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Keep your friends close, and your enemies closer: Turkey and Israel's approaches to incorporation of religion

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Thesis

**KEEP YOUR FRIENDS CLOSE, AND YOUR ENEMIES CLOSER:
TURKEY AND ISRAEL'S APPROACHES TO
INCORPORATION OF RELIGION**

by

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ABSTRACT

In contemporary world affairs, it is seemingly impossible to separate religion from politics. Turkey and Israel are often pointed to as states that still struggle with balancing religious and secular forces. Both Turkey and Israel's independence era leaders desired secular, modern republics, looking to French laicism as a method to subordinate religion from the state, but unlike France, neither was able to accomplish this goal. How did this come to be? I argue that the compromises of Turkish and Israeli independence-era secular leaders with religious advocacy coalitions which established Religious Ministries as a quick policy solution inadvertently paved the way for religion to exert a central influence. Through such ministries, religious groups were able to enshrine particular strains of Islam and Judaism along with their particular conceptions of citizenship based on ethno-religious grounds in place of initial republican ideals. This pull between rival definitions of citizenship—secular and religious—would go on to define debates for decades. Using the complementary lenses of historical and discursive institutionalism I will trace the processes by which particular conceptualizations of citizenship were reached by advocacy coalitions of secular and conservative forces, how these philosophies became the basis for institutions, and how those institutions went on to constrain future interpretations.

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Introduction

In contemporary world affairs, it is seemingly impossible to separate religion from politics. Turkey and Israel are often pointed to as states that still struggle with balancing religious and secular forces. Both Turkey and Israel's independence era leaders desired secular, modern republics, looking to French laicism as a method to subordinate religion from the state, but unlike France, neither was able to accomplish this goal. How did this come to be? I argue that the compromises of Turkish and Israeli independence-era secular leaders with religious advocacy coalitions which established Religious Ministries as a quick policy solution inadvertently paved the way for religion to exert a central influence. Through such ministries, religious groups were able to enshrine particular strains of Islam and Judaism along with their particular conceptions of citizenship based on ethno-religious grounds in place of initial republican ideals. This pull between rival definitions of citizenship—secular and religious—would go on to define debates for decades. Using the complementary lenses of historical and discursive institutionalism I will trace the processes by which particular conceptualizations of citizenship were reached by advocacy coalitions of secular and conservative forces, how these philosophies became the basis for institutions, and how those institutions went on to constrain future interpretations.

During the establishment of the Republic of Turkey and the State of Israel, the definition of citizenship played a central role in determining institutions, programs, and policies. Turkey and Israel faced similar battles between secularism and religious conservatism, and negotiated new conceptualizations of citizenship and nationalism

amidst these battles. Leaders were additionally met with the unique opportunity to create entirely new collective memories and national identities that would be determined by their definitions of citizenship. A multitude of groups sought to influence the parameters of citizenry to favor their own conceptualizations of societal membership. Amidst these pressures, the central goal of secular leaders was to develop a modern-nation state. Leaders of Turkey and Israel, particularly Mustafa Kemal and David Ben-Gurion, desired secular states where individual rights were balanced with religious ones. Religion was bound to be an important component of Turkish and Israeli nationalism as both countries were established as iterations of ancient cultures united by religion. Religion was entrenched in society, and would need to be addressed by early governments.

An important set of distinctions to remember when considering the relationship between government and religion in Turkey and Israel are those between the ideologies of laicism and secularism. Both originated in the Enlightenment period, and have continued to evolve. Any ideology's strength lies in its malleability, and 21st century nation states often adopt a form of one or the other. In the Anglo-inspired secularism, the state seeks to completely remove religion from the public sphere. French laicism advocates the temperment of the influence of religion within government by ensuring against any religious involvement in government.

In the French case, laicism prevailed because the definition of French citizenship was successfully separated from any religious distinctions, and belonging to a religious group became distinct from being a French citizen. The French government successfully promoted a sense of nationalism while providing programmatic and policy solutions such

as “free, compulsory and laic education in France.”¹ Other state initiatives and laws encouraged patriotic sentiments and replaced religious symbols and traditions that previously enabled clerical control. French nationalism did not rely on religious ideas, symbols or actors. Being a Frenchman did not require being a member of a particular religion. This is extremely different from the tones struck by early Turkish and Israeli policies. Secular leaders’ hands were forced, and religious advocacy groups demanded and obtained inclusion in early governments.

Laicism featured prominently in Kemalism. In fact, Kose states that, “If there is one image associated with the Turkish Revolution and with the Kemalist ideology on which it was based, it is that of laicism or ‘secular’ reform”.² In Turkey, *laïcité* became *laiklik*. This allowed the new state to curate a secular image in the international system, but in reality, religion played a significant role in state formation.³ While Kemal strictly delineated the line between religion and state, this does not mean religion and government were never to intersect. On the contrary, Kemal intended *complete* control of religion by the state.⁴ Israel’s Ben-Gurion felt that the country’s viability as a modern nation state rested on its ability to maintain secular, liberal values and the freedom of religion. Yet he also had to contend with powerful religious forces present during the

¹ Power, ‘The French Laic Laws (1879–1889): The First Anti-Clerical Campaign of the Third French Republic’, *Review of Politics*, 4:3 (1942). 357.

² Brockett, “Revisiting the Turkish Revolution, 1923–1938: Secular Reform and Religious Reaction, Gavin. “Revisiting the Turkish Revolution, 1923–1938: *History Compass* 4:6 (2006): 1060.

³ Warhola, James, Bezci, E. “Religion and State in Contemporary Turkey: Recent Developments in Laiklik.” *Journal of Church and State* 52:3 (2010): 428

⁴ Warhola, “Religion and State in Contemporary Turkey: Recent Developments in Laiklik.”428.

Yishuv period and at Israel's founding. Both men sought control of early governments and realized pragmatism would be necessary.

In an idiosyncratic and politically expedient move, leaders gave a seemingly unimportant ministry to religious ideological groups. To gain political flexibility elsewhere, Kemal and Ben-Gurion followed the adage “keep your friends close, your enemies closer” and incorporated religion into government institutions: the Turkish Presidency of Religious Affairs⁵ and the Israeli Ministry of Religious Services.⁶ Ironically, the move meant to placate and sideline religious groups ultimately enshrined their beliefs, entrenched their practices and delegated defining citizenship to these Ministries. In both Turkey and Israel, religious ministries were established in specific veins of Islam and Judaism, setting the stage for decades of contention. The religious interpretations of Ministries countered democratic goals and alienated significant portions of populations and empowered the very religious groups secular leaders attempted to quiet.

By tracing the inception, codification, and evolution of these Ministries using the lenses of historical and discursive institutionalism I will highlight the omnipresence and importance of ideas and their institutionalization. The institutions created at the founding of Turkey and Israel propagated specific philosophical ideas of what it meant to be a

⁵ There are several names for the Religious Ministry that was established under this Constitution: The General Directorate of Religious Affairs, Department of the Affairs of Piety, Directorate-General of Religious Affairs, and Religious Affairs Directorate. Most English sources refer to the Ministry as the Presidency of Religious Affairs, or the PRA.

⁶ Over the years, the Israeli Ministry that handled underwent many name changes; when discussing the general lifespan of the Ministry I will call it the Ministry of Religious Services.

Turk or an Israeli. Attempted changes to the Ministries highlight the entrenchment of religious forces and institutional constraints formed by early compromises. Discursive debates underlie both early coalitions and later tussles for influence, and the institutions themselves played an integral role in setting the boundaries of debate. Turkey and Israel provide two exceptional cases where secularist and religious forces battled for dominance at the time of independence and continue to do so today.

Comparisons between Turkey and Israel are many, since they share a few important similarities but also a plethora of differences. With different economic development, urbanization levels, party systems (and relative strengths), electoral structures, majority religions and general history in relation to the region and the world, they allow isolation of variables, and a true consideration of institutional change and discursive evolution. Additionally, Turkey and Israel are an attractive comparison because they debunk essentialist and Orientalist theorizations that are all too common in considerations of the relationship between state and religion in the Middle East. Understanding the formal and informal association of religion and governance in Turkey and Israel is paramount to any consideration of either country, as well as to the region as a whole. To understand the relationship between religion and government, it is necessary to go one step further, and investigate the source of this debate. To do so, we must begin with the tools provided by historical and discursive institutionalism. Following a discussion of the theoretical foundations of the thesis, I will separate my case studies into three sections: Ideational Foundations, Institutions Produced, and Evolutions. In Ideational Foundations, I will investigate the various types of discourse that influenced

the founding of Turkey and Israel, paying special attention to the conservative and secularist forces at work. In Institutions Produced, I will trace how those ideas were codified in the Ministries of Religion and enabled religious forces. Last, in Evolutions I will highlight one attempted change and one successful alteration to the Ministries, therefore underlining what forces are necessary to incite institutional change. Through this process, it will be clear how independence era compromises entrenched specific values through the Ministries of Religion and prevented laicism from taking root in Turkish and Israeli society.

Theoretical Foundations

Ideas are fundamental to society and its government. Ideas motivate, inspire, and influence the foundations of governance. Institutions are the interactive context in which ideas are introduced, discussed, argued, contested, propelled, and enacted. Historical institutionalism provides explanations of the mechanisms of change within institutions, while discursive institutionalism sheds light on how and why these changes come about. These two analytical lenses provide a myriad of tools that aid in the process tracing of citizenship discourse in Turkey and Israel. For this endeavor, the most useful components of historical institutionalism and discursive institutionalism describe the interactions that occurred within institutions among actors and coalitions. From historical institutionalism, I draw on the explanatory abilities of power sharing coalitions, the emphasis on interactions within institutions and their actors, and the theory's modal types of institutional change. Discursive institutionalism provides the lens to examine ideas; its classification of levels of ideas, description of interactions of sentient actors and advocacy coalitions, and illumination of argumentation methods lend the capacity to identify specific ideas and their entrenchment.

Historical institutionalism's focus on the constraints imposed by institutions and the power to influence actors is key in understanding the implications of the establishment of the Religious Ministries. Historical institutionalism considers policy outcomes as the product of interaction among various groups, interests, ideas and institutional structures. The state is not a static institution, and should instead be viewed in terms of "stateness", where there are "sets of institutions, power sharing agreements

and a complex web of relationships.”⁷ Interaction between institutions and the actors within them is very important to understanding the constraints actors face and the pressures institutions endure. In their work *Structuring Politics*, Thelen and Steinmo cite Peter Hall, who explained that institutions shape goals of political actors and their power relations. He states that: “Institutional factors play two fundamental roles in this model. On the one hand, the organization of policy-making affects the degree of power that any one set of actors has over the policy outcomes...On the other hand, organizational position also influences an actor’s definition of his own interests...”⁸ Actors are not only rational individuals operating in a vacuum, they are constrained and propelled by structural forces within the institution. Thelen states, “By shaping not just actors’ strategies (as in rational choice) but their goals as well, and by mediating their relations of cooperation and conflict, institutions structure political situations and leave their own imprint on political outcomes.”⁹ Interactions determine the structure of institutions, but are constrained by institutions themselves. Institutions affect actors, and actors in turn affect institutions. For institutions to change, there must be a significant move for it to evolve.

Once institutions are created, some argue they are path dependent, and determined to perform the same functions until a critical juncture causes the proverbial river to jump

⁷ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 65.

⁸ Mahoney, James, Thelen, K. *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency and Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2010, 3.

⁹ Mahoney, Thelen, *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency and Power*, 9.

its bank. Thelen and her many co-authors¹⁰ discredit the simplicity of path dependency and critical juncture theories. She writes, "...it is not sufficient to view institutions as frozen residue of critical junctures, or even as 'locked in' in the straightforward sense that path dependence arguments adapted from the economics literature often suggest."¹¹ Institutions are a part of "ongoing political contestation", and the aforementioned political coalitions that they are established within drive their internal structure and external functions.¹² Path determination theories are too rigid to explain the fluid and fluctuating changes institutions undergo. What is instead at work is a more nuanced, fluid process that encompasses countless interactions, debates and compromise. As such, institutions are "the product of past and ongoing political intervention and tinkering, of active maintenance and re-setting."¹³ Once again, interactions between political actors and their coalitions drive change within institutions.

Historical institutionalism also provides an explanation of how institutions change when they do. Thelen and Mahoney outline four modal types of institutional change: displacement (removal of existing rules and introduction of new ones), layering (introduction of new rules on top of or alongside existing ones, changing how the rules structure behavior), drift (changed impact of existing rules due to shifts in the environment) and conversion (changed enactment of existing rules due to their strategic

¹⁰ Works by Steinmo, Skocpol and Mahoney, among others were influential in the writing of this theoretical section.

¹¹ Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan*, 8.

¹² Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan*, 31.

¹³ Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan*, 3–4.

redeployment).¹⁴ Layering is especially important in identifying internal structural changes of the Religious Ministries. Overall, historical institutionalism enables us to identify the impact of institutional constraints on actors, the importance of actors and coalitions and the necessary components to precede change. What it misses, however, is what is at the basis of these institutions and coalitions, and the motivations that alter actors' courses of action. This is where I turn to discursive institutionalism. Together, the two are complementary, enabling me to explain the dynamism of institutional change through the discursive interactions of the principal actors.

