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**Secularism and Religious Freedom: The Impacts on Governance and
the Economy**

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the Economy**

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family. For my mother, father, and sister, whose unwavering support helped me continue on my non-traditional academic path. For my wife, whose love and friendship helped me achieve more than I could have ever imagined.

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Abstract

Secularism and Religious Freedom: The Impacts on Governance and the Economy

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2014

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The role of secularism in government is an important question following the events of the Arab Spring. This report aims to look at how Turkey and India's political systems evolved in the 20th and 21st century against the backdrop of constitutional secularism. Moreover, this report explores some of the consequences of secular principles on economic and societal progress. Turkey, with a stance that separates religion and state, has had numerous problems between secular and religious groups. This strife has led to multiple coups and cycles of progress and political turmoil. The military sees its duty as guarding the secular principles of Turkey – a problem for politicians perceived as overly religious. In India, which has a concept of secularism that requires government consideration and protection for all religions, what has evolved is a political system that pits a party devoted to secularism against a party that advocates a more Hindu national identity. In both Turkey and India, some social and economic interests are drowned out

by more vocal religious political groups. While both these countries have different interpretations of secularism, the current atmosphere in both countries fosters civil unrest and, at times, violence. On a societal level the rhetoric only serves to divide people. So long as this rhetoric and atmosphere exists, there is a limit to economic progress, societal stability, and international influence. This last aspect is especially important for these two countries, which have broad historical reach. In Turkey, previous restrictions on religion have been repealed by the current government in order to follow more democratic principles, however, many also see this as the first step towards a politically Islamic Turkey. In India, the religious rhetoric concerns the religious minority groups. India is a country with relatively high governmental restriction and very high societal hostility towards religion. Much of this hostility manifests as public violence. The emergence and predicted victory of a more Hindu political party only fuels the public debate over secularism. The challenge is to balance secularism with freedom of religion, and perhaps accept an evolving stance that reflects each policy's limit.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The terms secularism and freedom of religion are often used interchangeably. However, these two concepts have had different meanings as well as different effects throughout the world. What is the true difference and can the consequences of one be much larger than those of the other? The end question is how does the implementation of these principles affect a society? As an application, what lessons could be applied to the emerging governments in the Middle East, North Africa and beyond? These are questions that require an answer in the form of a policy prescription, but first, one must also look at the impact of religious freedom, and specifically, the impact of different forms of secularism. The larger impacts of religious freedom can be seen in stable societies, freer democracies, national security indicators, and greater opportunity for political and economic growth.¹ Such impacts can also affect the way the United States views and interacts with nations around the world.

¹ Gill, Anthony, and Timothy Samuel Shah. "Religious Freedom, Democratization, and Economic Development: A Survey of the Causal Pathways Linking Religious Freedom to Economic Freedom and Prosperity and Political Freedom and Democracy." *Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Religion, Economics, and Culture Washington, D.C.* 13 April 2013.

Chapter 2: Definitions

The definitions of freedom of religion and secularism vary. For the purposes of this paper, freedom of religion will be defined according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and secularism will be defined according to both the New Oxford American Dictionary and the constitutions of Turkey and India. As per the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 18: “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.” This definition can be taken to mean that every individual has the right to believe, not believe, change beliefs, and voice or practice those beliefs (or lack thereof) in public and private. Secularism, as per the New Oxford American Dictionary, is defined as “denoting attitudes, activities, or other things that have no religious or spiritual basis; not subject to or bound by religious rule.” The differences between these two concepts are subtle, but important.

For this paper, freedom of religion will take on the characteristics of the state intervening only when the right to believe or not believe is infringed upon, whereas secularism will take on the characteristics of a more active role of the state in religious policy. This could mean that the state actively excludes or includes religion in its political ethos. The definition of secularism will be amended when discussing India. India has a unique view on secularism that merits examination; the country sees secularist principles as the government’s responsibility to incorporate, protect, and represent all religions

within the public sphere.² To continue the discussion as to what the impacts of both concepts are, one must first look at the historical examples of both - primarily, through the secular principles of Turkey and India.

² Larson, Gerald James. *Religion and Personal Law in Secular India: A Call to Judgment*. Indiana University Press, 2001. 1-3.

Chapter 3: The Actors

Turkey and India serve as useful examples of secularism in practice, and have been seen as models for other countries. Both these countries are less than a century old in their current political state, have long and rich histories, emerged from imperialist policies,³ and have historical and current conflicts between a dominant religion and minority faiths. Moreover, these two countries have portions of the population who believe that faith should drive the national identity of the country - portions that have become more vocal in recent years. This last point highlights the fact that even with differences in economic and social policies, at times the religious identity (or lack thereof) of a party has driven support for that party.

Turkey, with its Muslim-majority population, history of many ethnic and religious groups, democratic elections, and an economic rebound over the last decade, is often seen as a role model for emerging countries in the Middle East and North Africa. India, with its plurality of religions and ethnic groups, Hindu-majority population, and large Muslim population, has played an interesting role as strategic and economic player in Asia. With both these nations lauded for their progress, it is important to look at the political climate and economy in both countries, and how religious rhetoric and politics currently overshadows other policy positions. Turkey's disputes find fuel in a variety of sources: the Kurds, Armenians, Christians, Muslims, and Alevis, to name a few. India sees its domestic disputes manifest in Hindu-Muslim violence, a tense relationship with Pakistan,

³ An important distinction is that while India was a British colony, Turkey was not, but had to deal with the breakup of the Ottoman Empire by an Imperial Great Britain.

and a society sometimes antagonistic towards other minority religions. Additionally, both countries have codified secularism within their respective constitutions.

It is important to note that while Turkey has a population of around 75 million people, with most identifying as Muslim,⁴ the debate over secularism in Turkey has not waned over time. Ataturk, a powerful advocate of secular principles and the separation of religion and state, left a legacy that echoes through the halls of Turkish politics. The current ruling party has beliefs that incorporate more protection for religion in government and state capacities – specifically, protection for Islamic principles. The debate over religion in state can also be divided among rural and urban populations, and even eastern and western Turkey. While Istanbul may boast of its acceptance and diversity, in which mosques, synagogues, churches, and nightlife may occupy the same neighborhood, it is not uncommon to see divisions among the people who frequent these religious and entertainment venues. Moreover, the rise of rural areas under new economic policies has created a broader base of support for the current government. Ataturk nationalized a number of the industries in Turkey, hoping to have greater control in the new economy. This state control remained throughout many decades of turbulent political change and the economy only flourished under more recent economic liberalization.⁵

⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Factbook: Turkey." <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tu.html>.

⁵ Oztrak, Faik. "Turkey's Economic Development in the Last Decade, Policy Issues and the CHP Perspective." *Turkish Policy Quarterly*. Vol. 11, No. 2 (2012): pp. 39-49. <http://turkishpolicy.com/dosyalar/files/2012-02faikoztrak.pdf>. 40-41.

India has a population of approximately 1.2 billion people and a Muslim population of roughly 160 million⁶ – a number that puts India’s minority Muslim population at greater than the population of most countries. Additionally, the ethnic strife between Hindus and Muslims is interesting because it has not yet caused a full-fledged civil war. This indicates that there is some confluence of secular policy and ethnic cohesion that prevents a greater degree of tension than exists. This secular policy, as opposed to that of Turkey, makes it the responsibility of the Indian government to protect and essentially incorporate all religions. This does not mean that India is a religious or ethnic utopia; the varying degrees of progress among ethnic and religious groups, castes, and the conflicts between them are problems India must attend to. Like Turkey, India has had its debates over secularism, and the major arguments from both sides revolve around how much protection the government should give to various religious groups. Should it be the responsibility of the central government to ensure that there is an equal proportion of Muslim members in Parliament as exists in the overall population? This becomes even more complicated when determining how much the government should protect groups with different bases of support. Should the government protect the small group of Jews in India with the same vigor as it might the larger Christian and Muslim communities? The economic impacts of these questions apply to helping religious minorities or marginalized populations in areas that may not offer equal economic opportunities.

⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Factbook: India." <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/in.html>.

Both Turkey and India provide us with two excellent examples of secularism in younger countries. Turkey, which will turn 100 in 2023, is still dealing with the problems of secularism and separation of religion and state, while India has to try to reconcile protection of religion with freedom of speech and equal protection for all individuals under the law. The question as to whether these two nations can continue to maintain their versions of secular identity is an interesting one, and one that this writer is not optimistic about. It would seem that in order to provide the protection to religion that each of these countries intends it might be necessary to change policy to freedom of religion. In doing so, there may be the opportunity for the population to observe what Al Stepan calls the “Twin Tolerations”⁷: that is the recognition that religion can have a place in public speech and that insufficiently or overly pious politicians can be voted in or out, *and* that the government must also take care not to establish a religion or discriminate against those who practice religion publicly. Stepan places the burden on the democratic system and believes that if the candidate is too religious or not religious enough to match the general public, that candidate will not win the election or will be ousted. Essentially, democracy will dictate the proper balance between religion and state.

⁷ Stepan, Alfred. "Tunisia's Transition and the Twin Tolerations." *Journal of Democracy*. No. 2 (2012): pp. 89-103. <http://www.journalofdemocracy.org/sites/default/files/Stepan-23-2.pdf>.

