ISLAM OR DEMOCRACY?

Atilla Yayla[*]

Ten years ago there were twenty democratic countries all over the world. Democracy used to appear as a regime confined to the countries in West Europe and North America. In other parts of the world anti-democratic regimes dominated for decades in the form of authoritarianism or totalitarianism. Indeed, a large part of world fell under ideologically sophisticated socialist regimes while the rest was in essence under the control of brute left or right wing authoritarianism.

There was a sharp difference between the two kinds of anti-democratic regimes. Authoritarian systems did not pretend to be democratic in any sense. In contrast socialist countries attempted to redefine the word democracy to have a ground on which to claim that they are the real or more progressive democracies. Thus they called themselves "people's democracy" that meant in practise suppression of the people by a tiny minority gathered in the single-party apparatus. This caused blurring in the meaning of democracy that lasted for quite a long time.

Towards the end of 1980s a rapid change swept al over the world. Totalitarian regimes of socialism started falling down one by one. The first move happened in central European Countries which was followed by East European socialist regimes. The collapse and disintegration of the Soviet Union marked the final triumph of democracy over socialist totalitarianism. This was named as "white revolution" which was the starting point of what named as "white revolution" which was the starting point of what Samuel Huntington called as "the third wave of democracy." This also helped accelerate democratization process in undemocratic countries. Thus ruling elites in many countries were ousted sometimes peacefully and in other cases by force. The overall result was rapid spread of democracy in all continents. Indeed more than 110 countries today claim to be democratic or trying to democratize themselves.

However there is an exception to this general phenomenon. We have a large region where third ware of democracy, like the previous ones, seem to have no serious influence: the

[*] *Professor of Political Theory and Political Economy, Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey*

Middle East. Indeed, in the Middle East, which is mainly home to Muslim countries, democratic regime is really an exception. For long time only two countries, Turkey and Israel, have been considered to have reasonably well-functioning democracies. This may be no longer so. In recent years Turkey went under a process in which basic right and freedoms of large masses were brutally suppressed by state elites in the name of "modernism", "secularism" and even democracy. Turkey lost the sensen of rule of law, inviolable human rihghts, and secularism which is a tool of social peace and state's impartiality with respect to religious stances. Turkey has now a unique regime which mikes different aspects to democracy, authoritarianism and totalitarianism.

On no accounts are any one of other Islamic countries in a better position than Turkey in this respect. In come Islamic countries, like Syria, Iraq, and to a certain extent Egypt, we see dictatorships that differ from each other only in the degree of brutalism. In some others monarchies-dynasties with no respect to basic human rights and rule of law reign like Saudia Arabia and small Golf countries. Then there are those regimes in North Africa which have desperately been trying to modernize or to secularize their country at the expense of human rights, and rule of law, In none of Islamic countries, including Turkey, the ruling elites really want their people to have a real say in public affairs, some regularly hold elections not as a tool of power sharing peacefully but rather as a show to impress outsiders and to crack down actual and potential opponents.

Why is this so? Why do not we see real democracies in Islamic countries. This is a question for whose answer those who live in these countries should spend brain-power, time, and energy at least as much as Western observers. The question can be tackled at two levels, the first being practical and the second theoretical. There are many reasons to be pessimistic on practical level. As mentioned above, Islamic countries neither wish their people to have a say in conducting public affairs nor they respect human rights. In all Islamic countries decision making is over-centralized, power sharing tools and mechanisms are very few, civil society tradition is extremely weak, and spontaneous forces of society are strictly obstacled.

Does this mean that Islam is inherently incompatible with democracy? That question brings us to the second and theoretical level of analysis. We see here two main brands of thought: The first one pessimistic, and the second optimistic. I must emphasize at the outset that five authors whose articles included here are quite optimistic. I would like to hope that

their optimism does not amounts to imagination. Let us have a look at what they thought of the subject before we proceed to evaluate their position.

Norman Barry starts with a historical and intellectual account of civil society concept. That is followed by an analysis of the term. To him "the most important element" of civil society is "the rejection of centralised political arrangements which embody the features of Hobbesian sovereignty". That includes, of course, not only the limitation of executive branch of political power but also, and probably most importantly, of the legislature. To put it more openly, "the legislature should be limited by law not of its own making", Prof. Barry points out that the tools with which this can be achieved are a written constitution or common law. Thus the second important element of civil society comes out: rule of law. Because "only in conditions of liberty and the rule of law is there the possibility of the preservation and development of differing cultural arrangements, religious practises and moral traditions".

