Diyanet and Politics

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The PRA is a laic administrative unit in the Republic of Turkey established in 1924 to execute services regarding Islamic faith and practices, to enlighten society about religion, and to carry out the management of places of worship. In order to understand religion, politics and the politics of religion in Turkey, the PRA should be examined. This article is primarily concerned with this agency, which was initially established to regulate Islamic services, but which has actually been used as a means of ‘securing’ the secular nature of the state in Turkey for over 80 years.

This apparent paradox in terms was the muse which led me to reflect on the representation of the construction (and deconstruction) of the terms “modernity” and “state and religion” in Turkey. In order to develop my argument, I focus on the politics and Diyanet; however, in order to comment on these issues I need to clarify what politics means for me in the context of this article. I use “politics” not only in the context of the regulation of a political unit, namely, the state or government in the general sense, but also to refer to the methods and tactics used to formulate and apply certain policies to set up an official ideology supported by “pillar” institutions of that unit, for example, the military in the Turkish case. In other words, politics in this context is, in essence, power: the ability to achieve a desired outcome, through any means. Andrew Heywood in his textbook Politics describes power as “whenever A gets B to do something that B would not otherwise have done. However A can influence B in various ways. This allows us to distinguish between different dimensions or faces of ‘power,’ (like) power as decision-making; power as agenda setting; power as thought control.” In this article, I aim to identify the main actors who exercise power in the field of religion and state in Turkey in modern times. These actors’ activities in the politics of religion, which apparently is composed of interactive processes among all the mentioned actors, actually shape each other.
Vesting sovereignty fully and unconditionally in the nation of the new state of Turkey founded in 1923 indicated the new political choice of a modernization project that was based on laicism and the nation-state. Atatürk’s statements indicated that the principle of laicité, along with republicanism, was the foundation of the new regime and the nation-state. Atatürk’s policy on laicité was to remove religion from the public realm and reduce it to a matter of the faith and practice of the individual, so that the principle of freedom of religion was to protect “individualized religion” only. Religion was to remain in the personal domain and only requires state intervention to the extent that it concerns and objectifies the social order. The Turkish Republic was designed to be a strictly temporal state. Mustafa Kemal stated this clearly: “We get our inspirations not from the heavens or invisible things but directly from life.” These were clearly the words of a typical “Enlightenment Secularist,” separating religion and state to ensure dangerous religious passions and ‘superstitions’ be confined to the private sphere. The purpose of the new leadership in this period was to secularize and modernize not only the state and the ‘political,’ but to transform society into a modern entity. Actually the radical program of reform and Westernization that the republican cadres pursued in the 1920’s and 30’s had earlier started within the Ottoman Empire in the mid-19th century, especially with the reception of Western codes and political principles. In my view, the biggest difference between Republican and Ottoman Westernizations was the spectrum of their telos; laicité was the pillar for the Republican founding elite, which designed the Diyanet as an administrative tool to ‘regulate’ Islam. “Regulating” Islam was to “put orthodox Islam under the state control” and to nationalize it, while establishing secular systems of law and education, destroying the influence and power of the ulema (scholars of religion) within the state administration, banning the unorthodox Sufi orders, and outlawing the use of religious speech, propaganda or organization for political purposes. Şerif Mardin, a prominent scholar who has been working on religion and politics in Turkey since the 1970’s, brilliantly analyzes this phenomenon in his 1991 article by using terms for the secularizing republican founding elite such as “positivist-nationalist generation,” and by displaying class alliances. Niyazi Berkes (1908–1988), a prominent sociologist, evaluates this phenomenon as follows:

The Islamists, who had strongly opposed separationism when they were promoting the idea of an Islamic state, favored the separationist interpretation of secularism following their defeat. They now claimed that provisions restricting the political power of religion were incompatible with secularism, which implied non-interference in the affairs of religion; therefore, Kemalist secularism was not true secularism, but shoddy legitimization for the persecution of Islam.
A modern secular state, said the secularist jurists on the other hand, should let religion follow its own course if the state did not intend to liquidate religion altogether. The inference was that, if Kemalist secularism did not fit one shoe, it should, perforce, fit into the other. (Berkes, Niyazi, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, Hurst & Company, London, 1964/1998, 479–480).

