

**Niches in the Islamic Religious Market and Fundamentalism:  
Examples from Turkey and Other Countries**  
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**1. Interbrand and Intra-brand Competition in Semi-Monopolistic Religious Markets**

The aim of this paper is to discuss how the sociological theory of religious economy may be relevant for analyzing the competition in the semi-monopolistic religious markets of countries with large Islamic majorities. In this section, I would mention very shortly general methodological issues, building from a previous study of Italy (a semi-monopolistic market because of its large *Roman Catholic* majority) before applying the theory to Islam and focusing in particular on a case study of Turkey.

One of the main tenets of the religious economy theory is that "to the degree that religious economies are unregulated and competitive, overall levels of religious commitment will be high. (Conversely, lacking competition, the dominant firm[s] will be too inefficient to sustain vigorous marketing efforts, and the result will be a low overall level of religious commitment, with the average person minimizing and delaying payment of religious costs.)"<sup>1</sup> The theory predicts that, contrary to the secularization thesis, religiousness levels will be higher and religious organizations will be stronger where pluralism is greater.

Italy offers an interesting test case. As Rodney Stark and I discussed elsewhere, religious attendance consistently declined after World War II as long as religious pluralism was minimal, and State tried to protect a Roman Catholic monopoly. When religious economy became somewhat deregulated, with massive immigration of non-Catholics and legislation effectively protecting religious minorities, religious attendance in general began to grow rather than decline, an almost unique phenomenon in Western Europe<sup>2</sup>. The analysis I and Stark proposed met with several objections from Italian sociologists. They conceded that Italian data are an effective weapon against any theory which regards secularization as a necessary correlate of modernization and democratization. In fact, modernization and the expansion of religious liberty and pluralism in Italy caused church attendance to experience a moderate growth rather than decline. But, they object, these Italian data do not really corroborate the religious economy theory either. In fact, Italian religious pluralism is mostly theoretical. According to data I myself published in 2001, all minorities other than the Roman Catholic Church account in Italy for 1.9% of Italian citizens and 35% of those living in Italy, including non-citizen immigrants and guest workers.<sup>3</sup> We have thus in Italy, or so the objection goes, a growth of religious attendance in a situation of de facto religious monopoly, where the religious economy theory would in fact associate monopoly and decline.

This has been called, by a sociologist sympathetic to religious economy, "the Italian puzzle."<sup>4</sup> The puzzle, however, is not without solutions. First of all, Stark and I argued that perceived pluralism is at least as important as real pluralism. In Italy political events leading to the end of the Christian Democrat hegemony in 1994, new legislation on religion, and above all a spectacular increase in

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<sup>1</sup> Rodney Stark, Rodney - Roger Finke, *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000,) 201.

<sup>2</sup> See Rodney Stark - Massimo Introvigne, *Dio è tornato: Indagine sulla rivincita delle religioni in Occidente* (Casale Monferrato [Alessandria]: Piemme, 2003.)

<sup>3</sup> See Massimo Introvigne - PierLuigi Zoccatelli - Nelly Ippolito Macrina - Verónica Roldán., *Enciclopedia delle religioni in Italia* (Leumann [Torino]: Elledici, 2001.)

<sup>4</sup> Luca Diotallevi, *Il rompicapo della secolarizzazione italiana: Caso italiano, teorie americane e revisione del paradigma della secolarizzazione* (Soveria Mannelli (Catanzaro): Rubbettino, 2001:) Diotallevi, "Internal Competition in a National Religious Monopoly: The Catholic Effect and the Italian Case," *Sociology of Religion* 63:2 (Summer 2002,) 137-155.

immigration, mostly from Moslem countries, during the 1980s and 1990s made religious pluralism a hotly debated cultural and political issue. While the average Italian living outside the largest cities before the 1970s may have never seen a non-Christian, with the exception of a very small Jewish minority (and, of course, of atheists,) in the 1990s and 2000s even the most remote village is host to Moslem, Hindu, and other non-Christian immigrants. September 11, of course, greatly increased the perception of a “Muslim invasion,” popularized by the controversial bestsellers of Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci,<sup>5</sup> although numbers remain much smaller than in other Western European countries. This increased perception of pluralism may have just the same effects as real pluralism.

On the other hand, religious competition, as competition in other fields, may be either interbrand or intrabrand. Competition, for example, shows its healthy effects in the car market not only when several car manufacturers compete in the same market, but also when a semi-monopolistic car company is able to differentiate between very different product lines and models, thus creating intrabrand alternatives where little interbrand competition exists. This may also be true for religion. Outside the religious economy field, sociologist Niklas Luhmann (1927-1988) analyzed large churches as conglomerates of several different micro-churches (congregations, movements, religious orders,) each with a very large degree of internal autonomy and at times pursuing competing agendas.<sup>6</sup> “Differentiation” was long perceived by Italian sociologists as both a key feature of Italian Roman Catholicism and a source of its strength, compared to neighboring countries such as France or Switzerland, where the Catholic organization is much more centralized and is still mostly focusing on the parish system. In Italy, largely autonomous movements, brotherhoods and similar institutions account for the large majority of church-goers.<sup>7</sup> In short, Roman Catholicism is so large that what appears at first sight as a Catholic monopoly in fact hides a vibrant intrabrand religious market where semi-independent Catholic firms compete for the allegiance of the largely Roman Catholic population. This intrabrand competition is, of course, not identical to interbrand competition. It may, however, cause similar effects, particularly when one considers that in the market on which religious economy theory was originally based, the United States, the most visible competition is intra-Protestant, with the different Protestant “firms” largely recognizing the other firms as legitimate participants in a common Christian enterprise. Competing Roman Catholic firms in Italy would claim just the same.

Religious economy focuses on supply. It postulates that demand remain comparatively stable, even in the long period. This happens, the theory argues, because consumers, including consumers of religion, tend to distribute themselves in market niches according to their demographics, financial capabilities, and preferences (the latter being perhaps, as Becker argued,<sup>8</sup> the most important factor in markets of symbolic goods.) Niches tend in turn to remain stable.