Chapter 4: A Brief History of the Turkish Republic

The Turkish Republic emerged from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, as the home for a people associated with Turkic culture, language, and Islam. However, this was not always in line with the vision of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the modern republic. Ataturk's vision was of a secular state, in which Islam, or any religion, would have little role in society and government.⁸ In fact, Ataturk held that the new Turkish identity, based on secular democratic principles, would be the unifying identity for the people of this new nation⁹, and that religion would be a secondary or even tertiary factor. This was implemented in the hopes that the Turkish society and economy would progress on path that empowered all, and did not limit opportunity based on religious or ethnic background.¹⁰ Ataturk went so far as to ban Islamic dress and symbols such as the *fez*¹¹, some forms of what he deemed Islamic music, and also nationalized some mosques and cathedrals, such as the Hagia Sophia, as national landmarks and museums as opposed to places of worship.¹² His party, the Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi¹³ (CHP), was vehemently secular, sometimes anti-religious, and was the dominant - sometimes only - party in Turkish politics for many years.¹⁴ Ataturk also feared a reprisal by Kurds and the ceding of lands in the east, so he made it a priority to squash Kurdish identity in favor of the new

⁸ Mango, Andrew. *Ataturk: The Biography of the Founder of Modern Turkey*. Overlook TP, 2002. 534-536.

⁹ Baran, Zeyno. *Torn Country: Turkey Between Secularism and Islamism*. Hoover Institution Press, 2010.

¹⁰ Mango xi.

¹¹ Ibid at 238.

¹² Ibid at 499.

¹³ Translated as 'Republican People's Party'.

¹⁴ Watts, Nicole F. *Activists in Office: Kurdish Politics and Protest in Turkey*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010.

and broader Turkish identity.¹⁵ A popular argument in Turkey is that Ataturk said that anyone within the new country who spoke Turkish, was Turkish, and with that made all the various ethnic groups in Turkey part of a new identity.

This is important for several reasons. First, what Ataturk did was to try to muddle, or even erase the rich ethnic makeup of the Ottoman Empire. This empire was long known for its embrace (and sometimes repression) of many different ethnicities and had ties as far west as Germany and as far east as India. In fact, the Mughal rulers of India had a friendly relationship and regular correspondence with the rulers in the Ottoman Empire.¹⁶ Second, Ataturk also made it virtually impossible for Islam, or any religion, to emerge as a force in the new country. With the power of an autocrat, he was able to change the script of the language, many of the words, and any linguistics that resembled the previous Islamic heritage Turkey had.^{17,18} All of Ataturk's actions had a long lasting impact on Turkish society, in both the way the military saw the role of secularism in governance and in the recent emergence of religious rhetoric as a political tool.

¹⁵ Yegen, Mesut. "Banditry to Disloyalty: The Kurdish Question in Turkey".
<http://www.setav.org/ups/dosya/16058.pdf>

¹⁶ Hanioglu, M. Sukru. "The Land of the Foreign Padishah: India in Ottoman Reality and Imagination." Diss. Princeton University, 2012.

¹⁷ Lewis, Geoffrey. *The Turkish Language Reform: A Catastrophic Success*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

¹⁸ Mango 496-497.

Chapter 5: Modern Turkish Politics

Over the years the country held on to these secular principles, those of separating religion and state, and endured multiple military coups and the shuttering of numerous political parties. Any economic or social progress was undermined by political upheaval due to a clash between the military and allegedly religious leaning governments. In the last two decades, there has been a stronger showing of Islamic leaning parties, and that has been met with strident opposition from the military. The initial economic liberalization reforms enacted in the early 1980s were short-lived as political upheaval throughout that and the next decade created uncertainty in the economic system.¹⁹

Formed from the remains of the banned Refah Partisi²⁰, the Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi²¹ (AKP) has been in power since 2002, with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan leading this party for the last ten years. Refah was founded as an Islamist party in 1983, itself taking up the mantle from two previous Islamist parties. The 2013 protests in Turkey were not the first time Erdogan had political problems. He was arrested and barred from politics in 1998, while serving as mayor of Istanbul, for publicly reciting a poem that was interpreted to incite racial hatred and violence.²² He served several months in prison and was barred from holding office until the AKP came into power and had his status changed.²³ Since then, Erdogan has been fighting charges of authoritarianism every

¹⁹ Oztrak 40.

²⁰ Translated as 'Welfare Party'.

²¹ Translated as 'Justice and Development Party'.

²² "Turkey's Charismatic Pro-Islamic Leader." *BBC News*, 4 November 2002. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2270642.stm>.

²³ Ibid.

step of the way. Erdogan's plans to lead the nation to the centennial anniversary of its founding, just under ten years from now, can only point to the fact that he plans to stay in power for as long as possible, and with that, perhaps fall into some of the trappings of other leaders with long tenures.

Under Erdogan's leadership, Turkey has seen a booming economy as well as growing government restriction. Turkey has been criticized for a lack of freedom of the press, earning severe criticism from the Committee to Protect Journalists.²⁴ Reporters Without Borders echoes the sentiment, ranking Turkey 154th of 179 countries in their 2013 Press Freedom Index.²⁵ From the beginning of the 2013 protests, the government ordered a media blackout that stretched across the country.²⁶ Erdogan also passed constitutional reforms that expanded the power of the AKP and executive branch, while weakening a number of other institutions such as the army.

Besides the legislative changes, the symbolic victory of the AKP over the army and other parties reaffirmed their strength in Turkish politics. The constitutional changes allow for the prosecution of military personnel for their roles in previous coups, including the 1997 coup that unseated Erdogan's mentor and leader, former Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan²⁷ (of the banned Refah Partisi). Both Erdogan and Erbakan worked

²⁴ Phillips, Karen. "CPJ Risk List: Where Press Freedom Suffered." *Committee to Protect Journalists*, 2012. <http://www.cpj.org/2013/02/attacks-on-the-press-in-2012-turkey.php>.

²⁵ "Press Freedom Index 2013." *Reporters Without Borders*, 2013. <http://en.rsf.org/press-freedom-index-2013,1054.html>.

²⁶ Letsch, Constanze. "Turkish Protest Takes Root in Istanbul Square After Security Forces Withdraw." *The Guardian*, 1 June 2013. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jun/01/turkey-istanbul-erdogan-demo-protests>.

²⁷ Yavuz, Ercan. "February 28 Period Still Maintains Its Grip on Turkey." *Today's Zaman*, 27 February 2009. http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=168113.

together in the past and espoused similar ideals about Islam in society. The bloodless 1997 coup, in which the military forced Erbakan to resign and withdraw from politics, came immediately after the military compelled him to sign into law measures that would protect Turkey's secular nature – mostly by repressing Islam through restrictions on *hijabs*, the shuttering of or crackdown on schools with ties to Islamic organizations, and the preservation of the right to fire religious soldiers.²⁸ This link to Erbakan is important because the accusation that Erdogan is trying to change Turkey into an Islamic republic stems from similar accusations against Erbakan and Refah.

Turkey's 2007 presidential election took on a new meaning when the candidate who would eventually win, Abdullah Gul, was accused of being too Islamic for this post that was meant to safeguard Turkey's secular nature. Some of the rhetoric was that Gul's wife wore a *hijab* and Gul had a history with political Islam. After Erdogan endorsed Abdullah Gul for the position of President,²⁹ the military, which saw itself as the protector of secular Turkey, implicitly threatened Erdogan with a similar fate as that of his mentor. That threat came after a series of events that fueled the tensions between the AKP and the military. In a controversial move, the Army's General Staff released a memorandum expressing concern over the state of secularism in the country and strongly asserted that the Army was dedicated to defending a secular Turkey against any threats.³⁰ That memorandum set off protests across Turkey for and against the Army. However,

²⁸ Yavuz.

²⁹ "Army 'Concerned' by Turkey Vote." *BBC News*, 28 April 2007.
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6602375.stm>.

³⁰ Ibid.

between the coup against Erbakan and the threat of a coup against Erdogan, something changed that had great symbolic impact on the country.

When the military ousted Erbakan, it was a strong military with great popular support. Moreover, Turks had very little to lose at that time as Turkey's economic conditions were mediocre at best. In 2001, that mediocre economy collapsed. However, in 2007, the Turkish economic position had changed dramatically and Turkey was on the rise. As the second largest consumer base that was a part of Europe, Turkey had incredible purchasing power and the citizens had become accustomed to some of the luxuries they had not previously imported. A large part of that economic progress came from Erdogan's economic policies. Following the election of the AKP, the government resumed the previous attempt of reforming the economy, and went further by adhering to policies of strict fiscal austerity, privatization, and increased foreign direct investment (FDI). This led to a decade of solid growth and increased support from international financial institutions, domestic holding companies, and foreign investors.³¹

From 2002 to 2013, Erdogan's AKP saw support rise from 34% in the 2002 election to nearly 50% in the 2011 election. This support meant that there were fewer people who would risk their economic success to defend their political beliefs and support a military coup. Through the aforementioned series of measures passed in parliament, Erdogan also made certain that it was difficult and costly for the military to

³¹ Bank, Andre, and Roy Karadag. "The Political Economy of Regional Power: Turkey Under the AKP." Working paper. GIGA Research Unit: Institute of Middle East Studies, 2012. http://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/system/files/publications/wp204_bank-karadag.pdf. 10.

execute a coup in the future. However, the calming of opposing political voices through economic success did not last.

Erdogan continued to bring the debate over religion and state in Turkey to the forefront. This was evident in the 2013 riots as many pointed to Erdogan's Islamic authoritarianism as part of the reason to protest.³² These riots stemmed from the planned development of Istanbul's largest park, a move that was seen as a step too far by those who opposed the AKP's policies. The protests then adopted many of the pro-secular and anti-authoritarian sentiments that eventually led to mass rioting. For its part, the government did not help the situation when it sent in riot police to forcibly clear out the park.

A secular history had created a part of the population that believed that there was no place for anybody who publicly professed any aspect of religion. This was also seen in the opposition to the *hijab* several years prior.³³ One of the remnants of Ataturk's policies was that no *hijabs* were allowed in public buildings. The consequence was that many women were not allowed to attend certain government funded colleges and universities. Some estimates state that nearly 55% of women in the work force have not been educated beyond high school.³⁴ Erdogan wanted to change that citing the freedom to observe religious practices as his argument. However, many who opposed this change in policy

³² Benhabib, Seyla. "Turkey's Authoritarian Turn." *New York Times*, 3 June 2013. http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/04/opinion/turkeys-authoritarian-turn.html?_r=0.