The state elite tried to secure the laic order after the foundation of the Turkish Republic through a series of legal regulations. The provision concerning the state religion (Islam) in the constitution prevailing at the time was abolished in 1928\(^{10}\) and the adjective “laic” was added to the constitution to define the Turkish state in 1937\(^{11}\). One of the most important legal tools in this context was the act dated 3\(^{rd}\) March 1340 (1924), no. 429 on the abolishment of the Ministries of Şeriyye (Religious Affairs) and Evkaf (Endowments). The new legislation preferred to place the management of religious affairs in the hands of an administrative bureau, not to a ministry in the cabinet. This was a key part of the overall policy of the founding political decision-making elite of Turkey. They did not want to have a unit within the cabinet dealing with religious affairs. Instead, by assigning religious affairs to an administrative unit, the ruling elite both took religion under their control and at the same time managed to break the potentially sacred significance of the Diyanet. Their praxis may be compared to the French Republican public administration system with a Central Office of Organized Religions (*Bureau Central des Cultes*) within the Ministry of the Interior. According to official French interpretation, *le culte* involves three elements: the celebration of the *culte*, as in the mass; its buildings; and the teaching of its principles.\(^{12}\) These were the duties assigned to Diyanet, too. “Controlling” religion seems to be justified both in the republics of Turkey and France as fulfilling the intention to guarantee public order; ironically resembling the rhetoric of classical Islamic political theory, which assigned to the ruler the task of avoiding disorder or *fitna*.

The first article of Act no. 429 states that, “In the Republic of Turkey, the Parliament and the Cabinet are responsible for the legislation and execution of the provisions concerning the affairs of the society; and the Diyanet was formed as part of the Republic for the implementation of all provisions concerning faith and worship aspects of the religion of Islam, and the administration of religious institutions.” This is a reflection of Kemalist laicité. With this regulation, religious affairs concerning faith and worship were made the concern of the Diyanet, and all other areas of interest were considered to be under the legislative power of the Parliament of Turkey, thus Shariah as a legal system was abolished.

As per this enactment, the Diyanet was under the purview of the prime minister. The president of Diyanet was appointed by the president of the
Republic upon the proposal of the prime minister. In this act, the organizational structure of the Diyanet and positions under its authority were not specified except by the provision that “the place where muftis would refer to is the Diyanet.” The administrative structure of the central and provincial branches of the Diyanet was first stated in the 1927 Budget Act. In the “Permanent Positions Table” attached to the Act dated 30 June 1929, no. 1452 on the unification and equation of the salaries of civil servants was published in the Official Gazette and went into effect on 30 June 1929. The permanent positions of Diyanet employees were stated for the first time, and as per Article 2 of said law, this table was considered as the organizational law for the Diyanet until a new law would be made in 1935. With this regulation, claims made during the previous meetings of the Parliament, namely, that there was a lack of legal basis for the Diyanet, were rendered invalid. The management and personnel (hademe) of all mosques and prayer rooms were transferred to the Presidency-General for Foundations by June 1931 with the 1931 fiscal year budget law of the Presidency-General for Foundations, adopted on 8th June 1931 and published in the Official Gazette on 13th June 1931. The personnel of the Presidency of Religious Institutions and Presidency, which had been under the central organization of the PRA, were transferred with their posts to the Presidency-General for Foundations. Thus the powers of the Diyanet were considerably reduced. Furthermore, article 7 of the Act stated that mosques and prayer rooms would be classified according to “actual needs” and duties that could be combined would be specified in order to determine new positions, so that the number of personnel was also to be reduced. Despite all these changes, the legal regulation was passed in the Parliament without any objection. The annulment of article 5 of Act no. 429, which was inconsistent with the mentioned law, was clearly stated by the Parliament’s decision on 4 January 1932.