Stark and Finke<sup>9</sup> have created several models of religious demand which distinguish between niches according to the concept of strictness, and to costs. Religion is more strict when its symbolic costs are higher, and when its members are expected to believe and behave in a more traditional and conservative way than society at large. Religious consumers distribute themselves in niches of different strictness. By simplifying more complex models, we may distinguish between five niches: ultra-strict, strict, moderate-conservative, liberal, and ultra-liberal. The liberal niche includes those

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<sup>5</sup> Oriana Fallaci, *La rabbia e l'orgoglio* (Milan: Rizzoli, 2001:); Fallaci, *La forza della ragione* (Milan: Rizzoli, 2004.)

<sup>6</sup> See Niklas Luhmann, *Die Religion der Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt am Main : Suhrkamp, 2000.)

<sup>7</sup> On “differentiation” in Italian Roman Catholicism see Luigi Berzano, *Differenziazione e religione negli anni Ottanta* (Turin: Giappichelli, 1990:); Roberto Cipriani, *La religione dei valori: Indagine nella Sicilia Centrale* (Caltanissetta - Rome: Sciascia, 1992:); Franco Garelli, *Forza della religione e debolezza della fede* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1996.)

<sup>8</sup> Gary S. Becker, *The Economic Approach to Human Behavior* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976.) 5.

<sup>9</sup> See Stark and Finke, *Acts of Faith*, 197; Stark and Finke, “Beyond Church and Sect: Dynamics and Stability in Religious Economics,” in Ted G. Jelen (ed.,) *Sacred Markets, Sacred Canopies: Essays on Religious Markets and Religious Pluralism* (Lanham [Maryland]: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002,) 31-62.

consumers which are prepared to accept the liberal values prevailing in the modern society; the ultra-liberal niches, those who enthusiastically embrace these values and are willing to give them a religious sanction. By contrast, consumers in the strict niche see the prevailing liberal values as negative and dangerous, and those in the ultra-strict niche require absolute separation from these values, perceived as truly perverse and even demonic. Consumers in the moderate-conservative niche do not utterly reject modern values, but feel free to re-interpret them based on religious tradition, while in turn re-interpreting religion in order to make it relevant to the modern world.

Religious consumers also occupy different niches according to their ideas and aspirations about the relationship between religion, culture and politics. Ultra-strict religious consumers identify religion and culture (and religion and politics,) and would not admit any distinction. Those in the strict niche regard the identification as desirable, but realize that it is not always possible, and leave room for some pragmatic compromise. Liberals accept, and ultra-liberals promote, modern separation between religion and culture (above all, between religion and politics.) Moderate-conservative appreciate that there is, and should be, a distinction between religion, culture and politics, but would like religion to remain a relevant factor in the public arena. They accept distinction but reject separation. It is because of this attitude that those in the strict niche may be called “fundamentalist” and those in the ultra-strict niche “ultra-fundamentalist.” I am of course aware of the epistemological ambiguity of the category “fundamentalism,” a subject of great controversies. The term is used here without reference to specific historical movements, and rather refer to an attitude regarding as desirable a non-distinction between religion and culture (including, again, between religion and politics.)

One of the conclusions of the religious economy theory most supported by empirical data is that niches are not equal in dimensions. There are, indeed, more consumers in the central moderate-conservative niche than in the others; and the strict niche is larger than its liberal and ultra-liberal counterparts. Religious economy has confirmed what Dean M. Kelley (1927-1997) argued in 1972 in his *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing*,<sup>10</sup> and has answered Kelly’s many critics. American data have confirmed in a quite spectacular way the growth of conservative and moderately conservative churches, and the decline of liberal denominations. Religious economy, particularly through the works of Iannaccone, has contributed an explanation based on the free rider theory. A religious group plagued by a high number of free riders would offer to its members boring and unsatisfying religious experiences, and many would simply walk away. Conservative and (moderately) strict groups, by raising costs, successfully reduce the number of free riders, thus enjoying more success than their liberal counterparts<sup>11</sup>. It is also the case than the liberal and ultra-liberal *religious* niches are smaller because consumers interested in the symbolic goods offered in these niches have a great number of *secular* alternatives, which is not true for the other niches. A consumer who wish to express its support for modern liberal values may do so in dozens of non-religious organizations, without having to pay the specific costs associated even to the most liberal forms of religion.

Religious consumers, thus, are willing to pay reasonably high costs for obtaining he benefits associated with intense and satisfying religious experiences, offered by groups where the number of free riders is limited. These costs, however, should remain reasonable. If costs are too high, only a handful of radicals will be prepared to pay them. This explains why the ultra-strict, or ultra-fundamentalist, niche remains smaller than the strict one, and much smaller than the moderate-

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<sup>10</sup> Dean M. Kelley, *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing: A Study in Sociology of Religion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972)

<sup>11</sup> See Laurence R. Iannaccone, “Sacrifice and Stigma: Reducing Free-Riding in Cults, Communes, and Other Collectives,” *Journal of Political Economy* 100 (2/1992) 271-292; Iannaccone, “Why Strict Churches are Strong” *American Journal of Sociology* 99 (5/1994), 1180-1211.

conservative niche<sup>12</sup>. It should also be noted that, while niches normally remain stable, religious organizations move from niche to niche. Many organizations start in the ultra-strict niche but, as their foundational charisma becomes routinized, gradually move towards the mainline, first to the strict and then to the moderate-conservative niche. They may also go on and move further left to the liberal and ultra-liberal niches, but in this case their membership will normally decline. Very few extremist groups remain forever in the ultra-strict or ultra-fundamentalist niche, where they end up declining or turning to violence. Most move on. This is, of course, a religious economic way of revisiting the classing “sect to church” model elaborated by H. Richard Niebuhr (1894-1962.)<sup>13</sup> With the difference, however, that there is nothing unavoidable in the process<sup>14</sup>, and that confronted with the decline experienced when they reach the liberal niche, some organizations may experience conservative revivals, and in fact go back “from church to sect.”<sup>15</sup>

Or, this is what happens in *normal* conditions. I have argued elsewhere that several possible circumstances may distort the religious demand and the normal functioning of the niches.<sup>16</sup> I propose to call *war religious economy* a situation where a widespread social conflict is *perceived* by participants as a religious struggle or crusade (whichever its “real” causes as assessed by outside observers.) In this case, the ultra-strict and strict niches may experience an abnormal growth, as consumers are more interested in a religion literally prepared for war. On the other hand, an *economy of war against religion* is one where the government persecutes or strictly controls most religious groups, claiming that extremist religion threatens to destroy the existing social order. The unintended result of this policy is, more often than not, a growth of the very ultra-strict or ultra-fundamentalist niche the government hoped to control. In fact, if every religious groups except those supporting a non-religious government is persecuted, the normal bridges where religious demand and religious offer meet would be cut. Moderate groups would not be accustomed to operate underground or illegally. Extremist groups would, and they may end up being the only organizations available for supplying religious goods to a wider public that, in other circumstances, may have preferred merely strict or moderately conservative organizations. The latter, however, cannot function in an economy of war against religion, since they have no experience or skills for operating underground.