³³ Rainsford, Sarah. "Turkey Divided Over Headscarf Ban." *BBC News*, 11 February 2008. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7239330.stm>.

³⁴ Oztrak 44.

feared the prospect of Islam creeping into the political and public spheres. This led to demonstrations and concern over Erdogan's intentions for religion in the state.

Another equally polemic factor is the existence and role of the Directorate of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet*). While the secular nature of Turkey's constitution provides for free expression of religion in private, the *Diyanet* operates in the public sphere. The institution regulates over "85,000 registered mosques and employs more than 117,000 imams."³⁵ Through this control, the *Diyanet* shapes Islam in the country and heavily favors the Sunni majority over any other minority Muslim groups or religions - a source of worry for many Christian and Jewish communities.³⁶ However, it is not just non-Muslims who are worried. Alevi groups see this influence of Sunni Islam as contradictory to any overtures of secularism or religious freedom in public statements, and the directorate does not recognize non-Sunni communities. The *Diyanet* claims that all sects of Islam simply fall under the broad category of "Muslim".³⁷ Beyond this, the *Diyanet* also influences a swath of religiously based schools that appeal to more conservative members of the population. These schools were both criticized for being Islamic, and lauded for welcoming women.

What we see in Turkey is that codified secularism, that is the historical constitutional provision separating religion and state, has actually brought the issue of

³⁵ United States Department of State. "International Religious Freedom Report for 2012." <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm#wrapper>.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Gusten, Susanne. "Turkey's Elephant in the Room - Religious Freedom." *The New York Times*, 28 September 2011. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/29/world/europe/turkeys-elephant-in-the-room-religious-freedom.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

religion to trump issues of social equality and economic growth, and motivated a population to protest and riot. However, it has even greater power in that parties can no longer forward a social agenda with religious ties without reprisal from all classes. Joining the demonstrators at the 2013 Gezi Park protests were opposition political parties from across the political spectrum, as well as those who were poor, wealthy, elite, religious, and secular. The protests became vehicles to express the frustration that had built up for over a decade, or even longer.

What also made this protest different from others was the number of young people and women involved in the movement. Youth unemployment is above 20% and the overall youth labor force participation rate is just under 50%. The labor force participation rate of women is just under 30%.³⁸ These people, unlike those from previous generations, were not just protesting against a government, but were also exhibiting frustration over economic conditions and religious tolerance to those who joined them. There were practicing Muslims who did not support the authoritarian policies of the government, and were joining the protests. There were also Imams voicing support for those in Gezi Park, and contradicting some of the propaganda being released by the government.³⁹ These protests stopped the Turkish economy, and whereas those in the elite and wealthy classes did not support the military in overthrowing the government, they would go and protest against that same government with their fellow citizens. Based on the government reaction, it seems that in Turkey there now exists very little middle

³⁸ Oztrak 44.

³⁹ "Erdogan: Icildi, Imam: Icilmedi." *Haber.Ekolya*, 9 June 2013. <http://haber.ekolay.net/haber/Erdoğan-İcildi--İmam-İcilmedi/2705/1073628.aspx>.

ground for freedom of speech or freedom of religion, and that middle ground is what is needed in order to allow for a natural democratic process. There seems to be a lack of debate about voting for the candidate who represents an individual as opposed to narrowing the field from the outset based on any religious statements the candidate may have made.

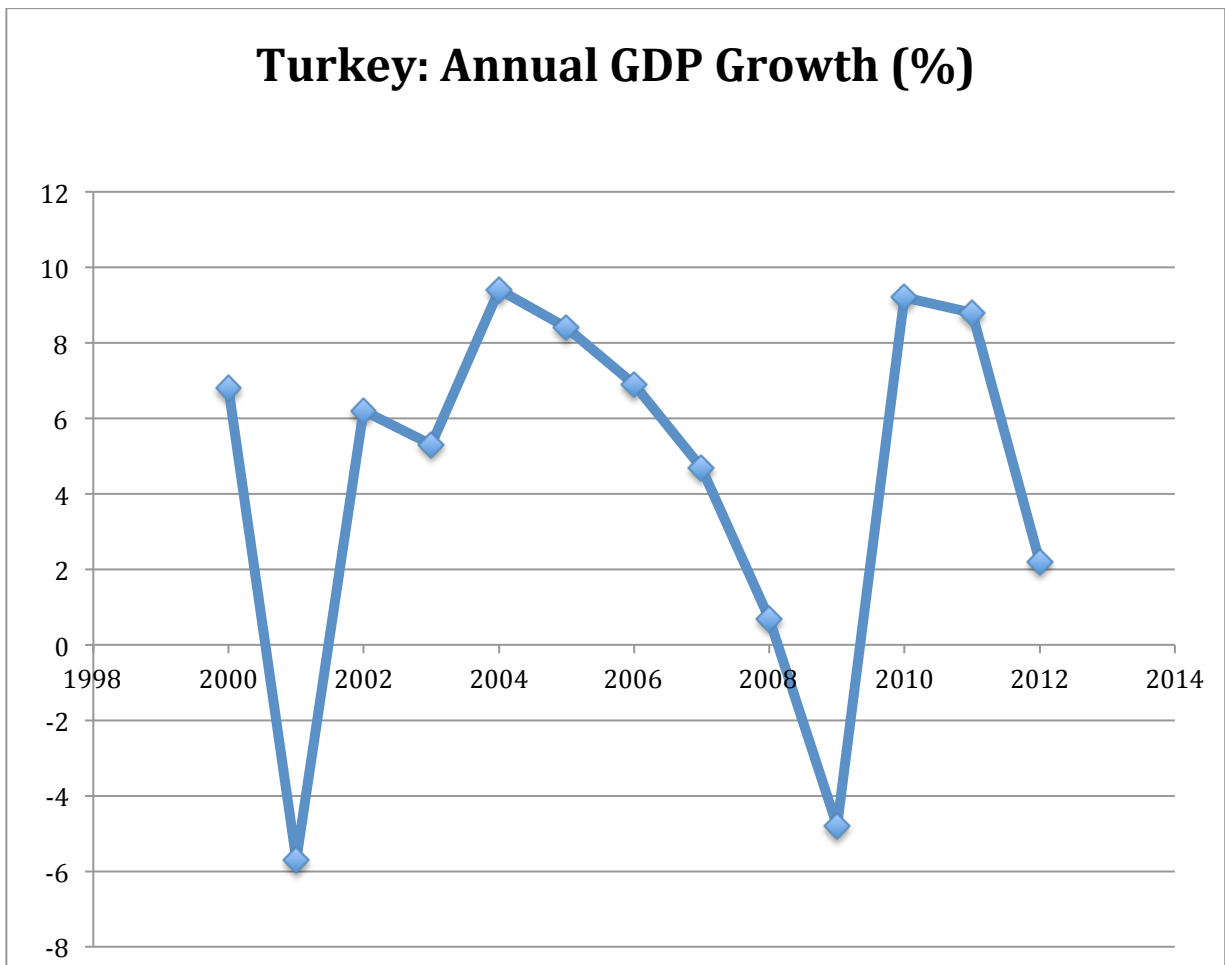
The current state of affairs has allowed Prime Minister Erdogan to stay in power despite any religious leanings; but to remain in power, Erdogan and Turkey may need to move towards freedom of religion as opposed to purely secular principles. It should be mentioned that secularism has not been completely detrimental to the Turkish society or economy. In a country that was born of an Islamic empire, the concepts and implementation of secular principles made it less likely that the country would slip into a theocratic state, or a religiously based dictatorship. While arguments can be made that Ataturk behaved like a dictator, his legacy remains in the democratic republic with a Muslim-majority population.

Chapter 6: The Turkish Economy

Despite any recent political scandals, the AKP, and Erdogan, seem to have a firm hold on power. Turkey has a legitimate, democratically elected government (one that has not been referred to international voter monitoring organizations), which distinguishes it from some Arab spring countries. The AKP had almost 50% of the vote in the last election, and even with a few cracks, enjoys a huge base of support from those living outside the cities. In fact, the majority of AKP's support comes from the rural or Anatolian regions, creating a rift between urban centers and rural areas. However, the AKP's power is truly based more on economics than anything else. The AKP has brought Turkey from its economic collapse in 2001 to a position of regional power. OECD data shows that Turkey now has stable unemployment and inflation rates (as opposed to previously high and unpredictable rates), and has a higher GDP and lower public debt to GDP ratio than it did ten years ago.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development*. OECD iLibrary, 2013. s.v. "Country Statistical Profile: Turkey." http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/country-statistical-profile-turkey_20752288-table-tur.