Act No. 2800 on The Organization and Duties of Religious Affairs, which was passed on 14th June 1935 and published in the Official Gazette on 22nd June 1935, is the first organizational enactment of the Diyanet. But, more importantly, Act no. 5634 came into effect on the 29th April 1950 after the passing of a draft bill (dated 7th March 1950) on 23rd March 1950, towards the end of the Republican People’s Party government. Thus, the Günaltay15 government (16 January 1949–22 May 1950) considerably changed the organization of religious affairs. This law is a reflection of a religiously different climate in the late 1940s that affected the 7th Republican People’s Party Assembly in 1947. This change in political climate can be observed also in speeches made by various deputies during debates on this law, in which they stated that they were glad about the positive changes in religious organization and in the status of relevant individuals.14 The difference in attitude observed
in these proceedings compared to previous, related laws is especially interesting. Previous debates were generally just votes on the proposed regulations. Furthermore, the statement “necessity and need reflected by
continuous applications and dictated requests in party congresses” in the
preamble of Act no. 5634 was another indication of the same change in
climate. With this legislation, the name “Reislik” was changed to the name
“Başkanlık” which reflected a change in the use of the Turkish language (Reis
is the Ottoman equivalent of ‘president’, whereas başkan is modern Turkish)
and created several new units within the organization. Moreover, the
management of the mosques and worship places and mosque personnel,
which had been transferred to the Presidency General for Foundations by the
1931 Budget Act, was given back to the PRA.

The organizational and personnel structure of the PRA, introduced in
1950 by Act no. 5634, was preserved until 1965. The draft bill related to the
organization proposed to the Parliament of Turkey after the adoption of the
1961 Constitution was accepted and enacted after lengthy debates on 22 June
1965. Act no. 633 on the Organization and Duties of the Presidency of
Religious Affairs, which was published in the Official Gazette on 2 July 1965
and came into effect on 15 August 1965, was in my view a sign of a different
mentality compared to that of the founding elite. In this regulation the duties
of the Diyanet were stated as “to carry out affairs related to the beliefs, worship
and moral foundations of Islam, to enlighten Turkish society about religion
and to manage places of worship.”

In 1975, the Parliament enacted a new law that altered the existing system
regarding religious affairs to a large extent. New legislation titled Act no. 1893
was sent to the president for ratification on 6 May 1975, but President
Korutürk15, who was then in office, sent the legislation back to the Parliament
to be reviewed again in accordance with Article 93 of the Constitution of the
Turkish Republic. During the revision of law No. 1893 in Parliament, some
fundamental changes were made on articles other than the ones that had led
the President to return the law. In accordance with constitutional procedures
with regard to legislative activities that did not require the president’s approval
for a second round, the Parliament enacted the regulations as an Act dated 26th
April 1976 No. 1982, and sent it to the president on 30th April 1976 to be
published. However this enactment was considered by the President to be a
new law because of the changes beyond the scope of the stated reasons for
the rejection of Act No. 1893, and was therefore sent back to the Parliament
on May 7th to be reviewed again. Upon rejection of this demand, the President
filed a case against Act No. 1882, and the Constitutional Court decided that the
enactment was “incompatible with the Constitution in form” on 30th April 1979.
This Constitutional Court decision was published in the Official Gazette on
11th May 1980, with the requirement that it should be revised one year later. However, neither on this date nor later was any legal regulation enacted, and the legal domain was regulated by cabinet decrees and other administrative regulations.

Since there is still no change regarding legislation, a question to be asked is whether the provisions of Act No. 633 are in effect once again. This problem is solved by two decisions of the Council of State. A Third Chamber of the Council of State decision provides that a previous Act does not come into effect automatically, because the duty and authority of enacting and amending laws belongs exclusively to the Parliament of Turkey and the decisions of the Constitutional Court are not retroactive. The General Board of the Council of State ratified this decision by the decision E.1971/22, K.1971/36 and dated 24th May 1971. Thus, it cannot be claimed that after the annulment of Act No. 1982 came into effect, Act No. 633 would come into effect. In short, the PRA can be defined as a legal oddity that continues to exist as a very powerful administrative unit despite its lack of a technically legal basis.

The absence of an organized body of clergy in Islam, or a legally defined Muslim community in Turkey are the most important considerations put forward in legitimizing the state’s intervention in religion, and the legislators’ categorizing it as a public service. Public service can be defined as “an activity managed by public legal entities or by private entities supervised by the state for the purpose of meeting a shared and general need which has acquired a certain importance for the people.” Thus, since the beginning, the legislators of the Turkish Republic have been claiming that the absence of an ordained ministry in Islam necessitates the state’s management of religious affairs. An assessment of the duties of the Diyanet in this context reveals that duties such as “the management of places of worship” and “providing correct publications of the Qur’a” appear to be public services fulfilling a collective need. However, the state’s use of the Diyanet as an administrative tool to propagate official ideology regarding Islam, while fulfilling duties like “enlightening society about religion” and “religious education,” is obviously a part of the official politics. Another interesting point here is that one of the duties of the Diyanet is to “to carry out affairs related to the . . . moral foundations of Islam” in the 1965 Act. In my opinion, this wording is a reflection of the altering politics of religion in Turkey over 40 years, starting with attempts to “reform Islam” and come to grips with it.

