streets. This is why we can observe so many divisions on the streets and in neighborhoods, and this is why we must seriously examine the role of highly urbanized sites within the struggle towards democratization.

To conclude, contemporary violations of freedom in Turkey are not trivial issues to be ignored by the international community and Turkish liberal democrats. The issue requires immediate attention and democratic intervention. However, this alarming situation must also be analyzed and understood in the larger context of the politics of engagement and the politics of contestation within inclusion. Ironically, if we were able to correctly understand this larger picture, Turkey may outperform Western, and particularly European, countries that are still attempting to cope with the challenge of Muslim accommodation.

THE SPECTRUM OF CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC RENEWAL AND REFORM IN TURKEY

Scott Alexander- Catholic Theological Union

My presentation is essentially divided into five sections. I have a brief preliminary axiom that I would like to present to you. I wish to discuss one of the categories. It is a problematic category. Most of you are familiar with the reasons that this category is problematic, but I will go through them anyway. The category in which a movement such as Hizmet is often placed – moderate Islam – is being assigned to ever fewer Turkish Muslim movements for a variety of interesting political reasons. Then, I will provide a brief historical perspective on *Tajdid* and *Islah*, this dynamic of renewal and reform, of which I argue *Hizmet* is a contemporary manifestation. This discussion will be followed by my tentative, and somewhat flawed, four-fold typology of a spectrum of contemporary renewal and reform movements. This typology is simply a heuristic device, not something that I contend is the ultimate way of considering such matters or categorizing these different movements. Then, I will examine *Hizmet* and where it falls on this spectrum. Finally, we will attempt to relate such concerns to the topic of our conference today, briefly raising the question: “*Hizmet* and Turkish Democracy”? I have a few remarks I must share with you in that regard. So, if that sounds sensible, and even if it does not, we will continue because that is all I can cover today.

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The preliminary axiom that I would like to put before you, in part, states the obvious. It comes from my training as a historian of religions, and one of the axioms of that discipline is that the singular terms we employ to refer to some of the well-known religious traditions of the world's faiths. They are called world religions. All religions are world religions; they exist in the world. However, the singularity of the terms - Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and of course Buddhism- is a very problematic construction for precisely this reason; this singularity is very misleading, as it obscures the stunning internal diversity within those very broad categories. Moreover, it encourages the sort of essentialism that Dr. Yukleyen discussed earlier today. Therefore, it is a problem, and we must always remind ourselves that no religious tradition is a monolith, and this applies to Islam or any other tradition. Islam, like Judaism, Christianity, and Buddhism, is lived out in a variety of different cultural and historical expressions, many of which are accepted, but some of which are contested among different types of Muslims. One could carry this line of argument to its radical extreme and contend there are as many Islams as there are Muslims, or there are as many Christianities as there are Christians. In some respects, that is true, and that insight is very important to take with us as we move forward.

Let us now turn to the category of moderate Islam, which is where a movement such as *Hizmet* is occasionally placed. Even under the best of intentions, this is not a philosophical category. Why? Similar to “moderate Muslim,” “moderate Islam” is actually an indirect, prejudicial slur. It reminds me of phrases such as “the Good Samaritan.” Christians frequently employ that phrase to refer to the parable in which Jesus of Nazareth, in the Gospel of Luke, tells a story about a Samaritan who does a wonderful thing and cares for a man whom he presumes to be a Jew. The reason that this is such a shocking tale is that these two communities, the Samaritans and the Jews, both devoted to worshipping at the temple in Jerusalem, are at odds. The Jews consider the Samaritans arch-heretics, and vice versa. The two groups profoundly alienated from one another. However, this story is told from a Jewish perspective. Jesus is a Jew telling it to a Jewish audience. He must use this terminology: the Samaritan is referred to as a “good Samaritan,” is he not? The implication is then that most of them were bad, right? The sober Catholic, the sober Irishman, or the intelligent evangelical: all of these appear to be compliments, but they are indirect expressions of deeply flawed assumptions regarding the religion of another. Here is a deeply flawed assumption that one insect makes of another. The praying mantis says to a bug on a leaf, “It may look that way, but actually I’m an atheist.” (That was a joke. If you need these sorts of cues, I will be certain to give them to you as

we move along.) At its core, this is a negative, essentialist value judgment, which means that the statement carries very little empirical weight. Anything that has a negative, essentialist value judgment at its core will not make a substantial contribution to understanding the subject you are attempting to understand, particularly if it is a phenomenon related to how human beings understand, express and organize themselves, et cetera. This is the “seen one, seen them all” idea. Or to beat a dead horse – I am certain you get the point by now – if I knew relatively little about a group and I were told that the group would be a threat to me, even if I had the best of intentions, I would assume that the bad apple represents the entire group. There we have Faisal Shahzad. This is John Yegen, who is probably better known to those of you from the Boston area, particularly Catholics, rather than elsewhere. The reason I have his picture over here is because I think there really is a sense, and I use this a lot in interreligious contexts, particularly in the Catholic-Muslim context, of mutual understanding.

Speaking about the “moderate Muslim” is something like speaking about “non-pedophile priests.” I suppose it is meant to be a compliment, but most Roman Catholic priests I know are good men striving to live good lives. They would rather simply be known as priests, and you should identify pedophiles as pedophiles. So, again, the underlying assumption is that most institutional extremists are priests or pedophiles, and that is not helpful. The facts are – and I take this from the only repository of these facts we have, the Gallup study, which is the statistical equivalent of a review of the pains of 90 percent of the Muslim world – that only seven percent of Muslims worldwide feel that the 9/11 attacks were completely justified. Large numbers of local Muslim leaders have been vigorously and, most interestingly, protesting the hijacking – an ironic term – of their own faith to advance global, pro-violence agendas. Many Americans, who are unaware of this union here, are constantly referring, you know – where are the moderate Muslims in this respect. Why do moderate Muslims not speak up? And many Muslims are speaking out. Just because you do not hear them does not mean that they are not saying things.

Let us move on to a popular category in which a movement like Hizmet is placed. There are folks with good intentions who used to refer to Hizmet as moderate Islam. However, now they are also looking at some prestigious connections between the Gulen Movement and the AK Party in Turkey and some dysfunctional disillusionments, which I will refer to later regarding some of the foreign policy decisions made by Prime Minister Erdogan’s government. And knowing that he comes from an “Islamic background,” maybe these Muslims are not as moderate as they used to

be, and maybe these Hizmet people were not as moderate as we thought. So we feel a need for recourse to that unhelpful category of “moderate Islam.” What I would like to do is explore the possibility of setting these events against the backdrop of the dynamic of renewal and reform, the Arabic terms, again, being *tajdid* and *islah*. And so, to do that, I would like to provide a brief historical perspective, the scriptural locus classicus for the idea of *tajdid*. Both roots occur in the Quran, and not exactly those particular known forms. Is this a hadith *Mujaddid*? The prophet Mohammed, peace be upon Him, is reported to have said, “Indeed, God will send to this community at the beginning or end of every hundred years one who will renew” *Mujaddidu*, “renew for it,” or in other words, renew the community’s religion.

So this is the notion of centennial renewal. It does not have to be exactly one hundred, but maybe at least every one hundred years, one will come. I am told that Ayatollah Khomeini falls into this category for many Shiites. And it is ironic that if some US foreign policy makers and foreign affairs people had looked more at religion and more at these kinds of categories and ideas, they would have recognized that 1979 was actually the turn of the Muslim century, from the 14th to the 15th century. So I do not think – it is too much of a coincidence – that the energy behind the Iranian revolution, which brought about the Islamic republic as a result of the charismatic magnetism of a figure like Khomeini, had nothing to do with this *Mujaddid* idea or just coincidentally came at the turn of the Muslim century. We should delve deep into history, and consider early recognized and rare political figures, as Khomeini fits more into the typology or the expectation of the *Mujaddid*. Such people typically enjoyed religious privileges or came from the religious elite, or if they had come from an elite family and established their religious piety, it came to be recognized that some group embodied the ideals of the faith. However, you do have some exceptions. You might have heard of Omar Abdul Aziz, sometimes called “Omar the Pious”, who was referred to in the early sources as *Mujaddid*, trying to reverse, and this is a massive undertaking, the worldly kingship dynamic that the Umayyad Dynasty gets associated with, and trying to more truly actualize the deeper structures of what it means to be a Caliph of Rasul Allah into the successor of the messenger of God.