Discursive institutionalism focuses on the power of ideas and the importance of discourse in solidifying communities, and producing coalitions and institutions. Discursive institutionalism is a set of ways to explain political and social reality, focused on the substantive content of ideas and the interactive processes of discourse in institutional context. It divides ideas into normative or cognitive. Normative ideas indicate, "what is good and what is bad", while cognitive ideas work to justify policy options.¹⁵ Once a normative idea is chosen, cognitive ideas influence debate on how normative ideas should be communicated. Discursive institutionalism then dissects ideas into three levels of generality- philosophical, programmatic and policies. Philosophical ideas within the political sphere are tied to broader moral and normative values. In the cases of Turkey and Israel, this level of generality is of the utmost importance, as it is where discussions of citizenship occur. At the programmatic level, philosophical changes

¹⁴ Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan*, 16.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 309.

are implemented via paradigm shifts. In the cases of Turkey and Israel, programs like language instruction and religious instruction doctrine convey broader conceptualizations of citizenship. Last, policies are the most fluid implementation of ideas as they change rapidly. When identifying institutional change, successive policy changes can signal a deeper change in programs and philosophies.

Actors then communicate ideas (at all levels). Sentient actors “construct, articulate, communicate, argue and contest” ideas and are incredibly important in the translation of an idea from abstract philosophy to a tangible policy.¹⁶ Art elaborates, “Deliberation matters. Elites in democracies react to, challenge, modify, and adopt the ideas of others as they debate one another... Through this process, elites create frames, the weight of elite opinion shifts, and new discourses emerge.”¹⁷ In communicating these ideas, actors engage in coordinative and communicative discourse. Coordinative discourse among policy actors is relayed to the public through communicative discourse, and ideas continue to evolve, influence and incite change.¹⁸ During the course of these discussions, actors form advocacy coalitions. Advocacy coalitions are made up of not only actors that share ideational values and philosophical goals, but include actors that can influence real political change via institutions and social mobilization. These coalitions explain the aforementioned political coalitions, such as those created by influential religious groups. Through advocacy coalitions, these ideological groups gained enough clout to influence Kemal and Ben-Gurion. Ideas existing at every level of

¹⁶ Schmidt, “Discursive Institutionalism”, 87.

¹⁷ Art, David, *The Politics of the Nazi Past in Germany and Austria*, 41.

¹⁸ Schmidt, “Discursive Institutionalism”, 87

generality are debated in coordinative and communicative discourse. Epistemic communities may form within the public sphere, and are united by those with similar ideas. In Turkey and Israel, minority populations formed cohesive epistemic communities that could not engage in effective coordinative discourse of policy because they had little access to policymakers. Argumentation of ideas can include “narratives, frames, frames of reference, discursive fields of ideas, argumentative practices, storytelling, and collective memories.”¹⁹ Discursive communities used many of these different ways of conveying their ideas in both the cases of Turkey and Israel.

To highlight the usefulness of discursive institutionalism, I will consider two extremely important philosophical ideas that determined the course of Turkey and Israel—citizenship and nationalism. Nationalism is often heralded as a prevailing unifying factor for nascent states, but in the cases of Turkey and Israel, it is necessary to search one step deeper and consider the citizenship discourses that occurred at the time of independence. At the heart of every nation is the relationship between state and individual. Definitions of citizenship determine the parameters of social contracts and carry significant implications for the future of states. Citizenship discourse is an example of a philosophical idea with real repercussions in the policy and public spheres.

Most states choose one lens of citizenship discourse to establish a barrage of characteristics that make a “citizen.” Shafir outlines the three philosophies of citizenship as liberal, republican, or ethno-national. Each vein determines what defines citizenship and associates a different package of rights with citizenship. The liberal conception

¹⁹ Schmidt, *Discursive Institutionalism*, 85.

places personal liberty at the forefront, and individuals are expected to bear universal rights, and are not “beholden to the community.” In this civic nation, citizens are “equal and rights bearing.”²⁰ Republicanism on the other hand, is based on civil duty and creates a self-limiting realm that institutionalizes methods of compromise and emphasizes moral laws. Ethno-national citizenship highlights the importance of membership in a community realized in a national or ethnic group.²¹ Adhering to their French models, secular leaders of Turkey and Israel advocated republican theories of citizenship. Kemal included republicanism in his six pillars of Kemalism, while Ben-Gurion supported considering all those who believed themselves to be Jews to be Israelis, as long as they were supportive of the success of the state of Israel. With the pressures presented by the religious forces, however, each nation eventually incorporated ethno-national conceptualizations of citizenship. This happened through coordinative debates and discourse between the two groups. As independence movements forged on, coalitions communicated their philosophical, programmatic and policy goals and eventually compromised upon this definition of citizenship. In the cases of Turkey and Israel, two philosophies were blended to create national citizenship that still lacked precise definition. Later programmatic and policy implementations of this idea would carry important implications.

A secondary aspect of citizenship discourse is the state’s philosophical

²⁰ Aktoprak, Elcin. “Citizenship and National Identity: A Comparative Analysis.” In *Societal Peace and Ideal Citizenship for Turkey*, edited by Rasim Ozgur Donmez and Pinar Enneli, 27–48. New York: Lexington Books, 2011, 27.

²¹ This movement originated in Eastern Europe and Germany, where many Jewish immigrants originated.

interpretation of nationalism. Gellner states that, “Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist.”²² Many have asserted that Israel is exactly this type of nation, and that it employed a multitude of argumentative tactics to ensure that its created philosophy of nationalism was sustainable and durable. Turkey is arguably a nation that existed prior to its establishment, but its national consciousness is certainly a recent phenomenon since its modern “principles” were established at the War of Independence.

Nationalism possesses the power to influence entire communities and regions. Benedict Anderson is well known for his postulation that nations are “imagined political communities”, and that they are both “inherently limited and sovereign.”²³ Nations are limited as they can only incorporate particular territories, groups and ideals, and are sovereign over these things. Israeli nationalism is a prime example of Anderson’s imagined communities, as Jews have remained connected for centuries in while in diaspora. In a community with limited face-to-face contact the motivation to create an actual state required a common unifier of nationalism.²⁴ This common idea culminates in collective identities and memories that build on blocs of nationalism like symbolism, religion and language (argumentative practices of discursive institutionalism).

Symbols and cultural artifacts are a powerful tool in the crafting of a new feeling of nationalism, granting a new state legitimacy. Anderson places symbolism in a larger

²² Aktoprak, “Citizenship and National Identity: A Comparative Analysis,” 6.

²³ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1982, 5.

²⁴ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1982, 5.

system of cultural artifacts. Artifacts command a cultural legitimacy, gained from a collective acceptance of a particular interpretation. Interpretation, appropriation and acceptance of symbols are key steps in crafting collective memories and identities. Symbols fit into a larger cultural paradigm that can be utilized to create a cohesive collective memory and identity.

Religious symbols are especially potent, but simultaneously constrained by interpretation. For example, Israel appropriated images of controlling the location of the Second Temple, but such a symbol empowered religious groups rather than modernists. Religion is a “symbolic” system in and of itself, it can “convey multiple meanings and inform diverse positions.”²⁵ Tepe, underlines the power of religious symbols to create such nationalistic devotion, but reminds of their limits; “their interpretations are bounded by certain rules, shared knowledge, and acknowledged practices.”²⁶ Any symbol is reliant on an agreed definition and narrative and can be altered to further nationalistic purposes. Israel actively employed and continues to employ religious symbolism in its justification of statehood. Biblical references are plentiful in Israeli culture, seen everywhere from shekel coinage to math textbooks that convert modern monetary systems to ancient currencies.²⁷ Kemal successfully molded some religious symbols to the benefit of Turkish nationalism, but early Turkish leadership ignored the power of religious symbols, leaving much of the population outside of the discursive process of legitimizing the new state. By using pre-Ottoman era symbols but Islam as a key factor of

²⁵ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 51.

²⁶ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 52.

²⁷ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 52.

defining Turkishness the new regime was not as effective as it could have been. The ability to tie a modern nation state to ancient greatness is a persuasive tool in creating national cohesion and a national identity. Symbols are an effective argumentative practice used to convey a larger citizenship discourse.

Another major component of nationalistic discourse is actual language. Turkey and Israel each engaged in unique initiatives to transform the language of their newly independent states. With the latinization of the alphabet in 1928, Kemal clearly moved Turkey from its historical association with the Arab world to the modern European dominated international system. The linguistic transformation also successfully severed ties to an Ottoman past centered on religion. In contrast, Israel brought back a traditional language rarely spoken to unite its disparate citizens to add one more reminder of their “ancient” existence. By making Hebrew the national language of Israel, the Yishuv²⁸ government’s and Zionist Congresses required all immigrants to learn a new language, and assume a new identity as not just Jewish, but Israeli. Anderson explains these moves were powerful because they solidified national definitions of membership. When religion dominated ideological allegiances, language was the foundation of imagined communities; it established a “confidence in the unique sacredness...and thus their ideas about admission to membership.”²⁹ Communication is key in any state, especially one creating a new history and identity.

Discursive institutionalism’s ability to categorize types of ideas is useful in

²⁸ The Jewish Community in Pre-statehood Palestine.

²⁹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 13.

explaining the failure of laicism in Turkey and Israel. Both countries adopted particular blends of citizenship discourse as a result of coordinative discourses between ideational leaders (Kemal and Ben-Gurion) and advocacy coalitions (conservative religious actors). Their programmatic, policy solution of providing religious forces with a ministry sought to limit their influence in government, but instead it entrenched specific religious definitions of citizenship and ultimately constrained future attempts to alter the system. Both historical and discursive institutionalism are necessary to connect independence eras attempts towards laicism and republican basis of citizenship to the present day challenges each country faces in the balance of religion and government. Only through identifying discursive struggles and advocacy coalitions (and the institutions they produced) can we see the institutions that let religious elites have the power to decide what ideas became embedded in institutions, government, and society.

[I] Ideational Forces

Turkey and Israel have complex histories that have both striking similarities and differences. From their Ottoman past to Western interventions, both were met with a unique opportunity at independence: battle hardened citizens and leaders, poised to emerge from the ashes, ready to enter the Western world, all while harking to their ancient pasts. Kemal and Ben-Gurion were military men with secular beliefs who envisioned countries that would rewrite the rules of secular modernity. Both looked to French *laïcité* as a method of acknowledging strong religious forces in their country while balancing the need for liberal, individual rights. Turkey's Tanzimat reforms³⁰ and Young Turk revolutions meant various ideological forces were already gathering support in society. Conservative advocacy coalitions called for a pious return to Sunni traditions, while Kemalists pushed for a secular republic. Kemal's victory against the West in the War of Liberation³¹ increased his currency in discursive debates. Israel, on the other hand, remained very divided, with sharper schisms between Orthodox and Secular Zionists, Ashkenazis from Europe and Sephardim from the Middle East. The Israeli War of Independence masked these differences as Jews fought for a permanent home in

³⁰ The Tanzimat reforms included the first Ottoman Constitution (*Kanvn I Esasi*), military reforms, administrative service creation and social reforms that sought to integrate Muslims and non-Muslims through enhanced civil liberties.

³¹ A Young Turk General, Mustafa Kemal, led Turkish troops in the Western part of the country. His repulsion of the British land invasion in the Battle of Gallipoli quickly catapulted him to military and political fame. After World War One, from 1919–1920, the Turkish fought a War of Liberation against Greece, the United Kingdom and France under Kemal and other CUP leadership. During this time, Kemal became the leader of the Grand National Assembly and the Commander in Chief, and the de facto leader of the Turks. The 1920 Treaty of Lausanne led to an end to the war, and Turkey finally became an independent modern nation state.

Palestine.³² Alliances were struck during the war that carried implications for future government power sharing agreements. Institutionally, the two stood on very different footing, but both were clarifying new cognitive norms, developing philosophies of citizenship and renegotiating national narratives and collective memories.

In *Beyond Sacred and Secular*, Tepe argues that the leaders of both nations shared basic backgrounds that held implications for the future of both countries; “The constitutive elite of the two nation-states shared intellectual ties during their formative years...(they) were educated in Ottoman schools, were active in the Ottoman parliament, and were exposed to the ideas that shaped the empire’s unique political system- most important its millet system, which consisted of autonomous religious communities and sought to prevent the empire’s disintegration along sectarian lines.”³³ At the peak of its power, the Ottoman Empire sprawled across the Middle East, encompassing countless ethnic and religious groups. Its millet system allowed non-Muslim minorities to largely govern themselves.³⁴ The Ottoman Sultan’s hands-off approach with minorities created a tradition of self-government in minority communities, and facilitated various power sharing arrangements.

Not only did leaders experience the autonomous institutions of the Ottoman Empire, they also saw first hand the failures and successes of attempted reforms. The

³² After World War Two, and the United Nations Partition Plan that divided Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state, a full-fledge civil war erupted. The battle engulfed surrounding Arab nations, who came to arms in support of the Palestinians. Eventually, on May 14, 1948, the Israeli state declared independence, altering the region forever.

³³ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 16.

³⁴ Aral, Berdal. “The Idea of Human Rights as Perceived in the Ottoman Empire.” *Human Rights Quarterly* 26 (2004): 474.

Ottoman Tanzimat period influenced both Turkey and Israel. In Turkey, the stage was set for debate between Young Turk secularists, conservative Islamists and other Ottomanists. After WWI, Palestine's experience as a British mandate saw lingering Ottoman institutions and intensifying debates between the Yishuv communities. While institutionally different, Israel and Turkey saw similar discursive debates surrounding new definitions of citizenship, nationalism and the future of the state that were remarkably similar. The omnipresence of religion was felt by all, and a key component of defining the new states that hoped to incorporate laïcité, democracy and republican ideals.