After underlining the importance of civil society, Barry moves to the relation between liberalism and religion. He draws our attention especially to the American case where despite a deep-rooted tradition of tolerance and religious freedom, problems arise from time to time. Barry calls the attitude of Federal Supreme Court in many cases as a kind of "liberal totalitarianism" which derives partly from "excessive legalism", and partly from growing intolerance against religious liberties in certain circles of the American society.

The centre point in Barry's article is "Islam, liberalism, and civil society", The author admits that at first glance Islam might seem uncompr**om**ising with either liberalism or civil society, especially when we look at social, cultural, and political structure in Islamic countries. However this may be misleading. The acts of "Muslim states that have done so much to discredit Islam" do not necessarily prove that Islam has nothing to do with civil society, rule of law, and market economy.

Despite the difficulties created by Islam's not having "one authoritative tekst that deals exclusively with forms of government", one can find some elements stimulative for rule ou law and civil society. The first is the character of Islamic law. It binds not only believers but also the rulers. The sovereignty ends in God that means that there can be no absolute sovereign –be it a person or a group of persons. Barry says "there are… no nation states" in Islamic teaching, Muslims are not divided by race or language. The law making process in

Islamic traditions is also very interesting in his opinion. In Islam there is a Hayekian understanding of law making, that is, no concrete body has the final and absolute power to make law, it rather comes out from individual, uncoordinated reasoning of Muslim scholars.

In the last part of his article Prof. Barry mentions ethical imperatives in Islam like treating everybody equal, respecting humans including even enemies, caring for justice. He also traces features of pluralism in Islamic history. In his opinion, "Islam is closer to classical liberalism than it is to the egalitarian American variant", He also points out that "Islam can claim to have originated the theory of the free market a long time before Adam Smith…"

After pointing out so many positive points in Islam with respect to its relation with civil society and market economy, Barry raises a very important question: "Why has Islam not been recognised as part of mainstream liberal social and political theory since much of its doctrine is consisted with it?" I think this is the question for which especially Muslim liberals should seek a satisfactory answer. It is difficult not to share Barry's conviction that Muslim states acquired "quite the wrong doctrines from the West and many ideas which are alien to pure Islamic tradition"" however, despite being a good starting point, this answer is not sufficiently explaining the problem in itself.

Chandran Kukathas searches the relationship between Islam, democracy and civil society in his article. He is quick in pointing out the groundlessness of the prejudices against Islam in the West. Starting his analysis with the concept of civil society, he first underlines the vagueness in the concept, and then goes on to mention historical roots of civil society. A main concern for him is the difference, if there is any, between society and civil society. In his understanding civil society could be seen as a "distinctively modern form of society."

The notion of civil society implies some ideas. The first is that "civil society means society as distinguished from the state." The second idea is freedom in the sense classical liberal philosophers defended. Kukathas strongly emphasizes that the idea of freedom embedded in civil society has nothing to do with the idea of freedom put forward by Karl Marks and J. Jack Rousseau. In Kukathas' view "the freedom embodied in civil society is the freedom that allows human beings to live together in spite of their differences and in spite of the conflicts which arise from their varying interests, temperament, and beliefs". It is this understanding of freedom that "makes civil society a notably modern idea." In its core lies the

recognition of the fact that in all human societies "people worship different god, and this fact has to be accommodated by legal and political institutions if humans are to stand any chance of flourishing."

Like Barry, Kukathas does not ignore to touch upon the ties between civil society and market society: "Civil society is market society; but it is not just market society". I think this point deserves to be stressed again and again. On no account would it be an exaggeration to claim that a civil society without a market society will be something we can never have in this world. However, civil society does not only include business associations but also "associations to which people have attachments rooted less in their economic concerns than in their emotional attachments and moral commitments and so, in their identities. The most important associations or communities, here, are religious ones".

Moving from civil society concept to democracy Kukathas does express basic problem of democracy quite differently from conventional formulas. To him the problem is not who governs, but rather how to keep pluralism in society. As he puts, political problem "is no longer a problem of how to preserve unity; for such unity does no exist. It is a problem of how to make possible –and preserve- freedom: the freedom to live, and worship, differently". But this question is not easy to answer, "since differences here will not simply matters of taste but will raise questions about what is right, and how one should live". Kukathas mentions two kinds of solutions. The first is to settle the question of how one should live and then to impose it on all. The second is to leave the decision how to live to individuals and to provide a framework of meta-norms by which different ways could co-exist in peace and harmony. The first solution has no practical capacity to be applied as people disagree among themselves and resist again the imposition of beliefs upon themselves. It inevitable paves way for oppressive states. Thus, civil society has to turn to the second solution. It is at this point that the need for a more elaborated political theory appear. Kukathas is not shy to say that this political theory that tolerate the diversity of communities, associations, and traditions have been in existence for quite a long time and it is commonly labelled liberalism.