## 2. Intrabrand Religious Competition in Muslim Markets

As Anthony Gill noted in 2002, there is no reason that the religious economy theory should not apply to the Islamic world.<sup>17</sup> Roman Catholicism and Islam are the largest religions in the world for number of members. They have developed various forms of interbrand competition between themselves, which continue today in Africa and elsewhere. For the purposes of this paper, it is however crucial to note that intrabrand competition is as prominent in Islam as it is in Roman Catholicism. I mentioned that a supposed “Catholic monopoly” in Italy is in fact an umbrella category encompassing a vigorous intra-Catholic competition between various very different organizations. The same is true for many allegedly monopolistic religious economies in the Islamic world. What country would appear to be more religiously monopolistic than Saudi Arabia? Surely there should be no religious competition there. This, however, is not the case according to scholarly

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<sup>12</sup> See Laurence R. Iannaccone, “Toward an Economic Theory of ‘Fundamentalism’,” *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics* 153 (1997,) 100-116; Iannaccone, “Religious Extremism: Origins and Consequences,” *Contemporary Jewry* 21 (2000,) 8-29.

<sup>13</sup> H[elmut] Richard Niebuhr *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1929.)

<sup>14</sup> See Roger Finke - Rodney Stark , *The Churching of America, 1776-1990. Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy*(New Brunswick [New Jersey]: Rutgers University Press, 1992.)

<sup>15</sup> Stark and Finke, “Beyond Church and Sect,” 53.

<sup>16</sup> Massimo Introvigne, *Fondamentalismi: I diversi volti dell'intransigenza religiosa* (Casale Monferrato [Alessandria]: Piemme, 2004).

<sup>17</sup> Anthony J. Gill, “A Political Economy of Religion,” in Jelen (ed.), *Sacred Markets, Sacred Canopies*, 115-132 (128.)

surveys such as the one produced by Pascal Ménoret in 2003<sup>18</sup>. Here, we found a rich religious market where State ulamas compete with a vast unregulated private sector, offering all shades of Islam from ultra-fundamentalist to moderately liberal, different interpretations of Wahhabism, and even frank opposition to it, not to mention the presence of both non-Wahhabi Sunni and Shiite minorities. Not surprisingly, the growth of intra-Islamic competition has resulted in Saudi Arabia in what many call simply “the Revival.”

Religious offer within the Islamic world covers, in fact, all niches. Predictably, again, the ultra-liberal niche which enthusiastically embrace Western values and is occasionally advertised as “the Islamic Enlightenment” (*l’Islam des Lumières* in France) remains small, more popular among elite circles of intellectuals than among the population at large. A description of the other niches should take into account the holistic character of Islam, the fact that Islamic trends and movements offer solutions to all domains of human life, and that many religious groups have immediate political expressions as well. An intra-Islamic and, particularly, intra-Sunni religious market seems to have originated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the growing awareness that the Islamic world was experiencing serious problems, and solutions were needed. Weismann has described 19<sup>th</sup>-century Damascus as a main center of this revival,<sup>19</sup> but there were others as well. Calling themselves Salafis (with references to the pious and glorious ancestors of the first Islamic generations,) reformers such as Jamal alDin Afghani (1839-1897) and Muhammad ‘Abduh (1849-1905) tried both to modernize Islam and Islamize modernity. Their teachings, however, were read in quite different ways by the following generation of reformers. Through Rashid Rida (1865-1935,) the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Salafiya developed towards what will become, with the foundation of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, modern Islamic fundamentalism. (“Salafi” designate today in several countries fundamentalist and even terrorist movements, but this was by no means the original meaning.) At the opposite extreme, authors such as ‘Ali ‘Abdel Raziq (1888-1966) developed an Islamic modernism which closely parallels movements in the Western ultra-liberal niche, and remains both controversial and confined to comparatively small intellectual circles<sup>20</sup>. And, in the center, a moderately conservative reformism tried to avoid both fundamentalism and secularism, more often than not by allying itself with Sufi brotherhoods.

This scheme refers to the Arab Middle East, but the same situation seems to have developed elsewhere. Islamic revivals in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century called to a return to past glory, and eventually developed in the opposite directions of both fundamentalism and modernism. This was the case in Indonesia and Malaysia with several groups, in Yemen with the reformism of Muhammad al-Shawkani (1760-1834,) who led the country from Zaydite Shiism to traditionalist Sunnism,<sup>21</sup> in sub-Saharan Africa with Shayk al-Amin ibn ‘Ali alMazru‘i (1890-1947)<sup>22</sup> and several others. Almost everywhere those who develop the insights of the earlier reformers towards fundamentalism are anti-Sufi and ask for an interpretation of Islamic law, shari‘a, based on taqlid (tradition) only, while the moderate-conservatives often have Sufi connection and call for interpreting shari‘a through ijthad (interpretation based on principles of analogy.)

The strict niche does not include only fundamentalist in the lineage of the Muslim Brotherhood (or parallel organizations outside the Arab Middle East.) In competition, and occasional co-operation,

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<sup>18</sup> Pascal Ménoret, *L’énigme saoudienne: les Saoudiens et le monde, 1744-2003* (Paris: Éd. la Découverte, 2003.)

<sup>19</sup> Itzchak Weismann, *Taste of Modernity: Sufism, Salafiyya, and Arabism in Late Ottoman Damascus* (Leiden: Brill, 2001.)

<sup>20</sup> See Azzam Tamimi, “The Origins of Arab Secularism,” in John L. Esposito - Azzam Tamimi (eds.) *Islam and Secularism in the Middle East* (New York: New York University Press, 2000,) 13-28.

<sup>21</sup> See Bernard Haykel., *Revival and Reform in Islam: The Legacy of Muhammad al-Shawkani* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.)