Turkish Ideas: Legacies of Tanzimat and Divisions of Independence

For centuries, the Ottoman Empire held the Islamic caliphate, and thus acted as the center of Muslim political power. The role of Islam in Ottoman politics and government is undeniable. Key actors and groups at Turkish independence have roots in previous movements during the Tanzimat and the First and Second Constitutional eras. With the “clean slate” of independence, disagreeing elite actors and groups advocated very different philosophies of citizenship and nationalism.

The overarching ideological “Turkish revolution” began with the Young Turk Revolution of 1903 and continued under the Kemalist revolution of 1919–23. This incremental revolution altered the entire fabric of society. It aimed to complete Tanzimat goals and Westernize all components of the empire, from political to social to economic

to cultural norms.³⁵ The elites of the period subscribed to the belief that in order to modernize, the empire must centralize and secularize.³⁶ After independence, the remnants of the Islamic Ottoman Empire were to be transformed into secular, constitutional institutions. To accomplish this, Kemal and his contemporaries had to discredit other ideas pushing for inclusion. To successfully undertake such an effort, the citizens of this new country needed to be convinced of its merits and drawn away from other ideas and discursive communities.

During the revolutionary era, discourse swirled in an eddy of revolutionary fervor. Preeminent concepts included Ottomanism, Islamism, Pan-Turkism, and Kemalism, and religious and social tensions were high. Ottomanism sought to create a national sense of “imperial citizenship or transnational Ottoman identity.”³⁷ Early Ottomanism existed among elites who aimed to maintain their preeminent positions of influence in society amidst reforms.³⁸ Tanzimat reforms coincided with urbanization and shifts between ethnic and social divisions.³⁹ Elites worked to capitalize on a variety of identities so that could navigate “multiplicities of social spaces without dissolving their private/communal features.”⁴⁰ Identity was a very fluid concept, and remained self-descriptive. Ottomanists did not accept the need to abolish Ottoman institutions and instead advocated institutional

³⁵ Kazamias, Andreas M. *Education and the quest for modernity in Turkey*. London: Allen & Unwin. (1966), 17.

³⁶ Sunar, Ilkay. *State, Society and Democracy in Turkey*. Istanbul: Bahcesehi University. 2004, 158.

³⁷ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*.

³⁸ Donmez, Rasim Ozgur. “Beyond State-Led Nationalism: Ideal Citizenship for Turkey.” In *Societal Peace and Ideal Citizenship for Turkey*, edited by Rasim Ozgur Donmez and Pinar Enneli, 1–26. New York: Lexington Books, 2011, 4.

³⁹ Donmez, “Beyond State-Led Nationalism: Ideal Citizenship for Turkey,” 4.

⁴⁰ Donmez, “Beyond State-Led Nationalism: Ideal Citizenship for Turkey,” 4.

layering. To them, institutions like Seriyye and Evkaf⁴¹ were too sacred to completely abolish, and conversion would preserve their character.

Conservative religious groups emphasized Pan-Islamism; they “attributed the weaknesses of the Ottoman Empire to the abandonment of orthodox Islamic principles and institutions.”⁴² These advocacy groups petitioned for the retention of the mujallah legal system, Islamic schools and an overall religious government, even more religious than the Ottoman sultanate.⁴³ Overall, they promoted a religious society and a return to religiously motivated laws and governance. Pan-Turks, on the other hand, advocated a Turkish citizenship based on ethnic similarities, and campaigned for a narrower definition of Turkishness with few allowances for minorities. While these groups had significant portions of the population behind them, none had the charisma or discursive influence of Kemal and his Kemalism based on both ethno-national and republican parameters.

Mustafa Kemal worked to ethnify Islam in Turkey, and unify Turks by their “Turkishness” rather than their religion or Ottoman era ethnic divides. Kemalism and the Young Turks envisioned Turkishness as a linguistically based identity that would incorporate many ethnicities and cultures previously separated by the millet system. Reflecting their conceptualization of Turkey as a “conglomeration of religious and ethnic groups without political bonds”, the first leaders of Turkey did their utmost to desacrilize

⁴¹ The Evkaf in Turkey was the board of Pious Foundations, which handled religious donations while the Seriyye was an early Ministry of Religious Affairs that coordinated between the state and local religious matters.

⁴² Donmez, “Beyond State-Led Nationalism: Ideal Citizenship for Turkey.” 107.

⁴³ Afsah, Ebrahim. “Constitution-Making in Islamic Countries- A Theoretical Framework.” In *Constitution-Making in Islamic Countries: Between Upheaval and Continuity*, edited by Rainer Grote and Tilman Roder. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

politics and establish a new national identity.⁴⁴ First and foremost, they separated themselves from the “duality” of state and faith and moved quickly to legitimize their new state under a collective memory of “Turkishness” rather than Islamic Ottoman identities.⁴⁵ Kemal possessed great influence in both the policy and public spheres, but not enough to counter centuries of Islamic practice in law and strong Islamic forces during independence. His laiklik stemmed from the realization that Islam simply could not be eradicated from the public sphere. Instead, Kemal simply began to advocate for government monopolization of religion.⁴⁶ Ironically, at the end of the day, the new “Turkishness” was based on the unifying trait of Islam. As expected, this carried implications for the adoption of a citizenship reliant on ethno-national characteristics, alongside republican ideals.

In the new Republic of Turkey, the relationship between state and religion was immediately complex, since Kemal simultaneously used Islam to assimilate Muslim minorities as “Turkish” while pushing Islam from daily life and government activities. Kemal’s nation would redefine Islam and its role in national identity and government. Tepe further outlines the contradictory methods, stating Kemal used “...Islamic terms to emphasize the religious unity of the emerging nation, (while) calling for a redefinition of some traditional practices at the same time.”⁴⁷ This effort used obvious ethno-national definitions of citizenship but uniquely inserted Islam into this interpretation in order to

⁴⁴ Kazamias, *Education and the quest for modernity in Turkey*. 35.

⁴⁵ Kaplan, Sam. “Religious Nationalism: A Textbook Case from Turkey.” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 25:3 (2005): 666.

⁴⁶ Taspinar, “The Old Turks’ Revolt: When Radical Secularism Endangers Democracy.” 119.

⁴⁷ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 91.

gain its normative currency. It was conjoined with republican ideals and less influential liberal goals as well. Kemalist nationalism became a “juxtaposition of territory, religion and ethnicity.”^{48 49}

Opposite of its Ottoman predecessors the new Turkey rejected multi-culturalism. The new “secular” Republic of Turkey was in practice more exclusionary than the “Islamic” Ottoman Empire.⁵⁰ Minority groups across Turkey reacted loudly and violently in response to the government’s reliance on Kemalism’s blend of Pan-Turkism and Islam to define “Turkishness” and citizenship in the new state. While Kemalism’s republican citizenship discourse could be expanded to include all Turks, the religious and ethnic aspects transformed the philosophies that would go on to influence programmatic initiatives and policies. To quiet some minorities, Kemalists framed Turkishness as reliant upon loyalty to the Anatolian homeland. The Alevis, a non-Sunni Muslim minority were swayed by this argumentative practice. Kose explains, “The narrative of a common homeland was a valuable asset for the Turkish bureaucracy in maintaining the loyalties of Alevi citizens, since many Alevis had strong emotional and cultural attachments to the Anatolian homeland.”⁵¹ Alevis were additionally lured by the promise of secular society, highlighting the additional importance of republican ideals in the definition of “Who is a Turk?” and new collective identity. Before institutions were even

⁴⁸ Kose, Talha. “Between Nationalism, Modernism and Secularism: The Ambivalent Place of ‘Alevi Identities.’” *Middle Eastern Studies* 49:4 (2013): 597.

⁴⁹ Donmez, “Beyond State-Led Nationalism: Ideal Citizenship for Turkey,” 6.

⁵⁰ Taspinar, “The Old Turks’ Revolt: When Radical Secularism Endangers Democracy,” 119.

⁵¹ Kose, “Between Nationalism, Modernism and Secularism: The Ambivalent Place of ‘Alevi Identities,’” 957.

created, Kemalists were layering citizenship discourse to gain acceptance. While this minority in particular aligned with the new regime, others continued to chafe under the early authoritarian rule. Turkish nationalism pandered to an assortment of groups, but was not met by full-scale success.

Eventually, Kemal effectively used his political heft to legitimize his own normative ideas, undermine opponents, and quiet disgruntled minorities. This dominance translated into control of coordinative discourse that became more and more domineering than truly coordinative. National narratives focused on Kemal's military greatness and ability to lead, religious issues were framed as threats to the newly independent, and modern state and collective memories were created and emphasized to fabricate a national identity of "Turkishness". All of these efforts centered around Kemal's attempts to define the new Turkish state and its citizens. To subdue religious groups and address Ottoman Islamist legacies, Kemal incorporated religion into government to ensure the continued domination of coordinative, policy discourse. The resulting Ministry of Religious Affairs simultaneously reflected the intentions of secularism, and subjugation of religion and religious forces. It additionally would reflect the restrictive definitions of citizenship and national identity. In creating a Ministry designed to quiet one groups, one interpretation of Islam was chosen- the one hand picked to unify "Turks." With such narrow intentions for the role of the institution, not all minorities would be well represented.

Turkey's discursive debates built on centuries of divides. Discursive struggles did happen before institutions were created, but Kemal's monopolization of power meant

they were publically subdued. Pre-independence reforms instigated national considerations of citizenship and the Republic saw a triple use of liberal, republican and ethno-national justifications for new norms. Kemal's determination to break away from Ottoman institutions and traditions was challenged by Ottomanists and Pan-Islamists. The power sharing "coalition" present at independence resulted from discourse coalitions and limited coordinative discourse. These were heavily tipped in Kemal's favor. Early Turkish leadership was remarkably authoritarian in nature and did not meet significant opposition from the public (or attempt to convince the public of new initiatives rather than institute top down changes). Turkey's independence was a critical moment and early decisions would lead to decades of unsolved debates. Ideologically, Israel faced similar pulls between secularists, religious groups, minorities and conservatives. While Turkey was able to draw on ethnic definitions, Israel had the additional complications of religious and social divisions.

Israel: Past Separation, Contemporary Unity

While Jews are often presented as one nationality, ethnicity, or religious group, they are like any other socially constructed community, with internal partitions. To detail ongoing debates at the time of Israeli independence, it is imperative to understand these divides. The two broad ethnic groups are the Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews.⁵²

Ashkenazim originated in the Rhineland valley and eventually migrated to Poland,

⁵² Plural, Ashkenazim and Sephardim.

Lithuania and other Central and Eastern European countries.⁵³ After the 17th century, these Jews adopted the “German rite”. Orthodox, Reform and Conservative Jewish congregations arose from this group.⁵⁴ The Sephardic rite originated in Spain but North African and Middle Eastern Jews who resided under the Ottoman millet system adopted the Sephardic rite.⁵⁵⁵⁶ Unlike European Jews who experienced more consistent discrimination, Sephardi Jews did not usually have to make a choice between assimilation or conservatism, and usually lived among regional populations. Differences between the Ashkenazim and Sephardim include cultural traditions, synagogue practices and until Hebrew was adopted in Israel, language. Neither rite is specifically political; divisions began as more cultural and social than ideological.

Additional divisions were along ethnic or religious ideological lines. Judaism, like all religions, possesses a spectrum of religiosity, conservatism, and reformism. There are five major sects of Judaism, first divided between religious and non-religious. Within the religious, there are the Orthodox and the ultra-orthodox or *Haredim*.⁵⁷ Orthodox, non-Hasidic Jews can be seen as the centrists of Judaism. Haredim are either Hasidic or non-Hasidic. Hasidic Jews originated in Eastern Europe while non-Hasidic hailed from

⁵³ Elath, Eliahu. *Britannica*, Academic edition, s.v. “Internet.” Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 2013. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/296740/Israel> accessed December, 2013.

⁵⁴ Elath, Eliahu. *Britannica*, Academic edition, s.v. “Internet.” Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 2013. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/296740/Israel> accessed December, 2013.

⁵⁵ Sephardim derives from “Sepharad,” the Jewish name for the Iberian Peninsula. These Jews lived in Spain until the late 1400s when they were driven out by the inquisition.

⁵⁶ Encyclopedia Britannica, "Sephardi (People)." Accessed March 10, 2014. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/535030/Sephardi>.

⁵⁷ Ben-Yehuda, Nachman. *Theocratic Democracy: The Social Construction of Religious and Secular Extremism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (2010). 13.

Central and Western Europe. No matter the sect or rite, all Jews share key cultural artifacts, collective memories and a base level of “Jewishness.” These divisions are philosophically important, as they carry separate qualifications for acceptance to their communities.

In contrast to the created Turkish nationalism at the time of independence, the Jewish narrative is centuries old. It is defined by the longstanding yearning to return to the land of the Temple and commitment to maintaining strong ties throughout the diaspora. Tadmor-Shimony underlines the importance of biblical Israel as a geographical entity: “The link between the Jewish People, the Land of Israel, and their connection to Zion, is a desire, recognized for many years that proves the existence of an ancient ethnic identity.”⁵⁸ Unlike the Turks, Jews had long lost control of Israel, and the modern iteration of the nation offered an opportunity to create an Israeli collective memory and a unified sense of nationalism. United by their faith, Jews are required to remember Zion in times of celebration, and yearnings for Zion are communicated in prayers, liturgical poetry, and various customs.”⁵⁹ The cultural artifact of certainty in the inherent right of Jews to return to Israel spanned nations.

Before the Yishuv, in the diaspora community, debates raged on the merits of Zionism and other political motivations for a Jewish state. One major factor ideological impetus was the early 20th century movements of Enlightenment, liberalism and individualism. Western European Jews had mixed experiences of acceptance as citizens

⁵⁸ Tadmor-Shimony, Tali. “Yearning for Zion in Israeli Education: Crating a Common National Identity.” *Journal of Jewish Identities* 6:1 (2013): 2.