Having said that Kukathas raises another question: What is the place of religion in civil society? He points out that religion is still an important element of society despite the modernization and secularization: "We need to understand how the world has indeed become more secular; but we need also to appreciate why, and how, religion has an important place in

modern civil society." In explaining why this is so, Kukathas uses a reasoning that reminds Humean and Hayekian thought. He tells us that reason alone can not guide human-beings in all aspects of life. Unaided reason fails especially about value or morality. If this is so, where we should turn to for appropriate answers. Kukathas counts again two possible sources: To look to nature and to apply to post-modernism. The first may not be successful enough as naturalism generates disagreement rather than consensus. The second seems worse as its offer bears no content and it, as Larmore said, "ends up confusing the rejection of philosophical rationalism with the abandonment of reason itself."

"If reason alone is not enough, and the extremes of naturalism and post-modernism offer no solution, upon what resources can we draw to address our fundamental concerns in matters of value?" asks Kukathas. How about tradition? The author is hopeful to find keys to the solution of this important question in tradition and places religion within his wide understanding of tradition. To Kukathas, religion has two important functions. "First it has been a source of substantive judgements on matters of value." Second, "religion… has played an important role in constructing the understandings which have socialised individuals." Therefore "the religion has a really important place in civil society", concludes Kukathas. This brings him closer to the more fundamental question of "what is, and should be, the political place of religion in civil society, and democratic civil society in particular."

Kukathas mentions two views about the place of religion in modern society both coming out of the European Enlightenment. "The first suggests that religion ought to be repudiated as irrational" the second view is more moderate. It suggests that "religions should be recognized as something important to some people, and therefore tolerated within tightly defined limits." Kukathas himself is keen to reject both views because the first fails to understand the importance of religion in human society and the second falls away from a proper understanding of the nature of civil society.

He recognizes that religion can be a powerful and dangerous force in society. It attracts people and religious leaders who are able to mobilize large masses can have great power in their hands. It is tempting to use this power in their hands. It is also tempting to use this power in politics. However to use the power in hand is not peculiar to religious leaders, rather it is a general phenomenon. The real danger stems not from who has the power but rather from the concentration or usurpation of power. "If the alternative is to concentrate

political authority in the hands of a power great enough to keep all, including religion, in awe, the cure might be worse than the potential disease." Indeed, as Kukathas rightly underlines, "the greatest tyrannies in this century were exerted by the godless states of communism, and by Germany under the influence of Nazi doctrines of religious hatred".

Like all liberals Kukathas favours the dispersion of power. "The greater the dispersal of power the better." Because each power holder "operates to constrain any one power from assuming a position of… preeminence that tyranny becomes as possibility." Therefore it is good if there is a division of power between religion and state as long as none can take the upperhand.

There is not much doubt about this approach's validity with respect to Christianity. However many scholars and politicians like to disclose the view that this does not hold for Islam, since they believe, Islam doesn't accept any separation between state and religious establishment. Kukathas does not think so. To him "Islam is not at adds with democracy or civil society", because it does not claim to embrace whole of society as long as there are unbelievers.

The author goes to historical examples, starting with the days of prophet Muhammed himself, to show how tolerant Islam has been against unbelievers and believers of other religions. He does not insist that "Islam's history is stainless", there had been times when tolerant disappeared and bloody conflicts happened. But this is true also for other religions. Islamic teaching has the capacity to be subject to tolerant interpretations. Therefore we should look to the "traditions which are ready to embrace norms of toleration."

Detmar Doering starts his article dealing with the subject at a more general level. He first summarizes a quite common view that "religion and civil society do not go well together. "This is the view and said that religious truth could be reconciled with a secular concept of politics. Edmund Burke, for example, stressed that "man is religious animal" and without the support of religion no political system can survive long.

Doering finds some truth in both approaches. In his words, "Western civilisation and western civil society certainly owe much of its progress to some kind of secularism. On the other hand we see that the loss of social cohesion sometimes undermines even the most

elementary rules of civil society." Then he attempts to solve the problem behind this conflict by looking at the meaning of "civil society."