<sup>22</sup> See Roman Loimeier, “Patterns and Peculiarities of Islamic Reform in Africa,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 33:3 (2003,) 237-262.

with fundamentalists we find in the strict niche the heirs of a previous wave of reformism which proposed to free Islam from allegedly superstitious elements derived from Sufism and popular religion. These included Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia and HaH Hadith in India, while the Indian Deobandis, although sharing a severe puritanism with Wahhabis, are in fact much more tolerant of Sufi practices. Traditionalist movements such as the Wahhabis or the Deobandis do not belong to the historical lineage of fundamentalism. Unlike fundamentalists, they have a tradition of quietist respect for the powers that be, and a much more radical aversion to modernity. Although political alliances have confused the issues, differences between fundamentalists and traditionalists remain significant, as they compete for the allegiance of consumers in the same “strict” niche. From both fundamentalist and traditionalist lineages, finally, derive groups in the ultra-strict niche with either separate themselves radically from the mainstream society or resort to violence and terrorism. Terrorist forms of ultra-fundamentalism should not be confused with the more mainline tradition of fundamentalism, whose main organizations do not promote terrorism (although they would often condone it in particular war situations such as Palestine or Chechnya.) In this sense, fundamentalism, referring to the tradition of the Muslim Brotherhood and similar organizations, has a quite precise historical meaning in Islam and should not be used as a synonym for terrorism or illegal activities.

As for the liberal niche, it is occupied by those secular nationalist movements who maintain a role for religion (unlike other nationalist movements which reject religion altogether.) Algerian nationalism is a case in point, although the fact that both the government and its fundamentalist opponents now claim for themselves the heritage of the reformism of Malek Bennabi (1905-1973) confirms that even in the Maghreb it is not impossible to go back from present-day modernism and fundamentalism to common earlier reformist roots. From the same roots may develop a moderate-conservative center. “Centrist” is indeed an expression which is part of Egyptian political lexicon, indicating as it does the members (or, rather, former members) of a political party originally established in 1996 as Hizb al-Wasat (The Centre Party) and reformed in 1998 as Hizb al-Wasat al-Mizri (The Egyptian Centre Party.) The new name did not prevent a consistent refusal by Egypt’s Political Parties Committee (PPC) to legalize the Centrists. Although they declared to regard Islam for political purposes as a “civilizational” rather than “religious” element (a formula also used by Bennabi in Algeria,) and the parties included Christians as well as Moslem, the fact that several prominent members were ex-Muslim Brothers made the Wasat highly suspicious to the government. However, although perhaps incomplete, the Egyptian “Centrism” seemed an interesting attempt of a part of the Muslim Brotherhood to move from the fundamentalist to the moderately conservative niche, where a significant constituency is obviously supposed to exist.

### **3. “Islamic Exceptionalism”?**

Religious economy should consider Islamic reformism in its various shapes from a supply-side perspective. Reformism and revival, be they in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Plymouth, Boston or Damascus, do not arise because of an alleged inherent newness of the religious demand. Reformers and revivalists understand that the demand is already there, and create an offer adequate to meet it; hence their success. The theory would postulate that, in the long period, ultra-fundamentalist (and ultra-liberal) movements will meet by only a limited degree of success, fundamentalist movements will be more successful than their liberal counterparts, and those capable of occupying the centrist moderate-conservative niche would enjoy the greatest success of all. Many would object that this is not true in the Islamic world. Either the theory of religious economy is not universally applicable, they would say, or there is an “Islamic exceptionalism.” Or is there really?

First of all, in our post 9-11 situation, ultra-fundamentalism is over-reported. Nobody in the general public in the West has heard the names of organizations such as the Indonesian Nadatul Ulama, a

centrist conservative group, or Mohammadiyya, a group which can be classified among the less extremist expressions of fundamentalism. They have respectively an estimated forty and thirty million members, and appear to be much larger than the Muslim Brotherhood, not to mention Al Qa'ida. The same is true for the Turkish Fethullah Gülen movement, both large and international, yet hardly a household name in the West.

On the other hand, there are as mentioned earlier abnormal situations conducive to a distortion of the niches, with an alarming but temporary expansion of the ultra-strict segment. In the *war religious economy* prevailing in Palestine the largest local branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, is an expression of the Brotherhood's move from the strict niche it occupies in other countries to the ultra-strict one, due to exceptional local circumstances. War religious economy polarizes the alternative between an ultra-fundamentalist group, Hamas, and secular nationalism, making as difficult as all observers claim it is the emergence of a centrist leadership which would be a more reliable partner in international negotiations. Similar comments may apply to Chechnya, Kashmir, and other war situations.

In other countries, governments have banned a large number of religious organizations. As mentioned earlier, the most extremist groups in the ultra-fundamentalist niche are the ones that are able to resist such persecution and operate underground, where the moderate-conservative and even the most moderate organizations of the fundamentalist niche may simply disappear. Extremist ultra-fundamentalists are thus able to meet a large segment of the religious demand, virtually with no competition, and are paradoxically reinforced by the same legal measures aimed at eliminating them. Saddam Hussein's Iraq was a case in point. Particularly before 1991, the regime sought to eliminate all independent religious organizations, Sunnis as well as Shiites. Those who managed to survive underground were, predictable, the most extreme including some branches of the Muslim Brotherhood and semi-terrorist groups with international connections. The situation that prevailed during Saddam's religious repression (an economy of "war against religion," or at least against *independent* religion) is somewhat repeated in the present religious war economy, where extremist groups may gain a larger audience than in "normal" times. Polls, however, seem to show that most religious consumers in Iraq, whose ideas are perhaps under-reported in the media, do look for alternatives in the centrist, moderately conservative niche, represented by Najaf's traditional Shiite authorities and those Sunni political parties which have joined the provisional government.