If we consider this dynamic to which I have been referring, which has its lowest consequence in this particular Hadith, we can see that it is fair to describe it as a dynamic of adaptive continuity. Throughout the history of Muslim society, it can be found across the stunning array of cultures that constituted these societies for over 1,400 years. For most of Islamic history, the dynamic was indigenously stimu-

lated. Generally, what I mean by indigenously is as problematic as the term civilization, as if you said “within Islamic civilization,” broadly construed. These indigenous stimuli would trigger renewal and reform thinking or movements, which are not always one and the same thing, but often happen within Islamic society, generated from tensions that were emerging as our society was evolving internally (and every society or cultural context is related to what lies on the outside because obviously known from boundaries). I think a case can be made for this. If you look at the Abbasid Revolution, for instance, of the seventh or eighth century, the subsequent Sunni revival (the so-called Sunni revival of the eleventh century after the Umayyad period, which was a Shiite dynasty), more or less kept the Abbasid caliph under its tutelage.

The movements of Ahmed Shindi in the sub-continent and the movement of Muhammad Abdul Wahhab in eighteenth-century Arabia were not larger responses to external stimuli. Even Muhammad Abdul Wahhab was responding more to what would be categorized, from an Arab peninsular perspective, as Ottoman imperialism. It was part of an Arab nationalist reaction to what was perceived as Ottoman imperialism. Although you had loyal dynamics well under way in the time of Shindi and Abdul Wahhab, they do not seem to have been reacting primarily to these dynamics. More recently, however, this dynamic has been stimulated by the relatively exogenous forces of Western colonialism, imperialism and secular modernism, and these things go together in many ways during the experience of a substantial slowdown that took place in the Muslim world over a few centuries, leading and continuing in some ways into our own.

Let us briefly discuss the spectrum of contemporary renewal and reform, or what the spectrum might look like. First of all, I have to confess that I am a little uncomfortable with the term spectrum, as it is actually too linear.

I identify four types. And, again, this is tentative, heuristic. In no way are these ideal types; they are not to be thought of as something that is by any means unchallengeable. These are: (1) neo-modernist renewal and reform, (2) neo-traditionalist renewal and reform, (3) puritan Wahhabi Salafi (and I take the word “puritan” from Marshall Hudson and, more recently, from Khaled Abou El Fadl, who, you will see, belongs in the neo-modernist category in my perspective. In other words, I mean Salaf. Salafi means a number of different things, obviously, and there have been developments in Salafism during the twentieth century that make using Salafi monolithically as problematic as using any category in that way. What I am discussing is the Salafism that is closely associated with Wahhabism and not some of the other variants that have not

been as popular over the last 60 or 70 years. Finally (4) is a special, Shiite version of renewal and reform, which is the revolutionary type that we have in Iran.

One can pick various icons of this new institution. I pick Amina Wadud – she is an African American Muslim thinker here in the United States – and Muhammad Tahir ul Qadri, who is the inspiration behind Minhaj-ul-Quran, the South Asian Pakistani-centered movement. This [referring to slide] is Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, the third fellow represents the Shiite part of the spectrum is Ayatollah Ali Khomeini, the current Allahabad of the Supreme Leader in Iran. And I have already made reference to this, but the boundaries between the categories are fluid and porous and in certain instances even multiply overlapping, but I have no way of demonstrating this visually.

Let me talk a little bit about how I define these heuristic, tentative categories. First, neo-modernists are highly inspired by classical Muslim scholarship and late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Muslim modernism. This is how I arrived at the term neo-modernist because, in a sense, I see the people who belong to this category as taking up, after some interruption, the project of people like Muhammad Abdu and Mahmoud Shaltut, who worked in the early part of the twentieth century, both Egyptians like their folks in parts of the world obviously. So: classical Muslim scholarship – not just Sunni, but across the spectrum – late nineteenth-, early twentieth-century modernism and postmodernism and post-colonial philosophy, these are the important defining characteristics of this category, for me at least. There is no identifiable associated grassroots or social movement, largely because one of the hallmarks of this category is that you find it in the thinking and writing of fairly elite types who are doing fairly deep and sophisticated thinking about the revitalization, renewal and reform of Muslim institutions and societies.

In this strategy, you find some very common themes, like commitments to strong civic and non-governmental institutions, progressive ideas and religious liberty and pluralism, and progressive democratic ideals, as well as secular institutions. What I mean by this is that in the writings of the folks I would categorize as neo-modernist, they have good things to say about the secular, and some secular institutions they respect very much. This is not to be aggressively or actively secular, but more passively secular, to use that useful typology. Farid Isaac, the South African Muslim, along with liberation theologians, would fall into this category, as, I think, would Tariq Ramadan, especially since the publication of his book *Radical Reform*, where he does some very serious and deeply engaged thinking about Islamic jurisprudence and the reform of jurisprudence, but puts it in a broader

framework, where he talks about the importance of non-governmental organizations.

Amina Wadud, who made her initial mark in Quranic seminars from the heuristics in her book *The Quran and Women* and her second book, which I think is of great import, called *Inside the Gender Jihad*, which some of you have read. Khaled Abou El-Fadl was a classically trained fakih, a classically trained Muslim jurist, and a renewal and reformist thinker. I think he teaches at the law school at UCLA. And authors a number of different... I think one of his best in this regard, and the most extensively sought out, is *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority, and Women*, which has to do with women in Islam and, to a certain extent, the late Abdol Karim Soroush. And this is interesting, as in some ways he was an ideologue of the Iranian revolution, so why is he not in this category? Well that speaks to the progress that I am talking about and to the fact that these are not hard and fast categories; some people move between. However, he has also been saying things that are somewhat different from some of the things he said earlier in his academic career. You can throw others in here, like Mohammed Arkoun. In all of this, by the way, I could not figure out everything, and I would like to share this ignorance with you. Because this ignorance is challenging, and I hope it makes this type of typology more valuable and dynamic rather than less.

I could not figure out where to place the Tunisians Al-Nahda and Rashid, for a variety of reasons. In a way, they are revolutionary, as Nahda is finally able to come to power in a kind of quiet revolution, part of the Arab Spring. He is Sunni but conservative in some ways. Conservative Salafi roots in to some extent also apply to different elements that you would find in the neo-traditional category. This shows you just how flexible one has to be when creating typologies like this. Sorry, I am getting ahead of myself; so let me talk about neo-traditionalists. These are movements led by individuals or inspired by classical Sunni scholarship and traditional Sufi piety and spirituality. For me, these aspects represent an overall map of this neo-traditionalism. I do not mean traditionalism in a negative sense, but an attempt to revive, in an adaptive and dynamic way, tradition that in some ways, interestingly enough, has been subverted by the puritan project. This is because part of the puritan renewal reform, part of Muhammad ibn abd Al-Wahhab's vision, was that we are skipping over approximately 1,300 years of Muslim history and institutions to get back to the real thing in Medina. So, in a way, neo-traditionalism is responding to that.