In his opinion the most clear understanding of civil society comes from John Locke, Locke defines civil society as a political framework within which our lives, liberties, and estates are mutually preserved. Locke's theory does not need any religious assumption to function, though Locke tried to give a theological foundation to his theory. Locke's attempt to reconcile civil society with religion has not proved very successful. But nonetheless it helped eliminate some intolerant features of religion in practice.

Detmar Doering goes on analysing the relation between classical liberal conception of civil society and religion by comparing each's final aim. religion is mainly concerned with end states. It does not aim to widen the choices before the person, rather it urges human beings to strictly follow its way. Liberalism offers to the individual an increase in the area of choice. Doering does not hesitate to say that "religion's concern for 'end states" can have positive consequences". But the view that a liberal civil society offers no concrete moral values to teach is in correct. Religion and other sources of values can live together to help make a civil society work smoothly.

Despite his tolerant approach to religion and religious values, Doering hold a secularist position and rejects some prejudices about secularism stemming out of secularist and religious circles. He rejects government censure, but accepts that "there is a right to speak out about and to censure immoral tendencies in cultural life" while discussing about pornography. In his opinion, "liberty does not mean that nobody is allowed to tell you what you can or cannot do. Social ostracism and boycotts are, although it may not always serve good purposes, legitimate means, to ensure that moral and religious standards have a voice in society." Another prejudice he rejects is that "a secularist state has to enforce secularist standards upon al social sub-structures of a civil society". Civil society implies peaceful society. It can not impose "its" views upon its citizens. The standard of civil society is not "levelling" secularism but "the possibility to pursue your own values within a framework of voluntary cooperation."

However Doering is aware of the fact that there are some prerequisites for civil society and religion to work together in peace: Communal structures that support religion should be

“privatised.” There must be a separation between religion, religious establishment and state. The members of religious communities must be free to organise themselves in an exclusive way. “Religious communities (like other special interest groups) must not instrumentalise government for their purposes, unless the purpose is the mere protection of their rights.” Liberal secularism does not aim to secularize the private sphere but the politics.

He ends up by pointing out that to realize these requires “an enormous self-restraint-sometimes vitalised by constitutional mechanism- for both, religious and civil society itself.” Otherwise, not only religion but also secularism might turn into threats to civil society. Indeed, is not the right when we bring any “secular” Islamic state under light?

The Turkish scholar Mustafa Erdoğan begins with a short account of developments in Turkish politics since 1995. It was a unique period for Turkey as for the first time in the history of Turkish Republic an Islamic oriented party, Welfare party become the leading partner in a coalition government. as Erdoğan puts it, the secular establishment, the army being in its core, was not happy with this and it found out a way to force WP out of power. This provoked the ongoing debate about Islam’s compatibility with democracy in general and Islam’s place in Turkish politics in particular.

After that Erdoğan first turns to what he calls “a paradigmatic error” very common among Turkish scholars dealing with the subject. According to these scholars. Islam is an exceptional phenomenon in Turkish politics. It is evens an outsider that has nothing to do with the sociological structure of the country. There can be no place for religion in modern, secular society. All Islamic appearances are “fundamentalist”. The reasons for the rise of Islamic influence in social, political and economic life have been rapid urbanization, unbalanced modernization, “unfair” income distribution, and financial help or ideological manipulation from abroad.

However not all Turkish scholars adopt this approach. There are some who see things in an different way. Among whom are Nilüfer Göle, Şerif Mardin and Binnaz Toprak. They try to explain the rise of Islamic movements on more scientific and realistic grounds, Erdoğan himself decisively rejects several assumptions of “paradigmatic error”. He points out that “Islam … is a formative component of Turkey’s social and cultural fabric”, not an outsider, Therefore, it will have appearance in Turkish politics and public debate in various forms

unless it is not suppressed legally or politically." If it did not do so before 1950s, it was because appearances of religious faith and practices had been suppressed brutally. When Turkey chose to be democracy in 1950, the policy with respect to religion was bound to change. Democratization has inevitably led to the raising political participation of religious masses. This has become more evident during 1980s under the leadership of Turkey's late president Turgut Özal.

Thought the secular elites of Turkey claim that modernization and secularism started with M. Kemal, the history of modernization in Turkey goes back to early 19 th century. Erdoğan gives us a short story of Turkish modernization. His aim is to put the picture as a whole before the reader to show the continuity between the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic. He is brave enough to underline that the Turkish Republic has been even more backward in some respects than its predecessor. In the single-party period the ruling elite monopolized the political power and invaded all civil society domains including religious ones step by step.