Islamic ultra-fundamentalist terrorism is obviously a complex phenomenon, whose causes are not only cultural or religious. However, the Algerian case seems to confirm the dangers of repression. The Army coup of January 11, 1992 banned a whole spectrum of Islamic organizations. Some went into exile, but among those who were able to continue an illegal existence in Algeria were, predictably, the most extreme wings of the ultra-fundamentalist movement. These, soon divided into a plethora of conflicting organizations (some of them infiltrated by the Algerian intelligence, others by Al Qa'ida,) were responsible for a bloody civil war that probably claimed some 100,000 victims. The situation has now evolved. Only small pockets of terrorist and guerrilla activities by the GIA (Armed Islamic Group,) the GSPC (Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat,) and HDS (Guardians of the Salafi Call) remain operative. It is certainly true that the main terrorist organizations were defeated through military action, although with a high cost in human lives. It is also the case, however, that actions taken by President Bouteflika (re-elected in 2004) in terms of granting amnesty to several insurgents, freeing from jail the leaders of the banned FIS (Islamic Salvation Front,) legalizing parties with connections to the Muslim Brotherhood (although not the FIS itself,) reclaiming the common heritage of Bennabi's reformism and the contribution of political Islam to Algeria's national anti-colonial struggle, have opened the religious market and created a number of options alternative to ultra-fundamentalism. Conservative and fundamentalist religious demand may now be legally met by a number of legitimate groups, which offer serious

competition for those ultra-fundamentalist organizations that remain committed to violence, although Algerian problems are far from being solved.

#### 4. A Case Study: Religious Market(s) in Turkey

Although Turkey does have its share of religious minorities, I am concerned here with its intrabrand Muslim market. Turkey does offer an ideal test case for a number of reasons. Thierry Zarcone claims that Islam in Turkey has always been highly pluralistic, and still maintain the heritage of tensions between large cities and rural countryside, Istanbul and Anatolia, Turkish identity and Arabic Koran. The French scholar sees what we would call the Turkish religious market as resulting historically from the competition of five trends during the Ottoman period:

- a) Islam as the official religion of the Ottoman empire, whose orthodoxy was guaranteed by the ulamas. In the imperial Turkey, they controlled the administration of justice through the kadis, and religious instruction as a whole, from elementary to superior, interpreting the shari'a through the lenses of the Hanafi legal school;
- b) Sufi Islam of the large brotherhoods, which perpetuated a substantially orthodox Sunni Islam outside the circle of the religiously educated through their large networks of tekkes; since many shaykhs of the most important brotherhoods were themselves ulamas, there were no substantial conflicts with the first group. Zarcone, however, suggests a distinction between three groups of Sufi brotherhoods: one claiming to fully respect the shari'a as defined by the Hanafi ulamas (Naksibendiya, Chaziliya;) one divided between a respect for orthodoxy and the sympathy for the mysticism of Ibn Arabi (in turn despised by most state ulamas: Halvetiya, Mevleviya;) and one engaged in a difficult attempt to harmonize pre-Islamic and non-Sunni influences with Sunnism (Bektasiya, Melamiya, Hamzeviya;)
- c) heterodox Islam of the countryside, grounded in the syncretistic Turcoman heritage with Shiite influences. In fact, the most relevant groups were not technically Shiite (while a Shiite minority did exist in Turkey) but part of what many scholars now call the "hyper-Shiite tradition,"<sup>23</sup> a style of religious thought both regarding Ali as a divine incarnation and its subsequent leaders as Ali's reincarnations. An exact typology of different groups within the hyper-Shiite tradition is the subject matter of complicate discussions. Zarcone does not believe that the Bektasis are part of this tradition, while he includes here the Kizilbaks, which in part still exist under this name in villages of Thrace and Anatolia, in part merged with, or influenced, the Alevis, whose complicate recent evolution calls however their inclusion in the "hyper-Shiite" fold into question;
- d) what Zarcone calls the heterodox Islam of the "doctors-philosophers," in the tradition of Bedreddin Simavli (1359-1416) and of a series of independent mystics verging on pantheism;
- e) the popular Sunni Islam of "country ulamas," which took great pride in distinguishing itself from the crypto-Shiite or hyper-Shiite heterodoxy, yet incorporated a number of beliefs of non-Sunni origin, focused on the rural shrine of the saints, and were often regarded by both the State ulamas and the larger brotherhoods as superstitious. In fact, the three latter competitors were regarded by the Ottoman establishment as somewhat illegitimate. However, they managed to survive.<sup>24</sup>

Although the personal ideas of Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938) about religion are in turn the subject of some debate, there is little doubt that he was inspired by the sociological theories of Auguste

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<sup>23</sup> See Tord Olsson - Elisabeth Özdalga - Catharina Raudvere (eds.) *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives. Papers Read at a Conference Held at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, November 25-27, 1996* (Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul and Richmond [Surrey :] Curzon, 1998.)

<sup>24</sup> Thierry Zarcone, *La Turquie moderne et l'islam* (Paris : Flammarion, 2004.)

Comte (1798-1857) and regarded traditional religion as an obstacle to progress. Kemalism involved a complex de-Islamization process, whereby the official Islam was separated from the judiciary (which was secularized) and brought under the strict control of the secular state, Sufi brotherhood were formally dissolved in 1925 and the rural shrines of the saints closed. Admirer as he was of the French *laïcité*, Atatürk realized that the French model could not simply be imported into a Muslim country. The *laïcité* in France was aimed at reducing the religion to an affair of the individual, entirely separated from the state. Unlike French Roman Catholicism, Turkish Islam was not easily amenable to a process of de-institutionalization. It was just too much intrinsically institutional, and operating within a framework where the distinction between public and private, religious and cultural was much less evident. The Turkish *laiklik*, thus, did not so much ignore religion as the French *laïcité* proclaimed (at least theoretically) to do, but rather put it under the direct control of the Prime Minister's office, to which answered the Direction of Religious Affairs, instituted in 1924.

The de-Islamization process in fact greatly reduced the available options in the Turkish religious market. Although circumscribed by the secular state, the official Islam maintained its prominence. The large brotherhoods did not disappear, but the official dissolution forced them to perform what Yavuz calls an "inward migration" away from the public domain into the sphere of family and household.<sup>25</sup> The rural Islam experienced difficulties and problems due to the official prohibition against the cult of the saints and the general de-Islamization policy, but managed to survive. Heterodoxy in general celebrated Kemalism as its ally in a revenge against previous discrimination. Kizilbaks, Alevis, and even the Bektasis presented themselves as staunch supporters of Kemalism, although this support converted some of their organizations into secular-cultural associations with feeble religious references,<sup>26</sup> while on the other hand the laws against the brotherhoods did create problems for them also.