⁵⁹ Tadmor-Shimony, “Yearning for Zion in Israeli Education: Crating a Common National Identity.” 6.

in newly nationalistic states, but Eastern European Jewish communities struggled to gain recognition as equal citizens.⁶⁰ As a result, Eastern European Jews more fervently maintained their Jewish national identity, while Western European Jews often surrendered it in favor of European identities.⁶¹ Continent wide anti-Semitism persisted, however, and ultimately Jews internationally began to call for a Jewish state. Settlers began to move en masse to Palestine, hoping for a Zion to finally accept them.

In the British mandate Palestine, during the Yishuv period, Jewish settlement communities separated by ideology functioned as nearly complete sub states, each with different aims for the future of a Jewish nation state (and conceptualizations for memberships in the community, a precursor to philosophies of citizenship). In Palestine and abroad, Zionist, Orthodox, and ultra-Orthodox movements characterized Ashkenazi Jews while Sephardic Jews discourse remained splintered and not influential in the Yishuv period.

Zionism was the pre-eminent topic of discourse in the Yishuv and diaspora communities. At its core, Zionism supported the establishment of Jewish state in the lands of Biblical Israel. Zionism represented a political Judaism, as it gained prominence internationally; it garnered support for an independent Jewish state.⁶² Theodor Herzl first articulated Zionism and claimed its origins in Jewish tradition that encourages belief reestablishment of Zion; he argued Zionism was built on the artifacts of Judaism itself. To center the growing movement, Herzl formed the First Zionist Congress in 1897.

⁶⁰ Parzen, Herbert. *A Short History of Zionism*. New York: Herzl Press. 1962, 14.

⁶¹ Parzen, *A Short History of Zionism*, 19.

⁶² Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 76.

Herzl organized the Zionist Congress as a forum with the mission to “...create a publicly recognized and legally secured home for the Jewish people in Palestine.”⁶³ The operative clauses attached to this mission included;

1. The systemic promotion of the settlement of Palestine by Jewish farmers, laborers and artisans.
2. The Organization of Jewry into local and general bodies in conformity with the laws of their respective communities.
3. The strengthening of Jewish sentiment and national consciousness.
4. The initiation of steps to attain such government assistance as may be necessary for achieving the aim of Zion.”

Amidst these decrees Herzl continued to argue that the Jewish question was, overall, a national question that could only be solved in a state where Jews were the ethnic and religious majority. He wrote that, “Only cultural, secular nationalism would transform Jewish minorities into a distinct nation-state and normalize them as a member of the family of modern nation-states.”⁶⁴ Herzl emphasized that a Jewish state would be secular, liberal, and free of clericalism: religion and state would be strictly separate,⁶⁵ but the feasibility of this vision was always doubtful.

Zionists that immigrated to Palestine were usually Eastern European Orthodox Jews that arrived after the 1905 failure of the Russian Revolution. They emphasized

⁶³ Parzen, Herbert. *A Short History of Zionism*, 32.

⁶⁴ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 73.

⁶⁵ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 75.

Zionist-Socialist goals, “especially the use of Jewish labor on Jewish land.”⁶⁶ These Jews focused on both liberal and ethno-national definitions of citizenship. These communities relied on participation in the community to qualify for acceptance and membership.⁶⁷

Hasidic Central European Jews immigrated to Palestine in two major waves in 1919 and 1923. Many were active in labor organizations like the Zionists and provided agricultural and industrial support in the growing economy of the Yishuv.⁶⁸ At this time, the Yishuv was largely egalitarian and lacked major class divides. Most immigrants participated in the agricultural sector of the Palestinian economy. Whether they subscribed to Zionist Socialist views or more religious motivations, their coordinative discourse of this time emphasized Jewish unity over divisive disagreements. Truly coordinative, ideas and actors entered debates freely. Since communities were separate and autonomous, rhetoric avoided questions of normative beliefs and all found common cause in the very tangible goal of establishing a Jewish state.

The last major Yishuv group consisted of Orthodox Western European Jews. This wave coincided with major international changes after World War I and significantly altered the Yishuv community. Less concerned with socialism or traditional practices most of these Jews aimed for an incremental separation of state and religion, similar to

⁶⁶ Peretz, Don. *The Government and Politics of Israel*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press. 1983, 37.

⁶⁷ Jabotinsky founded the Revisionist Zionism movement in 1925. This movement focused on a stronger response to British occupation of Palestine. It would go on to become a part of the Likud party, but in my research I did not find its particular influence on the Ministry of Religious Services or the discourse surrounding it. (Virtual Library, Revisionist Zionism)

⁶⁸ Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 38.

the Western European nation-state system.⁶⁹ In day-to-day life, Orthodox Jews adhered to religious traditions, but were active in secular civil society. Many of these immigrants were physicians, engineers, musicians and PhDs with diverse skills. Distinctively middle class, they expanded the political and economic landscape of the Yishuv, and enhanced the non-Socialist liberal orientation, and increasing discussions of the future ideology and government of an Israeli state. Many of these Jews supported Ben-Gurion in his support of a secular state that employed laïcité.^{70 71}

Within the Yishuv, questions of citizenship remained within communities; each had its own basic definition of “Who is a Jew?” Zionists were by far the most vocal group and they employed a multitude of tactics to gain support. Their continued secularism alienated many Jews who saw it as “nonconformist and deviant.”⁷² Hasidic Jewish communities had strong advocacy coalitions of religious authorities (active in mandate courts and other institutions), community leaders, and more that adhered to more traditional lifestyles. Orthodox Western Jews sought refuge in Palestine and while significant, did not yet constitute a singular vision other than a mild support for secularism. Divisions fell by the wayside during the War of Independence. Many individuals rose to prominence, but David Ben-Gurion represented the face of the Jewish fight for independence. David Ben-Gurion was the Executive Head of the Western Zionist Organization and head of the Jewish Agency, and therefore, the de facto leader of

⁶⁹ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 77.

⁷⁰ Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 39.

⁷¹ Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 40.

⁷² Ben-Yehuda, *Theocratic Democracy: The Social Construction of Religious and Secular Extremism*, 13.

the Yishuv. A Zionist and a pragmatist, Ben-Gurion knew more traditional Judaism would have to be incorporated to the Jewish state. Like Turkey, Israel would ultimately rely on all three discourses of citizenship to create a singular Israeli nationalism. Employing pre-existing cultural artifacts, Israel relied heavily on a Jewish narrative. Therefore incorporation of religion into government was expected, but in the midst of independence compromises, conservative Orthodox forces gained control of the Religious Ministry. In doing so, they gained power to define “Jewishness” as a national philosophy. While “Turkishness” was important in the abstract, “Why is a Jew?” would have very real implications for life (and immigration to) the Jewish state. Like Turkey’s Kemal, Ben-Gurion struck an uneasy alliance with conservative religious forces that would carry long lasting consequences.

Impacts of Division

Independent Turkey and Israel were met with disparate populations, new territorial boundaries, violent independence wars, and an opportunity to create entirely new nation states. Tepe draws a stark comparison, stating, “This definition of an exogenous Turkish identity matches the parallel construction of the Israeli identity.”⁷³ Yet each encountered powerful religious forces that called for the primacy of religion in inspiring laws, norms and society.

At this stage of statehood, coordinative discourse and resulting alliances of advocacy collations stood poised to influence the course of each nation. Conservatives

⁷³ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 95.

and secularists had the support of their constituencies and continued to advocate unique narratives of citizenship. Ultimately, elites compromised to blend ethno-national and republican philosophies of citizenship that was immediately narrowed by religious sectarianism via Religious Ministries. By attempting to placate and sideline leaders of religious groups, each country inadvertently chose very narrow definitions of Turkishness and Jewishness. These similar occurrences would go on to override institutional legacies present in each country and create decades of dispute.

[II] Institutions produced

Sentient actors, advocacy coalitions, and their coordinative discourse produce institutions that reflect philosophies, programs and policies of the time. Discourse determines the normative rules to be adopted. Power sharing is determined by discursive coalitions and enshrined in initial institutional agreements. In Turkey, Kemal dominated any power sharing agreement with communicative force. Kemalists rode the tide of military success, propelled by nationalist tools to subordinate Islamist and Ottomanist forces. Rather than craft an agreement, Kemal and early leaders quelled Islamist power allowing them to control religious functions and responsibilities via the Presidency of Religious Affairs (under the government's watchful eye). Israel's coalitional alliances were much more visible in the first years of Independence. Secular Zionist and religious Orthodox both held ideational and material sway in significant portions of the population. Methods of framing the new Israeli narrative were very controversial and nearly every decision of governance required extensive debate. To negotiate these anxieties, initial power sharing agreements were epitomized in the lack of a single Israeli constitution. Instead, Zionist, Orthodox and other factions crafted a government that would be characterized by coalitional governments and continuously shifting power sharing agreements.

Turkish and Israeli independence did not occur in a vacuum and joined a long history of negotiated agreements between state and religion. Ottoman institutional and ideational legacies influenced both countries. Competing groups aimed for different iterations of laicism, and codification of agreements reached by discursive coalitions is

highlighted in a variety of power sharing agreements like the Ministries of Religion. Ultimately, each country built religious institutions as a political policy solution for broader disagreements. Ironically, this would backfire and reassign the power of defining citizenship from the general government to those ministries. This section will work to understand the legacies of the Ottoman Empire, followed by a discussion of what institutions were produced from discursive coalitions described in the last section. Both leaders relegated the Ministries of Religion to religious forces and inadvertently failed their laïcité efforts before they began. In the Turkish case, it will become clear that amidst competing ideational aims, a compromise was struck to enshrine both Kemal's definition of "Turkishness" and Islamist forces' goals of a narrow interpretation of Islam. In Israel we see a parallel course of events; the Yishuv period facilitated a myriad of disagreements, and state institutions preserved 1948 advocacy (and political) coalitions and an underdeveloped idea of citizenship.

Ottoman Institutional Legacies

The Ottoman Empire administration was a vast, dynamic institution, with broad influence in the region. It was, at its core, a Sunni caliphate, and religion influenced all aspects of government. Aral summarizes, "The Ottomans believed in a state based on their religion, i.e. Islam. They formulated this through the concept *din-u-devlet*, i.e. a state governed by religion as well as religion in the service of the state."⁷⁴ The institutions established under the Empire left legacies that each independence movement

⁷⁴ Aral, "The Idea of Human Rights as Perceived in the Ottoman Empire." 465.

had to contend with and negotiate. The Ottoman administration focused on the rights of collectives (rather than individuals) and on justice (rather than freedom).⁷⁵ Kemalists abolished nearly every institution while Israelis built on Ottoman and British systems, but the two countries eventually arrived at similar institutional set ups as a result of independence era compromises between laïcité seeking leaders and counter coalitions of conservatives. The political compromises struck following the Wars of Independence were a result of years of internal coordinative discourse. Coordinative discourse between Kemalists, Islamists and the rare minority group led to coordinative agreements on programs and policies, but a lack of agreement at the philosophical level meant institutions produced by these agreements were poised to upset tenuous agreements.

Kemal vs. Islamists: Laicism Realized

Institutional Legacies and Competing Aims

The greatest obstacle to establishing a new, legitimate Turkish government was contending with Ottoman institutional and philosophical legacies that intertwined religion and government. To counter this, the Young Turks and Mustafa Kemal introduced a radical form of westernization and secularization. The 1920s and 1930s saw top-down modernization, led by military men. In 1922, the Caliphate⁷⁶ and the Sultanate⁷⁷ were both abolished. A new caliph, Abudlmeceid II was elected, but this new office

⁷⁵ Aral, “The Idea of Human Rights as Perceived in the Ottoman Empire.” 454.

⁷⁶ The religious leader of the Muslim world.

⁷⁷ State leadership of the Ottoman Empire.

acknowledged the sovereignty of the nation and the national assembly.⁷⁸ The caliphate held centuries' worth of legitimacy from "leading" the Muslim world. Kemal fundamentally altered the proclaimed source of legitimacy for this leadership, and stated that the caliphate was now a political, not a religious, institution and it had always sought to control the Muslim world and was now only kept intact for historical and cultural reasons."⁷⁹ This shift is an example of Kemal's efforts to tie Turkish citizenship and nationalism to ancient Ottoman achievements, before the involvement of Islam.

Turkish leaders additionally discarded the Arabic alphabet, Islamic education, and an array of minority religious brotherhoods. In their new government, they utilized Western legal codes, Western time and weight measurements, and the Latin alphabet.⁸⁰ The government successfully appropriated Ottoman symbols, thus controlling discourse and establishing itself as the "founder of a new era" while simultaneously assuming the role of the fallen Ottoman Empire.⁸¹ Thus, Ottoman artifacts were demolished and each ideological group envisioned new ones to fill the void.

While Kemalists clearly attempted to complete secular and republican aims, conservative forces did influence some debates, especially regarding Islam. Conservatives advocated for the preservation and modification of the contemporary Sunni Hanafi Islam.⁸² Prior to Turkish independence and the Turkish revolution,

⁷⁸ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 94.

⁷⁹ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 95.

⁸⁰ Taspinar, "The Old Turks' Revolt: When Radical Secularism Endangers Democracy." 117.

⁸¹ Ozyurek, Esra. *The Politics of Public Memory in Turkey*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press. 2004, 4.