Sufi piety and spirituality enter in a big way here, because these are precisely what comes under attack from the puritan perspective. This neo-tradi-

tionism transforms regionally centered into global grassroots movements. I am primarily thinking of two cases as I construct this category, with purely charismatic figures at the center, and I do not think it is a coincidence that in these two noble instances, these charismatic figures are living in the West. I think this is the case for a variety of reasons, but it is primarily due to the power and scope of their influence, and even though these movements are peaceful, they have such potential to destabilize the status quo that both of these charismatic leaders have placed themselves in self-imposed exile, one in Canada and one in the United States. They share a commitment to strong civic institutions, religious liberty and pluralism, which is not perhaps exactly as expansive as in neo-modernists, in this case. They also seek a socially conservative democracy structured and regulated by traditional Islamic governance and morality. It reminds me more of the vision of US democracy that would be espoused by folks on the conservative end of the US political spectrum, rather than the far left. And Kadri is on the spectrum. As I said, he is at the center of a very important movement called Minhaj-ul-Quran. And then Hizmet, with the Fethullah Gulen at the center of that movement as the charismatic figure.

Moving on to the third category, puritan Wahhabi Salafi, which is inspired by the Sunni Hanbali reformationalism of Ibn Taymiyyah, but presents a very selective reading of Ibn Taymiyyah. This reading is so selective there is no recognition that Ibn Taymiyyah was a Sufi, although he was. And so all the very recuperative anti-Sufi rhetoric of this particular trend in renewal and reform departs from the contents of Ibn Taymiyyah in a significant way. Muhammad ibn abd Al-Wahhab, of course, lived large and lent his name in a way to the movement, although many people in this category would reject Wahhabi as an appellation, as it goes against the very principles of the movement. Using such a label is shirking in a way, and they simply prefer to call themselves the Ahli Salaf.

This is characterized by a strict, scriptural critique of innovation – Bid'ah especially, a former Sufi pioneer of practice and progressive approaches to religious liberty in pluralism. It is somewhat similar to the reactionism of North American Christian Fundamentalism. I use that term with a capital F because it is self-descriptive; some Christians call themselves that, returning to the fundamentals, and they used this term because they were trying to respond to what they felt was the threat of an over-riding Enlightenment rationalism that was going to alter the Bible by teaching Darwin and evolution in the schools. And so religious liberty becomes a problem. I remember going to a church in Indianapolis, a fundamentalist church – and it really described itself as a link to this tradition of Christian fundamentalism from the late nineteenth

century. There were two young sisters who were singing little songs, and they sang a little ditty on the ecumenical movement, which the song regarded as bad because the ecumenical movement is relativist and will draw people away from the true faith. And I did not forget this one lyric – I think it has been immortalized in a video. It goes like this: “Catholic, Protestant, and Jew / Buddhist, Muslim, and Hindu / I guess they’ll want the devil, too / In the ecumenical movement.” That says it all, thank you.

So you have something similar going on here, perhaps, with a perceived threat from pluralism and liberalism. And in the case of this puritan model, even though the Wahhabi movement was not a direct response to Western colonialism and imperialism, it certainly has grown more so, and as we move forward in history, becomes precisely that. So one can understand how these elements of Western secularity, including types of religious liberty and pluralism, can be seen as a threatening part of the colonial and imperialist project. It is an established global phenomenon, nearly sectarian in some ways, with numerous elites in grassroots institutions and a commitment to a vision of a religious utopia, through a Pan-Islamic re-institution of Hizb ut-Tahrir or through a global socialist Salafization of nation states. I do not know what I would put in this category. In some way, the dynamics of the role of Jemaat e Islami in Pakistan fits, although I do not know whether we can oversimplify and say that Pakistan itself can be put here. Again, representatives of this movement would include the movement of the Al-Ikhwan al Muslimun, inspired by the teachings of both Hasan Al Banna and Sayyid Qutb, and the Jemaat e Islami and Sayyid Abul A’la Maududi.

Finally, the Shiite revolutionary category, inspired by what I characterize as a novel interpretation and synthesis of traditional Shiite jurisprudence and tropes of resistance against corrupt rule and oppression with contemporary political ideologies of anti-imperial resistance and liberation. In other words, this is a synthesis. You have traditional Shiite Juridics taking the role of Mujtahid. (Some of you know that one of the differences between Isna Asheri, the twelve of Shiite legal theory and Sunni legal theory, is the conception of the role of each Ijtihad, which actually almost replaces Ijma in Shiite jurisprudential theory; everyone who is capable of exercising Ijtihad, anyone who has any experience as a jurist (who has the training to exercise Ijtihad), is obligated to do so. This means that a deference to established legal rulings and authority, Taqleed, is something that actually is not appropriate for the Mujtahid.

So you have this built-in freedom to renew and reform, using the tools and substance of traditional Fiqh. And then you have these tropes of resistance

to corruption, corrupt rule and oppression, which have been part of Shiite identities for centuries and centuries. And then mix those with contemporary political ideologies of anti-imperial resistance and liberation, and you have some of the characteristics of this category. And you have these two pot-shaped movements, realities that are closely related. This time they could be wrong. The Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini and many others fall into this category, and Lebanon has Mullahs, such as Hassan Nasrallah, kind of the guy in head. And here, too, we have a very important reflection of the ethnic diversity of an often segregated movement; however, it is more than that, obviously, but we have an Iranian and an Arab representing how this works, in the Iranian sphere and in the Arab sphere.

It would be interesting to ask, “Where does Ayatollah Sistani fit in here?” He probably does not fit. I do not know where exactly he fits, as the role would be filled one of those other individuals like the Nursi and Nahda. And certainly there are elements of Tajdid and Islah at work. However, I think that until these societies can get on their own two feet and out from under the shadow of domination by external forces, it is extremely difficult to say where we can place them. Some of you may be wondering what I would do with someone like Osama bin Laden. Maybe it betrays some bias on my part, but given what I know about Bin Laden’s writings, there is no constructivist vision there, only resistance and deconstruction and destruction. I do not see any elements of Tajdid or Islah. If you want to get sharply critical, it is more similar to Hinduism, in a way, than anything else. That is why I did not feel that I had to figure out a category in which to place those kinds of folks.

Fifth, as we move into the last two sections, I will try to respect my time and go as quickly as possible. Hizmet is a neo-traditionalist, spiritual renewal and social reform movement. I see the renewal dynamic as having a lot to do with spirituality, and this commitment to individual spirituality is connected to other symbols in society for social reform; in quite a number of ways, it makes people strongly attracted to this movement and its reforms and then strongly repelled by it.

I would like to highlight the principle teachings of Fethullah Gulen to expand my understanding of how Hizmet fits into the neo-traditionalist category. Gulen was inspired by Said Nursi and the Nurcu Movement, and Nursi was all about trying to make connections between what he saw to be the valuable aspects of the Ottoman legacy and moving the people of Anatolia into modernity with the creation of this new, Western nation-state, and he was very concerned. He was offered a position in the Eastern Diyanet, and he

refused it, because I think he knew that this project of aggressive secularism, laicite, this Turkish form of laicite, was hostile to Islam, and he felt that Islam was going to be the key to the Turkish people's being able to move into modernity and adjust and adapt and at the same time retain their identity. And Nursi was convinced that the loss of spirituality, the loss of a sense of the spiritual, would one of the great downsides to any secularization project, be it more benign or be it more benevolent.

So we encounter another case of a socio-spiritual approach to renewal and reform, linking traditional, personal spiritual and moral character and duty, this notion of *ibadah*, with family values and consequent social reform. Nursi emphasizes service (that is, *Hizmet* – one of the names of his movement), in the form of education, social justice and intercultural and inter-religious dialogue. What I have been trying to reflect here is the language of the movement itself; I am not trying to make a judgment one way or the other. This is important, I think, especially from someone like myself, who is involved in inter-religious dialogue. And you have already heard about how dialogue in Europe is an important phenomenon in the whole process of European Muslims' being able to forge a new brand of European Islam for their communities, new immigrant communities, as opposed to the indigenous European Muslim communities that have been in existence for so long.