An interesting point regarding the politics of religion in Turkey is the differing policies of administrations over time from being strictly positivistic to somewhat religious. However it should be noted that, as with everything in Turkey, these lines of qualifications have blurred boundaries. This in fact is a reflection of an altering political milieu. The implicit hostility towards religion...
by the Republic’s founding elite, built on a rivalry between nationalism and Islamism and explicitly backed up by an explicit preference for the former, may be easily observed in several legal policies and administrative actions of 1920’s and 30’s indicated above. Especially during the second half of the 1940’s, for single party — Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People’s Party) governments, there appears to be a period of an attempt of reconciliation with “Islam.”

Religious education was the topic debated in the Parliament on December 24, 1946. Many of the members of the Parliament were in favor of religious education to be a part of the national educational system; some claimed that it would provide moral resistance against communism. In following years several other religion related regulations were enacted. Among these were allocating foreign currencies for hajj (the pilgrimage to Mecca performed by Muslims) pilgrims for the first time in republican times; placing optional religion courses in the fourth and fifth grade primary school curriculum (1949); establishing a faculty of divinity at Ankara University (1949); and allowing the establishment of Qur’an seminaries (1949). During the Democrat Party government period, the ban of azan (call for prayer) to be chanted in Turkish was abolished and was chanted in its original Arabic (1950). During 1960’s a group of Turkish university students, including Turgut Özal and many others to become political figures in the coming years, had gathered around Mehmed Zahid Kotku (1897–1980), a Nakşibendi sheik. The 1970’s witnessed the establishment of the first pro-Islamic political party, Milli Nizam Partisi (National Order Party) to be followed by others founded one after the other upon the Constitutional Court’s shutting down decisions for each of them. It is claimed that each of these political parties were established with Kotku’s promotion and support; he supervised their activities throughout his life. In 1983, Turgut Özal came to power with the victory of his liberal Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party) at the first election after the military coup d’etat in 1980. The Justice and Development Party of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, yet another character in allegiance with Kotku’s circle and with his successor, Kotku’s son-in-law Esat Coşan, had significant victories at the Turkish general elections of 2002 and 2007. All the changes in political milieu regarding religion had their mirror effects on the politics of various administrations regarding the Diyanet.

The “occasional paper” dated June 2007 of the European Union Institute for Security Studies describes the Diyanet as “a state-run body whose members are carefully selected and vetted by the authorities and who, in good Ottoman tradition, preach a very pro-state interpretation of Islamic tenets.” It is a legal requirement for civil servants to act and speak in accord with state directives; all the employees of the Diyanet including its presidents are civil servants.
Also, as the employees of an administrative unit, it is their duty to uphold the constitutional provisions. Actually it seems that the task of the Diyanet has not been to educate ‘good Muslims’ or raise Muslim consciousness. A booklet that lays out the functions of the Diyanet and its personnel by Ahmet Hamdi Akseki, the third president of the Diyanet, reveals the Turkish Republic’s founding elites’ objectives were to create ‘good citizens’ with civic responsibility toward the state: to promote love of homeland, the sacredness of the military and civil service, respect for law and order, and hard work for the development of Turkey. Article 136 of the 1982 constitution that is currently in effect in Turkey sets the goal of Diyanet as “promoting and consolidating national solidarity and unity.” Although since June 2006, bulbes (sermons delivered at the noon prayer on Fridays and on certain other occasions) have not been sent from the central Diyanet organization in Ankara, it is apparent that the Diyanet has served as a tool for social engineering, as in the “girls to school” campaign, with respect to issues of domestic violence, etc. However, it is also a fact that Islamic movements that have evolved by virtue of economic and political opportunities in Turkey and had influences on the Diyanet, too. For instance, as a result of the 1949 decision to open Qur’än seminaries and hire more preachers for the state mosques, Süleymancıs trained and employed preachers for the Diyanet. Süleymancı preachers dominated the different levels of the Diyanet until the enactment of No. 653 (1965), which provided that only graduates of Imam Hatip and Divinity schools were to be employed at the Diyanet.