⁸² Brockett, Gavin. "Revisiting the Turkish Revolution, 1923–1938: Secular Reform and

Islamists gathered public support through calling for greater respect for the Sultan and Caliph. This religious mobilization of the populous was immediately interpreted as a threat, and the Committee of Union and Progress and Young Turk elites realized Islamist power to counter secularization.⁸³ Upon Kemalists' rise to power, they framed Islamists as backward, harking back to the dysfunction of the Ottoman Empire.⁸⁴ Islamists were related to traitors, reactionaries, fanatics, and bigoted.⁸⁵ By transforming the narrative, Kemalists effectively removed Islamists from positions of influence and isolated those involved in advocacy coalitions.

While the Young Turks and Kemalism idealized a secular government without religious influences, they quickly realized such a feat was impossible with such a religious population. As a compromise, they advocated a contained version of Islam. Turning to laicism and laiklik, they incorporated religious advocacy coalitions into the government, attempting to kill two birds with one stone- quiet their competitors and control the Islam used in new definitions of "Turkishness". This also kept Islamists in sight of the highly suspicious government. The freedom of religion, then, entailed a protection of "individualized" religion.⁸⁶ Ottoman era religious functions would be moved under the purview of the new Directorate of Religious Affairs that regulated

Religious Reaction." *History Compass* 4:6 (2006): 1063.

⁸³ Brockett, "Revisiting the Turkish Revolution, 1923–1938: Secular Reform and Religious Reaction" 1064.

⁸⁴ Brockett, "Revisiting the Turkish Revolution, 1923–1938: Secular Reform and Religious Reaction," 1063.

⁸⁵ Brockett, "Revisiting the Turkish Revolution, 1923–1938: Secular Reform and Religious Reaction," 1065.

⁸⁶ Gozyadin, "A Religious Administration to Secure Secularism: The Presidency of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey."

almost every aspect of Islam: its imams, sermons and other services.⁸⁷ Kemal and his contemporaries narrowly won normative and cognitive philosophical battles of independence years and gained the legitimacy necessary to revise Turkey's official relationship with religion.

Codifying Discourse: Islam Enshrined

In order to clear the institutional "room" for a new institution for religious affairs that subscribed to Kemalist and laiklik principles, the Turkish government passed Act no. 429 on March 3, 1924 that abolished the Ministries of Seriiyye and Evkaf.⁸⁸ Moving away from a ministry within the cabinet, the Turkish Republic established the Presidency of Religious Affairs as an administrative bureaucracy in the Constitution of 1924.⁸⁹

The laws establishing and defining the Presidency of Religious Affairs are contained in multiple sources of legislation. Article 129 of the 1924 Constitution states, "...and the Presidency of Religious Affairs will be formed as a part of the Republic for the implementation of all provisions concerning faith and prayer of the religion of Islam, and the administration of religious organizations,"⁹⁰ where Article 136 continues the aims of the Presidency of Religious Affairs are "to execute the works concerning the beliefs, worship, and ethics of Islam, enlighten the public about their religion, and

⁸⁷ Taspinar, "The Old Turks' Revolt: When Radical Secularism Endangers Democracy." 119

⁸⁸ Gozyadin, Istar. "A Religious Administration to Secure Secularism: The Presidency of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey." *Marburg Journal of Religion* 11:1 (2006).

⁸⁹ Gozyadin, "A Religious Administration to Secure Secularism: The Presidency of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey."

⁹⁰ Gormez, Mehmet. "The Status of the Presidency of Religious Affairs in the Turkish Constitution and Its Execution." *Muslim World* 98 (2008): 3.

administer the sacred worshipping places.”⁹¹ It is also to, “to direct all requirements and implications concerning beliefs and prayers of the religion of Islam and to run religious establishments.” Kemal moved any item related to faith, worship or the administration of religious organizations under the purview of the Presidency of Religious Affairs. To coordinate these efforts, a Religious Affairs High Council worked to “define, regulate and improve” religious affairs in Turkish society.⁹² This council was to be drawn from people who had mastered ‘Akaid-i islamiyye and ulumu ser’iyye’ (Islamic sciences and jurisprudence).⁹³ This council epitomizes the new Republic’s adherence to its Islamic past, but emphasis on new civil codes and legal systems. The few laws that determined the future of the Presidency of Religious Affairs encompassed both ethno-national and republican philosophical bases, exemplifying when a philosophical idea motivates an institutional programmatic solution.

The Constitution placed the Presidency of Religious Affairs under the purview of the Prime Minister, but other than the Religious Affairs High Council, made sparse suggestions to the intended internal structure.⁹⁴ A few years after its establishment, the first administration’s Budget Act (1927) included a permanent positions table within the Presidency of Religious Affairs. It set a preliminary organizational structure until the

⁹¹ Adanali, “The Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Principle of Secularism in Turkey,” 229.

⁹² Gormez, “The Status of the Presidency of Religious Affairs in the Turkish Constitution and Its Execution”, 3.

⁹³ Gormez, “The Status of the Presidency of Religious Affairs in the Turkish Constitution and Its Execution”, 3.

⁹⁴ Adanali, “The Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Principle of Secularism in Turkey.” 228

Assembly further detailed internal arrangements (which finally occurred in 1935).⁹⁵ Most importantly, the Presidency of Religious Affairs was a relatively autonomous “administrative” unit signaling the elites’ goal of separating the new institution from its potential sacredness.⁹⁶ The lack of internal structure dictated by initial laws highlight the lack of importance dedicated to this ministry. It was also a mistake on the part of the Kemalist government as conservative forces entrenched their ideals.

As with most new institutions, the Presidency of Religious Affairs evolved quickly in its first years of existence. In June 1931 another fiscal budget act transferred the management and personnel of all mosques and prayer rooms to the Presidency-General for Foundations. This was a reduction of responsibility for the Presidency of Religious Affairs and an indication of continuing debates between Kemalists and Islamists.⁹⁷

The entire establishment of the Presidency of Religious Affairs was a hugely political process guaranteed to garner serious debate. Kemalism hinged upon a “sterilized” Islam, contained in the government institution and channels.⁹⁸ In order to accomplish this, Kose states, “the Republican establishment tried to create a ‘local’ Turkish Islam that was completely ‘apolitical’ at the popular level. In addition, this vision

⁹⁵ Gozyadin, “A Religious Administration to Secure Secularism: The Presidency of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey.”

⁹⁶ Gozyadin, “A Religious Administration to Secure Secularism: The Presidency of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey.”

⁹⁷ Kose, “Between Nationalism, Modernism and Secularism: The Ambivalent Place of ‘Alevi Identities,” 599.

⁹⁸ Kose, “Between Nationalism, Modernism and Secularism: The Ambivalent Place of ‘Alevi Identities,” 598.

of Islam was meant to exclude the ‘low Islam’ or ‘Sufi Islam.’⁹⁹ To efficiently quell popular Islamist forces (outside of the political sphere) and seize their support, Kemal retroactively ensured the Presidency of Religious Affairs enshrined “true” Sunni Orthodox Islam. Its commentary on the *hadith* and the Quran were based on the Sunni tradition, particularly Hanafi principles.¹⁰⁰ The Presidency of Religious Affairs’ Islam thus incorporated conservative Islamist visions, but not smaller sects and other minorities. As Kose mentions, “This specific form of laicization made neither the Sunni cemaats and tariqats nor the Alevi communities happy.”¹⁰¹

This lack of inclusion and therefore lack of representation in a government institution is markedly undemocratic. In principle, Kemalist secularism guaranteed the rights and freedoms of all religions, but in practice, efforts to command Islamist forces resulted in discrimination against all not adherent to the “proper” Islam of Turkey. Turkey’s independence era definition of Turkishness was incredibly narrow, and limited citizenship discourse to mainly ethno-national ideals, with only a few republican ideals included. As a result, the institution produced mirrored these biases. In the next section, challenges to the institution will be met with fierce opposition since initial entrenchment followed such a narrow citizenship. In Israel, a similar process occurred as Ben-Gurion and his contemporaries worked to transform pre-independence institutions while simultaneously debating the future of Israeli citizenship.

⁹⁹ Kose, “Between Nationalism, Modernism and Secularism: The Ambivalent Place of ‘Alevi Identities,” 595.

¹⁰⁰ Kutlu, Sonmez. “The Presidency of Religious Affairs’ Relationship with Religious Groups (Sects/Sufi Order) in Turkey.” *Muslim World* 98 (2008): 249.

¹⁰¹ Kose, “Between Nationalism, Modernism and Secularism: The Ambivalent Place of ‘Alevi Identities,” 596.

Israel: A Land Dreamt of, A Nation Realized

Institutional Legacies, Competing Aims

Aside from obvious external tensions, the settlement of Israel was riddled with complications. Under Ottoman rule, Palestine was treated much like other holdings, and government was very decentralized. Primarily settled by traditional Arab communities, Palestine always possessed minorities, and in the late 1800s Palestine absorbed new Jewish communities. By the early 1880's no less than 5 major European immigrant Jewish settlements were taking root in Palestine.¹⁰² Some Jewish communities integrated with pre-existing towns and cities, while others created parallel governance structures. Local groups and communities coordinated most social, cultural and economic activities.¹⁰³ The Ottoman Jewish millet was lead by the hacam bashi (chief rabbi) of Jerusalem, also called rishon le-zion.¹⁰⁴ Jewish courts were separated under one Sephardi and one Ashkenazi chief rabbi; each community functioned under these separate courts.¹⁰⁵ This was the institutional solution to fundamentally different views of the source of law. In the Jewish tradition, laws derive from two sources of authority: dina d'malchuta dina (the laws of the land where one resides are binding) and takanot (regulations) established by the community."¹⁰⁶

The practice of dividing Sephardi and Ashkenazi courts was continued and

¹⁰² Parzen, Herbert. *A Short History of Zionism*. New York: Herzl Press. 1962, 25.

¹⁰³ Aral, "The Idea of Human Rights as Perceived in the Ottoman Empire." 467

¹⁰⁴ Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 184.

¹⁰⁵ Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 184.

¹⁰⁶ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 113.

Sephardi usually deferred to local laws and customs, where Ashkenazi Jews were usually isolated from the community at large.

expanded under the British mandate of Palestine. To create a semblance of unity, the mandate created a Supreme Rabbinical Council that would be jointly led by the chief rabbis.¹⁰⁷ These inherently religious courts had jurisdiction over personal-status matters such as marriage, divorce, alimony, and confirmation of wills.¹⁰⁸ In conjunction with this highly divided judicial system, the Yishuv community persisted in its divisions.

The question of “Who is a Jew?” dominated the Yishuv period. Each ethnic and religious group desired different characteristics, and disagreed on the method of defining citizenship. Tense disagreements arose, especially between Sephardim and Ashkenazi communities. After decades of living autonomously with other religions, the Sephardim were more amenable to integrating with existing society, while the Ashkenazi were more intent on establishing their ideal Israel. This schism existed within an ethno-national and republican discourse at the philosophical level of generality. Zionists placed socialist, liberal ideals alongside Jewish identity.¹⁰⁹ Their republican definition reflected their Western European origins and goal of integrating with Western society. The equality of liberal and Jewish motivations in this discourse posed a direct threat to more religious communities’ way of life. Although citizenship discourse highlighted differences within the Yishuv, the broader Jewish community at least agreed on the collective goal of an independent Jewish state.

Once Israel became a true nation, ideas were no longer abstract discourse, but the source of programmatic and policy solutions Israelis could take without the intervention

¹⁰⁷ Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 185.

¹⁰⁸ Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 185.

¹⁰⁹ More strict followers of Herzl also envisioned an Israel where state and religion were separate

of the British. Determining “Who is a Jew?” was not only a philosophical concern; Israel’s final decision would hold significant implications for the millions trying to immigrate to the new Jewish state. Ben-Gurion advocated for a broader definition of “Jewishness”, including any individual who considered himself Jewish, who conducted himself as a Jew and who was willing to accept the responsibilities of Jewish identification.¹¹⁰ Secular Zionists argued that it was under the purview of the state to determine Jewish nationality, while the Orthodox Rabbinate declared this definition was religious law, and therefore under their jurisdiction.¹¹¹ Previously, only the Chief Rabbinate (and the Orthodox parties that controlled it) could determine who was a Jew, and the Orthodox advocacy coalition fought for this broader definition. At independence they insisted on a narrower, halachic definition, fearing that a broader definition would not only “dilute Israel’s Jewishness”, but also that their exclusive authority would be undermined.¹¹² The Orthodox eventually coalesced into a strong political party, reflexive of their growing advocacy coalition. Ben-Gurion ultimately struck a deal with Orthodox parties: in exchange for support on his security issues, his Mapal (Labor) party would support their control of marriage, divorce, conversion and other personal issues.¹¹³ This alliance would go on to define Israeli politics for decades. While on the surface this looks to be an issue at the party level, it in fact stems from a much deeper debate on the cognitive definition of Jewishness.

¹¹⁰ Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 187.

¹¹¹ Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 188.

¹¹² Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 187.

¹¹³ Elath, Eliahu. *Britannica*, Academic edition, s.v. “Internet.” Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 2013. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/296740/Israel> accessed December, 2013.

Codifying Discourse: Ideological Alliances of Peace

Without a constitution, Israel's assorted bills, laws and acts create the skeleton of the state. As mentioned, Israel at independence possessed more factions (with stronger factions) than Turkey. The Orthodox advocacy coalition constituted the third largest political advocacy group, and was very effective at extracting concessions. Ben-Yehuda gives an example of the potency of Orthodox forces, "In 1948, Haredi party Agudat Israel demanded and received four political concessions: (1) the legal day of rest in Israel will be Saturday, (2) every state kitchen for Jews will be Kosher, (3) all legal matters governing personal status (for example, marriage and divorce) will be determined by Halakha,¹¹⁴ and (4) the autonomy of religious education will be guaranteed (that is, the establishment of independent, state-sponsored orthodox and ultraorthodox religious educational systems.)¹¹⁵ The Orthodox movement mobilized support remarkably well and unlike Turkey, could not be entirely sidelined or subordinated by secular forces.