This principle that is at the heart of Gulen's commitment to dialogue, *hosgoru*, is often translated as "tolerance." I think that is an unfortunate translation, as it only means to see the goodness in others. "Practice *hosgoru* so that your bosom becomes wide like the ocean, becomes inspired with faith and love of human beings, so that there will be no troubled souls to whom you do not offer a hand and remain unconcerned." This is not an expression of relativism but one of the recognition of another human being, of the daily events of a human person, which are deeply hurt by a commitment to absolute truth. I know that there are many folks, who are more secularly inclined, who see these things as irreconcilable. You cannot really believe in the fundamental beliefs of every human person and also think that there is something like absolute truth. I will not, I cannot easily accept that as axiomatic. I think it is an important challenge to hold those things together in a creative tension, and many of us who are in interreligious dialogue, many Catholics, are faced with the same challenge: to hold those things in creative tension.

Democracy. This is one of many statements that Gulen made about democracy, and it is not, as some of you were saying earlier, a developed philosophy, an Islamic philosophy of democracy using so-

phisticated disciplinary methodologies. Its maker is a traditional Muslim scholar coming very much out of a traditional heritage but attempting, very sincerely I think, to engage some of the challenges and promises of modernity. It says that democracy is developed over time. Just as it has gone through many different stages in the past, it will continue to evolve and improve in the future. Along the way, it will be shaped into a more humane and just system, one based on righteousness and reality.

As a Catholic, I can say this reflects a certain healthy religious critique about terms that those of us who are fans of baseless secularity (and I include myself in this category), sometimes lose sight of, terms like democracy. The wonderful term that we are used to in theory may not match reality. If human beings are inside a hole, without disregarding the spiritual dimensions of their existence – I mean spiritual needs – and without forgetting that human life is not limited to this mortal life and all people have a great craving for eternity, democracy could lead to a deeper perfection and bring even more happiness to humanity. And applying Islamic principles to equality, tolerance and justice can help produce just this. I believe that he believes that, but there are some people who would point cynically and say, "No, those Islamic principles are not really true to equality, tolerance and so on, they corrupt democracy and turn it into something else." Again, I am not sure that we have to be reasonably cynical as we analyze these things, but ultimately I come at this as someone who teaches in a school of theology and is engaged in interreligious dialogue; I come at this from a theological perspective, and hope is a very important virtue for me, even when I do my analysis.

So, finally, we come to the question of *Hizmet* in Turkish democracy. Is *Hizmet* going to feed into that what some might describe as neo-Ottoman democracy? This idea of *Yeni Osmanlıcilik* (neo-Ottomanism) is a very controversial term but is highly contested; it has been used to describe the foreign policy of the AK party in a negative way. It has been used to say that the AK party is re-establishing Turkish dominance. This seems true if our reference is going to be the Turkification of central Asia. What role does *Hizmet* play in that? These are all questions that need to be addressed by people both within the movement and outside the movement who are concerned with exploring these issues. Neo-Ottomanism has been rejected by some of these folks in the AK Party and by others. It is sometimes contrasted with Ottoman revivalism by those who wish to give it a positive valence and suggest that Ottoman revivalism is intended to revive the urban empire in some diseased form, that neo-Ottomanism may be an attempt to take some of the best elements of Ottoman civilization and use them as resources for the reinvention of contemporary Turkish

society. This is a vague kind of idea, but there are both positive and negative connotations of the term. These are natural questions regarding the future of Turkish democracy. They are similar in some ways to questions regarding the future of Russian democracy and the future of any democracy, including democracy in the United States, which in some cases is in jeopardy, I think.

The question that I will raise is: Does Islam in general, and Hizmet in particular, exercise undue influence on its oppressors? That is the question. I want to leave you with a final anecdote. For decades now, the Turkish press has been increasingly filling books and writing articles raising concerns about what role Hizmet plays or will play in the future of Turkish democracy. These are legitimate concerns. Equally robust media efforts have been made concerning Hizmet, and they are forced to say what their vision is and what it is not. I think the debates are rooted in a shared, and accurate, framework in Turkey where religious convictions and values have played a major role in bringing about democratic reforms. I do not know anyone, even people who might say, “You call this democracy? You want democracy?” who are looking at Turkey’s situation and saying, “Well, it looks like Turkish democracy is in one of the best situations it has been in since the founding of the republic” (if you can even talk about it going back that far). And I think it is difficult to deny, although I know this could be contested, that religion has played a major role in that.

So the question is as follows: If religion has played a major role, should we reasonably think of getting rid of it? Is this especially the case in a social context, where the framework is strictly secular? Or would such a project be possible because the model of secularism is aggressive, active secularism, not passive. In all of this, Hizmet, and Mr. Gulen in particular, has been attacked from many conflicting perspectives. As you can see in the images here [referring to slides], one depicts Fethullah Gulen in the mind of Tayyip Erdogan, and in the other he is the Muslim Pope, who maybe has the same kind of authority for the people of Hizmet as the Pope does for Catholics. When you look at the website on which you find this image, it is more like he is a traitor to true Turkish nationalism. It is difficult to understand, but maybe this is because he has gone over to the West and is an agent of the CIA and the Catholic Church; he is a secret cardinal, and all of these kinds of things.

Finally, when I close by reviewing perceptions of the questions of religion and democracy in Turkey, I would like to address them in this regard. And then I will use the words of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, which is probably an unexpected way for me to conclude. A member of the Senate on the Services Committee was

recently asked how people in the Senate regarded AK Party rule (the Senate not the press, somebody I know from personal connections), and this individual said, “Most on Capitol Hill are very encouraged by the democratic reforms but are very concerned about the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in Turkey.” That is the language that was used, the de facto rise of fundamentalism. For me, this response reflects both a failure to consider the significant historical differences between the US and Turkish experiences of secularism, to which I was referring before. Can you actually have a strictly secular framework for democracy in Turkey? We do not even have that here in the United States. Maybe in France to a certain degree, but in the United States, we do not. Why do you expect that in Turkey? Finally, I would like to conclude with the concept of amnesia in regard to religion and democracy and the history of US foreign policy. A really interesting book has just come out, written by Andrew Preston, called *Sword of Spirit, Shield of Faith, Religion in American War and Diplomacy*. In one of its later chapters, the book looks at Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the argument Roosevelt made to convince a previously isolationist US electorate that it was worth getting involved in the Second World War, worth fighting Nazi Germany, and this is what he says, “Stories brought from abroad directly challenged three institutions indispensable to Americans. The first was religion.” So he sees Nazism as a challenge first to religion, which is the source of the other two: democracy and international good faith. Religion (and pardon the gender-exclusive language), by teaching man his relationship to God, gives the individual a sense of his own dignity and teaches him to respect himself by respecting his neighbors. Democracy, the practice of self-government, is a covenant amongst free men to accept and respect the rights of their fellows. International good faith, a sister of democracy, springs from the world of a civilized nation of men to respect the rights and liberties of the other nations of men. In a modern civilization, all three – religion, democracy and international good faith – complement and support each other.

I close with the question I ask myself: Have people in the U.S Senate and on Capitol Hill read their FDR lately?

TURKEY AND THE ARAB SPRING

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The good news about the narrative in Washington regarding Turkey is this: For the last two years, there has been a sense of pessimism in Washington regarding the possible loss of Turkey, beginning with the invasion of Iraq and the Turkish refusal to permit American troops to use its territory, and then Turkey's strengthening relations with the Islamic world, especially its strong stance on the Palestinian issue, and the visit of the leader of Hamas in 2006. Moreover, Turkey had close relationships with Iran and Syria. Recall that Turkey's policy of zero problems with its neighbors failed due to its decision to engage with Iran and Syria. Further, there was a perception that Turkey had gone native and was becoming increasingly anti-American. There was a rise of Islam in Turkey; the country was becoming increasingly Islamist. The perception that Turkey was experiencing a rise of political Islam was especially common during the Bush administration. The AKP was portrayed as an Islamist party. When members of the administration wished to be charitable, they would use the term "moderately Islamic," but it was perceived to be an Islamic party.