In the first democratically held election of May 1950, the Democrat Party came to power with a huge majority in the Assembly. Democrat Party government was counter-attacked by the Kemalist elite who was controlling legal and institutional mechanisms. Republican People's to throw away Democratic party government from the power. Thus Turkey had its first military coup in 1960 which consolidated the grip of Kemalist elites upon the regime. The military interventions of 1971 and 1980 would follow the same path.

Meanwhile Islam had been gaining visibilitiy in social, cultural, political, and economic spheres. As a political movement representing Islamic demands it first appeared in 1969 under the flag of National Order Party. After this party's being closed down by the Constitutional Court, National Salvation Party came into existence. It was too closed by the constitutional court. (Interestingly its successor WP would also be closed at the same charges). Late president Turgut Özal's opening up the system widened liberties in political arena from which religious groups and religious masses benefited generously like all other segments of society. However all these were resenting the secular establishment.

After the death of Özal in April 1993, "the political atmosphere started to change and the military, through NSC (National Security Council), gradually reassumed the initiative in

government policies", according to Mustafa Erdoğan. The military's dominance reached to its peak when it, again through NSC, forced the coalition government, between Welfare Party and True Path Party, out of office. It is out of question that the dominant power in Turkey in the end 20 th century has been the military.

After this historical and actual account of Turkish politics Erdoğan turns to secularization adventure of Turkey. The subtitle he chose here speaks for itself: "Radical Secularization in Turkey". This title makes clear that Erdoğan sees the Turkish State's attempt to secularize the country-society as a radical step. To explain this he applies to the analitical tools developed by D.E. Smith and David Apter.

In his view, "Kemalist secularism rests not on the separation between religion and state but on government control over religion". He refers here to Levent Köker who pointed our that he Turkish state sought to replace Islamic value system with a "scientific one. Thus the Turkish type of secularism appeared as a radical one, to the extent that, the State tried to create a kind of political religion in the sense Apter put forward. The unique character of creating political religion is this: It politicizes all life. In result politics as we know it disappears. Conflict that lies beneath politics becomes not only bod, but also counter revolutionary. This understanding, in Apter's words, "runs counter to the natural evolution of human society, and ideas of opposition downgrade and confuse the power of positive thinking. Ideas not only are dangerous, challenging the legitimacy of the regime or charisma of the leader. They also represent unscientific vestige wherever they run counter to those of the regime."

Thus Mustafa Erdoğan finds most elements of political religion in Kemalist secularism. Among which are the monolithic character of state structure, monopolization of political power, single party to control society, charismatic leadership personifying the monistic character of the regime, and context of "Kemalist ideology". The author underlines one important point, that is, political religion can not be an end in itself. "The final objective of creating a political religion is to incorporate a new value system and code of conduct-a religion to replace traditional religion." In his view Turkey seems to have attempted "to replace Islam with a new civil religion that was to grow up from secular ideas and institutions." How successful it has been is of course open to debate. The rise of Islamic

movements may suffice to say that this attempt has not been as successful as its initiators must have hoped.

Mustafa Erdoğan concludes with this: Islam is not only a religious faith, it is also a part of Turkish social, cultural, public, and political life. It is deep rooted in the Turkish society. There can be no oddness in the growth of Islamic revival during democratization process. This is not a pathological phenomenon. "Turkey's political elite has to learn to live with Islam. If Turkey really wants to be a democracy, it will do successfully only with Islam, not by attempting to cast it off".

Ahmet Aslan has the last article in this volume in which he discusses the compatibility between Islam and democracy. As a professor of classical Islamic philosophy by profession, he begins by pointing out the two sides of the long lasting debate. On one side there are those writers who confidently say "constitutional administration, secularism and human rights are not incongruous with the basic values and notions of Islamic civilisation." On the other side we see those who claim that these values "have no place in the religion of Islam, in Islamic culture and Islamic traditions." He counts among defenders of the second view Sayyid Qutb of Egypt. Abu'l Ala Mawdudi of Pakistan, Ali Shariati of Iran and Ali Bulaç of Turkey.

He is now ready to elaborate both stances. The holders of first view mentions these as proofs or source of their convictions: Coming of rulers to power through elections during the first four caliphs; ijma that "represents a compromise first among the scholars who have the authority to interpret the religion accurately and then among all muslims"; ulema's having "the authority to formulate the rules relating to the problems which may arise in the social life o al muslims." The absence of an institution between God and man; Islam's egalitarian attitude with respect to race, language and social and economic position can also be counted among the elements supporting democratic principles. Aslan also summarizes the argument of those who see an incompatibility between Islamic traditions – values and democracy: Islam's not distinguishing between religious community and political community: its imposition of the Sharia'a as law and constitution that empowers religious scholars; the scholars authority to refuse or challenge governmental policies. more handicaps are on the line like Islam's not recognising equality between genders or Muslims and non-muslims and the problems in political participation.