One of the first (albeit minor) cabinet positions created in 1948 was the Minister of Religions and War Victims.¹¹⁶ This ministry was immediately placed under the control of the Orthodox in a political concession to maintain secular control of other facets of the government. In a move to placate them, the Orthodox were actually granted a ministry that would go on to influence core components of Israeli society. The Ministry of

¹¹⁴ Religious law.

¹¹⁵ Ben-Yehuda, *Theocratic Democracy: The Social Construction of Religious and Secular Extremism*, 22.

¹¹⁶ This was followed by the Minister of Religions in 1951, then the Minister of Religious Affairs in 1981. In 2003, the Ministry was dismantled, but in 2008 it was revived as under the Minister of Religious Services. For ease while discussing the institution that encompasses religious affairs in Israel, I will call it the Ministry of Religious Services.

Religious Services is closely tied to the religious courts in Israel, under the Chief Rabbinate. The Chief Rabbinate and the Supreme Rabbinical Council influence any Knesset law relevant to religious questions or the administrative duties of the Ministry of Religious Services. Their judgments on controversial issues (based on traditional Jewish law, or halacha) in turn influence the political system by mobilizing their followers and, in turn, prominent Orthodox parties.¹¹⁷¹¹⁸ Again, the parties mentioned are representative of a part of advocacy coalitions and since they exist in conjunction with the ministry, some of their leaders were sentient actors that could introduce, mold and propel ideas within the institution.

The Ministry of Religious Services historically holds an array of responsibilities, including: appointment of religious councils, provision of shortfall in approved budgets for religious facilities and services, the monitoring of budget implementation, supply of financial assistance to yeshivas, renovation and construction of physical facilities, construction and renovation of synagogues and ritual baths, maintenance of public order, facilitation of religious ties with diaspora, the monitoring of the observance of kashruth in public and government institutions, maintenance of religious services of non-Jewish groups, provided religious education for poor, provided, ritual articles to immigrants, educational institutions and support of the chief- rabbinate and managed rabbinical courts.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 184.

¹¹⁸ Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 184.

¹¹⁹ Jewish Virtual Library, "Ministry of Religious Services." Accessed April 2, 2014. <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Politics/relig.html>.

Additionally, the Ministry of Religious Services oversees religious services to the public via religious councils. There are more than 170 religious courts in Israel and local rabbis assist the Ministry of Religious Services. The Ministry of Religious services allocates much of its budget to the ultra-Orthodox (Haredi) educational and social services, religious and educational institutions (Yeshivas), religious youth movements, religious cultural institutions (which are institutions that hold Torah lessons for the ultra-Orthodox public) and the religious research institutions.¹²⁰ Shestreeet states, “This status of the Rabbinate...illustrates the strong association of state and the religious bodies in Israel.”¹²¹ Orthodox forces determined the general structure of the Ministry of Religious Services and used their bit of government control to favor their interpretation of Judaism.

Since the Ministry of Religious Services was a component of early political compromise, the Orthodox have always maintained control and influence via this ministry. Like Turkey, this led to the adoption of a particular (conservative) interpretation of Judaism and excluded minorities within and outside of Judaism. Like Turkey, the Ministry of Religious Services entrenched Orthodox power and guaranteed a permanent position of influence. The Ministry of Religious Services was a blow to Israeli assertions of secularism and led to claims of failure to ensure freedom of religion. As Shestreeet points out, the freedom of religion is under the Ministry of Religious Services and Orthodox dominance; every Israeli is subject to Orthodox interpretation and rules in the civil areas of marriage, divorce and other social areas. There is simply no secular option.

¹²⁰ Shestreeet, “State and Religion: Funding of Religious Institutions- The Case of Israel in Comparative Perspective.” 443.

¹²¹ Shestreeet, “State and Religion: Funding of Religious Institutions- The Case of Israel in Comparative Perspective.” 437.

¹²² The religious policy actors successfully secured continued ability to define Israeliness by its ability to define Jewishness. The Israeli story highlights similar problems of independence that never settled on a permanent, accepted philosophy of citizenship. Turkey and Israel were able to create policies and programs that relied upon uneasy alliances and coalitions and most importantly- loosely defined conceptions of citizenship. While this solved initial problems of government, it did not bode well for the stability of institutions.

Takeaways from Independence Era Solutions

Both Turkey and Israel rose from the ashes of violent wars with secularists, conservatives and other groups attempting to guide citizenship and nationalist discourse. Each had traditionalist forces clamoring for the presence of religion in the new nation state. Secular groups pushed for a wall of separation and republican values and principles to inspire governance. Where Turkey's Kemal was able to displace old legacies yet not eliminate religious influences, he simply relegated Islamic actors and advocacy collations to the PRA. A secularist approach legitimized the new Republic and moved it away from the remnants of the Ottoman Empire but alienated minorities not included in new definitions of citizen. Israel's Ben-Gurion similarly encountered challenges to his ideals of laicism. To accommodate the many different forces, early governments granted some autonomy to Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox advocacy and political coalitions and created the Ministry of Religious Services as a political concession established via coordinative

¹²² Shestreeet, "State and Religion: Funding of Religious Institutions- The Case of Israel in Comparative Perspective." 437.

discourse. Both Turkey and Israel inadvertently allowed conservative forces to define citizenship on the basis of religion when they granted religious parties the Religious Ministries. The lack of oversight into the internal structure of the Ministries meant religious forces quickly entrenched their interests and began programs and policies based on their particular philosophies. Their conceptualizations of citizenship rested on particular veins of Islam and Judaism and effectively altered the nationalist discourse.

[III] Evolutions

The Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Religious Services were creations of political compromise, intended to satisfy religious groups so that centrists could lead other, more influential portions of government. All institutions change, however, and the Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Religious Services display institutional evolution amidst extremely instable government atmospheres. From coups in Turkey to coalition government after coalition government in Israel, neither government nor its institutions escaped scrutiny or controversy. Domestic turmoil meant alliances were shaken and new openings for ideas and change appeared. Whether or not those ideas succeeded relied upon support within the institution, and interactions of actors and their coalitions.

Institutions are produced on initial power sharing agreements between advocacy coalitions of sentient actors who have successfully led coordinative discourse on philosophies, programs and policies and convinced the public of their merits via communicative discourse. By investigating shifts of motivations, interests, and alliances, it is possible to identify power adjustments stemming from the “coalitional foundations on which institutions rest.”¹²³ Within institutions, actors’ abilities, goals and strategies are altered and “the decisions of religious partisans and parties rest on and nest in multi-layered structures, and that is not only structural but ideational space.”¹²⁴ Institutional context is where ideas possess meaning, where discourse has communicative force, and

¹²³ Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan*, 33,

¹²⁴ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 63.

where collective actions make a difference.

In Israel and Turkey, Ministries of Religion underwent layering, displacement, drift and conversion at the hands of political actors. There are always pressures for an institution to change, whether they are internal or external. Sentient actors, whose motives are constrained by institutions, introduce incremental changes. What ultimately makes pushes for institutional change successful is the ability to alter national discourse and garner adequate support for the change. In Turkey and Israel, minority groups attempted to change the religious status quo to no avail. When more powerful external religious pressures threatened to alter previous coalitions, the ministries responded. In Turkey, the Presidency of Religious Affairs moved to isolate itself from Islamist forces, which successfully avoided direct confrontation. In Israel, the Orthodox controlling the Ministry of Religious Services fought off potential changes in funding abilities and renegotiated the coalition that underlined the Ministry of Religious Services' very existence. Communicative force is key in achieving institutional change and by investigating case where attempts failed and succeeded, it will be clearer how and where force must be applied. Why that force exists in the first place is a product of interactions that will shed additional insight. Changes were suggested in both Turkey and Israel because both nations experienced socio-cultural cleavages. In Turkey, a hierarchy of a modernist center and the conservative periphery mirrored divides between Ashkenazim and Sephardim in Israel. Divisions between secular, modern Orthodox, and ultra-Orthodox forces further exacerbated the Israeli divides.¹²⁵ For each ministry, I will

¹²⁵ Yusuf, *Mobilizing Religion in Middle East Politics*, 28.

explore a proposed change that did not garner enough support, and seek an explanation for one successful alteration to the status quo. In this comparison, the power of ideational force will be seen, and the amplifying abilities of institutional focus heard.

Turkey: External Threats, Internal Responses

External Pressures

Since the PRA's founding, it faced internal and external pressures. Islamist groups pushed for more recognition and control within the government, and the ability to influence Muslim life within Turkey. Outside government control, these Islamist coalitions have continued to mobilize populations to influence the government's treatment of religion. Since Kemalists and their successors never focused on the periphery of society or the complete legitimization of the Islamist power of the government, this population is remarkably simple to rally and mobilize.¹²⁶

¹²⁷ Additionally, minority groups claim they are severely underrepresented. The PRA's refusal to accept varied interpretations of Islam led to consistent critiques of the institution's democratic nature. Gozyadin states, "This is where the Presidency of Religious Affairs is criticized most frequently and severely with respect to equality."¹²⁸

Minority groups are especially affected by the narrow nature of the Ministry rooted in

¹²⁶ Brockett, "Revisiting the Turkish Revolution, 1923–1938: Secular Reform and Religious Reaction," 1067.

¹²⁷ Not discussed in this thesis is the Islamists incredible rise to political power, achieved by framing of socio-cultural, economic and moral issues. Islamist groups have found ardent supporters in most aspects of Turkish society. This newfound control significantly alters the balance of state-Islam relations today.

¹²⁸ Gozyadin, Istar. "A Religious Administration to Secure Secularism: The Presidency of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey."

Kemal's narrow definition of Turkishness. For decades, the Presidency of Religious Affairs has been far from welcoming to minority groups that are often not even recognized by the government of being different.

While the Alevi population and identity politics surrounding them has not garnered the same attention as the Kurdish minority in Turkey, it is no less of a divisive issue. While they petition for recognition, Alevis fear being “homogenized” under the government and PRA's Hanafi Sunni Islam.¹²⁹ Within the Alevi community itself, there is debate over whether the Alevi identity is an ethnic, sectarian or political one. Different Alevi groups prefer different terms, including a ‘sectarian group’, an ‘ethnic group’, ‘faith based social movement’ or ‘true Muslims.’¹³⁰ Ozmen defines Alevis as a distinctive group that adheres to Alevism;

“Alevism is a religious thought pattern embellished by some beliefs influential on the Anatolian lands for some period, such as shamanism, Buddhism, and Manichaeism, and later integrated with Sunni Islam. For this reason, we can say that Turkish Alevism, in other words, Anatolian Alevism, emerged as the nomadic Turkmen and Turkish clans accepted Islam and combined Sunni Islam with some of their already existing religious and mystic beliefs and traditions.”¹³¹

¹²⁹ Kose, “Between Nationalism, Modernism and Secularism: The Ambivalent Place of ‘Alevi Identities,” 957.

¹³⁰ Kose, “Between Nationalism, Modernism and Secularism: The Ambivalent Place of ‘Alevi Identities.” 957, 591.

¹³¹ Ozmen, Fazilet Ahu “The Alevi Identity and Civil Rights in the Twenty-First Century.” In *Societal Peace and Ideal Citizenship for Turkey*, edited by Rasim Ozgur Donmez and Pinar Enneli, 71–94. New York: Lexington Books, 2011, 76.

Alevi are Turkish speaking and of Turk/Turcoman origin,¹³² but since they do not subscribe to the Hanafi Sunni tradition, they reside outside of the Kemalist definition of citizenship. Unique religious and cultural qualities mean Alevi are a minority group without a status.¹³³ During the War of Independence, Kemal struck a deal with the Alevi leadership, promising freedom of religion and worship in the new regime for their support.¹³⁴ Instead, the new regime created the Presidency of Religious Affairs with the intention of subordinating political Islamists and no provisions for minorities were made. In early Turkey, there were no political avenues to voice discontent and Alevi refrained from campaigning to change the discriminatory system.¹³⁵

The tumultuous 1950s in Turkey led to an open party system. During this period, the public sphere burgeoned and expanded to an array of deviant identity expressions. These changes led to an increased call for minority and religious recognition. Both Alevi and Islamist forces began to politically mobilize and immediately aimed for the PRA.

Attempted Changes: Alevi on the Outside

After the turmoil of the 1950s, the military intervened for the first time in Turkish government.¹³⁶ The coup of 1960 and the resulting 1961 Constitution “created active

¹³² Kose, “Between Nationalism, Modernism and Secularism: The Ambivalent Place of ‘Alevi Identities,’” 957, 592

¹³³ Ozmen, “The Alevi Identity and Civil Rights in the Twenty-First Century,” 75.

¹³⁴ Gozyadin, Istar. “A Religious Administration to Secure Secularism: The Presidency of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey.”

¹³⁵ On that note, any protest was forcefully quelled by the Turkish military, so even if the Alevi had been organized, potential for earlier attempts is doubtful.