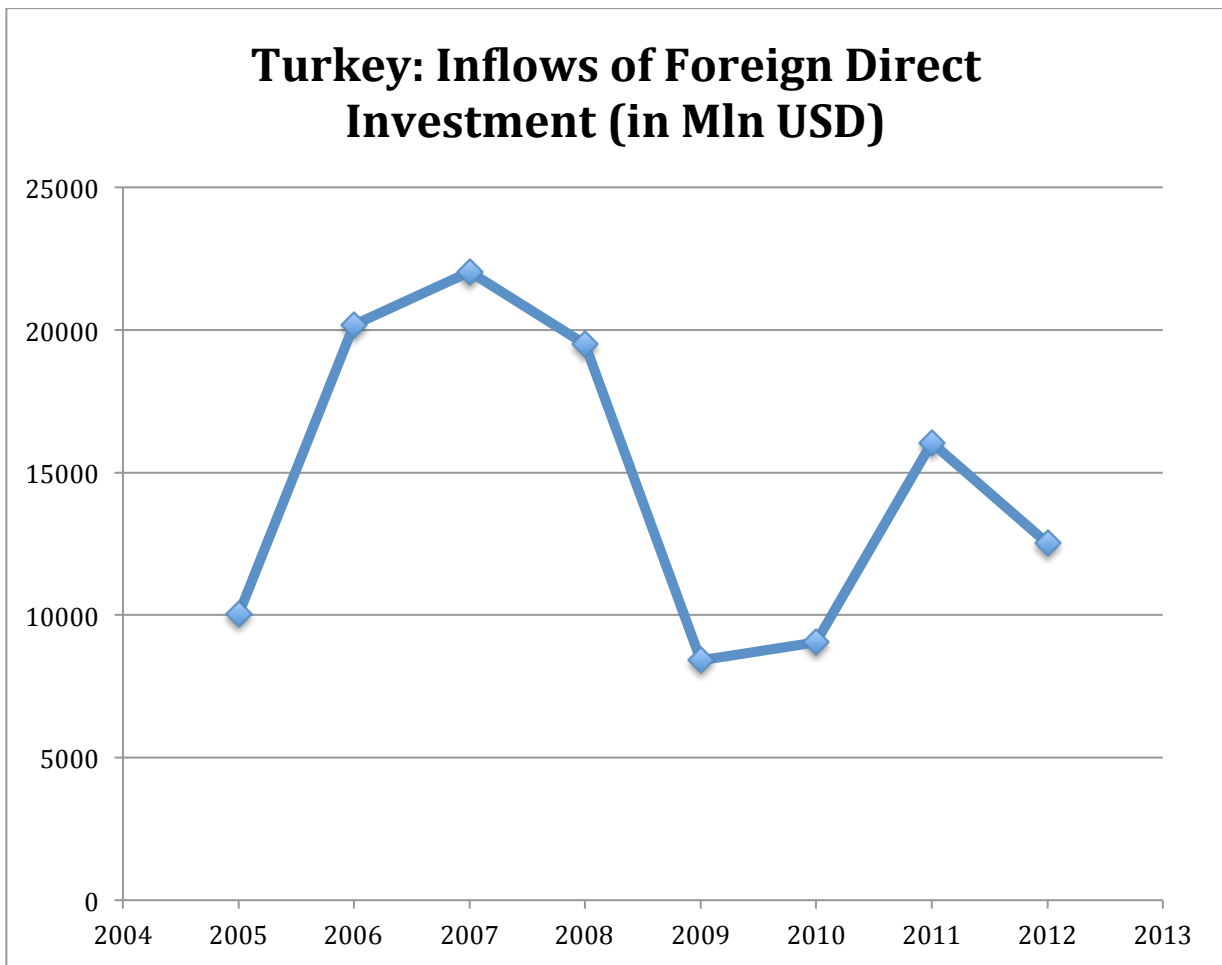
Figure 1



Data Source: The World Bank⁴¹

⁴¹ *The World Bank*. 2013. s.v. "GDP Growth (Annual %)."
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG>.

Figure 2



Data Source: The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development⁴²

⁴² Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. OECD iLibrary, 2013. s.v. "Country Statistical Profile: Turkey." http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/country-statistical-profile-turkey_20752288-table-tur.

According to the World Bank, Turkey's annual GDP growth rate was erratic, and went from 8.4% in 2005, to -4.8% in 2009 (attributed to the global economic downturn), to 9.2% in 2010, to 8.8% in 2011, and 2.2% in 2012.^{43,44} Between 2005 and 2012, GDP increased by close to 60%;⁴⁵ the World Bank data shows that GDP also grew and rebounded quickly from the 2008 crisis, while OECD data shows that foreign direct investment (FDI) was also erratic.⁴⁶ This may seem to contradict the confidence that foreign investors displayed in the Turkish economy; however, the erratic rates in both GDP growth and FDI were still on an upward trend. In recent years FDI has slowed; this could be due to the strength of the Turkish economy, or maybe because investor confidence has been shaken with the increased political polarization in the country. FDI increased from under \$5 billion USD in 2004, to over \$20 billion USD in 2007,⁴⁷ and settled back down to approximately \$12 billion USD in 2012. Overall this could mean that support for the AKP will continue so long as the economy does not suffer greatly, but perhaps in a limited manner as evidenced by the protestors last year. Moreover, assuming that the growth rate trend continues, we may see more social and religious issues take center stage in the Turkish political arena. Essentially, in the absence of

⁴³ *The World Bank*. 2013. s.v. "GDP Growth (Annual %)."
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG>.

⁴⁴ Figure 1.

⁴⁵ *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development*. OECD iLibrary, 2013. s.v. "Country Statistical Profile: Turkey." http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/country-statistical-profile-turkey_20752288-table-tur.

⁴⁶ Figure 2.

⁴⁷ Bank and Karadag 10.

economic crisis, social issues may play a more important role in Turkey's political climate.

Income inequality during this period of economic progress has persisted, with the World Bank GINI coefficient data rating Turkey at 39 out of 100.⁴⁸⁻⁴⁹ The OECD places Turkey third in terms of highest inequality rates among over 30 countries.⁵⁰ An alarming statistic that does not bode well for Turkey is that consumer debt is now 55% of household disposable income, a figure that was negligible almost a decade ago.⁵¹ What this mean is on average, households are spending more and more on credit card and personal debt and not able to save as much. While this is not a problem for the rich, the middle class and poor carry the majority of this burden – this creates additional problems for the AKP but how this will affect elections is unclear.

In reality the electorate in Turkey is not that different from the voters in many parts of the world – people vote with their wallet and the economy takes precedence over many other issues. The CHP remains the main opposition party in Turkish politics; however, the secular principles of Ataturk that the party espouses come with an economic stance favoring slower economic liberalization and greater emphasis on the “welfare

⁴⁸ *The Library of Congress: Country Studies*. The World Bank, 2013. s.v. "GINI Index".
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI/>.

⁴⁹ As a point of reference, the United States scored 45 out of 100, indicating a higher degree of income inequality than in Turkey.

⁵⁰ Iyigun, Seltem. "As Turkey's Economy Booms, Deep Inequality Persists." *Reuters*, 28 November 2012.
<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/28/turkey-unemployment-idUSL5E8MGBB420121128>.

⁵¹ Ewing, Jack, and Sebnem Arsu. "Credit Card Debt Threatens Turkey's Economy." *The New York Times*, 27 February 2014. <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/28/business/international/credit-card-debt-threatens-turkeys-economy.html>.

state”.⁵² This electoral alternative does not support the same economic policies as the AKP, and therefore invites some hesitation among voters. Again, the problem here comes in terms of how much the electorate will prioritize those secular principles against the economic progress of the last decade. It should also be noted that the CHP favors policies that focus on Turkey’s domestic issues. One of the characteristics of the AKP has been the attempt to position Turkey as a regional power, and not always at the expense of Turkey’s domestic security.⁵³ The 2013 protests slowed the economy to some degree; however, what hurt the AKP more was the damage to its reputation among those who live in major cities (including supporters), and among other nations throughout the world. A country previously perceived as a link between east and west was quickly marginalized in international diplomatic politics.

⁵² Oztrak 48.

⁵³ Bank and Karadag 5-6.

Chapter 7: Religious Freedom in Turkey

Turks are proud of the incredible history of the country, and the fact that synagogues, churches, and mosques neighbor each other in communities. However, the studies on religious freedom are more complicated. The AKP's tenure has increased religious freedom in the country, but there is no evidence to show that this is a long-standing trend that will continue. The Pew Research Center has shown that from 2007 to 2011, government restrictions on religion decreased from a score of 6.6 to 5.3 (very high to high). In the same time period, the study showed that societal hostility towards religion decreased from 4.7 to 4.2 (high).⁵⁴⁻⁵⁵ The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has changed their assessment of Turkey from being a tier 1 "country of particular concern" to a "monitored country" – a significant change considering the intermediary step would have been tier 2, or the "watch list".⁵⁶

Table 1 - *Turkey: Religious Freedom Indices*

GRI: Government Restrictions Index, SHI: Social Hostilities Index

	June 2007	June 2010	December 2011
GRI	6.6	5.8	5.3
SHI	4.7	4.9	4.2

Data Source: The Pew Research Center⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Grim, Brian, ed. *Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life*. Washington, D.C.: 2013. s.v. "Arab Spring Adds to Global Restrictions on Religion." <http://www.pewforum.org/2013/06/20/arab-spring-restrictions-on-religion-findings/>.

⁵⁵ Table 1.

⁵⁶ United States Commission on International Religious Freedom: Annual Report 2013, Last modified April 2013. [http://www.uscifr.gov/images/2013_USCIRF_Annual_Report_\(2\).pdf](http://www.uscifr.gov/images/2013_USCIRF_Annual_Report_(2).pdf).

⁵⁷ Grim.

These two organizations show that religious freedom in Turkey may have improved, but political scientist Jonathan Fox paints a picture with minor differences. Fox rated 177 countries on 30 different questions, each question with a score of 0-3 where three indicated a higher level of religious restriction. Fox's metrics give Turkey a score of 24 out of 90 from 1990-2004, but a score of 25 from 2004-2008. As a basis of comparison, the United States had a score of 3. Fox's data says that religious restrictions have increased by 1 point out of 90, and did so in 2004-2005 in the category of "Anti-religious propaganda in official or semi-official government publications".⁵⁸⁻⁵⁹⁻⁶⁰⁻⁶¹ In other words the government, in that one-year period, was involved in some anti-religious propaganda; where this propaganda came from, who it was targeted towards, and the degree to which the government was involved is unclear.

The conclusions of the Pew Center and USCIRF could be a result of a number of things. Some major movements in government policies came in the form of relaxing restrictions on Kurds and Kurdish culture, limiting the ban against *hijabs* in public buildings, and launching the "Alevi Opening" to discuss Alevi demands for official recognition of their faith. While these are tied to increased religious freedom, there are some limitations on these initiatives.