Aslan himself is a critic of both views. The first is too optimistic and the second to pessimistic. Looking at the actual politics in Islamic countries he observes: "… opposition movements carry the banners of democracy, human, and democratic values while they oppose existing despotic, autocratic regimes. On the other hand, enough sings exist to show that these movements or their spokesmen are not committed to democracy as a positive doctrine and a positive program."

He then turns to the case best known to himself: Turkey. He criticizes Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of former WP for taking democracy as a means to an Islamic end and for his majoritarian understanding of democracy. WP's lack of interest in the freedoms of other groups, individuals and minorities is rightly subject to his criticisms. Indeed the WP did not show a real concern with respect to basic universal human rights until itself came under pressure from the establishment.

In line with Mustafa Erdoğan's argument, he points out that Turkish modernization and secularization process has a history of 150 years. This process culminated in democracy in 1946. In the last ten-fifteen years Turkey has made big progress in economy. In particular the development of civil society accelerated in 1980's with the liberalising policies of the late prime-minister (then president) Turgut Özal.

Naturally this has provided a ground for "the Islamic movements that have been wishing to express themselves more freely and in a more institutionalised form since the transition to democracy." The WP took advantage of this event to raise to the position of biggest political party in the country. In other areas also we witnessed the institutionalization of Islamic movements, like businessmen circles and women movements.

As Aslan rightly points out, woman-issue has occupied and will occupy Turkey's public agenda for some time: Women's wearing head scarf. This act has two sides: "On the one hand, this movement presents itself in radical opposition to modernity. On the other hand it also carries attributes of being a criticism, or oven a refusal of traditional Islam." It is interesting that "the demands for the right to wear Islamic dress are voiced with contemporary values such as individual freedoms, rather than Islamic references." The same it true also for Islamic writers and intellectuals in defending universal values. "In this context during the last ten years, the western school of thought that has been most popular with this group (of

intellectuals) was post-modernism and the famous writers and representatives associated with it."

Aslan deals with prospects for an Islamic democracy in the last pages of his article. Despite not denying setbacks Islamic movements suffer from, he warns not to dismiss them totally as reactionary. He sees hopeful signs in Turkey that may be of help to the democratization of Islam or the emergence of, what he calls, "an Islamic version of democratic rule." However he again warns us that" we can not ignore those developments that run counter to this trend and indeed threaten it." Aslan believes that "life will teach all the parties the lessons of modern life and social order." Within this framework Islam and Islamist movements will be more compromising with democracy and democratic values as it has happened with Christianity.

You must have heard the saying: "All good things happen by accident and all bad things are well-planed." I think this is the case with this book. Despite the fact that the authors had been given just general subjects to write about, they came up with articles that perfectly combine with, and complete, each other. It would be nice if we found more reference to, or more interpretation of, Islamic sources and teachings in the articles of Barry and Kukathas as they both have been leading figures in political philosophy in the last decade. However, I suppose they have just made a beginning and we have many reasons to expect more from them in the future on the subjects they shortly dealt with here. The same goes, of course, for Detmar Doering. As a bright student of classical liberalism, he could contribute much more to the democratization of Islamic countries and to our better understanding of civil society-religion relations through his future work. Erdoğan and Aslan are leading intellectuals in Turkey and one can always find something new to learn in their work, as it is here.

I am particularly pleased that Barry and Kukathas have not been short of emphasizing the relation between civil society and market economy-society. This relation has been constantly ignored in civil society discussions because of the left wing authors have dominated for long time. The truth is clear: There can be no civil society in the absence of market economy. Thus one of the ways to promote civil society in Islamic countries is to promote market economy.

All authors agree on the importance religions carry in societal structure not only for the believers but also for whole society. This may be seen as a timely and important warning to those Islamic countries who carry secularism to radical extremist points. Liberal secularism does not aim at secularizing whole society, it just seeks secularization of politics. This is such an important point for Turkey nowadays that we need to remember it every day, if not every moment. I would like to conclude with this. I am much more optimistic, after reading such a good collection of articles, about the future of democracy, civil society, and market economy in Islamic countries in general and in Turkey in particular.