As the religious economy theory would predict, the official regulation of the religious market caused several extremist reactions: an insurrection in the South-East in 1925 combining Kurdish ethno-nationalism and religious reaction, the so called conspiracy of the Tarikat-ı Salahiya (Brotherhood of the Virtue) between 1920-1925, and religiously oriented popular uprisings such as the "Menemen incident" of 1925, where a Kemalist officer was lynched by the populace. The government reacted with a stricter control of religion, which experienced its worst period between 1925-1945. Between 1932-1954 the People's Houses and the Village Institutes tried to replace the mosque and the tekke as the (secular) centers of the village life.<sup>27</sup>

On the other hand, as Yavuz has noted, "the secularization policies of the state did not succeed fully, because they focused on the public sphere and were not able to touch the grassroots level of informal societal networks."<sup>28</sup> According to Yavuz, it was Sufism that in the face of state coercion was most able to resist, thanks to its ability of withdrawing into the inner, domestic and familial sphere. However, those Sufi orders which relied on external rituals, clothing, buildings, and ceremonies such as the Mevleviya experienced more difficulties. The Naksibendis, on the other hand, whose system does not necessarily require a tekke, whose clothings are not peculiar, and which are able to privilege the silent (and inconspicuous) zikir were able to survive both the legal ban of the 1925 and the persecution of the 1930s. Together with the Naksibendis, a "movement of resistance to the ongoing Kemalist modernization" capable, according to Yavuz, to be at the same time "forward-looking and proactive" emerged

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<sup>25</sup> M. Hakan Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.) 56.

<sup>26</sup> See David Shankland, *The Alevis in Turkey: The Emergence of a Secular Islamic Tradition* (London – New York: Routledge and Curzon, 2003.)

<sup>27</sup> Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 285-286.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

in the shape of the Nurcu movement of Said Nursi (1876-1960.)<sup>29</sup> Nurcus, which proclaimed the harmonization of Islam and modern science, in fact occupied a space outside the public sphere that Kemalism had denied to religion: the sphere of culture, of successful books and of their readers. Although Nur had been a member of the Naksibendi and defended the brotherhoods against the Kemalist ban, he founded a peculiar centrist-conservative (but not fundamentalist) tradition which is not, strictly speaking, part of Sufism.<sup>30</sup>

Naksibendis and Nurcus thus were at the forefront of a new relevancy of Islam which emerged when, in the 1950s, the Turkish religious market started being deregulated. Faced with the new threat of Communism, the Kemalist establishment and the military granted more latitude to religion, regarded as both a necessary component of the nation's moral fabric and as an element capable of unifying all Turkish citizens transcending their ethnic diversities, particularly the contrast between Turks and Kurds. The Turkish secularism, or *laiklik*, as Davison has noted, became something still more different from the French *laïcité*.<sup>31</sup> The differences with France, perhaps, were there from the very beginning.<sup>32</sup> The government of Turgut Özal (1927-1993) in the 1980s epitomized this new approach. Özal was himself part of the circle of the charismatic shaykh Mehmed Zahid Kotku (1897-1980,) head of the Naksibendi branch known as Gümüşhanevi headquartered at the Iskenderpasa Camii mosque in Istanbul.<sup>33</sup> The teachings of Kotku, whose circle also included future prime ministers Necmettin Erbakan and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, emphasized the perfect compatibility between Islam and modernity, including economic development.

While the political consequences, developments and reactions to the deregulation of the Turkish religious market would deserve a larger discussion, I would conclude by proposing a map of this market according to the theory of religious niches. The map may of course include only some of the many trends and groups active in Turkey, and leave largely aside the Kurdish and Shiite minorities. It will also try to apply to Turkey the general model of the Islamic religious market outlined in Section 3 above.

Ultra-fundamentalism, defined as the total rejection of the modern political order and the attempt of its subversion through violent means, appears to be very rare in contemporary Turkey. Turkey had its sad share of terrorist attacks claimed by ultra-fundamentalist Islamic groups (and a considerably higher number of incidents attributed to Kurdish separatists or Marxist-Leninists.) However, a simple statistical table would reveal that ultra-fundamentalist terrorism declined with the opening and deregulation of the Turkish religious market.<sup>34</sup> This is in accordance with the religious economy theory, which predicts that extremist groups find more followers when conservative but non-violent alternatives are not easily available to religious consumers, or are harassed in their public activity by the state. On the other hand, when religious consumers are comparatively free to choose fundamentalist (but non-violent) and conservative (but not fundamentalist) competing groups, ultra-fundamentalism declines. Recent incidents have been attributed to foreign influences (perhaps with Al Qa'ida connections.) Even a terrorist organization which has claimed some recent attacks with such a

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 151.

<sup>30</sup> See, for different assessments of Nursi, Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi' (ed.), *Islam at the Crossroads: On the Life and Thought of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003.)

<sup>31</sup> Andrew Davison, "Turkey, a 'Secular' State? The Challenge of Description," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 102: 2/3 (Spring-Summer 2003,) 333-350.

<sup>32</sup> Davison, *Secularism and Revivalism in Turkey: A Hermeneutic Reconsideration* (New Haven - London: Yale University Press, 1998.)

<sup>33</sup> Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 141.

<sup>34</sup> See Richard I Chasdi, *Tapstry of Terror: A Portrait of Middle East Terrorism, 1994-1999* (Lanham [Maryland]: Lexington Books, 2003,) 232.

quintessential Turkish name as the Knights of the Great Orient (*Büyük Dogu*, Great Orient, was both the title of a journal founded in 1943 by influential Islamic intellectual Necip Fazil, 1904-1983, and its term for Islam as “a holistic and totalist ideology”)<sup>35</sup> remains somewhat ambiguous. Certain scholars of terrorism even think that it may originally have been a creation of fractions of the Turkish intelligence establishment eager to blame terrorism on Islamic fundamentalism,<sup>36</sup> although of course this opinion remains controversial.

The word “fundamentalism” is in the Turkish context as ambiguous as it is elsewhere. Considering the difference between Turkish and Arab political Islam, one may prefer to use expressions other than “fundamentalism.” My use here, however, refers strictly to the niche theory outlined above, and is not a value judgement. In this sense, Turkish political Islam as represented by Necmettin Erbakan occupies the “fundamentalist” niche of the religious market. It is perhaps not coincidental that Erbakan’s first meeting as newly installed prime minister in 1996 was “with the leader of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood,”<sup>37</sup> the movement which largely defines international Islamic fundamentalism (which, again, should not be confused with ultra-fundamentalism and terrorism.) The fact that Erbakan had Sufi connections and enjoyed the support of Sufi brotherhood is not incompatible with a collocation of its supporters in the fundamentalist niche. Not everywhere are fundamentalists anti-Sufi, and the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan al-Banna (1906-1949,) was himself a Sufi<sup>38</sup>.