In 2010, under Obama, we hoped that things would improve, but the US and Turkey experienced a crisis over Iran. When Turkey mediated the Tehran agreement regarding uranium enrichment, this was a tremendous disappointment to Washington. Some argued that it was the wrong time and the wrong approach; Washington was agitating for sanctions against Iran, and as a member of NATO member and the UN Security Council in 2010, Turkey voted against

the sanctions. However, China and Russia voted in favor of the sanctions, and this created a substantial crisis with the Obama administration with respect to Turkish policy towards Iran. Thus, as late as 2010, there was a certain degree of pessimism regarding Turkey's future direction. Tom Friedman, the popular New York Times columnist, wrote about Turkey's being part of the Islamist axis, having grown closer to Iran, Syria and Hamas, and having significant problems with the USA and with Israel after the Mavi Marmara (flotilla) incident. Currently, as Joshua rightly mentioned, this is a golden age of Turkish-American relations, a honeymoon with the USA. What changed over the last one and a half years? In 2010, everybody was pessimistic about Turkey. Why is Turkey becoming Islamist? At present, Turkey is a model. We keep reading and hearing about the Turkish model. The reason for this change is, in part, the Arab Spring. From being an Islamic country that the West had lost, Turkey became a model, specifically for Egypt and Tunisia. We now hope that all Muslim movements in the region will be fortunate enough to be as moderate as the Justice and Development Party (AKP). We hope that they will be fortunate enough to follow the Turkish model, perhaps because the alternatives are much worse. What is the alternative to the Turkish model? Again, the alternative is often perceived to be the Iranian Revolution.

Arab revolutions may be hijacked by Islamists and lead to Islamist regimes. In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood and then the Salafists having carried large majorities created a sense of alarm. The alternative to moderate, friendly Turkish Islam is the radical Islam of the Iranian Revolution, or the influence of Wahhabi Islam, and in this context, Turkey appears to have a highly positive influence on the region. In that sense, the good news right now in Washington is that no one is discussing the Islamization of Turkey. On the contrary, there is a hope that Turkey may teach the region democratic lessons; the country may prove a useful model in terms of the compatibility of democracy and moderate Islam. In the future, there is the hope that Turkey will play a much more positive role in the region. Thus the narrative has changed, and that is good news. There is currently substantial focus on the Turkish model.

All observers agree that, overall, Turkey's foreign policy influence has increased. However, when you consider the media, when you examine detailed analyses of the situation inside Turkey, the Turkish debate, this increasing scrutiny also conveys a sense that the model has problems. Specifically, it essentially has two problems: (1) the Kurdish minority. What will happen to the Kurds? Some question whether there will also be a Kurdish spring in the region, whether the Kurds will agitate for their own nation or make for demands for federation and stronger cultural rights.

These possibilities place Turkey on the defensive. However, and perhaps more important, is (2) freedoms in Turkey, a topic we heard about this morning, freedoms related to freedom of speech and association. Significant tensions in Turkey concern Turkey's future and whether Turkey can truly become a liberal democracy. Because, if Turkey is not a first-ranked liberal democracy, why should it be a model for the Arab world? Why should a better model than Turkey not inspire the Arab World?

The substantial power currently wielded by the AKP has sparked fears in Turkey. The party has won three elections this far, which demonstrates their desire to change the Turkish political system via a new constitution. There are fears that the old type of Kemalist authority is being replaced by the authority of AKP or that of the Gulen Movement. The Turkish press is devoting increasing scrutiny to the Gulen Movement, and the clash between the Gulen Movement and the AKP is an interesting phenomenon in domestic Turkish politics, but it is also increasingly scrutinized by the West with respect to the Gulen Movement's relationship with Turkish politics in general and democratization in Turkey. What implications does the presence of Gulenists in the police force and the judiciary have in terms of this democratization debate? These are polarizing issues, there are fears that a new type of authoritarianism is emerging, and secularists have developed their own narrative of victimhood. All Turkish political groupings have narratives of victimization. The Gulen Movement and the AKP have very strong narratives of victimhood. They were the victims during the Kemalist era. Secularists now regard themselves as victims, and they perceive the Gulen Movement as being responsible for the jailing of journalists, due to the Gulen Movement's influence in the police force and the judiciary. These are some of the new issues changing the debate on Turkey in Washington. The discourse in Washington no longer concerns Islamization or Islam versus secularism. It is more concerned with illiberal democracy, authoritarian democracy versus liberal democracy, democracy with minority rights, and democracy with full freedoms.

This is a new and more sophisticated debate about Turkey, and I welcome this debate as an analyst because this should be the subject of our discussions, and the next step for Turkey is to focus on establishing a liberal democracy. We need to focus on concrete issues regarding freedoms and debunk this emerging notion of Turkey as a nation where one type of authority is being replaced by another. This will be difficult for Turkey to achieve because the drivers of democratization in Turkey were traditionally the process of EU accession and the sense that the AKP needed the EU, but EU membership is no longer an option for Turkey. I will return to this point subsequently.

I wish to discuss the Arab Spring's domestic implications for Turkey. The Kurdish question is increasingly debated in Western media as a weakness of the Turkish model. Turkey's authoritarianism has been debated in greater detail, as Turkey is more relevant, and the Gulen Movement will be increasingly relevant, as it is the most important religious movement in Turkey and is facing increasing scrutiny from the West. Therefore, we must analyze these issues, and we have to be prepared for such scrutiny and this new level of sophistication regarding Turkey that the West has gained.

In addition to debate concerning Turkey as a model, one must also consider Turkey's influence of in the region, the foreign policy dimension. I will return to the model debate, but allow me to focus for a moment on the influence of Turkey in the region. What can Turkey do beyond being a model in the region? Being a model is fine, but it is not a very concrete term. When you travel to Egypt and say that Turkey is a model, Egyptians will entertain this suggestion, but what does it mean? No country is truly a model for another. Turkey's impact is important. I believe that this impact is twofold. First, how did Turkey become Turkey? How did the AKP emerge in Turkey? In the eyes of the Egyptian military, the model of Turkish development does not truly concern moderate Islam. Why is the AKP such a moderate party, why is it different from Erbakan or Milli Gorus? Why did Milli Gorus become conservative? The Egyptian military would say, "Well, it is the Turkish military. It is the red lines of Turkish secularism and February 28th that actually established such moderation." So, for a range of powerful individuals in Egypt, the model involves the role of the Turkish military. That is one factor complicating what the model constitutes. It does not simply concern about moderate Islam, but rather how moderate Islam can be achieved. Is it possible that the military played a role in this moderation? That is one element of Turkey's influence.