The principle of equality, construed and applied as “equality in blessings and burden” by the Turkish Constitutional Court in various decisions, requires that all persons eligible for public service should be able to benefit from such service in a free and equitable manner. The first problem that arises on the subject of public service is that the state is focused on a single religion rather than on services that cover the whole population of Turkey. However, as concerns our present subject matter, this problem is relatively easy to solve because Islam is the religion of the majority of the people and services related to other religions are provided by the respective communities according to the provisions of the Lausanne Treaty. However, a problem emerges with services to be offered to different Muslim groups having different beliefs. This is where the Diyanet is criticized most frequently and severely.

It has been observed that the religious belief promoted by the state is closer to the Sunnite tradition and that the Diyanet and its officers or spokespersons have sometimes tended to display hostility towards Alevi and Shi’ite citizens. A draft law prepared in 1963 for defining the organization and duties of the Diyanet proposed the establishment of a “Presidency of Religious Sects.” This proposal, however, was criticized on the grounds that it could “pave the way for official separation” and was never implemented.
The Diyanet claims that Alevis and Sunnites are not subject to discrimination because, except for certain local customs and beliefs, there are no differences between these two sects as to basic religious issues; this actually indicates a denial of any separate ‘Alevi’ religious identity. The fact that Sunnites constitute the majority does not justify the state’s disregard for other sects, since there is no majority or minority religion or sect in a secular state. The state should be impartial toward all religions and sects. The Diyanet pretends to be unaware of the religious beliefs of the Alevi population, and allows mosques to be built in Alevi villages, which appears to be a part of pressure politics exerted by the state to implant Sunnite belief in this section of society.

The existing legal structure provides a dual nature to the Diyanet. On one hand, one gets the impression that religious life is being controlled by the laic state. This is assumed insofar as the Diyanet is directed by managers loyal to the laic state. However, the extensive network of the Diyanet all over the country, which no other administrative body enjoys, is a great opportunity for all governments, regardless of their political positions; thus the Diyanet as an administrative organism may indirectly obtain power over the government. Paradoxically, in this context, the state has been aiming to employ the Diyanet against religion and its influence on the socio-political level in Turkey. However, it is interesting to observe recent instances like the so-called “alternative celebrations” in honor of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammed on an official national holiday held by the Diyanet, that all related parties of politics of religion in Turkey take some role.31

Endnotes

1. I use the terms laicité/laic/laicists for a preference of the state’s control of religion as opposed to secularism which implies the separation of state and religion. As Rex Ahdar and Ian Leigh point out,

“The longstanding French policy of laïcité exemplifies . . . desire to restrict, if not eliminate, clerical and religious influence, over the state. The French Parliament’s ban in 2004 of conspicuous religious clothing and insignia in public schools – aimed at the wearing of Muslim headscarves- illustrates this suspicion of religion and is an attempt to avert the growth and influence of an incipient Muslim fundamentalism in that nation. The modern Islamic society of Turkey is similarly an example of a state founded on strongly secular principles where restrictions on individual religious liberty have been introduced to prevent pressure being exerted by the predominant religious group” (Ahdar, Rex and Leigh, Ian, Religious Freedom in the Liberal State, (Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 2005), 73.

Davison, Andrew “Turkey, a ‘Secular’ State? The Challenge of Description”, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 102 (2/3), 2003, 333–350. I totally agree with Davison in his arguments, thus I prefer to use the term ‘laicist’ for Republican state practice in Turkey. Furthermore, *laiklik* (laicité) is the concept that is preferred by the Republican decision-making elite of Turkey in all legislation and other legal regulations. However, I will sometimes be using also the terms “secular/secularity” in addressing not a means/policy but the *telos* or purpose.

2. I use the word *state* as the central state and its own employees, not regions or cities or “government” in general.


8. Islam actually seems to be considered by the Republican founding elite as a cement for the new identity, and some sort of a glue for different ethnic groups.