¹³⁶ This was the first official coup by the military, intended to restore “Kemalist” ideals of the republic.

citizens.”¹³⁷ Alevi populations seized the rare moment and released two declarations. Alevi leaders declared Alevi loyalty to the state and went on to explain “that Alevism is the core of Islam and that they were Muslims themselves and should be represented as a separate sect of the Presidency of Religious Affairs just like the Sunnis.”¹³⁸ In attempts to increase support, Alevis entered dialogue with other minority groups. Communicative discourse among religious minorities focused on the Presidency of Religious Affairs’ mishandling of religious differences and needs of specific groups. For example, in response to complaints of a shortage of mosques in rural regions, the Presidency of Religious Affairs continued to build mosques in Alevi areas but continued to appoint non-Alevi imams.¹³⁹ Alevism and Baktashism were ignored in Friday sermons and religious publications.¹⁴⁰ With the opening of the political system, Alevis articulated broad goals, but lacked the political organization and wherewithal to create true advocacy coalitions. Alevis simply could not coalesce to a point of discursive influence, and no sentient actors emerged prepared to argue and contest at the institutional level. Amidst internal debates of communal identity, Alevis were able to political mobilize but remained isolated from broader minority movements with different goals.

Even in their disorganization, Alevis and other groups pushed for change in the PRA. Their main goal was to fashion new departments within the Presidency of Religious Affairs that would address their specific demands. In 1963, riding a wave of perceived

¹³⁷ Donmez, “Beyond State-Led Nationalism: Ideal Citizenship for Turkey,” 78.

¹³⁸ Ozmen, “The Alevi Identity and Civil Rights in the Twenty-First Century,” 79.

¹³⁹ Kutlu, “The Presidency of Religious Affairs’ Relationship with Religious Groups (Sects/Sufi Order) in Turkey,” 249.

¹⁴⁰ Kutlu, “The Presidency of Religious Affairs’ Relationship with Religious Groups (Sects/Sufi Order) in Turkey,” 251.

liberation; a law was proposed to create a Directory of Religious Sects within the PRA. Hopes were high, and minority groups rallied among themselves. Quite importantly, the Turkish population did not rally behind them, or the new ideas that would expand not only policies or programs of religious inclusion, but an entire philosophical change to the relationship between the state, religion and religious groups. The proposed law was resoundingly shut down by the Turkish government. The regime stated that the law would “pave the way” for sectarianism, and clearly signaled that minorities would in no time soon attain greater representation.¹⁴¹ Internal divisions were the downfall of Alevi efforts, since without a cohesive effort; no actors were catapulted to a place of discursive or institutional influence.¹⁴² Neither Turkish elites nor the public supported their efforts to gain religious recognition in what was supposedly a secular republic. As a result, no sentient actors championed their cause, and no institutional arrangement was renegotiated. Even to this day, the Alevi minority is under represented by the PRA.¹⁴³

Successful Changes: Layering for Isolation

At the same time of Alevi attempts for recognition, elites within the Presidency of Religious Affairs realized the PRA’s exposure to populist pressures should they gain support (as Islamist forces potentially could). In response, the actors within the current coalition in power moved to isolate the institution from external influences. To do so,

¹⁴¹ Kutlu, “The Presidency of Religious Affairs’ Relationship with Religious Groups (Sects/Sufi Order) in Turkey,” 250.

¹⁴² Kose, “Between Nationalism, Modernism and Secularism: The Ambivalent Place of ‘Alevi Identities.’” 957. 594

¹⁴³ In later decades, many Alevis developed leftist tendencies, and continue to fight political Islamism that is even more harsh than Kemalism towards Alevi practices.

they engaged in institutional layering. In June 1965, the government passed Act 633 that significantly shifted the duties and structure of the PRA.¹⁴⁴ This law sought to:

- a. To determine the duties and responsibilities of the Presidency of Religious Affairs in accordance with the principle of secularism and the freedom of religion and conscience indicated in the constitution;
- b. To bring under a unified law various regulative changes and amendments concerning the PRA;
- c. To provide financial support for the Presidency of Religious Affairs and make the institution attractive for young people who are equipped in the moral and positive sciences;
- d. To increase the number of those who have competence in scholarly studies on various religious topics and use the results of their studies to serve and enlighten society, and thus solidify the unity and integrity of the nation in matters of faith and moral principles by removing bigotry and superstition, which were not permitted by the religion of Islam.¹⁴⁵

This law also created the “Higher Council of Religious Affairs” with eleven members to be determined by an election and approved by the Cabinet. Additional responsibilities were granted to the PRA, including the taking of “protective measures that maintain the loyalty of Muslim citizens to the national ideals.”¹⁴⁶ A moral dimension

¹⁴⁴ Gozyadin, Istar. “A Religious Administration to Secure Secularism: The Presidency of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey.”

¹⁴⁵ Kutlu, “The Presidency of Religious Affairs’ Relationship with Religious Groups (Sects/Sufi Order) in Turkey.”

¹⁴⁶ Adanali, “The Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Principle of Secularism in

was added to the laundry list of Presidency of Religious Affairs duties in 1965. The new law stated, “The responsibilities of the Presidency of Religious Affairs are to direct what is related to the principles of beliefs, prayers and ethics of Islam and to enlighten society on matters of religion and to run places of worship.”¹⁴⁷ These efforts were widely supported by those within the institution, since it enabled their larger visions for the ministry.

This law set the stage for continued expansion of the Presidency of Religious Affairs, ultimately resulting in personnel education centers, and a directorate for foreign relations (providing for personnel who were to provide religious services to Turkish citizens living abroad) among other departments. Legal changes involved were initially administrative in nature, but led to government reliance on cabinet decrees rather than constitutional changes to adjust the Presidency of Religious Affairs. Since these laws, the Presidency of Religious Affairs has become incredibly difficult to alter or change, legally or informally by drift of policy implementation. In short, the Presidency of Religious Affairs effectively isolated itself, and became protected from future waves of peripheral pressure that could be applied by the national legislature.¹⁴⁸

The vast expansion of the Presidency of Religious Affairs is significant. With the increased internal bureaucracy, the Presidency of Religious Affairs now relied on

Turkey,” 232.

¹⁴⁷ Adanali, “The Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Principle of Secularism in Turkey,” 232.

¹⁴⁸ Adanali, “The Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Principle of Secularism in Turkey.”, 231.

governmental decrees to adjust its internal functions.¹⁴⁹ This effectively isolated the Presidency of Religious Affairs against peripheral (i.e. Islamist and minority) forces. At the time, this was a deft move by institutional elites to subvert Islamist forces. By moving to protect the established methods of interaction between actors, the institution stalled other large-scale evolutions that would jeopardize the status quo.

Lessons of Change

The attempted and successful changes to the Presidency of Religious Affairs highlight the power of elites in transforming discourse and identifying pressures. In the case of the Alevis, popular opinion and discourse did not influence the elected political body of the Turkish National Assembly or influence the detached civil servants within the institution. At the same time, however, Islamist forces threatened to gain influence of the entire political system. Through institutional channels, and the interactions within institutions (and the discourse, coalitions, and policies that result) discursive communities can grow to advocacy coalitions, capable of real influence. Tepe underlines why this is important; "...the state's role and power in society does not take a single form once its institutions emerge- the entire political system may undergo significant changes that modify the environments of social actors and alter their leverages to such an extent that once marginalized groups may decisively influence the outcomes of states' actions."¹⁵⁰ To preserve Kemalist ideals of Turkishness, the Islamist forces had to be subordinated.

¹⁴⁹ Gozyadin, Istar. "A Religious Administration to Secure Secularism: The Presidency of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey."

¹⁵⁰ Tepe, *Beyond Sacred and Secular: Politics of Religion in Israel and Turkey*, 65.

The initial set up of the Presidency of Religious Affairs keep religious forces within the parameters of republican government, and expansions of 1965 increased these institutional capabilities.

The Turkish case carries unfortunate predictions for Turkish democracy. The continued exclusion of Alevis and other religious minorities highlights the incapability of Kemal's national identity to encompass *all* Turks. By so narrowly defining the religious aspects of Turkishness, and the subsequent enshrinement of those ideals in the Presidency of Religious Affairs placed Alevis in an uphill battle. Not only did the Alevis have to aim to change particular policies, but to accomplish real institutional evolution, they would have needed to incite philosophical and programmatic change as well. Without the proper support, it simply wasn't possible. Successful change within the institution occurred when policy actors within the Presidency of Religious Affairs and other government sectors came to agree that the Presidency of Religious Affairs needed to maintain autonomy. An efficient advocacy coalition of a variety of actors saw their coordinative discourse come to fruition via tangible policy change. In Israel, a similar situation is seen. Orthodox forces were given control of the Ministry of Religious Services from the first coalitional government, and while minority efforts to change the program were unsuccessful, pushes for increased autonomy were.

Israel: Minority Attempts, Conservative Retaliations

Pressures from Within

The central debate in Israel has always been the definition of “Who is a Jew?” From religious authorities to secular nationalists, the methods of characterizing a Jew are many. This problem is permanently relevant, as Israel (and the Zionist movement it derives from) is inherently Jewish.¹⁵¹ Additionally, individuals from around the world apply to immigrate to Israel every day, and in order to gain citizenship, they must be able to prove they are a Jew. Therefore, who is a Jew? Who is Israeli? Ben-Yehuda states, “Many political and governmental crises in this country can be traced to this whirlpool of tensions, which also served as a main topic for coalition governments. The issue here is deep and inherently divisive, because it touches the very essence of what Israel is or should be.”¹⁵² Peretz points out that only the Orthodox have a “clear-cut, unambiguous definition of who is a Jew, based on traditional Jewish law” which includes those whose mother is Jewish or those who have converted according to halacha.¹⁵³ Since the creation of Israel, there have been non-Orthodox communities that are discriminated against and push for greater religious freedom.¹⁵⁴

The Orthodox community is undoubtedly a minority community, but with control of the Ministry of Religious Services and Chief Rabbinate Orthodox practices dominate

¹⁵¹ Not to mention its direct implications in the implementation of the Law of Return, enacted in 1950.

¹⁵² Ben-Yehuda, *Theocratic Democracy: The Social Construction of Religious and Secular Extremism*. 8.

¹⁵³ Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 187.

¹⁵⁴ Shestreet, “State and Religion: Funding of Religious Institutions- The Case of Israel in Comparative Perspective,” 440.

Israeli society. Decisions of the chief rabbinate affect the entirety of Israelis, especially in matters pertaining to personal status.¹⁵⁵ Conservative and Reform rabbis are not allowed on the religious courts, do not carry out marriage ceremonies, cannot serve in the military rabbinate, and do not receive salaries from the state.¹⁵⁶ Additionally, the state finances religious institutions, especially Orthodox-Jewish ones. This influence is doubled by the significant political power of the ultra-orthodox parties in the Knesset.¹⁵⁷ With the ever-increasing immigration to Israel, society is continually affected by Orthodox political power, especially as executed in the Ministry of Religious Services.

Attempted Change: Weak Laws and Conversion

One of the most controversial components of Israeli religious tensions is the distribution of funds by the Ministry. Since the Ministry of Religious Services' founding, Haredi "cultural activities" were significantly over funded. Institutions that gained this additional funding included Haredi educational and social services, Yeshivas,¹⁵⁸ youth movements, and other religious institutions. Initially, government budgets contained requirements to include a list of sums allocated to religious institutions by name, but no laws designated amounts or ratios of funds between religious sects.¹⁵⁹ Non-Orthodox groups claim that Haredi and other ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox activities are

¹⁵⁵ Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, 186.

¹⁵⁶ Shestree, "State and Religion: Funding of Religious Institutions- The Case of Israel in Comparative Perspective," 440.

¹⁵⁷ Shestree, "State and Religion: Funding of Religious Institutions- The Case of Israel in Comparative Perspective," 442.

¹⁵⁸ Religious educational institutions.

¹⁵⁹ Shestree, "State and Religion: Funding of Religious Institutions- The Case of Israel in Comparative Perspective," 443.

overfunded, effectively lessening their representation within the Ministry. In 1985, a Budget Foundations Law came to vote as an amendment to the national budget. In the law, each category of public institutions would receive equal distributions of financial support. In theory, the Ministry of Religious Services was required to appropriate an “inclusive sum of support for every category of public institutions, which would be equally distributed to all institutions included in that same category.”¹⁶⁰ Surprisingly the law was passed, but it failed in implementation, exemplifying Thelen’s model type of change conversion. A loophole in the law meant that the Ministry of Religious Services could differentiate between public and private institutions, and could continue granting greater allowances to Orthodox Yeshivas.¹⁶¹ This was possible because in the law, the equal allowance requirement applied to institutions in the same category, and equal distribution was only required *within* categories. A simple recategorization nullified the entire law. Additionally, the Independent Education System of the Ashkenazi and the Sephardi Center of Fountain of Religious Education in Israel gained exceptions. Both of these institutions were Haredi education networks and were (unsurprisingly) given greater funding.¹⁶²

The passage of the Budget Foundations Law highlights the non-Orthodox public frustration with the apparent favoritism within the Ministry of Religious Services. Secular groups and minority religious groups alike complain of inadequate state funding and

¹⁶⁰ Shestreet, “State and Religion: Funding of Religious Institutions- The Case of Israel in Comparative Perspective,” 443.

¹⁶¹ Shestreet, “State and Religion: Funding of Religious Institutions- The Case of Israel in Comparative Perspective,” 443.

¹⁶² Shestreet, “State and Religion: Funding of Religious Institutions- The Case of Israel in Comparative Perspective,” 443.

through communicative discourse pushed their political parties to alter the status quo. While these epistemic communities were able to garner enough support for an institutional change to be made, the institution itself was resilient enough to continue its usual practices. This is a case of conversion, where a law was passed but is significantly altered during stages of implementation. The Orthodox establishment within the Ministry of Religious Services was simply too powerful. Like in Turkey, the Ministry that initially worked to incapacitate conservative forces instead marginalized other aspects of society.