Fundamentalism, as mentioned earlier, competes with traditionalism – a different religious style – for the allegiance of consumers in the strict niche. The largest (four million members) traditionalist organization in Turkey is the *cemaat* (community) of the Süleymancis, established by Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan (1888-1959.) A *cemaat* is not technically a brotherhood, and the Turkish system of the *cemaat* created what Zarcone defines “Sufism without ‘brotherhoodism.’”<sup>39</sup> Tunahan in fact denounced the decadence of the brotherhoods system, although he remained attached to its own tradition, rooted in the Indian branch of the Naksibendi to which, not coincidentally, the founders of the largest international traditionalist movement, Deobandism, also sworn allegiance.

It is worth noting that I use “traditionalism” here with reference, once again, to the niche model of Section 3, rather than technically in order to identify the school of thought mostly defined by, if not exclusively originating from, René Guénon (1886-1951,) and often referred to as “Traditionalism” with a capital T. Guénon’s ideas are popular among a handful of Turkish intellectuals and academics, including Mustafa Tahrali, a professor of theology at Marmara University, and Mahmud Kiliç, the heir of a prominent Sufi family who helped popularizing the works of Iranian Traditionalist Seyyed Hossein Nasr in Turkey. A limited number of Turks have also been initiated in “Traditionalist” orders, including female movie director Ayse Sasi, who joined a “Traditionalist” branch of the Khalwatiya. On the other hand, “there are no

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<sup>35</sup> Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 116.

<sup>36</sup> See Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurds and the Future of Turkey* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997,) 68-71.

<sup>37</sup> Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 243.

<sup>38</sup> In addition to Turkish fundamentalism, Iranian Shiite fundamentalist texts circulate in Turkish translations among the Shiite minority, although the most prominent Turkish Shiite leaders have distanced themselves from the Iranian model (Zarcone, *La Turquie moderne et l’islam*, 300-301.) The influence of Saudi Arabian Wahhabi traditionalism (often also referred to as fundamentalism) on certain independent (and often illegal) religious schools is also occasionally mentioned by both Turkish and foreign media, but should not be overestimated.

<sup>39</sup> Zarcone, *La Turquie moderne et l’islam*, 281. Mark Sedgwick (“Establishments and Sects in the Islamic World,” in Phillip Charles Lucas – Thomas Robbins [eds.,] *New Religious Movements in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Legal, Political, and Social Challenges in Global Perspective*[New York and London: Routledge, 2004,] 283-312) has developed a model in order to distinguish between “denominations,” “sects” and “cults” within Islam, but the model is based on the Arab world and it is unclear whether it can be easily applied to non-Arab religious markets such as Turkey.

Traditionalist organizations in Turkey,” nor have Traditionalists any political influence<sup>40</sup>, although they are occasionally attacked as dangerous, for opposite reasons, by both Kemalists and fundamentalists.

What appears unique of Turkish religious market is the strength of a conservative-moderate center, where the offer is both rich and diverse and has met with a notable degree of success. In this central niche of the religious market at least three different expressions of Turkish Sunni Islam compete. We have mentioned that, while niches are stable, movements often move from one niche to another and it is not uncommon for fundamentalist group to evolve towards the central conservative-moderate niche. Several Islamic fundamentalist movements have moved towards the center by rethinking their tradition and their relationship with the original 19<sup>th</sup>-century Salafiya. We have described the itinerary of a part of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood towards the formation of “centrist” political organizations. Similar evolutions have been described in Tunisia among Islamist intellectuals of the circle of Rachid Gannouchi.<sup>41</sup> In Turkey this process, although with peculiar characters original to the country, emerged with the separation of Erdogan’s AKP from Erbakan’s Saadet party. The AKP is regarded by many as a typical “conservative” organization.<sup>42</sup> The results of the 2002 elections, where the AKP obtained 34.2% of the votes against 2.46% of Saadet confirmed in their own way that the conservative-moderate niche is larger than its fundamentalist counterpart even when both are considered in their political projections. It is by no means arbitrary to discuss political parties within the framework of an analysis of the religious market. According to Zarccone, the parties of political Islam up to Saadet included were based on “the dominant model of the [Sufi] brotherhoods.”<sup>43</sup> The AKP, while still an expression of political Islam, should be regarded in this perspective as the first religiously inspired party capable of rejecting the brotherhood model and to adopt “the model of Western Christian Democrat parties.” Through this change of model, “political Islam in Turkey has not failed; quite to the contrary, it has successfully moved to a new ideological phase.”<sup>44</sup>

On the other hand politics, not even in the shape of political Islam, does not exhaust the field of the conservative-moderate niche of the religious market in Turkey. The same religious demand is met by the main branches of the Naksibendiya, both in the great Istanbul organizations such as the already mentioned Gümüşanevi, the Erenköy Cemaati,<sup>45</sup> or the group of the Ismail Aga mosque, and in the Anatolian brotherhoods such as the Menzil Köy Cemaati of Rechit Erol (1929-1996.) In different degrees, all these branches have succeeded in modernizing Sufi Islam, while remaining faithful to the Naksibendi ancient roots, thus catering to a large moderate-conservative constituency which in present-day Turkey appears to be larger than the traditionalist audience served by the Süleymançis.

Finally, the center of the religious market in Turkey is occupied by a very original phenomenon, “the greatest novelty in Turkish religious history,”<sup>46</sup> a dozen of Nurcu communities claiming the heritage of Said Nursi’s reformism. The most important neo-Nur movement is the Fetullah

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<sup>40</sup> Mark Sedgwick, *Against the Modern World: Traditionalism and the Secret Intellectual History of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004,) 256.

<sup>41</sup> See Azzam S Tamimi, *Rachid Gannouchi: A Democrat within Islamism* (Oxford - New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.)

<sup>42</sup> Ahmet Insel, “The AKP and Normalizing Democracy in Turkey”, *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, 102: 2/3 (Spring-Summer 2003), 293-308 (301.)

<sup>43</sup> Zarccone, *La Turquie moderne et l’islam*, 207.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 208.