⁵⁸ The data were downloaded from the Association of Religion Data Archives, www.TheARDA.com, and were collected by Jonathan Fox et al. The following three citations are required by the website and Dr. Fox.

⁵⁹ Fox, Jonathan. *A World Survey of Religion and the State*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.

⁶⁰ Fox, Jonathan. "Building Composite Measures of Religion and State." *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion* 7(8): pp. 1-39.

⁶¹ Fox, Jonathan. Religion and State dataset, <http://www.religionandstate.org>.

The Alevi opening, for instance, must reconcile the purported acceptance of the Alevis in Turkey and the contradictory public statements of officials. For example, while the “Alevi Opening” was launched to discuss Alevi concerns, Prime Minister Erdogan repeatedly reminded people that the leader of the main opposition party was Alevi in an effort to associate the politician with an ostracized minority. Erdogan also referred to Alevi houses of worship as merely cultural centers and said that Muslims only prayed in mosques.⁶² His remarks clearly target a minority that some estimates put at approximately 20% of the Turkish population.⁶³ With respect to the Kurds, the government finally allowed Kurds to openly express Kurdish culture, speak in Kurdish, and broadcast Kurdish music and programs on radio and television.⁶⁴ However, there is still some heavy scrutiny on Kurdish political parties and some societal prejudice against Kurdish people. Additionally, Kurds were the targets of Turkish airstrikes in northern Iraq as part of an operation to take out terrorist camps.⁶⁵

Turkey appears to be walking a fine line between religious freedom and a more Islamic government and society. Additionally, the government must assure the numerous minority religious and ethnic communities, as well as the large secular community, that religious freedom will not be diminished. In the past decade Turks have seen the restriction of alcohol sales in duty free shops at airports and at certain hours of night, and

⁶² "The Ephemeral Alevi Opening." *The Economist*, 11 August 2012.
<http://www.economist.com/node/21560314>.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Arsu, Sebnem. "Turkey Plans to Ease Restrictions on Kurds and Help End Decades of Conflict." *The New York Times*, 13 November 2009. <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/14/world/europe/14kurds.html>.

⁶⁵ "Turkey in New Air Strikes on Kurdish Rebels in Iraq," *BBC News*, 24 June 2012.
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-18570036>.

the removal of outdoor seating at restaurants (ostensibly to limit public interaction between sexes and consumption of alcohol in public). As discrete events these are not overbearing restrictions, however, in the context surrounding these restrictions, and the other government policies with respect to minority groups and the Diyanet, the measures warrant close monitoring.

Chapter 8: India - From Gandhi to Gandhi (Mahatma to Rajiv)

India has its share of religious problems, whether the intra-Hindu caste tensions, broader Hindu-Muslim tensions, or the rights of other religious minorities. A notion among some Indians is that when the British left the subcontinent they left the trains, the bureaucracy, and the systems of government and education. However, what is not mentioned is a method by which religiously integrated communities could continue to survive in a nascent India - an India committed to secular principles and weary of a constitutionally religious Pakistan. India has a different view on secularism than does Turkey; it sees the concept as incorporating all religions.⁶⁶ India sees it as the responsibility of the state to accept all religions as binding on the state. However, this general acceptance has been the cause of many difficulties in battles between the state governments and central governments, religious institutions and the state, and those who oppose this version of secularism and those who laud it. To a certain degree, the Indian model of secularism must take into account the opinions of all religions that exist in India, and must also ensure that those views are represented in the public and political arenas.⁶⁷⁻⁶⁸ One can see where this could cause a problem in policy making given the existing tension between state laws and central government laws, or even in inter-state commerce.

⁶⁶ Larson 1-3.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Jaffrelot, Christophe. "A Skewed Secularism?". *Hindustan Times* 15 May 2011. <http://www.sacw.net/article2081.html>.

The current political parties in India span the ideological spectrum, but the two main parties are the Indian National Congress (INC) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The INC was the party of Jawaharlal Nehru. An active member in the Indian independence movement and India's first Prime Minister, Nehru held the highest office in India for nearly 17 years. Many saw him as the guide for the new nation considering that Mahatma Gandhi died just four months after India achieved independence. Nehru embraced a socialist platform viewing it as a complement to Indian nationalism.⁶⁹ However, Nehru thought that dogmatic positions could also derail the path he saw India embarking on, and therefore advocated a more moderate form of socialism as an alternative to the capitalism and imperialism India had seen for centuries before.

Nehru was also thought to be either atheist or agnostic, once saying, "What the mysterious is I do not know. I do not call it God because God has come to mean much that I do not believe in. I find myself incapable of thinking of a deity or of any unknown supreme power in anthropomorphic terms, and the fact that many people think so is continually a source of surprise to me. Any idea of a personal God seems very odd to me." This surprise he spoke of, that many could believe in an anthropomorphic God, did not prevent him from emphasizing secular principles in the Indian republic that embraced all religions. Nehru saw secularism as a way to avoid religious confrontations – especially if the version of secularism was to ensure that various religious views would

⁶⁹ Mohan, Jag. "Jawaharlal Nehru and His Socialism." *India International Centre Quarterly*. Vol. 2, No. 3 (1975): pp. 183-192. <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/stable/23001834?seq=6>.

be taken into consideration in the government.⁷⁰ Moreover, Nehru wanted to avoid religion as a public debate in a new country with numerous other problems. Shortly after India and Pakistan achieved independence (August 1947), both countries went to war over the disputed state of Jammu and Kashmir. Nehru's rule in India saw yet another war with Pakistan over Jammu and Kashmir in 1965, and a war with China in 1962 over territories that bordered both countries.

Since India's birth 67 years ago the INC has held the Prime Minister's seat for 54 years, including the first 30 years of the country's modern political existence.⁷¹ The very fact that the same party held office from 1947-1977 meant that there was very little change in economic or religious policy; but, small measures to deregulate the economy did take place.⁷² Moreover, India's third and fifth Prime Minister was Indira Gandhi - Nehru's daughter and herself Prime Minister for a total of over 15 years. She, like her father, distanced herself from religion. She once said, "There exists no politician in India daring enough to attempt to explain to the masses that cows can be eaten." Many Hindus would consider it against the principles of Hinduism to eat meat from a cow, which makes her statement daring to say the least. Additionally, this statement and sentiment could have driven more devout Hindus towards more religious leaning parties.

Interestingly, Indira Gandhi's husband was Zoroastrian. In 1942, the year of their

⁷⁰ Rajasekhariah, A.M. "Jawaharlal Nehru's Contribution to Secularism in India - An Estimate." *The Indian Journal of Political Science*. Vol. 48, No. 2 (1987): pp. 212-224.
<http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/stable/41855300?seq=1>.

⁷¹ This reflects both INC majorities in Parliament as well as coalitions that the INC led.

⁷² Mukherji, Rahul. "The Political Economy of Development in India." Working paper. Australian National University, 2009.
https://crawford.anu.edu.au/acde/events/past/tradeandindustry/papers/Paper_9_Mukherji.pdf. 4-7.

marriage, this would have been a cultural taboo, regardless of the type of ceremony, and only overcome by the power of the Gandhi family name. As part of the 42nd Amendment to the Indian Constitution, Indira Gandhi codified the country's identity as both socialist and secular, fearing the dire consequences of sectarian violence fueled by politicians and the political exploitation of religion.⁷³

She eventually became that politician, and did so with grave consequences. When Sikh militants rose up against the government, Indira Gandhi declared them enemies of the state. In 1984, after the revolutionaries were cornered in the Golden Temple of Amritsar, she ordered the raid of the temple as part of Operation Blue Star. Indian troops fired on the Sikh holy temple in order to gain control of the house of worship. In the process, Indira Gandhi damaged the temple and her image. Later that year, Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her own Sikh bodyguards, in what some see as an act of vengeance. The consequences of her assassination included rioting across the country that killed thousands in the Sikh community.⁷⁴

Following Indira Gandhi's assassination in 1984 her son, Rajiv, became India's sixth Prime Minister. Rajiv Gandhi saw India as a country that needed to evolve. He valued technological investment and removed restrictions on licenses and investment.⁷⁵ He also improved relations with the United States after years of India-Soviet relations. His tenure as Prime Minister, however, came to an abrupt end in 1991 when he was

⁷³ "Congress Leader Indira Gandhi on Religion and Politics" Posted 25 September 2011. Pressbrief India. YouTube. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-8Q0Hfqip1o>.

⁷⁴ Bedi, Rahul. "Indira Gandhi's Death Remembered." *BBC News*, 1 November 2009. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8306420.stm.

⁷⁵ Mukherji 9-10.

assassinated as a consequence of India's involvement in Sri Lanka's domestic conflict – itself based in ethnic strife. He had tried to implement policies that liberalized India's economy and would bring in foreign investment. Where he failed, later INC administrations would succeed in bringing western neoliberal economic policies to India.

Chapter 9: Modern Indian Politics

The INC held onto power after the Rajiv Gandhi administration until 1996. In the early 1990s, a balance of payments crisis forced India to implement policies that liberalized the economy, and the socialist roots of the INC started to erode in favor of slow but effective economic liberalism.⁷⁶ The liberal economic policies of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and then INC Finance Minister Manmohan Singh (currently Prime Minister), implemented in 1991, paved the way for India's economic progress through much of the 1990s and the early part of the 21st century.⁷⁷ However, corruption in the government and general unhappiness among the population saw the Congress party ousted from office and replaced by the BJP and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Vajpayee ran on a platform endorsing globalization and greater international cooperation, but was the head of a party that both endorsed the idea of Hindutva, or Hindu nationalism, and had ties to Hindu fundamentalist groups.⁷⁸

The continuing economic progress of the country was overshadowed by diplomatic turmoil. During Vajpayee's term as head of a BJP-led coalition government (1998-2004), India conducted a nuclear weapons test but also signed the Lahore Declaration in February 1999.⁷⁹ This treaty between India and Pakistan set standards for the nuclear arsenals in these two countries, and outlined a series of measures to build

⁷⁶ Ganapati, Priya. Rediff India Abroad, "Manmohan Singh: Father of Economic Reforms." Last modified 14 May 2004. <http://www.rediff.com/money/2004/may/14spec.htm>.

⁷⁷ "One More Push." *The Economist*, 21 July 2011. <http://www.economist.com/node/18988536>.

⁷⁸ Malik, Yogendra K., and V.B. Singh. "Bharatiya Janata Party: An Alternative to the Congress (I)?" *Asian Survey (University of California Press)*. Vol. 32, No. 4 (1992): pp. 318-336. <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/stable/2645149?seq=1>.

⁷⁹ *The United Nations*. 1999. s.v. "The Lahore Declaration." http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/IN_PK_990221_The_Lahore_Declaration.pdf.

confidence and trust between the two nations. However, that diplomatic progress was short-lived when in the summer of 1999, Pakistani backed militant groups and soldiers crossed into Indian administered Jammu and Kashmir. Subsequently, India and Pakistan declared war on one another for the fourth time in just over 50 years.⁸⁰ In 2001, the Indian Parliament was attacked and the Indian government held Pakistani nationals responsible.⁸¹ This led to a military buildup along the India-Pakistan border and almost one year of tension between these two nuclear nations. Finally, in October 2002, both sides withdrew troops from the international borders.⁸²

Vajpayee spent the remainder of his term furthering India's economic progress while fighting charges of religious intolerance. In 2002 violence broke out in the Indian state of Gujarat between Hindus and Muslims, killing over 1000 people and injuring 2500.⁸³ Vajpayee, the Chief Minister of Gujarat Narendra Modi, and the BJP faced numerous accusations of inaction in the face of the unrest. It is worth noting that BJP politician Narendra Modi is the current candidate for Prime Minister should the BJP win this round of Indian elections.⁸⁴

Vajpayee and the BJP lost the elections in 2004, and the INC returned to power under current Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. While Singh and the INC initially

⁸⁰ Ganguly, Sumit. *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tensions Since 1947*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002. 114.

⁸¹ "India Blames Pakistani Groups for Parliament Attack." *The New York Times*, 14 December 2001. <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/12/14/international/asia/14WIRE-INDI.html>.

⁸² "Pakistan to Withdraw Frontline Troops." *BBC News*, 17 October 2002. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/south_asia/2335599.stm.

⁸³ "Gujarat Riot Death Toll Revealed." *BBC News*, 11 May 2005. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4536199.stm.

⁸⁴ While this paper is being completed, India is in the middle of its 2014 national elections.

succeeded in resuming previous policies, they face an uphill battle in 2014 as a result of a slower economic growth rate and rising nationalist tendencies. The elections have yet to conclude, but the BJP is the heavy favorite.⁸⁵ Various market analysts are also in favor of a BJP-led coalition that is perceived to be more business friendly than the INC.⁸⁶

The current state of Indian politics, while dramatic and sometimes uncertain, has two constants: the INC and the BJP. These two political parties dominate the Indian political arena, and even in coalition governments, are the largest members of their respective coalitions. While the distant future may bring about different parties or even the elimination of one of these two heavyweights, Indian politics in the near future can expect to see the INC and BJP as rivals based in religious and nationalistic differences.

⁸⁵ Mahr, Krista. "India's Opposition BJP Will Storm the Next Election, a New Poll Finds." *Time Magazine*, 27 February 2014. <http://time.com/10017/indian-election-bjp-to-win-pew-poll/>.

⁸⁶ Rai, Saritha. "Indian Stocks Rally Ahead of 2014 General Elections, Fueled by Hope." *Forbes*, 19 March 2014. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/saritharai/2014/03/19/indian-stocks-rally-ahead-of-2014-general-elections-fuelled-by-hope/>.

Chapter 10: The Indian Economy

In 1991 the Indian economy was in crisis. Seeking IMF aid, India pushed through the aforementioned reforms in order to lift itself from the position of third largest debtor in the world.⁸⁷ Surprisingly, those economic reforms continued through both INC and BJP administrations. The BJP has at times espoused more direct free market principles and often points to the progress of the state of Gujarat as proof that those methods are better for India; Gujarat enjoys a higher growth rate than the country as a whole.⁸⁸ Espousal of more free market based theories may be part of the BJP platform, but is not excluded from that of the INC.⁸⁹ In reality, the parties are somewhat similar in terms of economic goals, even if they have differing timelines for those goals.

According to data from the Reserve Bank of India, India's central banking institution, India's share in worldwide GDP steadily rose from under 3.5% in 1980, to 6% in 2006.⁹⁰ Credit as a percentage of GDP increased and even accelerated after 2000. The overall combined fiscal deficit fluctuated in the 1990s but has been on a steady decline, falling from 10% in 2001 to under 8% in 2005. The most dramatic change was in foreign direct investment. In 1991, FDI was negligible. That number rose to approximately \$4 billion USD in 1994 and fell to negligible levels by 1999 – the start of the Kargil War.

⁸⁷ Weinraub, Bernard. "Economic Crisis Forcing Once Self-Reliant India to Seek Aid." *The New York Times*, 29 June 1991. <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/06/29/world/economic-crisis-forcing-once-self-reliant-india-to-seek-aid.html>.

⁸⁸ *The United Nations*. 2014. s.v. "UNICEF India, State Profile: Gujarat." http://www.unicef.org/india/state_profiles_4321.htm.

⁸⁹ "India's Election and the Economy: A Useful Campaign." *The Economist*, 1 March 2014. <http://www.economist.com/news/asia/21597949-electioneering-focuses-economy-suggests-welcome-realisation-growth-matters?zid=309&ah=80dcf288b8561b012f603b9fd9577f0e>.

⁹⁰ *Reserve Bank of India*. 7 November 2006. s.v. "State of the Indian Economy." http://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/BS_SpeechesView.aspx?Id=312.

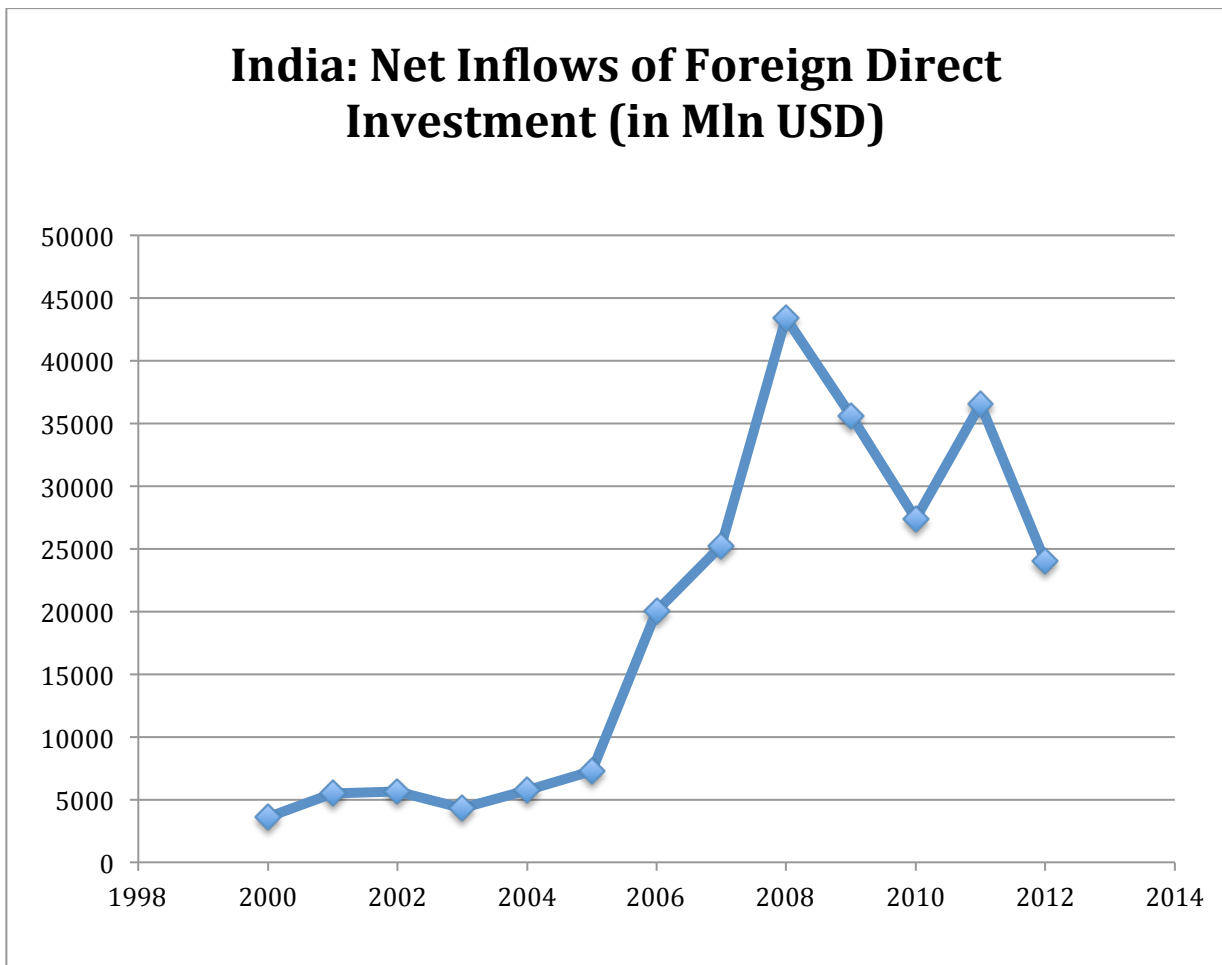
According to the World Bank, following the end of the war, FDI again increased to just under \$4 billion USD but hovered at that level through the subsequent stalemate between India and Pakistan in 2001-2002. This nadir also endured the religious violence in Gujarat and across India in 2002, with some investors on the brink of completely pulling out of India. The de-escalation of troops along the India-Pakistan border, and the restoration of public peace coincided with an up-tick in FDI, going from \$4.3 billion USD in 2003 to approximately \$20 billion USD in 2006.⁹¹⁻⁹² The high mark was in 2008, in which FDI was approximately \$43 billion USD. Since then FDI has fallen, but not significantly, with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) reporting that FDI in India for 2013 was \$28 billion USD.⁹³

⁹¹ *The World Bank*. 2013. s.v. "Foreign Direct Investment, Net Inflows (BoP, Current US\$)". <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.KLT.DINV.CD.WD>.

⁹² Figure 3.

⁹³ "India Received \$28bn FDI in 2013: UNCTAD." *The Times of India*, January 29, 2014. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/India-received-28bn-FDI-in-2013-UNCTAD/articleshow/29540063.cms>.

Figure 3



Data Source: The World Bank⁹⁴

⁹⁴ *The World Bank*. 2013. s.v. "Foreign Direct Investment, Net Inflows (BoP, Current US\$)". <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.KLT.DINV.CD.WD>.

Figure 4



Data Source: The World Bank⁹⁵

⁹⁵ *The World Bank*. 2013. s.v. "GDP Growth (Annual %)".
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG/countries/1W-IN?display=default>.

The World Bank's statistics show that India's GDP grew at an annual rate between 7.5% and 10% in the 2004 to 2007 period, dropped to approximately 3.5% in 2008, and then steadily climbed to over 10% in 2010. In 2011, GDP growth was estimated at 6.25% and in 2012, just 4.7%. During the 1999-2003 period, when the BJP was in power, growth rates went from 8.8% in 1999, to approximately 4 to 5% in 2000, 2001, and 2002. In 2003 those rates returned to 7.9%.⁹⁶⁻⁹⁷ These statistics tell us where the Indian economy's inflection points were, and from that we can then infer what caused the economic changes. Of particular interest is the fact that the inflection points in the economy occurred at times when there was religiously based violence or conflict with Pakistan.

Given that economic growth experienced low and high levels during INC and BJP governments, and the similar macroeconomic policies of both parties, it may be fair to say that partisan politics did not play a major role in Indian economic trends. Downturns in the Indian economy in the late 1990s and in 2008 coincided with global economic downturns. What is clear is that while liberal economic policies espoused by both parties have raised India's overall economic status, that has been met with the need to establish differences between the INC and BJP – namely in terms of nationalism and religious based identity. As in Turkey, many smaller entrepreneurs have been able to rise through a more open economy, but much of the industrial wealth remains in the hands of a few. In terms of income inequality, World Bank data gives India a GINI coefficient of 33.4 out

⁹⁶ *The World Bank*. 2013. s.v. "GDP Growth (Annual %)".
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG/countries/1W-IN?display=default>.

⁹⁷ Figure 4.

of 100,⁹⁸ and this number has been on the rise as income inequality doubled over the last twenty years.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ *The Library of Congress: Country Studies*. The World Bank, 2013. s.v. "GINI Index".
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI/>.

⁹⁹ "India's Income Inequality Has Doubled in 20 Years." *The Times of India*, 7 December 2011.
<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Indias-income-inequality-has-doubled-in-20-years/articleshow/11012855.cms>.

Chapter 11: Religious Freedom in India

The perceived rift between the INC and BJP is the commitment to secular principles. This commitment has given rise to extremist groups, acts of violence, and in some cases, gruesome civil unrest.¹⁰⁰ Secularism in India has always been met with the concept of Hindutva. The Indian national identity, for some, is very much tied into the religious identity of the over 960 million Hindu Indians.¹⁰¹ Complicating the issue are the ties between some of the extremist or hardline groups and the BJP.¹⁰² However, most mention these ties in the same breath as the supposedly burgeoning economy in the Indian state of Gujarat.¹⁰³

The 2013 Pew Center report¹⁰⁴ on religious restrictions in India shows that between 2007 and 2011, government restriction on religion rose from 4.8 to 5.1 (high) and social hostility rose from 8.8 to 9.6 (very high).¹⁰⁵ That second number is particularly useful in discerning whether societal hostilities and attitudes towards religion match state policies; in this case, we can say no, they do not. USCIRF places India in its tier 2 category, or the “watch list”.¹⁰⁶ Countries are assigned to tier 2 when they do not warrant being on the “Countries of Particular Concerns” list (a list that includes Iran, North

¹⁰⁰ Majumder, Sanjoy. "Narendra Modi 'Allowed' Gujarat 2002 Anti-Muslim Riots." *BBC News*, 22 April 2011. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-13170914>.

¹⁰¹ Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Factbook: India." <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/in.html>.

¹⁰² Majumder.

¹⁰³ Mungekar, Bhalechandra. "Gujarat: Myth and Reality." *The Times of India*, 12 June 2012. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/opinion/edit-page/Gujarat-Myth-and-reality/articleshow/14032015.cms>.

¹⁰⁴ Grim.

¹⁰⁵ Table 2.

¹⁰⁶ United States Commission on International Religious Freedom: Annual Report 2013, Last modified April 2013. [http://www.uscirf.gov/images/2013_USCIRF_Annual_Report_\(2\).pdf](http://www.uscirf.gov/images/2013_USCIRF_Annual_Report_(2).pdf).

Korea, Saudi Arabia, and others) but “require close monitoring due to the nature and extent of violations of religious freedom engaged in or tolerated by governments”.¹⁰⁷ Both the Pew and USCIRF statistics tell us that there are still restrictions on religious freedom, instances of religious violence, and a tremendous amount of religious discrimination.

Table 2 - *India: Religious Freedom Indices*
 GRI: Government Restrictions Index, SHI: Social Hostilities Index

	June 2007	June 2010	December 2011
GRI	4.8	5.3	5.1
SHI	8.8	9.0	9.6

Data Source: The Pew Research Center¹⁰⁸

The unique view of secularism in India brings up an issue as to how large or popular a religion must be in order to gain mainstream recognition. Additionally, a problem might arise when defending the beliefs of two religions that are in conflict with one another. Which religion should the government protect more? If majority were the criterion, then the government would only protect Hindus, thereby invalidating any notion of Indian secularism. This is the very problem that exists at times, as rural sharia courts or Hindu tribal councils contradict one another and the law of the state. In another example, some in the Muslim community are pushing to abandon the minimum age for

¹⁰⁷ United States Commission on International Religious Freedom: Annual Report 2013, Last modified April 2013. [http://www.uscirf.gov/images/2013_USCIRF_Annual_Report_\(2\).pdf](http://www.uscirf.gov/images/2013_USCIRF_Annual_Report_(2).pdf).

¹⁰⁸ Grim.

marriage based on the right to practice their religion freely,¹⁰⁹ something that other religious groups oppose.

This principle of overlap rather than separation can also cause issues between local tribes, state governments and central governments. If tribal laws are passed in various states and come into conflict with the law passed by the central government, there will be conflict over which rule supersedes the other. While central government law can overrule state government law, it also means that central government law might restrict a tribal religious belief. Finally, there is a conflict between those who oppose Indian secularism and those who support it. For those who support the law, there is comfort in knowing that the religious beliefs of everyone will be protected. However, this becomes a problem when those who do not believe in that principle try to pass a law applying to all. An example of this is contraception. While contraception is a religious debate in many countries, that debate in India would see conflict between some sects of Hindus who support and Catholics who oppose birth control; both groups have the right to have their religious beliefs protected. These sects of Hindus come into conflict with other sects of Hindus, which again causes problems over which Hindus to protect. Those who oppose Indian secularism at times argue that India should take the stance that freedom of religion is protected, but that the state should not be as actively involved in ensuring that *all* religions are represented and protected.

¹⁰⁹ Radhakrishnan, MG. "Muslim Groups Want Minimum Marital Age Scrapped." *India Today*, 22 September 2013. <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/muslim-groups-want-minimum-marital-age-scrapped/1/311127.html>.

The concept of Indian secularism cannot account for new religions or the metrics involved in measuring which set of beliefs constitutes a religion. The Indian form of secularism also marginalizes atheism and does not address the right not to believe. Of course we, in the United States, also know that freedom of religion does not magically solve all religiously based debates in society.

From a geopolitical perspective, the concept of secularism means that India must protect its status as home to one of the largest Muslim populations in the world. Why this specific protection is highlighted is because of Jammu and Kashmir, the only state in India with a Muslim-majority population,¹¹⁰ and an instrumental component in maintaining India's secular identity. If Jammu and Kashmir is not a part of India, then there is no example of a state in which the Muslim population, or any non-Hindu population, is preponderant and is protected. This battle for Jammu and Kashmir has manifested through three wars with Pakistan,¹¹¹ countless human rights violations, and at times, a repressive police state in Indian controlled Jammu and Kashmir.¹¹² The battle has also motivated terrorists and insurgents, such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, to fight against India and carry out attacks both in Jammu and Kashmir, and throughout the subcontinent.¹¹³ At core the secular identity of India, as manifested through the claim over Jammu and Kashmir, has helped create one of the most volatile geopolitical situations in the world.

¹¹⁰ This author acknowledges the dispute over the territory, but writes according to the current convention in the Indian Constitution with respect to Jammu and Kashmir.

¹¹¹ The 1971 India-Pakistan War concerned Bangladesh's independence.

¹¹² "Everyone Lives in Fear: Patterns of Impunity in Jammu and Kashmir." 2006. <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2006/09/11/everyone-lives-fear-0>.

¹¹³ "Profile: Lashkar-e-Taiba." *BBC News*, 3 May 2010. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/3181925.stm>.