13. Şemsettin Günaltay (1883–1961) was a graduate of Lausanne University, Faculty of Natural Sciences. In the 1900’s he started working on Turkish history, under the influence of Ziya Gökalp. In 1914 he first became a professor of Turkish history and Islamic nations at Darülifniun/Faculty of Letters, and then the dean of the Divinity School. He got into politics in 1915 as a member of the Parliament. He took posts in the Anatolian Movements. He was in the Parliament again from 1923 to 1954 as a member. He got appointed as the prime minister on January 16, 1949. His cabinet was in power until May 22, 1950, when the Democrat Party got a vast majority of the votes in the elections. He
published many books on Islam and politics, bringing together a Republican approach with religious sensitivities.

14. For speeches by the Seyhan deputy Sinan Tekelioğlu and the Erzurum deputy Vehbi Kocاغney see *TBMM Zabt Ceridesi (Grand National Assembly proceedings)* VII, 25 (1950), 838.

15. Fahri Korutürk (1903–1987) was a graduate of High Naval Academy, and as an admiral was the chief of naval staff. After his retirement in 1960, he held several diplomatic positions like being the Turkish ambassador in U.S.S.R., and in Spain. In 1968 he got elected as a member of the Senate, and was elected in 1973 by the Turkish Parliament to be the sixth president of the Republic of Turkey.


17. For this decision see *Danıştay Dergisi (State Council Journal)*, 4 (1972), 71–75.

18. Actually, this currently remains one of the wonders of the Turkish socio-political system, especially from a legal anthropological point. On a purely legalistic ground, it is not easy at all to perceive how any administrative unit remains technically without proper regulations for over 35 years, let alone one concerning a very sensitive issue like religion that all interested parties seem to be totally obsessed with. I believe that a thorough survey on the legal mentality of the decision-making elite in Turkey would be very interesting and useful in trying to understand the politics in this country.

19. Legally, ‘community’ is a term that may only be used for the Christian and Jewish communities that are defined by the Lausanne Treaty of 1926. Various *de facto* communities/religious orders have been organized as associations and/or foundations; however, legally they do not represent Muslim communities.

20. Official expectancy for *Diyarbakir* publications seem to lie in two parallel lines: to provide religious knowledge that should be “without any superstitions”; and to unify religion with the state, with Republican ideology and with the reforms of the 1920’s. A statement of Mehmet Nuri Yılmaz, the former President of *Diyarbakir*, reveals this quite clearly: “*Diyarbakir*, that has the duty to indoctrinate (telkin) citizens the essence, spirit, reality of religion that has been purified against superstitions, should be given the opportunity to establish its television and radio channels.” See “İrtica din değil, din irtica değil” an interview by M. Gündem, *Zaman* daily, 23 January 2000, 15.

21. See *TBMM Zabt Ceridesi (Grand National Assembly proceedings)* VIII, 3 (1947), 426.

22. For speeches by the Bursa deputy Muhittin Baha Pars and the Istanbul deputy Hamdullah Suphi Tannöver see *TBMM Zabt Ceridesi (Grand National Assembly proceedings)* VIII, 3 (1947), 428; and 437–440.


Ahmet Hamdi Akseki (1887–1951) was one of the prominent names of Islamist thought of the Second Constitutional Era of the Ottoman times. He was appointed as the third president of Diyanet by the President of the Republic İsmet İnönü, and occupied that post from 1947 to 1951, when he died. Akseki’s appointment was similar to Günaltay’s as the prime minister. For an evaluation of this period and the above-mentioned appointments see: Kara, İsmail, “Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı: Devlete Müslümanlar Arasında Bir Kurum” (Presidency of Religious Affairs: An Institution between the State and the Muslims) in Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce Ansiklopedisi (Encyclopedia on Political Thought in Modern Turkey): vol. 6 — İslamcılık (Islamism), (İletişim, İstanbul, 2004), 178–200, 192.


31. A press declaration dated 27 April 2007 was issued by the Turkish military, when the parliament failed to vote for a president. According to the ‘memorandum’, conspiracies of some groups that aim to undermine and to destroy Turkey’s laic system went so far as to organize alternative celebrations in lieu of the official national holiday (23 April), which is ‘the symbol of the independence of our state and the harmony and conviviality of our nation’. For full text of the ‘press declaration’ see Turkish military’s website http://www.tsk.mil.tr/bashalk/basac/2007/a08.htm.