<sup>45</sup> See Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 144-45.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 284.

Gülen movement, the subject of a growing number of scholarly studies also in the West.<sup>47</sup> “Neither ‘fundamentalist’ nor ‘secularist,’”<sup>48</sup> the movement combines Turkish nationalism, the Sufi heritage of Anatolia, and Nursi’s preoccupation for a dialogue between Islam and modern science to create a typical centrist and post-Sufi organization. Without recapitulating here the existing scholarship about the Gülen movement, I would emphasize that it typically addresses the need of the moderate-conservative niche in the intra-Islamic religious market. Other neo-Nur groups appeal to diverse audiences. For example, the Aczmendiya of Müslim Gündüz in South-East Turkey represents a neo-Sufism rather than a post-Sufism, reverts to the brotherhood model, and finds its members in a segment of the conservative niche much closer to traditionalism. It is also important to note that groups in the moderate-conservative niche does not automatically support the AKP. Concerning the Gülen movement Yavuz reports that “in previous elections, members of the movement voted for Bülent Ecevit (Democratic Left). In recent elections, I think their votes were divided between the AKP and Ecevit.”<sup>49</sup> Naksibendi brotherhoods were similarly divided.

There is, of course, also an offer addressing the liberal niche of the religious market in Turkey. Several movements offered a religious interpretation of Kemalism. This appears in the post-brotherhood phase of the branch of the Melamiya, where Maksud Hulusi (1851-1929) was succeeded by his son Mahmut Sadettin Bilginer (1909-1983) and by his close disciple Hasan Lufti Chuchut (1903-1988.) A Sufi brotherhood was transformed into a liberal movement critical of both traditional Sufism and the prevailing conservative-moderate groups. Much more complicate is the situation of the Bektasiya as reorganized by Bedri Noyan (1912-1997) and Turgut Koca (1921-1997.) According to Zarcone, Noyan’s designated successor, Teoman Güre, was excluded from the direction of the Bektasiya in 2000 “because of its membership in Freemasonry.”<sup>50</sup> This may appear as a confirmation that the fundamentalist propaganda against all forms of Freemasonry exerts an influence wider than expected within Turkish Islam. But in fact the relationships between the Bektasiya and the esoteric wing of Turkish Freemasonry (as opposed to its secularist-Kemalist wing) have a long history,<sup>51</sup> and Freemasonry has been often used as a vehicle for integrating Sufism and liberalism, with quite mixed results.

Problems within the Bektasiya have resulted in what Zarcone calls “quite serious confusions,”<sup>52</sup> with Alevis taking over several Bektasi tekkes and converting them into Alevi meetinghouses. Some use the expression “Alevi-Bektasis,” which has a questionable historical status. In fact, one is in principle initiated into a Bektasi brotherhood while one is born an Alevi, and the initiation simply confirms a status acquired by birth. The Bektasiya originated as a Sufi, and Sunni, brotherhood (although with non-Sunni influences and verging on heterodoxy,) while Alevism, whatever it may be considered, is not part of Sunnism. Alevism, however, has re-invented itself during the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century trying to occupy the ultra-liberal niche and claiming for itself the role of an ultra-Kemalist and occasionally openly Marxist community with a vague religious origin. In this sense it has claimed that one may become an Alevi (rather than being born in the tradition,) has initiated even Westerners, and has experienced its share of

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<sup>47</sup> See M. Hakan Yavuz - John L. Esposito (eds.) *Turkish Islam and the Secular State: The Global Impact of Fethullah Gülen’s Nur Movement* (Syracuse [New York:] Syracuse University Press, 2003.)

<sup>48</sup> John O. Voll, ‘Fetullah Gülen: Transcending Modernity in the New Islamic Discourse’, in Yavuz and Esposito (eds.) *Turkish Islam and the Secular State*, 238-247 (245.)

<sup>49</sup> “The Gülen Movement: a modern expression of Turkish Islam - Interview with Hakan Yavuz”, *Religioscope*, July 21, 2004 (<[http://religion.info/english/interviews/article\\_74.shtml](http://religion.info/english/interviews/article_74.shtml) >.)

<sup>50</sup> Zarcone, *La Turquie moderne et l’islam*, 279.

<sup>51</sup> See Thierry Zarcone, *Secret et sociétés secrètes en Islam: Turquie, Iran et Asie centrale XIX-XXème siècles. Franc-Maçonnerie, Carboneria et Confréries soufies* (Milan: Arché, 2002.)

<sup>52</sup> Zarcone, *La Turquie moderne et l’islam*, 280.

problems with the international crisis of Marxism. What exactly Alevism is today, or will be in the future, is a matter of considerable debate.

It is, at any rate, difficult for the Bektasis and the Alevis to reach an audience with no traditional or family attachment to their respective traditions. Those in the liberal and ultra-liberal niches may rather read the works of individual Islamo-Kemalist thinkers such as Hasan Ali Yücel (1897-1961,) which had never created organized movements. In fact, as the religious economy theory would predict, *religious* liberal and ultra-liberal organizations remain small because they have to compete with *non-religious* secular groups which espouse similar values. Jenny B. White has confirmed that, particularly in the large world of Turkish women's organizations, the real competition to the organizations of political Islam comes from secular Kemalist groups which are not religious.<sup>53</sup>

What makes Turkey almost unique among Islamic religious markets is its rich, persuasive and varied offer in the central moderate-conservative niche. Movements in these niche are both religiously and politically successful, and religion in general appears to be in very good health in a country which before World War II experienced one of the most sustained secularist policy of de-Islamization. Turkey confirms that, where the offer in the moderate-conservative niche abounds and the state limits its interference, fundamentalism is contained and ultra-fundamentalism marginalized. This should be good news for those preoccupied with an alleged "unavoidable" explosion of fundamentalism, if not ultra-fundamentalism, in deregulated religious and political markets within the Islamic world. Indonesia and Malaysia, large non-Arab Islamic countries where the religious economy appears to be in the process of being similarly deregulated, would tend to confirm these conclusions. Whether the same effects would follow deregulation in the Arab Muslim world is a prediction that the religious economy theory should dare to propose, although it could only be tested when truly deregulated Arab religious markets will begin to appear.

<sup>53</sup> See Jenny B. White, *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey: A Study in Vernacular Politics* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002.)