

The charge for judges, lawyers, elected officials, and engaged citizens is to thoughtfully consider what the relationship between the two religion clauses demands for law and public policy. Reading this book would be a useful first step.

***The Politics of Secularism: Religion, Diversity, and Institutional Change in France and Turkey.* By Murat Akan. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2017. xvi + 357 pp. \$65.00 cloth**

doi:10.1017/S175504831800038X

Ramazan Kılınc
University of Nebraska at Omaha

In *The Politics of Secularism*, Murat Akan offers a comparative study that examines the politics of secularism in France and Turkey with an emphasis on how political actors negotiated state policies toward religion. He starts with a critique of the existing literature for its lack of the “political field” that connects ideas with institutions. To fill this gap, Akan analyzes “arguments, and institutional preferences expressed in parliaments, constituent assemblies, and other public forums in both countries at different time periods” (31). He challenges the conventional binary analyses that pits secular actors against religious actors, and argues that the relationship between ideas and institutions are open-ended and develop around three competing political ends: “demobilizing religion, mobilizing religion, and state neutrality toward religion” (29). The political contestations around these three ends create three distinct institutionalist political contexts: anticlericalism, liberalism, and state-civil religionism. Akan develops his study in four substantive chapters around an empirical question in each. His conclusion of the empirical chapters can be summarized as: “Institutional relations of state and religion in Turkey are moving further in the direction of state-civil religionism (state mobilization of religion as the cement of society), whereas in France this tradition ended in 1905 but recently showed a resurgence” (29).

In chapter 3 and chapter 4, Akan discusses the transformation of the politics of secularism in France. Chapter 3 focuses on the puzzle of how French parliamentarians shifted from the divide between

anti-clericalism and state-civil religionism of the late 19th century to the institutionalization of state-religion separation in 1905. The author analyzes the public debates on secularism starting from 1882 secularization of education laws (known as Ferry Laws) to the passing of the 1905 law on secularism. Those who defended state neutrality transformed the public opinion in the first three decades of the Third French Republic and won over their rivals. Chapter 4 revolves around the question of how French politicians supported the ban of the headscarf in public schools while they supported the religion courses in public curriculum and the building of Islamic mosques, schools, and associations in the 2000s. Akan analyzes the public debates in the parliament and commissions, and challenge the binary outlook of religion versus secularism in this chapter.

In Chapter 5 and 6, Akan turns to the Turkish case and analyzes the transformation of the politics of secularism in Kemalist Turkey and under the Justice and Development Party rule. To Akan, in contrast to France, “the struggle in Turkey has remained encapsulated between anticlericalism and state-civil religionism, the former also frequently joining the ranks of the latter” (135). The state neutrality option was off the table in most of Turkey’s republican history. In chapter 5, examining parliamentary discussions and public debates, Akan shows how the Kemalists in Turkey kept state salaries for imams and religion courses based on Sunni Islam in the public school curriculum even though they imagined a secular state. He argues that the goal in these policies was to “preempt religion from becoming a focal point of countermobilization to the republican regime” (138). In chapter 6, Akan discusses the dilemma of Turkey’s governing political Islamist party, the Justice and Development Party, in both organizing outreach meetings with religious minorities and increasing the role of religion in society through strengthening the institution of the Directorate of Religious Affairs and instituting new religion courses in the public school curriculum. He challenges the view that pits Turkey between conservatives and secularists in which the latter supports state control of religion. He shows that the “AKP does not stand for some kind of a liberal alternative to the Kemalist establishment” (275).

Akan’s book contributes to the literature in a number of ways. First, Akan provides rich material on the debates of secularism in France and Turkey at key transformative eras. Akan brings together a vast array of speeches, reports, and parliamentary discussions to show the shifting discourses about state policies toward religion in France and Turkey. Second, going beyond the secular versus religious distinctions, Akan fleshes out the idea of state-civil religionism, in which a state mobilizes religion as the cement of society. Finally, Akan identifies the arguments that transcend state

borders and shows how actors in one national context use the experience of secularism in another. Specifically, he shows how the actors in Turkey and France utilized other countries' experiences in public debates. To describe these interactions, Akan coins the concept, "mutually interactional modernities." This concept is offered to replace "multiple modernities," the idea that each country had a unique path to modernity.

The greatest strength of the study is also its greatest weakness. Although Akan offers rich materials to track the evolution of ideas around secularism in France and Turkey, he does not provide a clear theoretical framework to account for those ideas in the formation of state policies toward religion. Akan provides important insights to give meaning to these debates; for example, he develops the idea of state-civil religionism. However, the study lacks a crystallized analytical framework to explain how ideas shaped policies. On a related note, although Akan does a superb job of disclosing various actors' varying positions in the debates around secularism in France and Turkey, he neglects the structural and process-oriented factors that interacted with these ideas. For example, in the French context, Akan discusses how the French politicians opposed the headscarf ban while supporting the building of large mosques and Muslim schools but he ignores the context that led them to behave as such. He does not mention the rising Islamophobia in Europe in the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks which motivated the French politicians to have more control over Islamic institutions.

All in all, Akan makes a significant contribution to the study of secularism in France and Turkey. Those scholars interested in both politics of secularism in general, and French and Turkish experiences in particular will find the book useful.

***Islam, Gender, and Democracy in Comparative Perspective.* Edited by Jocelyne Cesari and José Casanova. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017. vii+308 pp. \$95.00 cloth**

doi:10.1017/S1755048318000202

Saskia Schäfer
Freie Universität Berlin

When popular publications discuss the crossroads of Islam, gender, and democracy, they are often content to report deficiencies and failures or