India, under its version of secularism, has survived as a democracy for over six decades, and has done so without military rule or coups. This does not take into account the “State of Emergency” instituted by Indira Gandhi between 1975 and 1977, in which elections were temporarily suspended, civil liberties were curbed, and the Prime Minister could rule by decree. The state of emergency was instituted following a state court verdict in Uttar Pradesh that found Indira Gandhi guilty of electoral malpractice. The verdict invalidated Indira Gandhi’s electoral win and barred her from holding elected office for six years.¹¹⁴ The State of Emergency ended with Mrs. Gandhi’s electoral defeat in 1977.

With the economic liberalization in the 1990s, India has been able to rise to become an important player in the international trade market and political arena. This economic liberalization occurred under both an INC government devoted to secular India, and a BJP government with ties to Hindu nationalist groups. The question is how can India continue into the future while putting its religious struggles in the past?

¹¹⁴ *The Library of Congress: Country Studies*. The United States Library of Congress, s.v. "India: The Rise of Indira Gandhi." [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID in0029\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID in0029)).

Chapter 12: Analysis

The data from both Turkey and India paints a picture of two rising economies with potentially devastating domestic political problems. An apt description of the numbers is that religious intolerance could potentially halt or even hurt societal and economic growth, and that as a factor of societal stability, greater religious tolerance must exist in order to keep growth rates up. In both countries we see political parties using more religious rhetoric to garner political support regardless of whether their economic policies are different. In India's case, two parties with relatively similar economic policies have been battling for the support of wealthy industrial groups, and using religion to draw differences in their party platforms. While this may serve to attract some voters, it can equally deter non-Hindus from voting with the BJP and devout Hindus from supporting the INC.

If we look at the GINI Coefficients as provided by the World Bank - rating India a 33.4 out of 100, Turkey a 39, and the United States a 45^{115, 116} - a cursory look would indicate that India has the least economic inequality of the three countries, and one could go on and conclude that in these terms, India's form of secularism (vis-a-vis the economy) is better than that of Turkey, and the religious freedom clause in the U.S. Constitution. However, this needs to be put into context with religious freedom numbers and some sense of the size and growth of each country's economy over decades instead

¹¹⁵ *The Library of Congress: Country Studies*. The World Bank, 2013. s.v. "GINI Index".
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI/>.

¹¹⁶ The author is aware that the World Bank's GINI Coefficients might use different metrics in different parts of the world. However, for the purposes of this paper, the overall numbers still serve as a basis for the argument.

of years. For instance, the United States has a system that has been on an upward path since Bretton Woods (or even before), whereas military coups, civil unrest, wars, and only recent economic liberalization in Turkey and India put them at a relative disadvantage. Moreover, there is also the fact that inequality in India has risen dramatically over the last two decades,¹¹⁷ and that India has much higher levels of religious intolerance than the United States or Turkey.

The more nuanced question is while there is a connection between religious freedom and good governance, whether the case studies support a positive correlation between religious freedom and economic growth. Let us assume that levels of economic growth in younger economies are high and then settle into a more consistent but lower rate of growth. It then might be reasonable to conclude that with the high growth rate of a younger economy, all sections of society share in the growth. When that growth levels off to a more consistent level, then inequality starts rising at a faster pace – partially explaining why the United States has higher levels of economic inequality. Similarly, one could try to positively correlate religious freedom with a growing economy, but have a much lower correlation between religious freedom and more advanced economies such as that of the United States.

The problem with those conclusions is that India and Turkey's cases contradict this, somewhat. What we see is that with high and very high levels of religious intolerance, the economy can still grow and do so with an economic inequality rate lower

¹¹⁷ "India's Income Inequality Has Doubled in 20 Years." *The Times of India*, 7 December 2011. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Indias-income-inequality-has-doubled-in-20-years/articleshow/11012855.cms>.

than that of other countries, but we can infer that it does so only to a certain point. Moreover, Turkish growth would reinforce the point that religious tolerance is not correlated with growth in a younger economy.

The more apt description of the numbers is that religious intolerance could potentially halt or even hurt economic growth, and that as a factor of societal stability, greater religious tolerance must exist in order to keep growth rates up. Essentially, religious tolerance does not fuel growth, but is eventually a necessary factor in sustaining it. In India's case what this might mean is that while India has been able to grow at a rapid rate up until now, in spite of its high levels of religious intolerance, further growth might require greater societal stability and that could come in the form of more religious tolerance. It can be seen in the data that any instance of violence caused downturns in the Indian economy. A more cohesive policy on religion, such as a switch to religious freedom principles, might take some of the religious problems out of the political spectrum and help India continue its economic growth path. This could also have larger effects on international policy, especially towards Pakistan and the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir.

The violence that coincided with downturns in the Indian economy was mostly related to religion. Considering many of India's battles are religious in nature (secular India vs. Muslim Pakistan, Hindu-Muslim tensions within India, a secular political party vs. a party tied to Hindu nationalism), we might infer that greater religious cohesion, as manifested through better secular or religious freedom principles, might help India transcend its historical religious squabbles and continue economic growth policies.

Religious intolerance in India is a partisan and identity based problem, somewhat similar to economic policy differences in the United States. The effects of that intolerance on the economy are similar to partisan effects on the U.S. economy. During great political turmoil, the U.S. saw its bond rating lowered. The public statements of the ratings agencies pointed to the debt ceiling uncertainty and the potential for default as the reasons for a lower rating – something directly attributed to political gridlock. India could be going through a similar process in which economic uncertainty because of potential political conflict, in this case rooted in religious conflict, could hamper future growth.

In Turkey, a similar conclusion could come from the numbers. While economic growth has been on an upwards trend, the 2013 conflict that sustained massive protests and riots in Istanbul eroded confidence in the economy and hindered a previously functioning economic policy on the part of the ruling AKP. One could argue that with a less Islamic leaning government, but similar economic policies, there would be less societal strife and therefore less of a chance for such unrest to affect the economy. Of course, one would then have to weigh that against the fact that the current looser restrictions on Islam in Turkey would qualify as religious freedom in most countries. The fear of many is that if the restrictions are loosened even further, the country will eventually cross the line from Islamic openness and equality in society, to a politically Islamic society and state. In the short term Turkey will likely continue to relax some restrictions on ethnic minorities and minority religions, but only up to a certain point, and that is even more limited now after the riots that marred the AKP's reputation in the global community. In the medium to long term there will likely be measures that will be

inspired by greater tolerance for Islam in Turkish society – something the Prime Minister has already implied in many speeches. This could have the unintended consequence of eventually diminishing freedom for minority religions, or even border on having a religion that is more openly favored by the state. Even in the last few years, more moderate members of the AKP have been forced out, and polarization in the country has reached pre-military coup levels.

According to the Pew data, The United States' level of government restriction recently rose from 0.3 to 0.8 (considered a very low level), and was zero in terms of social hostility towards religion. What these numbers depict is that India was the only country in which there was a significant increase in both categories. One could make the argument that the increase for the United States in terms of government restriction was statistically significant domestically, however, the overall level is low enough that outliers could account for the change. In Turkey, the numbers seem to contradict the fear of a more Islamic leaning government, however, this is in the context of a country in which Islam was previously repressed by the state. Essentially, greater tolerance for the open practice of Islam, something the United States would consider religious freedom, caused the religious intolerance numbers to go down. The real question is whether that growing Islamic presence will overstep the religious freedom category and then put Turkey in a category of higher religious intolerance.

A system in which democracy dictates the appropriate level of religion in government is what India seems to be moving towards – a sentiment Al Stepan might echo – despite its codified secular principles. Considering religion is not taboo in the

country, and that India is intent on preserving religion, economic growth, and democratic credentials, it would seem logical that freedom of religion should replace Indian secularism in order to solve some of the problems that arise through the current system. The consequences of not addressing the current secular policies are the continuation of religiously based violence and an increasing number of citizens who feel alienated by the majority in society.

Turkey is a different story. While a segment of the population espouses secularism, what concerns them is the idea of a politically Islamic state, the inability to practice a non-Muslim religion, or the right to be atheist. The fear of religiously backed laws is not unwarranted, but any piece of legislation that can be even tenuously tied to religion is sometimes met with disproportionate opposition due to the fear of a slippery slope. The need to overcome this gap is urgent and the ability to do so is unclear. With an ever-increasing urban-rural divide, the way secularism has been instilled in Turkey has actually created a tense struggle between large sections of the population. These sections are not afraid to fight, as was proven last summer in Istanbul and across the country. More importantly, this schism could be what slows Turkey's rebound from its 2001 economic crash.

Chapter 13: Conclusion

Turkey and India are but two examples of secular countries that have emerged in the last century. Based on the case studies, the United States should monitor how levels of religious freedom and the implementation of secular principles in countries could be indicators of upcoming economic upheaval or societal unrest across the world. The experiences of Turkey and India could serve as models for emerging democracies and countries just beginning to find their way in constitutional law. Moreover, these emerging countries should see how Turkey and India have dealt with secularism and also see what role freedom of religion should play.

If anything, new nations should look at both the societal and economic gains from both systems and incorporate the best of both worlds. It may be necessary for certain countries to institute the Turkish or Indian models but also leave open the possibility for those concepts to evolve into freedom of religion. It also might be necessary to accept an evolving definition of religious tolerance as a country ages: new countries may need to have constitutions that initially reflect some semblance of secular principles that eventually evolve into religious freedom, for example.

As yet, Turkey and India have no plans to change their interpretations of religion and its interaction with the state - though Turkey seems more likely to attack that issue directly. If Erdogan increases his power in the country through another electoral victory with a larger majority, it is not unreasonable to expect that a new constitution will pass reflecting less secular principles and greater liberties for religious organizations and institutions. India's debate over its secularism will only come to the forefront if major

problems arise. The stagnant nature of the Kashmir conflict, the presence of many minorities in positions of power (both in business and government), and the still growing economy and middle class make it unlikely that the fate of Indian secularism will change, and many will opt to keep the status quo in favor of other advancements in the economy and society.

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