

“Secular States, Religious Politics: India, Turkey and the Future of Secularism”

Review of Sumantra Bose Book

By [James M. Dorsey](#)

Global Research, November 29, 2018

Region: [Asia](#), [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [History](#)

[Sumantra Bose's](#) new book [Secular States, Religious Politics: India, Turkey and the Future of Secularism](#) (Cambridge University Press, 2018) is a fascinating comparison of the rise of religious parties in the non-Western world's two major attempts to establish a post-colonial secular state.

The secular experiments in Turkey and India were considered success stories for the longest period of time but that has changed with the rise of **President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's** Justice and Development Party in Turkey and **Prime Minister Narendra Modi's** Bharatiya Janata Party in India and the capture of state power by political forces with an anti-secular vision of nationhood.

In his ground-breaking book, Bose attributes the rise of secularism to the fact that non-Western states like Turkey and India never adopted the Western principle of separation of state and church and instead based their secularism on the principle of state intervention and regulation of the religious sphere. In doing so, Bose distinguishes between the embedding of secularism in Turkey in authoritarianism entrenched in the carving out of the modern Turkish state from the ruins of the Ottoman Empire and the fact that secularism in India is rooted in culture and a democratic form of government.

With the anti-secular trend in Turkey and India fitting into a global trend in which cultural and religious identity is gaining traction, Bose's study constitutes a significant contribution to the study of the future of secularism and the of the complex relationship between religious parties and the secular state.

*

Note to readers: please click the share buttons above. Forward this article to your email lists. Crosspost on your blog site, internet forums. etc.

Dr. James M. Dorsey is a senior fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, co-director of the University of Würzburg's Institute for Fan Culture, and co-host of the [New Books in Middle Eastern Studies](#) podcast. James is the author of [The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer](#) blog, a [book](#) with the same title and a co-authored volume, [Comparative Political Transitions between Southeast Asia and the Middle East and North Africa](#) as well as [Shifting Sands, Essays on Sports and Politics in the Middle East and North Africa](#) and just published [China and the Middle East: Venturing into the Maelstrom](#). He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [James M. Dorsey](#), Global Research, 2018

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: **[James M. Dorsey](#)**

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca
www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca