The Culture Wars Redux? The Polarization of Social and Political Attitudes in Turkey

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The Culture Wars Redux? The Polarization of Social and Political Attitudes in Turkey

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Abstract

This study assesses whether social and political attitudes became polarized in Turkish society between 1990 and 2011. In recent years, many in academia and the public debate have claimed that Turkish society has become increasingly polarized between conservatives and secularists. Following the methods used to assess the "culture war" debate in the United States, this study uses data from the World Value Surveys and the European Value Surveys to determine the validity of the above hypothesis and assesses the impact of religion and Islamist politics on social and political attitudes. Our analyses of four areas (namely, family and sexuality, gender roles, democracy, and economic and social justice) reveal that there is no evidence of increasing polarization during this period. Although the individuals who voted for secular-oriented political parties were slightly more tolerant toward abortion, divorce, and homosexuality than the individuals who voted for religiously oriented political parties, the differences between the two groups were minimal and did not increase over time. Interestingly, we found some evidence for rising conservatism, especially in the 1990s. Overall, Turkish society became less accepting of abortion and divorce between 1990 and 2011, although support for women's participation in the labor force increased in the same period.

Keywords

Turkey, polarization, social and political attitudes, religion

Turkey often attracts scholarly interest as a Muslim country that experienced one of the most comprehensive modernization projects in the Islamic world. Opposing tendencies for Westernization in Turkish society can be traced back to the final days of the Ottoman Empire and the rapid modernization of the newly proclaimed secular Turkish Republic in 1923. However, the rise of Islamism starting in the 1990s, which coincides with the rise of Islamist politics in the wider Islamic world, and especially the current governing party's election in 2002, has highlighted these tensions. These tensions in society and the academic and public

debate on it reached a boiling point in 2007 when groups staged mass demonstrations on the grounds that the current governing party was endangering the state's secular nature. More recently, mass protests broke out during May and June 2013, sparked by government

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plans to demolish a park in Istanbul's Taksim Square. This event quickly transformed into a showdown between young, urban, and secular-minded Turks versus the government and its conservative support base. Today, many scholars inside and outside of Turkey argue that Turkish society is divided between the secular and the conservative groups who maintain opposing worldviews and values (Baran 2010; Çarkoğlu and Toprak 2007; Howe 2000). Some scholars also claim that the rise of Islamist politics made society more conservative and endangered the lifestyles of the secular Turks (Agirdir 2010; Mardin 2007; Toprak et al. 2008).

These claims resonate with observations made of many societies across the Islamic world. The Islamist groups' prominent roles after the Arab Spring–inspired regime changes, the ongoing tensions between the Islamists and the old secular establishment, as well as the young and more secular-minded urban masses in countries such as Egypt and Tunisia are good examples (Shaikh and Hamid 2012; Voll et al. 2012). Initially, many saw the Arab Spring as an attempt by flourishing urban, educated, and Western-oriented groups to overthrow repressive regimes (Ajami 2012; Güder, Mercan, and Klavuz 2012). However, the tensions between the Islamists and their opponents reinforced the existing images of dichotomous social structures in Islamic countries. According to this discourse, Islamic societies are divided between Western-oriented groups who are liberal in values and cosmopolitan in their lifestyles, and Islamist elements who seek to create theocratic regimes and maintain ultra-conservative attitudes toward social issues (de Castro 2009; Kardam and Tüzün 1998; Mardin 1994; Özbudun 2000).

This study assesses if social and political attitudes have become polarized in Turkish society between 1990 and 2011 using data from four waves of the World Values Survey (1990, 2001, 2007, 2011) and two waves of the European Values Survey conducted in Turkey at five different time points between 1990 and 2011 with a total of 10,837 respondents (World Values Survey 2014; European Values Survey 2001, 2009). Although our data are limited to one county, we hope that an analysis of the Turkish case will also enhance our understanding of the ongoing processes in the wider region and the Islamic world in general. In addition, this study contributes to the overall debate on social and political polarization by drawing on the "culture wars" debate in the United States (e.g., Davis and Robinson 1996; DiMaggio, Evans, and Bryson 1996) and comparing its findings with this literature.

Although there are wide-ranging debates on social and political polarization in the social sciences, the "culture wars" debate in the United States is the most relevant one in terms of its scope and methodology. This debate assesses the role of religious conservatism and orthodoxy as a divisive force and has many similarities to the ongoing debate on Turkey and the Islamic world, as well providing methodological and analytical tools. Following the "culture wars" literature, this study analyzes attitudes in four areas: family and sexuality, gender roles, democracy, and economic and social justice. Similar to the "culture wars" debate, the results of analyses reveal no evidence of increasing polarization of social attitudes In Turkey between 1990 and 2011. Although we found evidence of persisting differences between religious and secular people and between people who voted for religiously oriented political parties (ROP) and people who voted for secular-oriented political parties (SOP), the difference between these two groups was minimal overall. Remarkably, we found some evidence for rising conservatism, especially in the 1990s. Overall, Turkish society became less accepting of abortion and divorce between 1990 and 2011, although support for women's participation in the labor force increased during the time period we analyzed.

Past Research

The literature on social and political polarization is vast (see Fiorina and Abrams 2008; Fischer and Mattson 2009, for review). Summarizing it here is not possible and is, moreover, beyond the scope of this study. Within the broad array of such studies and debates, the most relevant ones are those that look at the debate along the fault lines that emerge around religious adherence and

orthodoxy. The debate on the United States's "culture wars," which was most vibrant during the mid-1990s, is especially relevant to this article in terms of scope and methodology. In this section, we first summarize this debate and then provide a background on Turkey and discuss the country's current debate on polarization.

The Culture Wars

By the mid-1990s, the American political and social scene was ripe with claims of a society polarized between liberal and conservative worldviews, which many likened to a culture war (see Davis and Robinson 1996; DiMaggio et al. 1996). These widespread claims in the popular discourse caused American social scientists to address them via comprehensive data analyses using various methods.

The phrase "culture war" is a direct translation of the German phrase *kulturkampf*. In the early 1990s, Hunter (1991) argued that American society was increasingly demarcated between the "orthodox" and "progressive" camps, both of which offered competing worldviews and claimed moral high ground. He presented an increasing number of controversial issues such as abortion, gun control, and gay rights as evidence for a "culture war." During his speech in the 1992 Republican National Convention, presidential candidate Pat Buchanan famously declared that a war for the soul of America was raging (Fiorina and Abrams 2008).

In their seminal study, DiMaggio et al. (1996) assessed the posited increased polarization of American attitudes during the mid-1990s using data from the General Social Survey (GSS) and the National Election Study (NES). They defined and analyzed four dimensions of opinion polarization: (1) if the attitudes of Americans became more dispersed than concentrated (the dispersion principle), (2) if the attitudes were moving to separate modes (bimodality principle), (3) the extent that opinions in one domain were dependent on opinions in other domains (the constraint principle), and (4) the extent to which individual characteristics and identities determined attitudes (the consolidation principle). This massive undertaking revealed no evidence of

an all-encompassing polarization between 1972 and 1994 except for a significantly more polarized attitude regarding abortion. Interestingly, they found increasing agreement on crime, racial integration, and women's rights. The differences among people who belong to different races, religions, and age groups, or among people with different levels of education, were either stable or declined, except for those who reported that they were Democrats or Republicans. In a replication of their earlier study with more current data (1972–2000), Evans (2003) reached similar conclusions. Hoffmann and Miller (1998) also found no consistent trends of decreasing or increasing within-group polarization among denominational groups regarding their attitudes toward family issues in the same period.

The conclusions and methods of DiMaggio et al. (1996) generated criticism from some scholars. For example, Mouw and Sobel (2001) claimed that no polarization occurred in attitudes toward abortion when using cumulative probit models. They criticized DiMaggio et al. (1996) for treating ordinal and nominal variables as interval data and not controlling for how wording changes had an impact on the abortion question. In their response, Evans, Bryson, and DiMaggio (2001) pointed out that Mouw and Sobel (2001) only dealt with dispersion and did not test for other dimensions of polarization. Downey and Huffman (2001) argued that polarization cannot be completely assessed in a modality versus bimodality framework, and that any analyses of it should also consider the possibility of trimodal distributions (i.e., a scenario in which society is divided into three or more camps). However, as they admit, they were unable to suggest a satisfactory alternative to deal with trimodal distributions.

In another influential study based on data from GSS 1991, Davis and Robinson (1996) assessed the impact of religious orthodoxy, religious service attendance, and religious denominations on attitudes regarding various issues in 1991; they did not, however, analyze any changes over time. They defined religious orthodoxy based on questions regarding the respondents' feelings toward the Bible, if they believe God decides the course of their lives, and if right and wrong are based on God's

laws. The results of their analyses indicate that religious orthodoxy is a significant predictor of attitudes toward sexuality, the gendered division of labor, abortion, and children's schooling. However, religious orthodoxy does not determine attitudes toward racial inequality, and the religiously orthodox are more likely to be more liberal on economic issues.

More recently, in their analysis of the American electorate, Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope (2005) reached similar conclusions and argued that Americans do not have strong opinions about most issues, although such scholars as Abramowitz and Saunders (2008) criticized their conclusions for downplaying ideological polarization and differences between Democrats and Republicans, and between religious and secular voters in the United States. Similarly, Thomson (2010) argued that there is no culture war in the United States, but rather ongoing controversies on specific issues that have been present in public debate since the nineteenth century. In their analysis of data from the American NES surveys, Wroe, Ashbee, and Gosling (2014) found that concern over traditional moral issues has increased in the United States since 1980s; they also found, however, that this was true for all groups on the political and social spectrum. On more contemporary issues, McCright and Dunlap (2011) found evidence for ideological and political polarization between liberals/Democrats and conservatives/Republicans on the issue of global warming from 2001 to 2010. Lindner and Hawkins (2012), however, found no polarization in attitudes toward globalization and soccer in the United States in 2010.

In the literature, some scholars pointed out the possibility of elite polarization as opposed to mass polarization. Hetherington (2009) argued that although there was not any significant evidence for mass polarization in the United States, the elites have experienced increasing partisan polarization since the 1980s. Similarly, Layman and Green (2005) argued that "culture wars" were waged primarily by specific religious groups and political leadership on specific issues and rejected the idea of a broader cultural divide in American society. In their analyses of Protestant clergy in the United States, Uecker and Lucke (2011) found evidence for polarization among the religious elite—the Protestant clergy—based on religious orthodoxy. However, their findings also suggest that the religious elite do not represent a unified front. In a similar study, Thomas and Olson (2012) found variety and change in the responses of evangelical elites in the United States between 1960 and 2009. Likewise, in his analysis of the debate on the embryonic stem cell research, Smith (2010) documented how moderate Republicans challenged the religious right within the Republican Party.

Overall, the findings of the "culture wars" literature accumulated significant evidence that polarization, if any, is limited to specific issues and debunked the myth of an increasing polarization of social attitudes and the division of American society into two broad and homogeneous camps based on religion. Although similar claims may resurface from time to time in the popular discourse, American sociologists seem confident that no such bifurcation exists.

The idea of a culture war between the religiously orthodox and the secular, however, has been a tempting one. Similar claims have been made in other contexts as well, although empirical analyses have yet to reveal any support for an all-encompassing polarization and crystallized social and political camps. For example, Adams, Green, and Milazzo (2012) observed declining polarization throughout all levels of English society between 1987 and 2001. In their comparison of the secular and traditional sections of Israeli society, Ben-Porat and Feniger (2012) found no evidence for an all-encompassing culture war, but did observe shifting positions and alliances on different issues. In the Islamic world, as mentioned above, many researchers have observed longstanding divides between the modernizing elites and the more traditional sections of the Muslim-majority societies in addition to recent observations regarding the divide between the urban and Westernized and the more Islamic sections of societies (Baran 2010; Berkes 1964; Davison 1998; Mardin 1994). However, comprehensive empirical analyses to back these claims, which this study attempts, are mostly absent.

Background on Turkey

The Turkish Republic was founded in 1923 following the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire. During its early years, the founding cadre led by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk initiated a vast Westernization process and established an authoritarian regime under his newly founded Republican People's Party (CHP; Ahmad 1993). The Westernization process and especially some of the reforms adopted by Ataturk and the CHP created some backlash, to which the newly established secular state's reaction was usually swift and harsh. The state, which committed itself to creating secular and Western-oriented generations, has always carried a deep suspicion about religion and conservative elements in society (Davison 1998).

Although the country's Islamist political movement has its roots in late-Ottoman era pan-Islamist movements, it first appeared on the political scene only during the late 1960s and early 1970s with Necmettin Erbakan's National Outlook movement. However, it really flourished in the 1990s when, building on its successes in the municipal elections of 1994, Erbakan's Welfare Party (RP) steadily expanded its support within society and won a significant portion of national assembly seats in 1995.[1] The following year, it established a coalition government with the center-right True Path Party (DYP), and Erbakan became the prime minister. After that, the Turkish army and secular elites eventually initiated an anti-government campaign, known in Turkey as "the 28 February Process," that forced him to resign in 1997. The Supreme Court banned the RP the following year (Cizre-Sakallioglu and Cinar 2003; Duran 2010).

After this, his followers established the Virtue Party (FP), which the Supreme Court also banned in 2001. Following this, the Islamist movement was divided into two. The traditionalists founded the Felicity Party (SP), and the reformists founded the Justice and Development Party (AKP), then led by the current president Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Although AKP claimed to be a center-right party, many secular-minded Turks suspected a hidden Islamist agenda and strongly opposed the party. In 2002, the AKP won the national elections. It went on to win two consecutive elections in 2007 and 2011 and remains in power. This reality inflamed a widespread and ongoing secular opposition. Before the 2007 presidential election, millions of secular Turks took to the streets claiming that the republic's foundations were in jeopardy. Again in 2010, during the constitutional amendment referendum, there was significant mobilization and political tension between the secular opposition and the government. May and June 2013 witnessed major protests against the government composed mostly of urban and secular masses. Today, many secular-minded Turks remain deeply skeptical of the AKP government.

The Debate on Turkey

Reflecting on Turkey's long history of social and political tensions, one may see many fault lines: the longstanding tensions between secularists and religious conservatives, Turks and Kurds, Sunnis and Alevis, and the political right and left. In this study, however, we focus on the tension between the secularists and the religious conservatives. A comprehensive study of all of the country's social and political polarization and conflict is beyond the scope of this study.

A survey of the recent literature on Turkey reveals a number of scholarly articles that assert such a polarization. In his well-known article, Samuel P. Huntington (1993) argued that Turkey was passing through an internal clash of civilizations, that it was a "country torn" between Western civilization and its rival Islamic civilization. This perspective resonates with the ideas of some Turkish academics and politicians. For example, Baran (2008, 2010), Kuru (2009), and Cornell and Karaveli (2008) thought that Turkey may be regarded as a country "torn" as a result of being Muslim and Western as well as secular and conservative at the same time. Yavuz (2009) argued that there is a conflict between the secularist elites and the religious conservative masses. Baran (2008, 2010) claimed that the AKP's rise divided Turkish society into those who uphold Ataturk's principals and those who want to shape the country according to an Islamist agenda. In his comparison of AKP and CHP

supporters, Baslevent (2009) maintained that the supporters of these two parties differ significantly in terms of their attitudes toward E.U. membership, the state of the economy, and secularism. Kaya (2012) found a deep divergence between secularists and conservatives/Islamists. Turam (2008) saw increasing tensions between secular and pious Turkish women due to the latter's increasing visibility in social and political life as a result of the ruling AKP's actions.[2]

Somer (2007, 2012) found a great convergence between secular and Islamist elites in terms of their rejection of democratic values, but also a deep clash between the old secular middle class and new conservative religious middle class. According to him, although the latter is drawn to a moderate and promodern sort of Islamism, the former remains suspicious of them. Well-known political scientists, Çarkoğlu and Toprak (2007:14–15) argued that "Turkish society has a clear dual structure" that they explain by borrowing prominent Turkish sociologist Şerif Mardin's (1973) center-periphery conceptualization. They argued that there are "two clearly distinguishable groups opposes to one another on almost all important issues" (Çarkoğlu and Toprak 2007:14):

> On one side are urban, better-educated people with a relatively high income level who do not feel extremely committed to religious values and who define themselves as secular; on the other side are rural, less-educated people with a relatively low income level and who define themselves as Islamist and religious. (Çarkoğlu and Toprak 2007:104)[3]

Another study that Toprak carried out with three journalists between December 2007 and July 2008 (Toprak et al. 2008) claimed that religious people who had been shunned by the secular elites since the republic's founding have now marginalized secular-minded Turks and transformed them into the "new others."

In his analysis of data collected in Turkey in 2010, Agirdir (2010) argued that Turkish society is polarized between "anxious moderns" (10.6 percent) and "religious conservatives," (12.8 percent), but also proposed the existence of "traditional conservatives" and "conservative moderns" as a middle ground between them. According to this research, these "anxious moderns" are mostly aged below 35 years, well-educated, have above-average incomes, work in the private and state sectors, and live in metropolitan areas. On the contrary, "religious conservatives" have lower levels of education and income, as well as lower rates in other cultural indicators such as book and newspaper readership. The results of another study conducted by Sencar and his colleagues (2011) about this portion of Turkish society had similar conclusions. In this research, which was conducted in the cities that mostly voted "no" in the 2010 constitutional amendment referendum, they found that 32 percent of people feel that religious policies threaten their lifestyle (Sencar et al. 2011).[4]

Although many scholars see a deep and strong division in Turkish society, others claim that these divisions exist only between the elite groups and not within the wider society. Göle (2010) made some conceptual analyses around the birth and development of Turkish secularism. According to her, "the process of democratization in Turkey shows that despite the political polarization between the religious and the secular, the wall of separation between the two becomes more and more porous" (Göle 2010:46), Heper (2009), who drew on findings from nationwide surveys conducted in Turkey since 1999, reached similar conclusions. He claimed that Turkey has no deep divisions because "if there have been deep divisions in Turkey, those rifts have been around some hard and soft ideologies and only among some members of the intelligentsia" (p. 421). Kandiyoti (2012) and Demiralp (2012) discussed the political elites' dichotomous construction of secularist and Islamic identities that enables them to pursue their own power and hegemony. Whereas Kandiyoti viewed the terms secular and Islamic as empty signifiers, Demiralp categorized them as cultural terms that hide the main economic agenda.

Despite these conflicting claims, however, most of these studies depend on cross-sectional content or data analysis and provide no convincing evidence for overtime trends. Our analysis of these trends between 1990 and

2011 seeks to fill this gap in the literature. In the following section, we explain our data sources and methodology.

Data and Method

This study assesses the polarization of social attitudes and the impact of the rise of Islamist politics on social and political attitudes with a sample of 10,837 respondents. Data for the analyses come from the World Value Survey (WVS) Rounds 2, 4, 5, and 6, conducted in Turkey in 1990, 2001, 2007, and 2011, and the European Value Survey (EVS) Rounds 4 and 5, conducted in 2001 and 2009. The third WVS round, which was conducted in Turkey in 1996, is excluded because data could not be collected in the southeastern region due to security concerns (intensified fighting between the Turkish Armed Forces and the Kurdish separatists at the time). Both the WVS and the EVS were conducted by the same research team in Turkey and are nearly identical in terms of their methodology and scope. The WVS and the EVS include many questions about attitudes toward marriage, sexuality, religion, and other issues collected from nationally representative samples. Although these surveys do not cover all relevant areas, they do allow one to track and analyze the changes in values and attitudes since 1990, when the indigenous Islamist politics began to rise and proliferate. Other data sources, among them the Eurobarometer and the European Social Science Survey, were considered but rejected on the grounds that their coverage is limited to the most recent years and does not allow for over time comparison. Finally, although the data used in some relevant studies may be wider in scope (e.g., Çarkoğlu and Toprak 2007), their cross-sectional approach does not allow one to account for over time changes, whereas the WVS and the EVS do allow for this.

Multiple methods will be used to analyze the degree of polarization and the impact of religion and Islamist politics. Following DiMaggio et al. (1996), this study will first assess dispersion and bimodality to measure the polarization of social attitudes in Turkey. Dispersion will be measured with variance, and bimodality will be measured with Kurtosis. A decline in variation signals an increasing consensus on a particular issue in a group. Kurtosis signals perfect bimodality in a group as it approaches −2; when coupled with decreasing variation, it signals an extreme consensus as it increases and approaches infinity (DiMaggio et al. 1996). We are unable to assess the constraint aspect of polarization because the nature of the WVS and EVS' attitudinal questions does not allow one to run a factor analysis and establish a Cronbach's alpha value. In addition, we decided not to regress the variance and Kurtosis values on time since our data has only five time points. Thus we present means, variance, and Kurtosis descriptively for each year without regressing them over time. The consolidation dimension of polarization will be explored in our regression analyses.

We also use *t*-tests to compare the means of the two groups being analyzed: respondents who reported that they would vote for the ROP and those who reported a preference for SOP. The ROP category consists of the three political parties established by Erbakan's followers (the RP, FP, and SP), the current governing party AKP, as well as the Grand Unity Party (BBP), which subscribes to what is known in Turkey as the Turkish-Islamic synthesis.[5] The SOP category includes all other political parties, including those of center right and the center left, as well as the far left and nationalist parties.[6] The use of political party preference can be seen as problematic in terms of causality; however, most of the academic and the public debate presents the rise of Islamist politics as the source of social polarization. Initially, we also wanted to compare those who prefer that religion has a larger role in politics with those who disagree with this preference. However, such a question was not asked in all of the waves and thus prevented an assessment of the changes over time. In addition, attending religious services was not a feasible option because Muslim women in Turkey traditionally pray at home and do not attend religious services held in mosques.[7]

We start our analyses by assessing the polarization of social attitudes among the entire population. Then, we compare people

who reported a preference for ROP with people who reported a preference for SOP. If any polarization does exist, it should decline within each group over time whereas it increases between them (DiMaggio et al. 1996).[8]

Then, we assess the impact of religiosity and preference for ROP on social attitudes by using regression models with a pooled sample of all WVS and EVS waves in our sample. We use an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression with the continuous dependent variables. Whenever our dependent variables are categorical, we use ordered logistic regression. The logarithmic models allow researchers to deal with binomial and categorical distributions as linear (Agresti 2002). Ordered logistic regression models constitute the best statistical model when the dependent variable is coded in order. Specifically designed for dealing with ordinal categorical variables, they calculate the likelihood of responding with a higher value in an ordered scale.

Polarization Variables

Polarization will be assessed in four areas: *family and sexuality, gender roles, economic and social justice*, and *democracy*.[9] Under *family and sexuality*, we assess the attitudes toward *abortion, divorce*, and *homosexuality*. In the surveys, respondents were asked if they thought these were justified on a scale of 1 (*never justifiable*) to 10 (*always justifiable*). For *gender roles*, we assess the attitudes toward *women's participation in the labor force* and *working mothers*. Both surveys asked respondents to rate, on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4 (*strongly agree*), if being a housewife is as fulfilling as being a working mother and if the latter can establish a good relationship with her children. The 2011 WVS revised the wording for the latter question and asked if children suffered when their mother worked. Attitudes toward family and sexuality and gender roles are among the primary areas where the differences between the religious and secular may reveal themselves. In the "culture wars" literature, issues such as abortion and gendered division of labor are the primary areas where conservatives differed significantly from seculars (e.g., Davis and

Robinson 1996; DiMaggio et al. 1996). Baldassarri and Bearman (2007) labeled these as the "takeoff" issues.

Under *economic and social justice*, we analyze two questions that assess respondents' attitudes toward *income inequality* and *individual vs. government responsibility* on a scale of 1 to 10. Finally, the WVS and the EVS assess people's perception of *army rule* and *democratic political rule*, with a scale of 1 (*very bad*) to 4 (*very good*). Attitudes toward democracy and economic and social justice are primarily used as controls to assess if any polarization on issues regarding family, sexuality, and gender expand to other areas. However, previous research also suggests that Islamic conservatives may be more inclined to support social and economic equality. In their analysis of seven Muslim-majority countries, Davis and Robinson (2006) argued that Islamists are more likely to support the idea that incomes should be more equal, everyone should be provided for, and there should be more government involvement in the economy, possibly due to a more communitarian orientation compared with seculars.

Independent Variables

Our first independent variable inserted in the regression models is *religiosity*, a dummy variable consisting of respondents who reported that religion is either important or very important in their lives.[10] Second, we assess the impact of *voting for ROP*, a dummy variable for people who reported that they voted for the RP, FP, SP, AKP, or BBP. In addition, we include *income, education, age, gender*, and *unemployment* in the models as control variables. *Age* enters into the models directly, whereas *income* is measured by a 10-point scale (the surveyors revised the latter's boundaries according to the cost of living before each wave of surveys). *Education* is measured by an 8-point scale,[11] and the impact of *gender* is assessed by including a dummy variable for *males*. To test for the effect of *unemployment*, a dummy variable is added. Finally, we add *year* as a variable to assess the strength and direction of changes over time and to control for the historical context.[12]

Results

Table 1 presents the mean, variance, and Kurtosis for the entire population for each attitudinal question by survey year. Among the family and sexuality measures, the mean score for accepting abortion decreased from 4.19 in 1990 to 2.22 in 2011, whereas Kurtosis increased and variance declined. This suggests that the overall acceptance of abortion declined among an expanding majority of Turkish society. The acceptance of divorce followed a similar trajectory, with the mean decreasing from 5.03 in 1990 to 3.31 in 2011. The acceptance of homosexuality was already low in 1990 with a mean score of 1.54, which increased slightly to 1.72 in 2011. However, the mean score, variance, and Kurtosis fluctuated during this period. These results suggest that Turkish attitudes on issues of family and sexuality became more conservative during this period, especially between 1990 and 2001, although the trend is most apparent in attitudes toward abortion.

In terms of gender role measures, the mean score for agreeing that being a housewife is as fulfilling as being a working mother declined from 3.05 in 1990 to 2.92 in 2011 although it fluctuated significantly in this period. Variance and Kurtosis also fluctuated during this period. Interestingly, the mean score for agreeing that working mothers can establish a relationship with their children that is just as good as the one established by non-working mothers also increased from 2.66 in 1990 to 3.00 in 2009. In addition, the variance declined and Kurtosis increased. Also in 2011, the mean score for disagreeing that children would suffer when the mother worked was 2.23 with a low variance value of .71 and a Kurtosis value of 2.59. These results suggest that although Turkish society continues to have high respect for a woman's traditional role, there has been increasing support for women's participation in the labor force. The trends for the democracy and economic and social justice variables are less clear as they display little change in mean values and have fluctuating variation and Kurtosis values.

Table 2 presents the mean, variance, and Kurtosis values separately for respondents who reported a preference for ROP and those

who reported a preference for SOP, and the *t* values comparing the means of these two groups in each survey year. In terms of accepting abortion, the trends within each group are similar to the overall trend in the entire sample: the mean score decreases in each group between 1990 and 2011, whereas Kurtosis values increase and variance values decrease overall. This reflects an increasing homogeneity within each group. But as both groups moved in the same direction, it does not indicate an increasing polarization between them. Although the *t* values were significant for all years, differences in means were minimal (less than 1 out of 10 except for 1990). The mean score for accepting divorce decreased substantially between 1990 and 2007 among respondents who preferred to vote for ROP, but increased slightly in 2009 and 2011. In the SOP group, it fluctuated but still declined from 5.06 in 1990 to 3.45 in 2011. Variance and Kurtosis values fluctuated for both groups during this period. The acceptance of homosexuality remained low within both groups and mean scores, and variance and Kurtosis values fluctuated; however, and remarkably, the mean scores slightly increased in both groups between 1990 and 2011. Interestingly, there was no significant difference between the two groups in 1990 in terms of accepting divorce and homosexuality. The *t* values were significant in the following years, peaking in 2007 and declining in following years, although it increased again for homosexuality in 2011. Again, however, differences in the means between the two groups were minimal. The peak in 2007 may be due to the tense political atmosphere at that time and may provide some evidence of politics fueling polarization. Overall, these results suggest that although people who reported a preference for ROP have had slightly more conservative attitudes toward family and sexuality, the two groups did not experience divergent trends.

The trends for gender role measures in each group were very similar to the overall trend during this period. Although the woman's traditional role remained highly respected, the support for working mothers increased within both groups. In terms of attitudes toward democracy and economic and social

Table 1. Means, Variances, and Kurtosis Values by Year (Entire Population).

Polarization Variables	N	Mean	Variance	Kurtosis
Family and sexuality				
Abortion justifiable				
1990	987	4.19	9.18	1.89
2001	1,198	2.43	5.48	4.90
2007	1,299	2.32	5.03	5.39
2009	2,328	1.92	3.94	8.45
2011	1,531	2.22	4.53	5.85
Divorce justifiable				
1990	986	5.03	8.66	1.98
2001	1,194	3.63	7.75	2.47
2007	1,307	3.45	7.91	2.51
2009	2,312	3.33	8.18	2.78
2011	1,502	3.31	8.33	2.55
Homosexuality justifiable				
1990	974	1.54	2.47	13.57
2001	1,192	1.55	2.51	14.64
2007	1,287	1.72	2.48	10.30
2009	2,300	1.48	2.00	17.88
2011	1,536	1.72	2.98	10.87
gender roles				
Being housewife is just as fulfilling				
1990	946	3.05	0.65	2.92
2001	3,256	2.98	0.68	2.77
2007	1,264	2.97	0.64	3.05
2009	2,172	3.16	0.56	3.03
2011	1,513	2.92	0.75	2.46
Working mother and child relationship				
1990	973	2.66	0.90	2.05
2001	3,292	2.92	0.75	2.39
2009	2,210	3.00	0.73	2.41
2011	1,509	2.23	0.71	2.59
Democracy				
Prefer army rule				
2001	4,189	2.02	0.88	2.37
2007	1,105	2.14	0.88	2.26
2009	1,897	2.13	0.94	2.17
2011	1,416	1.99	0.99	2.19
Prefer Democratic political system				
2001	4,168	3.38	0.49	4.37
2007	1,184	3.49	0.47	4.95
2009	1,954	3.35	0.49	3.61
2011	1,446	3.41	0.50	4.00
Economic and social justice				
Income inequality is necessary				
1990	976	4.59	10.45	1.74
2001	4,460	4.08	10.55	1.95
2007	1,294	4.97	9.46	1.70
2009	2,239	4.44	8.87	2.04
2011	1,514	4.51	7.12	1.95

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Polarization Variables	N	Mean	Variance	Kurtosis
Government should take more responsibility				
1990	974	6.18	10.29	1.73
2001	4,472	6.31	10.70	1.73
2007	1,289	6.23	7.81	1.98
2009	2,257	5.30	9.21	1.83
2011	1,504	6.60	6.13	2.25

Table 2. Means, Variances, and Kurtosis Values by Year and Vote for ROP and SOP, and *t* Values.

Polarization Variables	ROP				Secular-oriented political party				*t* value
	N	Mean	Variance	Kurtosis	N	Mean	Variance	Kurtosis	
Family and sexuality									
Abortion justifiable									
1990	41	2.17	5.44	6.20	946	4.28	9.16	1.88	**4.40*****
2001	216	1.72	2.30	8.24	982	2.59	6.04	4.34	**4.98*****
2007	448	1.75	2.74	10.12	851	2.62	5.98	4.23	**6.74*****
2009	687	1.67	2.90	12.69	1,641	2.02	4.34	7.36	**3.90*****
2011	633	2.07	3.74	6.27	898	2.33	5.06	5.44	**2.36***
Divorce justifiable									
1990	41	4.21	10.37	1.86	945	5.05	8.57	2.00	1.78
2001	215	2.85	5.00	2.67	979	3.81	8.19	2.33	**4.62*****
2007	454	2.69	5.87	4.04	853	3.86	8.52	2.14	**7.28*****
2009	683	3.08	7.48	3.33	1,629	3.43	8.43	2.60	**2.70****
2011	622	3.11	7.38	2.83	880	3.45	8.97	2.37	**2.25***
Homosexuality justifiable									
1990	41	1.21	0.97	19.56	933	1.55	2.54	13.27	1.33
2001	215	1.15	0.44	27.08	977	1.64	2.92	12.44	**4.06*****
2007	439	1.39	1.51	26.45	848	1.92	2.90	7.45	**5.54*****
2009	678	1.35	1.42	26.81	1,622	1.53	2.23	15.63	**2.73****
2011	634	1.49	2.03	15.44	902	1.88	3.59	8.88	**4.35*****
Gender roles									
Being housewife is just as fulfilling									
1990	41	3.24	0.58	3.17	905	3.05	0.65	2.92	−1.49
2001	276	3.14	0.55	2.77	2,980	2.97	0.69	2.75	**−3.21****
2007	444	3.06	0.52	3.47	820	2.92	0.69	2.89	**−2.90****
2009	632	3.17	0.54	3.23	1,540	3.16	0.56	2.96	−.17
2011	631	3.02	0.70	2.58	882	2.85	0.78	2.39	**−3.6*****
Working mother and children									
1990	41	2.53	1.30	1.61	932	2.66	0.88	2.07	0.87
2001	279	2.63	0.82	2.15	3,013	2.95	0.73	2.44	**6.00*****
2009	642	2.92	0.76	2.21	1,568	3.04	0.72	2.53	**3.12****
2011	621	2.81	0.68	2.68	888	2.72	0.73	2.53	−1.92
Democracy									
Prefer army rule									
2001	461	1.93	0.93	2.35	3,728	2.03	0.88	2.38	**2.06***
2007	380	2.12	0.87	2.17	725	2.15	0.89	2.30	0.47
2009	557	2.14	0.91	2.29	1,340	2.12	0.95	2.12	−.42
2011	570	1.95	0.95	2.31	846	2.01	1.01	2.12	1.05

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

Polarization Variables	ROP				Secular-oriented political party				
	N	Mean	Variance	Kurtosis	N	Mean	Variance	Kurtosis	t value
Prefer Democratic political system									
2001	459	3.33	0.51	4.54	3,709	3.39	0.49	4.34	1.82
2007	401	3.46	0.47	4.34	783	3.51	0.47	5.29	1.13
2009	571	3.32	0.53	3.55	1,383	3.36	0.47	3.63	1.02
2011	584	3.39	0.53	3.64	862	3.42	0.48	4.28	0.83
Economic and social justice									
Income Inequality is necessary									
1990	40	5.25	10.85	1.68	936	4.56	10.43	1.75	−1.30
2001	483	3.82	10.56	2.08	3,977	4.11	10.54	1.94	1.86
2007	448	4.95	9.44	1.69	846	4.98	9.39	1.71	0.15
2009	646	4.67	8.70	2.02	1,593	4.34	8.91	2.06	**−2.35***
2011	621	4.71	7.27	1.90	893	4.37	6.97	2.01	**−2.49***
Government should take more responsibility									
1990	40	5.87	11.03	1.66	934	6.20	10.27	1.74	0.62
2001	492	6.17	11.50	1.63	3,980	6.33	10.60	1.74	0.99
2007	444	6.22	7.86	1.90	845	6.24	7.80	2.02	0.10
2009	654	5.06	8.37	1.97	1,603	5.40	9.52	1.79	**2.37***
2011	618	6.45	5.63	2.32	886	6.70	6.47	2.22	1.95

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001 (two-tailed tests).

justice, the trends were overall similar to those in the entire sample; however, interestingly, there was some evidence from the *t* tests suggesting that people who reported a preference for ROP in 2009 and 2011 were more likely to emphasize with individual responsibility and see income inequality as necessary, although the differences in means were minimal (.33 and .34 out of 10, respectively). However, in any case, these results do not support the findings of Davis and Robinson (2006) on economic and social equality in Muslim-majority countries.

Regression Analyses

Table 3 presents the OLS models of attitudes toward family and sexuality, and economic and social justice on individual-level characteristics, religiosity, and preference for ROP. The first model assesses the determinants of accepting abortion and includes only the control variables.[13] In the model, income, education, and gender have a statistically significant effect on the acceptance of divorce at the .001 level, whereas age and unemployment have no

effect. Similar to the findings in the literature, people become more tolerant as their income and education increase, whereas men remain less tolerant than women. The significant negative effect of year shows that the acceptance of abortion declined significantly between 1990 and 2011. The second model adds religiosity and preference for ROP to the first model. Both variables have a statistically significant effect at the .001 level, a finding that suggests that religious people and those who report a preference for ROP are less tolerant of abortion than the rest of society. However, it should be noted that the *R*-square value improved only marginally with the inclusion of these two variables in the second model, which suggests that the overall impact of religiosity and preference for ROP on attitudes toward this issue is marginal. The results are nearly identical for the acceptance of divorce and homosexuality, except for the statistically significant negative impact of age on the latter item. This is similar to the findings in the literature.

The remaining models in the table assess the attitudes toward economic and social justice. In the models on income inequality,

Table 3. OLS Models of Attitudes on Family and Sexuality, and Economic and Social Justice.

Independent Variables	Abortion		Divorce		Homosexuality		Inequality necessary		Government responsibility	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
Income	0.126*** (7.13)	0.124*** (7.09)	0.099*** (4.71)	0.096*** (4.64)	0.054*** (4.46)	0.052*** (4.39)	0.137*** (6.78)	0.138*** (6.80)	−0.106*** (−5.35)	−0.105*** (−5.30)
Education	0.224*** (12.85)	0.189*** (10.75)	0.302*** (14.65)	0.267*** (12.80)	0.119*** (10.07)	0.092*** (7.72)	−0.052*** (−2.85)	−0.037* (−2.02)	0.018 (1.04)	0.013 (0.71)
Age	0.0006 (0.23)	0.001 (0.56)	−0.0002 (−0.08)	0.0004 (0.16)	−0.006*** (−3.77)	−0.006** (−3.45)	−0.008** (−2.90)	−0.008** (−2.92)	0.002 (1.07)	0.002 (1.05)
Male	−0.368*** (−5.33)	−0.385*** (−5.61)	−0.271*** (−3.32)	−0.282*** (−3.47)	−0.186*** (−3.95)	−0.198*** (−4.25)	0.093 (1.26)	0.103 (1.39)	−0.430*** (5.95)	−0.427*** (5.90)
Unemployed	−0.143 (−1.11)	−0.165 (−1.30)	−0.197 (−1.29)	−0.218 (−1.44)	0.130 (1.47)	0.115 (1.32)	−0.014 (−0.11)	−0.0005 (−0.00)	0.157 (1.20)	0.155 (1.18)
Religiosity		−0.790*** (−9.11)		−0.737*** (−7.17)		−0.611*** (−10.33)		0.330*** (3.57)		−0.056 (−0.62)
Vote for ROP		−0.300*** (−3.76)		−0.350*** (−3.69)		−0.232*** (−4.26)		0.104 (1.10)		−0.136 (−1.46)
Year	−0.121*** (−24.99)	−0.108*** (−21.18)	−0.116*** (−20.36)	−0.103*** (−17.02)	−0.004 (1.29)	0.005 (1.57)	0.013* (2.16)	0.007 (1.26)	0.025*** (4.16)	0.029*** (4.48)
Constant	3.155*** (22.45)	3.819*** (24.51)	3.959*** (23.74)	4.584*** (24.70)	1.324*** (13.81)	1.836*** (17.32)	4.103*** (26.24)	3.825*** (22.07)	6.392*** (42.37)	6.435*** (37.87)
N	4,856	4,856	4,535	4,835	4,833	4,833	7,688	7,688	7,681	7,681
R^2	.139	.158	.113	.126	.058	.084	.008	.010	.010	.010

Note. Each cell contains unstandardized coefficients, and t scores in parentheses. OLS = ordinary least square.

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001 (two-tailed tests).

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income has a significant positive effect at the .001 level on thinking that income inequality is necessary for a society, which is not surprising. Education and age have significant negative effects. Interestingly, religiosity has a significant positive effect at the .001 level, whereas voting for ROP has no effect. In the models on government responsibility, income and gender have a significant negative impact at the .001 level on thinking that the government should take care of people, which is similar to the findings in the literature. In the models, other variables have no effect except for the year, which has a significant positive effect. The lack of a significant effect of the ROP variable again does not support the findings of Davis and Robinson (2006). However, the results fall short of revealing a shift among the ROP supporters in attitudes toward economic and social justice.[14]

Table 4 presents ordered logistic regression models of agreeing that being a housewife is just as fulfilling as being a working mother and that working mothers can establish a good relationship with their children as well as the perception of army rule and democracy as governing systems, and displays odds ratios.[15] Similar to the models on attitudes toward family and sexuality, people with less income and education, as well as men, are more likely to have more conservative attitudes. A unit increase in income and education is associated with decreases of around 3 percent and 11 percent in agreeing that being a housewife is just as fulfilling as being a working mother, whereas it is associated with increases of around 6 percent and 9 percent in agreeing that working mothers can establish a good relationship with their children. Men have around 40 percent greater odds of agreeing that being a housewife is just as fulfilling as being a working mother and around 21 percent lower odds of agreeing that working mothers can establish a good relationship with their children. Age has no effect in the models, whereas unemployment significantly decreases the odds of agreeing that being a housewife is just as fulfilling as being a working woman. Religiosity has no effect on attitudes toward working mothers, but does have a significant effect on the perception of housewives. Being religious

increases the odds of agreeing that being a housewife is just as fulfilling as being a working mother by 29 percent. Voting for ROP increases the odds of agreeing that being a housewife is just as fulfilling as being a working mother by 18 percent, and it is associated with a 37 percent decline in the odds of agreeing that working mothers can have a good relationship with their children. However, the change in log-likelihood values is negligible suggesting that these two variables marginally affect the attitudes toward gender equality. Overall, these findings suggest that although religious people and those who vote for ROP tend to have more conservative attitudes toward gender roles than the rest of society, their effect is even less pronounced than in attitudes toward family and sexuality.

In the models on the perception of army rule and democracy as governing systems, education and age are associated with lower odds of perceiving army rule as positive and greater odds of perceiving a democratic system as positive. Men also have greater odds of perceiving a democratic system positively and lower odds of perceiving army rule positively, while unemployment has no effect in the models. However, income is associated with lower odds of perceiving a democratic system as positive, although it has no effect on the perception of army rule. Remarkably, religiosity and voting for ROP have significant reverse effects, although the change in log-likelihood values is again marginal. Religiosity is associated with a 32 percent increase in the odds of perceiving army rule as positive, whereas voting for ROP is associated with a 22 percent decline. The negative impact of voting for ROP may be due to the interventions by the military against the ROP in 1997–1998 and during the presidential elections in 2007. The reverse effect of religiosity may be due to high levels of reported religiosity especially among the supporters of center-right and nationalist political parties who traditionally hold a more positive outlook on military. On the perception of a democratic system, both religiosity and voting for ROP have no significant effect. Overall, the results of the analyses suggest that there is not much difference between people who vote for ROP and SOP in terms of their desire for a democratic system, a finding that supports the observations made by Somer (2007).

Table 4. Ordered Logistic Regression Models of Attitudes on Gender Roles and Democracy.

Independent Variables	Housewife		Working mother		Army rule		Democratic system	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Income	0.973* (−2.08)	0.973* (−2.08)	1.062** (2.69)	1.060** (2.61)	1.026 (1.88)	1.026 (1.87)	0.966* (−2.33)	0.966* (−2.36)
Education	0.893*** (−9.02)	0.893*** (−9.02)	1.099*** (5.88)	1.086*** (5.02)	0.889*** (−10.03)	0.890*** (−9.69)	1.126*** (9.51)	1.123*** (9.11)
Age	0.999 (−0.27)	0.999 (−0.27)	0.995 (−1.83)	0.995 (−1.92)	0.991*** (−4.56)	0.991*** (−4.62)	1.012*** (6.22)	1.012*** (6.21)
Male	1.406*** (7.00)	1.406*** (7.00)	0.789*** (−3.85)	0.788*** (−3.87)	0.858*** (−3.19)	0.873** (−2.82)	1.098 (1.85)	1.095 (1.80)
Unemployed	0.808* (−2.31)	0.808* (−2.31)	1.093 (0.84)	1.087 (0.78)	0.991 (−0.10)	1.005 (0.06)	0.951 (−0.54)	0.948 (−0.57)
Religiosity		1.293*** (4.18)		0.883 (−1.70)		1.276*** (4.07)		0.930 (−1.12)
Vote for ROP		1.179* (2.66)		0.638*** (−3.92)		0.785*** (−3.98)		0.988 (−0.19)
Year	0.994 (−1.35)	0.994 (−1.35)	1.043*** (6.08)	1.046*** (6.53)	1.010 (1.73)	1.017** (2.61)	1.011 (1.71)	1.012 (1.79)
N	6,452	6,452	3,868	3,868	6,265	6,265	6,346	6,346
Log likelihood	−7,478.64	−7,478.62	−4,796.72	−4,786.99	−7,954.44	−7,939.90	−6,035.19	−6,034.50

Note. Each cell contains odds ratios, and z scores are in parentheses.
*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001 (two-tailed tests).

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Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, we used data collected from 10,837 individuals at five different time points to assess if the Turkish society's social and political attitudes became more polarized between 1990 and 2011 as well as the impact of religion and Islamist politics on attitudes toward social and political issues. The results of our analyses revealed that people who voted for ROP differ only slightly in terms of their attitudes toward family and sexuality and gender roles. However, this difference was even less pronounced in regard to gender roles, and there were no significant differences in attitudes toward democracy and economic and social justice. Furthermore, there was scant evidence for a steady over time increase in differences between the two groups. In fact, both of them moved in the same direction in terms of their attitudes toward family and sexuality and gender roles. There is some evidence that their differences sharpened in 2007, when political tensions were high, but these smoothed out later. Overall, our findings do not support the popular image of a Turkey divided into two camps: one moving toward the Islamic World and the other moving toward the West (Baran 2010; Çarkoğlu and Toprak 2007; Huntington 1993; Kuru 2009).

Our findings are similar to those of the "culture wars" debate in the United States. For example, DiMaggio et al. (1996) found that polarization in American society was limited to the abortion issue, and Davis and Robinson (1996) argued that religious conservatism defined one's attitudes toward sexuality, the gendered division of labor, abortion, and children's schooling, but not in other areas such as racial inequality. Similarly, differences in attitudes between the secular and religious conservatives were limited to issues of sexuality and gender in Turkey. In other areas such as democracy and economic inequalities, they did not differ. The lack of a difference between the ROP and SOP groups on economic and social justice does not support the findings of Davis and Robinson (2006), but it is similar to the overall findings of the "culture wars" literature, including their earlier study (Davis and Robinson 1996).

However, we found some evidence of increasing conservatism. Turkish society in general, as well as both SOP and ROP groups in particular, became less tolerant toward abortion and divorce between 1990 and 2011. It should be noted that the shift toward more conservative attitudes happened between 1990 and 2001, and very little has changed since 2001. The increase in conservative attitudes on these issues coincides with, and may be due to, the surge of Islamist politics in Turkey and the rest of the Islamic world in the post–Cold War era. However, both ROP and SOP groups also displayed increasing support for working mothers in the same period. Regarding homosexuality, there was a slight increase in its acceptance between 1990 and 2011 although it remained very low in both groups. Thus, there is also scant evidence for an all-encompassing conservatism. In addition, the fact that both moved in the same direction does not support the claim made by some researchers that the secularists are being besieged by an Islamized society (Agirdir 2010; Mardin 2007; Toprak et al. 2008).

Turkish sociologist Mardin (2005) likened secular and religious Turks to two people swimming in the same direction on the same current. He argued that although these two groups sometimes seem to diverge during conflicts over certain symbols (e.g., wearing the headscarf or drinking alcohol), their overall worldview and value orientation remains very similar. He attributed this to the inability of the secular elite, who founded the republic, to replace religious values with an alternative secular value system. He argued that the supposedly national values they created have remained deeply rooted in the religion, and that secular and religious Turkish citizens are far closer to each other in terms of their worldview than they care to admit. Göle (2010), Kandiyoti (2012), and Demiralp (2012) also considered this secular-conservative division to be superfluous and saw no fundamental differences within the wider society. The results of our analyses support this opinion.

Overall, the results of our analyses do not support the idea of a bifurcated Turkish society. As in the case of the American debate on the country's "culture wars," short-term political tensions and circumstantial evidence that are abundant in the mass media do not always stand up to academic scrutiny. Our findings regarding polarization and religious conservatism in Turkey may be tied to the changes in the surrounding region as well as

global trends. The results of our analyses suggest that the claims regarding the polarization of societies between the Islamists and the secular, which dominated the public discourse on the so-called Arab Spring countries as well as other majority-Muslim countries, may be exaggerated. However, we refrain from drawing general conclusions since our analysis is limited to one country. Future research based on both individual- and country-level data from these countries using multi-level modeling may shed more light on this important question.

Our study also had other limitations that we hope future research will overcome. First, some relevant questions regarding ethnic and racial relations or the role of religion in politics were either not asked or were not included for all of the years covered by the surveys from which we drew our data. Second, the existence of five time points of data collection (in some cases three) prevented us from carrying our regression analyses further to establish statistical significance for over time change in some of the descriptive polarization we used, such as Kurtosis and variance. Finally, as the available surveys only covered the time period up until 2011, we could not assess the current level of polarization or account for the impact of the 2013 Gezi Park protests. We hope that future research will address these issues as new waves of the WVS and EVS and data from other surveys become available.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Notes

1. Hale and Ozbudun (2010:3–19) and Yavuz (2003:207–64) reviewed the movement's change from 1970 to 2002.

2. To resolve these issues, Grigoriadisa (2009) offered to build a liberal consensus, and Keyman (2010) presented democratic secular imaginary as a more dialogical, tolerant way to resolve these deep social divisions.

3. According to Tambar (2009), the mass demonstrations of 2007 caused secularism to become an element of popular politics. According to him, this was a new phenomenon for the Turkish politics, because secularism was part of the elite's identity.

4. For a critical analysis of the contribution to social division, see Atikcan and Öge (2012) and Kalaycıoğlu (2012).

5. The Nationalist Action Party (MHP) is not included in the ROP category. MHP has acted in harmony with the governing party at some instances, but also on many occasions joined the secular opposition to the governing party (e.g., the presidential elections in 2014). In analyses available on request, we included MHP and its predecessor in the ROP category. The results of the analyses showed that the overall trends did not change with the inclusion of MHP in the ROP category. In addition, we found evidence that MHP may be more suitable for the inclusion in the SOP category. With the inclusion of MHP in the ROP category, the variance within this group increased whereas the kurtosis declined for most polarization variables. Overall, MHP supporters had higher tolerance than the supporters of ROP, but slightly lower than the supporters of SOP. Including MHP in the ROP category would transform our study to an analysis of right- and left-leaning political tendencies, which is beyond its scope. Thus, we decided to include MHP in the SOP category.

6. The political parties in the SOP category are Motherland Party (ANAP), True Path Party (DYP), Republican People's Party (CHP), Democratic Left Party (DSP), Social Democratic Party (SHP), Nationalist Action Party (MHP), Nationalist Activity Party (MCP), Democrat Party (DP), Democratic Turkey Party (DTP), Young Party (GP), People's Democratic Party (HADEP), Democratic Society Party (DTP), Freedom and Solidarity Party (ODP), Worker's Party (IP), and Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). We also included respondents who said they did not have a party preference or they would not vote into the SOP category as our main objective is to compare people vote for ROP with the rest of the society, and the literature and the public debate rests heavily

on this distinction. We obtained robust results when we created a separate category for people who said they did not have a party preference or they would not vote and analyzed this group separately, although its members reported slightly more liberal attitudes toward family and sexuality and gender roles.

7. In analyses available on request, we added religious service attendance to our models that we ran only with male respondents. Our results were robust, and the effect of religious attendance was nearly identical to the self-reported religiosity.

8. The groups analyzed by DiMaggio, Evans, and Bryson (1996), such as men and women, older and younger people, are beyond the scope of this article.

9. No questions were asked about ethnic and racial equality in either survey, arguably due to the politically sensitive nature of these questions during the data collection period due to the activities of the Kurdish separatist movement. Thus, although it is very relevant, we are unable to add this issue to our analyses.

10. The question on religiosity was asked as, "Independently of whether you attend religious services or not, would you say you are," to which respondents were given the options of "a religious person," "not a religious person," and "an atheist." We entered this variable into our models by creating a dummy variable for respondents who reported themselves as "a religious person."

11. The 9-point scale used in a 2011 World Value Survey was converted to an 8-point scale by merging the highest two categories for comparability.

12. Bivariate correlations of all independent variables revealed a highest correlation coefficient of .47, which indicates that there is no multicollinearity problem.

13. The year 2009 was excluded from all models as income was asked with a 15-level scale instead of 10-level scale used in other surveys, which made it incompatible.

14. We interacted the ROP and year variable in the analyses, available on request, but it had no significant effect in the models.

15. The year 2011 is excluded from the models on the relationship between a working mother and children.

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