The second element is Turkey's role in the region more generally. In the Middle East, Shia and Sunni are divided. Is Turkey a Sunni power? Or is Turkey a country transcending the Sunni-Shia divide. This is a particularly important question for Sunnis and for Egypt. There is concern in the region regarding Iran and nuclear weapons. Here, the concrete level of Turkish influence is important, and for our discussion, Turkey's true impact does not relate to the model but what Turkey could do in the context of a crisis in the Middle East, and the most urgent crisis in the Middle East is Syria. What is the relevance of Turkey in the context of the Arab Spring and, more specifically, in the context of Syria? Turkey played an important role in the context of Egypt. That is fine. Turkey was also supportive of the democracy movement in Tunisia. That is also fine. Moreover, in the US, there are strong

perceptions of Turkey, economically and diplomatically, as Joshua mentioned. Turkey is becoming the victim of its own success. Because recall – what were Turkish leaders saying? “Regional solutions to regional problems.” Turkey is the central country; Turkey has substantial influence in the region. Nothing positive transpires in this region without Turkey being involved. That is the narrative you have been hearing from Ankara, a very strong, self-confident narrative. Well, if you are the superpower in Washington you might say: “Here is the test. There is a crisis in your region in Syria. Show us your influence; tell us what you can do.” In Washington, there is also a focus on Turkey because it can truly influence Syria; people are expecting miracles from Turkey in with respect to Syria. Whenever Turks are asked about their strategy, other than calling for the end of the Esed regime, their answer is, “What is America’s strategy? What is the UN strategy?” And the response: “You are calling for regional solutions to regional problems. You are the regional supervisor. Why do you not exercise greater influence here?” And the Turkish answer is: “No, we do not want to become involved without the US demonstrating a sense of strategic direction.” There are limits to Turkish influence. Turkey discovered, especially with Syria, the limits of its influence in the region. Since we began having problems with Syria, Turkey has been struggling to find an exit, but there is no easy way out. Turkey does not want to engage in military operations, but it also does not wish to remain totally passive. So we discuss “friends of Syria” conferences; we discuss diplomatic solutions. Esed may remain in power for a long time, and Turkey is facing these problems. So, again, it is fine to talk about the model, it is great to emphasize Turkey’s growing influence in the region. However, when push comes to shove, we need to identify the most important contribution Turkey can bring to the table in the context of Syria. And Turkey’s reflex is overall an attempt to be very conscious, not involvement and international diplomacy. Turkey’s regional solutions to regional problems policy are limited.

But to be fair, this is a substantial crisis. Not even the US or the Arab League is able to offer concrete solutions. However, Turkey was expected to have significant leverage with Syria. However, Turkey does not have this sort of leverage with Esed. The Turkish Prime Minister believed that he had leverage with Esed, like a young brother. The fact that killings continued in Syria during the month of Ramadan has also created anger in Turkey. And let us not forget that Turkey is a Sunni country, and there is a perception that the Shia regime in Syria is killing innocent Sunni Muslims. That is another dimension.

I will conclude with why Turkey differs from most of the countries we discuss in the context of the

Arab Spring. I have been writing about the Turkish model for a long time. I believe that it is interesting to consider the Turkish model. There are five reasons why Turkey is different from other countries in the Middle East.

First, Turkey has an imperial legacy coming from the traditions of the Ottoman state. The founding of the Turkish state did not require Islam. But the Arabs needed it. There were no real Arab states before Islam. Islam created the Arab states. In this sense, Turkey is a country adapted the secularism; Islam did not create the Turkish state.

Second, Turkey had democracy much earlier than the Arab countries. Turkey first held elections in 1946. Before then, during the Ottoman Empire, Turkey had its first constitution. So Turkey has a history of multi-party politics. In the presence of multi-party politics, the role of Islam in Turkey changed. Islam is no longer the only opposition movement; it is one of many opposition movements. Islam was one aspect of conservative politics. In contrast, in the Arab world, there are no real elections and no democratic participation. Turkey avoided that dilemma, thanks to its democratization. When Islam has the opportunity to seize power, once it has power, its slogan is as follows: Islam is the solution. The Muslim Brotherhood’s slogan in Egypt was no longer relevant. These are the dynamics that differentiate the Muslim Brotherhood from the AKP. To understand this, you need to know the different historical contexts. That is the second factor.

Third factor is, as Ahmet Kuru stated, that Turkey is blessed by the absence of oil. When you lack oil, you need to invest in people, the economy, industry, and so forth. You cannot simply rely on God-given natural resources. Thus, Turkey lacks both oil and strategic rents. Egypt does not have oil, but it has strategic rents, coming from the Suez Canal, et cetera. It has a source of income independent of economic productivity, which is called strategic rent. Turkey managed to avoid the oil trap by establishing a productive capitalist economy. Malaysia and Indonesia are similar examples. Therefore, Turkey is not only different because of its moderate Islamic and state background but also because of its economy.

The fourth factor is the Sufi movement in Turkey, including the Gulen Movement. Here, my concerns relate to the Sufi movement remaining apolitical. The Gulen Movement was able to stay away from political parties and maintain an equal distance from all parties. However, now some believe that the Gulen Movement is becoming a political movement. The army made a foolish mistake in 2007 with the e-memorandum that unified the AKP and the Gulen Movement. The AKP and the Gulen Movement were uni-

fied in 2007. This was a positive development for the AKP, as it received substantial support from the Gulen Movement. But now we can see the beginnings of a fracture between the AKP and the Gulen Movement, a rupture that the military had been unable to achieve, but the post-Kemalist order is achieving it now. So Turkey's Sufi identity differentiates it from Egypt and the other Arab countries.

The fifth reason that Turkey is different is the European Union process. Without the EU process, we would not have witnessed the level of democratization experienced this far, which unified the Islamists, Kurds, and liberals. Everyone was united behind the EU process. Without the EU, I do not believe that Turkey could have established the levels of democracy and human rights that it has today.

TURKEY AND THE ARAB SPRING

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Anybody who has been paying attention to the news would think that this year was the year of Turkey, because you hear about Turkey and see Turkey in almost everything. And for those of us who have been working on Turkey for a while, it's slightly frustrating. You have known about something for so long, and suddenly the entire world has discovered it. It is a little like Istanbul; it's a tourist destination. You go there and now you are irritated that all these people from the Arab World, all these Iranians, all these Americans, all these Russians have invaded the pristine area where you used to live. And you had to speak Turkish; now I rarely hear Turkish when I go to the most affluent areas of Istanbul. I feel like a foreigner when I go into Taksim, even though I spent a lot of time working on these issues. And I think that describes the new Turkey in many ways, right? The new Turkey is in many ways a perception and an ideal type. It is this new and emerging power in the world and has been classified as one of the most important. In my own work, I consider countries such as Brazil, India, and Indonesia, and conceive of them as swing states, pivotal nations. If the United States gets its policies right in these countries, then whatever happens otherwise, whatever happens with China, whatever happens with Russia, these democracies will be the future. This is because the world order in which we now live, which is still based on the World War II model and the Cold War model, has to change. It is very clear that the world in which we live will no longer be dominated by a super cowboy who runs around and fixes problems everywhere. Because we do not have the military mind we used to, and even though we are able to destroy countries, we are not able to build nations. I think countries such as Turkey offer great examples from a historical perspective. We have heard a little bit about this subject this morning, and I think we can go further in discussing Turkey's role in this region.

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To understand where Turkey came from, you really have to consider the changes that we have seen in Turkey over the last ten years, as Turkey did not emerge in a vacuum. It did not simply appear out of nowhere as a Muslim-majority, secular NATO member, EU aspirant, head of the organization of Islamic Congress states, the fastest growing economy in Europe, the largest economy in the Middle East, and the list goes on and on and on – to be the kind of heavyweight that it became in the region. It is impossible to discuss this subject without considering changes in the international order, and I would argue that what we have seen in the last year, and in many ways due to external factors, has been a confluence of what's been happening in Turkey for the last ten years. Turkey's own economic miracle, its own success, is rooted not in the financial crisis that the West faced in 2008 and has continued to face, but in a financial crisis that was completely separate, in 2001. And the AKP, the Justice and Development Party, did not come to power on the back of an Islamist movement. I think this is a misnomer.