*Successful Change: Layering for Isolation*¹⁶³

Cleavages in Israeli society occur between religious sects, ethnic divides, economic divisions and more. The divide between ultra-Orthodox, Orthodox and secular Jews has roots in the Yishuv period. Tensions between the Sephardim and Ashkenazim increased in later decades as Jews from the Middle East immigrated to Israel after escalating conflicts between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Domestic Israeli conflict is particularly unique as groups form along both ethnic and religious lines. For example, the Shas party (the Sephardic Torah Guardians) represents Sephardi ultra-Orthodox Jews. They are a Haredi party that seeks to fight perceived discrimination from Ashkenazi (both secular and religious) Jews. Formed in 1984, the Shas party has been in each

¹⁶³ Knesset, "The Ministry of Religious Services." Last modified January 05, 2006. Accessed April 2, 2014. <http://www.dat.gov.il/על־אודותינו/המשרד/default.htm>, Nevo, "Protocol No. 99 Meeting of the State Control Committee." Last modified June 08, 2011. Accessed April 2, 2014. http://www.nevo.co.il/law_html/law103/bikoret2007-06-12.htm., Walla, Sefi. "Approved Re-establishment of Ministry of Religious Affairs." *Walla*, January 06, 2008. <http://news.walla.co.il/?w=/9/1218157> (accessed April 2, 2014) - Special thanks to Ward Taye for translation assistance.

government since, and increasingly gained power in the late 1990s.¹⁶⁴ While the National Religious Party (a religious Zionist party) held the post of Minister of Religious Services for much of the ministry's history, Orthodox forces influenced the allocation of funds, public support for traditional education and more. With the rise of the Shas party, they gained leadership of the Ministry of Religious Services more consistently (ensuring their influence in the broader Israeli government). Secular and center parties began to express their concern at augmented influence, and in 2003 Shenoy ("Change", a liberal secular party) politicians campaigned against Orthodox extremist parties. Communicative discourse of elites easily mobilized thousands of Israelis, who collectively advocated for the decrease of power for Orthodox coalitions.

In a deal to form a new coalition government, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon agreed to close the Ministry of Religious Services.¹⁶⁵ The Prime Minister himself served as Minister of Religious Affairs for 11 months in 2003.¹⁶⁶ In January 2004, the Ministry was abolished.¹⁶⁷ While "abolished" the Ministry continued functioning, however, and was incorporated to other broader institutions. Institutional replacement was in full effect. Just a few years later, Shas and other religious parties gained influence in the Knesset. In 2006, Yitzhak Cohen (of the Shas party) gained the post of Minister without Portfolio, in

¹⁶⁴ *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, s.v. "Shas," Accessed April 10, 2014, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/755711/Shas>

¹⁶⁵ At the time, the Ministry of Religious Services was entitled the Ministry of Religious Affairs, but for continuity's sake I will continue to refer to it as the Ministry of Religious Services.

¹⁶⁶ Knesset, "Ministry of Religious Services." Last modified April 05, 2014. Accessed April 10, 2014.

http://www.knesset.gov.il/govt/eng/GovtByMinistry_eng.asp?ministry=12.

¹⁶⁷ Knesset, "Ministry of Religious Services."

charge of religious councils (leading to a de facto reestablishment of the Ministry).¹⁶⁸ In 2008, the Ministry was reinstated as the Ministry of Religious Services, and continued to function as it always has, under Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox control.

The changing legal definitions of the Ministry of Religious Services seems to be a force of Israeli political parties, or as a result of the electoral system that allows significant influence of small political parties, but that explanation does not fully explain the incremental evolution of the Israeli political atmosphere. Yusuf explains the triumph of the Shas party as a result of mobilization of peripheral factions of Israeli society. Yusuf argues that through framing in national discourse, religious parties were able to garner political support by “resonating” with socio-cultural grievances communicated through social networks and “articulated by credible agents.”¹⁶⁹ He continues, “Shas...not only emerged as political actors, but have also developed into social movements mobilizing masses with elaborate social networks.”¹⁷⁰ After they were excluded from the Sharon government in 2003, they toned down their rhetoric while increasing internal pressures to regain control of Ministries and policy decisions. External pressure escalated as advocacy coalitions increased calls for inclusion in the government. An incremental change was seen in the appointment of Minister Cohen to Minister without Portfolio, and culminated in a reestablishment of the Ministry.

Attaining information on the Ministry of Religious Services is notoriously

¹⁶⁸ Jewish Virtual Library, "Yitzhak Cohen." Last modified April 05, 2014. Accessed April 10, 2014.

http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Yitzhak_Cohen.html.

¹⁶⁹ Yusuf, *Mobilizing Religion in Middle East Politics*, 5.

¹⁷⁰ Yusuf, *Mobilizing Religion in Middle East Politics*, 3.

difficult, as is the lack of transparency around the Ministry's policies and practices. The Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox favoritism is found in budgetary details (like the successful allocation of funds to religious educational centers) but overall the Ministry is complex and rarely understood. The jostle of advocacy coalitions present in Israel is clear in the closure and reopening of the Ministry of Religious Services. To take away a ministerial position, Sharon clearly felt he had the public and elite support of secular actors. The continuation of Ministry of Religious Services' functions, however, show that the institution had effectively entrenched itself in Israeli society and governance. The entire progression is a display of replacement and conversion (when the ministry conducted its affairs under other ministries), layering (when Cohen was awarded the Minister without Portfolio position), and more layering when it was reestablished. The disorganized back and forth of the Ministry of Religious Services hints to the underlying debate of the place of religion in government. Sixty-five years after its founding, Israel continues to face internal divisions regarding its national identity.

Impacts of Change

In each of these cases, the power of the Orthodox institution and its advocacy coalitions within Israel is highlighted. It is powerful within the government as a result of Israel's unique electoral system, and whether the majority party is the Labor or Likud party, elites need the support of Orthodox groups. As a result of compromises struck with Orthodox Jews decades ago, the Israeli government remains swayed by their discourse and demands. The Israeli Ministry of Religious Services is an ideal example of how

rational actors cannot solely influence an entire system, and how sociological change is not powerful enough to alter an institution. Discourse within and surrounding the institution must demand change, and the coalitions at the foundation of the power sharing agreements within an institution must be under significant pressure to realign. Without this combination of forces, institutions will withstand pressure or deflect change.

Lessons of Institutional Change

Instrumental in establishing the relationship between church and state, the Ministries of Religion in Turkey and Israel were established as minor ministries without a dictated internal structure. Both faced intense pressure from conservative groups to expand, isolate, and continue favoring specific interpretations of Islam and Judaism. Political dominance in the early Turkish republic meant minority groups functioned at the periphery of influence, while in Israel conservative groups immediately forged an alliance with centrists to warrant a place of authority from within the government. Minority groups attempted to instigate change but could not garner adequate support for their alterations. Secular groups in Turkey successfully were able to change the Presidency of Religious Affairs through layering that isolated the Ministry from external forces. Conservative groups in Israel were not able to initially defend their precious Ministry but were able to retaliate and reestablish the Ministry only a few years after its demise. Thelen's modes of institutional change explain these successes and failures. Political realignment can lead to real change.¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain,*

While these case studies are beneficial in employing the lens of historical and discursive institutionalism, they also highlight the challenges democratic governments face when attempting to incorporate religion into institutions. Both Turkey and Israel aimed to establish modern secular states that would represent liberal and republican values. Each had to bow to religious pressures, however, and in doing so turned to laicism that then was never completely implemented. This failure and the subsequent enshrinement of a particular interpretation of religion failed to properly represent the entirety of Turkish and Israeli populations. Marginalization led to socio-cultural cleavages, populations that could be mobilized and sentient actors that had the influence and position to introduce, mold and execute new aspects of discourse.¹⁷² By tracing the evolutions of these institutions, it is clear that institutions shape the interactions of actors that give context to ideas, force to discourse and power to collective action. Although they began under different institutional constructions, Turkish and Israel's ideological philosophies led to similar evolutions within their Religious Ministries, and have led to similar alienation of minorities and a failure to include "all" Turks and Israelis.

the United States, and Japan, 33.

¹⁷² Yusuf, *Mobilizing Religion in Middle East Politics*, 19.

Conclusions

Turkey and Israel are incredibly influential players in the modern international system, and their internal political disputes play out on the international stage. Domestic political debates are clearly reflected in their Ministries of Religion. Turkey's Islamist parties have been garnering intense focus in recent years, as have the Israeli ultra-Orthodox. These conservative groups are significant for every facet of government, but the Religious Ministries are particularly good for highlighting the discursive struggles amidst individual actors, advocacy coalitions, and the community as a whole. These disagreements extend to the general public who continue to struggle with national definitions of citizenship. Even though both countries attempted to emulate laicism and the French model, the Ministries of Religion became divisive institutions that alienated minorities and enabled narrow definitions of "Who is a Turk?" and "Who is a Jew?" Each ministry set up an inherently flawed, factious system based on a quick policy solution that enshrined conservative beliefs. Subsequent alterations to the Ministries further reinforced conservative forces and highlighted the importance of gaining discursive unity at the philosophical level of generality before campaigning for institutional change.¹⁷³

Turkey and Israel became nation states during two of the most volatile periods in international history. Rarely was a discursive struggle over definitions of citizenship and nation so extensive, and were so many actors able to contribute to national discourse on

¹⁷³ Much later in the Turkish case, but isolation of the Presidency of Religious Affairs meant Islamist parties could more easily adjust religious policies once they were in power.

matters of the state and governance. From citizenship to nationalist rhetoric, a myriad of advocacy coalitions sought to establish government structures in their own image. The omnipresence of religion was felt by all, and a key component of defining the new states. In Turkey, Ottomanism, Pan-Turkism, Islamism, and Kemalism battled for influence in discursive communities and struggled via coordinative and communicative discourse. Kemal struck a deal with the Islamist advocacy coalition and incorporated religion via the Presidency of Religious Affairs and inadvertently allowed them to determine the future of Turkish citizenship and nationalism. A similar situation occurred in Israel, where Zionist leader Ben-Gurion compromised with Orthodox advocacy coalitions. Their control of the Ministry of Religious Services dictated definitions of “Jewishness”. In both countries, advocacy coalitions of seculars and conservatives battled over normative definitions of citizenship as pre-existing communities fought for autonomy. Amidst these debates, two ‘secular’ nation states were born, and religion was incorporated into government. Each centrist decided to “Keep his friends close, and his enemies closer”, and lose a battle in hopes of winning the war for a modern state. Most importantly, the creation of these ministries cemented the adoption of ethno-national grounds for citizenship, rather than only republican values. These institutions went on to define interactions between religious groups and the government, as well as inter-religious relations. As time went on, countless groups advocated change within the Ministries, yet most failed.

Even though both Turkey and Israel sought to institute laicism, they failed when conservative groups were allowed control of the Religious Ministries and when initial codification neglected to determine the internal structure of the institutions. Conservative

groups were able to entrench their ideals and interpretations of Islam and Judaism. Later attempts to alter the ministries realized the institutional constraints keeping them from effective change. In Turkey, the Alevi minority could not translate their public discourse into a true advocacy coalition without the support of elites. In Israel, non-Orthodox epistemic communities were able to garner some public support, but were no match for the thoroughly entrenched Orthodox ideals. In both cases, initial ideational values were codified into institutions that then resisted change. The only time these institutions evolved were in efforts to isolate themselves from further change. Turkey's Presidency of Religious Affairs effectively changed the legal routes of changing the institution and removed itself from influence of the parliamentary government. Israel's Ministry of Religious Affairs was once again traded in a political deal, but quickly resurfaced stronger than ever. Through both cases we see the resilience of ideas and the institutions they produce.

While these case studies are beneficial in employing the lens of historical and discursive institutionalism, they also highlight the challenges democratic governments face when attempting to incorporate religion into institutions. Both Turkey and Israel aimed to establish modern secular states that would represent liberal and republican values. Each had to bow to religious pressures, however, and in doing so turned to laicism that then was never completely implemented. This failure and the subsequent enshrinement of a particular interpretation of religion failed to properly represent the entirety of Turkish and Israeli populations. Marginalization led to socio-cultural cleavages, populations that could be mobilized and actors that had the influence and

position to introduce, mold and execute new aspects of discourse.¹⁷⁴ By tracing the evolutions of these institutions, it is clear that institutions shape the interactions of actors that give context to ideas, force to discourse and power to collective action. Although they began under different institutional constructions, Turkish and Israel's ideological philosophies led to similar evolutions within their Religious Ministries, and have led to similar alienation of minorities and a failure to include "all" Turks and Israelis

While the instances highlighted in this thesis are historically removed from today's news, they are incredibly relevant to contemporary discussions. The relationship between religion and state dominates Turkish and Israeli politics, and permeates into every facet of government. Although initial leaders desired laicism, their political dealings led to an entrenchment of religious ideals and doomed the experiment of laïcité from the start. Additionally, countless countries pursue paradigms of laicism, and academic literature would do well to consider alternative interpretations of separation of church and state. Last, comparing Turkey and Israel reminds readers that debates regarding of religious influence on government are not particular to one religion or another and affect every nation.¹⁷⁵ It is incredibly valuable to consider the origins of contemporary institutions, and how they arrived at current iterations, because such changes shed light on the political compromises struck, the forces at work, and the amount of support needed to truly change such an integral part of society.

¹⁷⁴ Yusuf, *Mobilizing Religion in Middle East Politics*, 19.

¹⁷⁵ Tepe, "Moderation of Religious Parties: Electoral Constraints, Ideological Commitments, and Capacities of Religious Parties in Israel and Turkey", 470.

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