Whenever you use a term like moderate Islam, it is a challenge, as this group that has come to power certainly grew up in a conservative Muslim theology in terms of its view of how politics and the world work, but at the same time they rejected it. They are not from the Erbakan Party; they began creating their own party outside of that movement, and so they grew up with the coups in modern Turkey. They witnessed the coup in 1998, and when 2001 came, and there was this economic crisis, their message to the electorate was: "Elect us. We are the clean party." Ak in Turkish means "clean." It's the Akdeniz, meaning the Mediterranean. So, "Vote for us, not because we are conservative Muslims, but because we are like you, and we will fix the economy." And in many ways, the 34 percent of the vote that they captured in the popular election that gave them over 60 percent of seats in the Turkish parliament. This was possible because the strange quirk of having the highest threshold to enter parliament at ten percent allowed the AKP to garner a large level of support outside their traditional Anatolian heartland, which was already in favor of the AKP. This political movement, which began in 2002, has sustained itself over the last ten years in three different elections, increasing the party's vote share in each one, is in many ways a quiet phenomenon within Turkey that has only recently been discovered by the West and the international community, precisely because some of the changes that have been effected in the last ten years are directly applicable to the Arab Spring.

Of course, the Turkish model is not a new one. In the 1990s, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, everyone discussed the notion of a Turkish model for Central Asia, and there was a lot of eupho-

ria within Turkey about these long-lost brothers that spoke the same language and had been oppressed by Soviet Empire; now it is our time in the world. There is a lot of rhetoric about the Turkic world, and Turgut Ozal and Suleyman Demirel, presidents of the Turkish Republic, used to discuss a Turkish World running from the Adriatic all the way to the Great Wall of China. This euphoria was rapidly quashed because the rhetoric failed to meet reality. Turkey at that time did not have the economy it has today. It did not exploit many of the typical mechanisms of power, because in many ways it hoped that the United States and its other champions would do the hard work and could then simply take the credit for it. And the major change that we saw was the realization in Turkey that you cannot just say something; you actually have to back it up. It is one thing to have principles but another to actually have realistic means and tools of diplomacy and influence. And Ankara made the mistake that that the Central Asian republics that had just emerged out of the shadow of one Big Brother wanted another Big Brother. They did not want a Big Brother; they wanted a friend. And at that point in time, the Turks did not seem to be as open to that and continued to adopt a patronizing attitude.

What I would argue is that what we are seeing today is the Turks learning from the mistakes of the past. I am not necessarily saying that these are the mistakes of just one government. From the 1990s to 2000, Turkey was in absolute turmoil because of a political mess, the number of political parties, the number of multi-party democracies having different prime ministers every year. What Turkey has experienced for the last ten years in terms of having one party, which has been hegemonic in a political sense, is that while there are opposition parties in Turkey (but I would not call them real alternative parties), the Turkish Gandhi, the new leader of the Republican People's Party, has not offered a real alternative vision for Turkey. He still tends to be reflexive and reactive. When Prime Minister Erdogan says the sky is blue, the opposition party says that it is black. And you say: "Why, it is not because there are any particles." And they say: "If Erdogan says blue, it cannot be blue." That is their policy. It is very destructive in many ways; you need to have true, constructive alternative parties, something Turkey has not had during this period of time. And I think it actually hurts the AKP Party and what they have tried to do.

So, having laid that out as a brief framework, I think we can discuss Turkey as a model in the context of the Arab Spring. You cannot begin with Tunisia in 2010-2011 because what Turkey was doing up to this point in time was reshaping its own identity, its thinking. The speaker this afternoon discussed the

term neo-Ottoman in a negative sense. As someone writing a book and focused on this idea of impure legacies, I do not like the term neo-Ottoman either, as you cannot recreate something from the past, but you can certainly re-imagine the past and use that understanding to give you a new sense of urgency and responsibility. I think that is what has been going on in Turkey. We are not an isolated country – just look to the West. We need to think about our neighborhood and where we can be most effective, and the AKP was doing this in a quiet, but also dramatic, way, for example Visa-free travel to certain regimes. In the cases of Syria and Iraq, the Turks established different organizations with their neighbors, and they focused almost exclusively on their neighbors. This idea we have in DC that there is a shift in the axis shift from West to East is, I think, somewhat incorrect. It is more about the neighborhood versus not-neighborhood, and the neighborhood includes Christian countries, Balkan countries, Caucasian countries and Middle Eastern countries. Simply to say this is about Muslim identity misses some larger nuances here, but I do believe that there is something, particularly about the Anatolian mindset of conservative Muslims as they look towards this region of the world and say, "Look, the Kemalists for so long have only focused on the West and the European Union; what we want to focus on is our immediate neighbors, and we want to figure out how we can be helpful in Syria and Iran and Iraq. In 2010, this was made somewhat easier in the sense that the Mavi Marmara incident with the Gaza Flotilla, in which nine Turkish citizens, one who was a dual American citizen, were killed by Israeli forces. The Prime Minister sort of has street credentials - this is a prime minister who comes from the roughest neighborhoods of Istanbul, the equivalent of the Bronx in New York, maybe the South End of Boston, and he has this charisma that oozes. He sometimes does not speak very eloquently; he says things that do not exactly sound statesmen-like, but when he speaks, the Turkish people listen, whether they hate him or love him. He is someone who can capitalize on the Turkish spirit. And he has emerged at a period in time when his country has become one of the most popular and inspirational in its region, and he himself is a leader. Polls have continued to show, since 2009 onward, that he is the most popular leader in the Arab world, above any other Arab leader, above Ahmedinejad, above the Hizbollah leaders, et cetera. So, in many ways, when the incident with Israel happened, this was already on this trajectory, it made a very clear distinction among Arab leaders who were afraid to criticize Israel, European and American leaders who tended not to say nasty things, and Turkey, which was able to say, "What you did was wrong. We expect an apology, and until you give us one, we are not backing down," and show the strength of the Turkish state. At the same time, Turkey

was trying to be proactive and find a solution to the Iranian nuclear question with Brazil, and it was a smart decision to work with a country like Brazil, another emerging power that is not only on the United Nations Security Council, but also demands a place at the table of world order. They said, “The West has tried for so long; the Iranians don’t trust you; let us try.” And it was very significant, the first time that the Iranians had ever signed anything when it came to this, and it was a flawed document for sure, but at the same time this is exactly what the American President had asked the Turks to do. The moment this came out, the Americans disowned it, and the Turks felt very betrayed, saying, “We did exactly what you asked us, and now you are going back on it.” So the Turks learned a hard lesson in geopolitics.

When Tunisia erupted in 2011 and Egypt erupted, it was very easy for Turkey to get on the bandwagon early. Turkey was the first country to call for Mubarak to leave, not necessarily because they were on the right side of history, as many leaders continue to claim, but because they really dislike Mubarak. Mubarak and Erdogan were not friends, and when you think about Egyptian foreign policy in this area of the world, Egypt and Turkey were on polar opposite sides. Any time I traveled to Syria or Jordan, anywhere, the Egyptian press would immediately come up to me and try to get me to say something nasty about Turkey and tried to tell me, “Turkey is not wanted here. They are not Arabs; they shouldn’t be involved in our politics.” This type of animosity continued for a very long period of time. When Prime Minister Erdogan called for Mubarak to leave and began to hold up the Tunisian people and the Egyptian people as our brothers, it was a no-brainer. The entire world began to look to Turkey and say, “Here is the Muslim-majority nation that has gotten Islam and democracy right, whatever that means. Why can we not use the Turkish model?” Of course, the Turkish model was attractive, but Turkey spent 90 years struggling with its own history. Turkey did not emerge out of a vacuum, and it has a strong state tradition. It comes out of the legacy of the Ottoman Empire, something none of these Arab countries can claim.

So, while Turkey certainly has some points to offer, I can argue on two different sides here. One Turkish model is to have a strong military to impose changes from the top, including the founder of the Republic, to force the Turkish population to emerge into modernity, or you could say it is more about the transition into a more economic power and using soft power, alaturka power, Turkish power, which means using the power of soap operas, the power of economic entrepreneurship; it is about unlocking the spirit of the Turks in this region of the world. You could argue in

favor of both sides. Of course, Tunisia and Egypt alone would have been great foreign policy successes, but then came Libya and Syria. On Libya, Turkey sounded outright Russian at first; basically it said, “We don’t think any NATO forces or Western forces should be involved here.” And it was more about a competition in many ways. Even after Turkey had joined the Western Alliance against Kaddafi (who had given an award to Prime Minister Erdogan) at that point, competition was emerging between France and Turkey, which have always had their differences and because they are in many ways natural rivals, having been former empires in the same region of the world. So when the president of France and the prime minister of Britain went to Libya, they went two days before the Turkish prime minister, and the Turkish Prime Minister, rather than letting it roll off his back, chose to make fun of them. He said, “Look, these guys came to visit Tripoli. They got stuck in their security entourages. Did they see any part of real Libya? Look at me. I visited four provinces. I got to visit all the people. I’m a man of the Libyan people, and I am going to pray with these people on Friday.” And then, the very next day, he was in Egypt, and he decided to give a speech about secularism to the Muslim Brotherhood, and they greeted him with open arms and Turkish flags at the airport at two in the morning (which is suspicious, that they had Turkish flags – where do you buy these types of things?). What I am trying to point out is that this was more about domestic politics than foreign policy. And, as a result, when he returned, he was seen as a great savior of this Arab Spring world. And he took it one step further. He decided to go to Somalia and lecture the West and the United Nations about having forgotten about the trials of Somalia. This is clearly a man on a mission, clearly a country with a mission, showing that Turkey has a new model of development and a new way of showing its power. It is not in the typical sense of using military might. It is not about invading Syria. It is not about forcing Esed to do anything. It is about using the power of persuasion. In Syria in particular, this has been frustrating for the Turks, as they stood by President Esed all the way up until the fall, until they realized they were getting nowhere, and particularly the sensibilities of the AKP were distraught in the month of Ramadan. When you are supposed to be fasting and focusing on your relationship with God, this president continued to kill his own citizens in a horrific manner, and as a result, the Turks changed their rhetoric and began to be critical, but at the same time they were not doing as much as many powers had wanted them to do. And now Turkey, which for so long had asked for responsibility, had demanded that they be at the seat of international leadership, was being given leadership, and the West became frustrated because Turkey was not doing as much as they thought Turkey should, precisely because Syria

was such a substantial problem. Turkey fears that a civil war in Syria, chaos in Syria, is far worse than a dictatorial regime, and the much-vaunted language of zero problems with neighbors has, unfortunately, become zero neighbors without problems. I think when you consider Iraq, where the prime minister has been very critical of the sectarian violence that he says Turkey is perpetuating, and when you look at Iran, its sudden change in policies because of Turkey's NATO membership, of keeping radar sites on Turkish territory, it shows you how difficult the Middle East is. And the reason that Turkey was able to remain above this for so long was that they stuck to business; they let their let entrepreneurs do their speaking for them. There were state policies; when the prime minister or president visits any country in the region, he takes far more economists and businessmen than he does journalists because in many ways that is the important thing. When he goes to open schools and hospitals, all around the Middle East, throughout Central Asia, throughout Africa, this was the focus. However, the difficulties of the Middle East, in terms of this major difference between it and the Magreb, where you saw the successful example of Tunisia, and you had people like Anusi, who referred to Turkey explicitly: "We want to be just like Turkey. That's who we want to be when we grow up one day." And the Turks reveled in this and were able to say, "They want to be us. We are not saying we are a model; we are simply an inspiration. If they want to be us, if they want to do that, what can we do?" This became problematic in many ways, between that notion and what was happening in its immediate neighborhood. In its immediate neighborhood, Turkey's hard power, its military, the second largest military in NATO, was feared because what if Turkey decides to turn on neighboring regimes? It is easy to have zero problems when there is one regime in play, but what happens when the regime is at war with its people? You have to choose one or the other, and Turkey found this incredibly difficult, and what has been happening in Turkey can be interpreted through the lens of domestic politics, precisely because every day in Turkey, in the newspapers, there is an open debate saying, "Look, it's great that we irritated the Israeli people because of the Mavi Marmara incident, but where is the Syrian flotilla, where is the opportunity to reach out to our Syrian brothers who are being brutally demonized and attacked by the Syrian regime? We have an army strong enough to defeat these guys. If we would just put our action where our mouth is, this is the way to lead."

I think one of the challenges that Turkey is discovering is, for as much criticism as there has been about the European Union process, which has essentially been at a standstill, and as much criticism as Turkey has given the West, it is facing the exact same

criticism that it launched against the West, precisely from this region of the world. So now, Arabs are beginning to take a second look at Turkey, and saying, "It's fine to have nice words for us, but what are you actually doing?" And the challenge here is that the Turkish people are very active and hopeful in certain areas, but their leadership is scared because of the domestic changes in Turkey, in terms of the lack of a constitution; the constitution written by the military in the 1980s continues to be used.

As for the Turkey of today, what it represents at the international level is not reflected by what we see at the domestic level. Moreover, regarding the Prime Minister, who has been a phenomenal leader in Turkey for ten years, people are beginning to question his health and what will happen when he becomes President. We are looking at a post-Erdogan world, and it is a scary world because if there is no Erdogan, what happens to Turkey? It looks like there will be a fractured AKP. No one has the charisma or the power to hold this together, and when you think about what's happening today in the foreign policy community, in 2011, we've never seen the US and Turkey as close as they are today, but I'd argue that this is more of a historical anomaly or a coincidence than any type of structural policy adjustments made on the American or the Turkish side. When the Syrian uprising began, when the Arab Spring began, when the European fall began, we witnessed Greece and Italy fall into chaos. Turkey was the natural winner, not because of its great policy, but because they were the only ones that had their economy growing so quickly. Unfortunately, there is a tendency within Turkey and many Mediterranean countries to be hyperbolic, to say the world is either falling apart or we are the king of the world. And so we go from one extreme, saying, "No one loves us," to "Everyone loves us; don't you dare criticize us." And this type of oscillation from one extreme to another is particularly difficult; it is difficult even for a country like the United States, which is so desperate to keep Turkey as a strategic ally. Even friends are not willing to speak the truth to power sometimes. As a result, having those difficult discussions about what we need to do as a transatlantic community to focus on Turkey's European membership at the same time that we discuss Turkey's rightful role in the Middle East. It should not be an either-or discussion. The Ottoman Empire had been Janus-faced throughout its history, it was able to be both a European power and a Middle Eastern power, and Turkey in many ways is the supra-regional power and can be all of the above; there is no need to choose A, B, or C. It's D – all of the above. And that type of mentality, that changing of the Cold War mindset, is something we are working on with difficulty in the United States and, particularly, in European countries like France, which tend to have

certain biases against the Turkish people. However, in a larger sense, it's something that Turkey also has to struggle with; they have been able to break out of the mold and show what they are capable of, but now the question becomes: How are you going to be able to do that with, as opposed to against, the West? Because in many ways, the way that Turkey has risen so quickly has been precisely because many people are jealous and look at Turkey and say, "Look, they are also a European power, they are able to be in NATO and all of these other institutions. If Turkey decides to say 'to heck with Europe – we do not want it, we want to go our own way' – Turkey becomes nothing more than just another Middle Eastern power, that is, anti-Western. And that is precisely the danger in Turkey, when you have a populist movement that is able to capture the feelings of the street and have leaders that shape popular feelings. Looking at EU statistics is very telling. Five years ago, everyone was in support of Turkish membership. Today, the EU Minister wants to change the title of his ministry, as he feels he has nothing to do these days in terms of complaining to the European Union and demanding that they open new chapters. There is very little constructive dialogue happening. This is where Turkey needs to work with its partners in the world to show that its geostrategic value, which has always been important, is only be able to match its soft power in the region and not overstep those bounds that it faces in terms of being able to be a major player, while not having to be the only player.

ISLAM & DEMOCRACY

A Closer Look at the Turkish Model

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