

REGULATING RELIGION IN TÜRKİYE AND GREECE: A COMPARATIVE  
ANALYSIS THROUGH RESTRUCTURING ESTABLISHED RELIGIOUS  
INSTITUTIONS IN PUBLIC SPHERE

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ESTABLISHED RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN PUBLIC SPHERE**

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## ABSTRACT

### REGULATING RELIGION IN TÜRKİYE AND GREECE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS THROUGH RESTRUCTURING ESTABLISHED RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN PUBLIC SPHERE

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This thesis discusses religious regulation through the cases of Türkiye and Greece. The issue is analyzed in the context of the restructuring of established religious institutions, the Diyanet and the Church of Greece, in the public sphere. This study aims to show how changes in religious regulation policies have affected the social functions and status of these institutions. In this thesis, I argue that the restructuring of established religious institutions in the public sphere responds to the changing religious regulation needs of Turkish and Greek States in the 21st century. To this end, in-depth interviews were conducted with experts in Türkiye and Greece, and primary and secondary sources were used. The findings suggest that, as a result of restructuring, these institutions have increased their access to society and, thus, their capacity to direct it. As a result, the social functions of these institutions have been redefined in line with changing religious regulation policies. However, their status vis-à-vis the state has remained largely unchanged.

**Keywords:** Religious regulation, established religious institutions, Diyanet, Church of Greece, restructuring

## ÖZ

### TÜRKİYE VE YUNANİSTAN'DA DİNİN DÜZENLENMESİ: KAMUSAL ALANDA YERLEŞİK DİN KURUMLARININ YENİDEN YAPILANDIRILMASI ÜZERİNDEN KARŞILAŞTIRMALI BİR ANALİZ

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Bu tez dinin düzenlenmesini (regülasyonunu) Türkiye ve Yunanistan örnekleri üzerinden tartışmaktadır. Oldukça kapsamlı ve çok boyutlu olan konu, yerleşik din kurumları olan Diyanet ve Yunanistan Kilisesi'nin kamusal alanda yeniden yapılandırılması bağlamında incelenmiştir. Çalışmanın amacı dinin düzenlenmesi yaklaşımlarında ve politikalarında yaşanan değişimlerin bu kurumların toplumsal işlevlerini ve statülerini nasıl etkilediğini göstermektir. Bu tezde yerleşik din kurumlarının kamusal alanda yeniden yapılandırılmalarının 21. yy.'da Türk ve Yunan Devletlerinin değişen regülasyon ihtiyaçlarına karşılık geldiğini iddia ediyorum. Bu amaçla Türkiye ve Yunanistan'da her iki kurumdan uzmanlarla derinlemesine görüşmeler yapılmış, birincil ve ikincil kaynaklardan yararlanılmıştır. Bulgular yeniden yapılandırma sonucunda bu kurumların topluma erişimlerinin ve böylece onu yönlendirme kapasitelerinin arttığına işaret etmektedir. Sonuç olarak, değişen regülasyon politikaları doğrultusunda bu kurumların toplumsal işlevleri yeniden tanımlanmıştır. Ancak devlet karşısındaki statüleri büyük ölçüde aynı kalmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Dinin regülasyonu, yerleşik din kurumları, Diyanet, Yunanistan Kilisesi, yeniden yapılanma

*dedicated to  
my greatest supporter, my mom, Nebahat Kalav*



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AKP</b>	Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)
<b>CHP</b>	Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi)
<b>DP</b>	Democrat Party (Demokrat Parti)
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FBOs</b>	Faith-Based Organizations
<b>ISAs</b>	Ideological State Apparatuses
<b>KESO</b>	The Family Support Center (Κέντρο Στήριξης Οικογένειας, ΚΕΣΟ),
<b>KSPM-ERP</b>	The Integration Center for Migrant Workers Ecumenical Refugee Program (Κέντρο Συμπαράστασης Παλινοστούντων και Μεταναστών Οικουμενικό Πρόγραμμα Προσφύγων )
<b>MNP</b>	National Order Party (Milli Nizam Partisi)
<b>MSP</b>	National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi)
<b>N.P.D.D</b>	Legal Entity of Public Law" (Νομικό πρόσωπο Δημοσίου Δικαίου, ΝΠΔΔ)
<b>ND</b>	New Democracy Party (Νέα Δημοκρατία, ΝΔ)
<b>NEOTITA</b>	The Ecclesiastical Foundation of Youth and Family" (Το Εκκλησιαστικό Ίδρυμα Νεότητας και Οικογένειας,)
<b>PASOK</b>	Panhellenic Socialist Movement (Πανελλήνιο Σοσιαλιστικό Κίνημα, ΠΑΣΟΚ)
<b>RNGOs</b>	Religious Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>RSA</b>	The Repressive State Apparatus
<b>SYNYPARXIS-ERP</b>	Synyparxis Ecumenical Refugee Programme (Συνυπαρξισ Οικουμενικο Προγραμμα Προσφυγων)
<b>TBMM</b>	Turkish Grand National Assembly (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi)
<b>TDV</b>	Türk Diyanet Vakfi



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This thesis deals with the religious regulation in Türkiye and Greece, two neighboring countries located geographically between the West and the East, where Western Christianity ends, and Orthodox Christianity and Islam begin, as Huntington put it in his famous work *Clash of Civilizations* (Huntington, 1996: 158)<sup>1</sup>. More specifically, this dissertation discusses the continuities and ruptures in the regulation of religion in Türkiye and Greece in the 21st century, within the framework of restructuring established religious institutions in the public sphere.

Let me first clarify the concept of religious regulation. Beckford and Richardson (2007) point out that the analysis of religion and regulation can be two-sided. One side of the analysis focuses on the capacity of religious teachings and institutions to regulate thought and action in the society in which they are embedded. In this type of sociological analysis, religion is an agent of regulation. The other side of the analysis focuses on how and to what extent religion or religious institutions are regulated by external military or political institutions. Here religion is the object of regulation (ibid., 396). Although the conceptualization of religious regulation emerged from the literature concerned with the second aspect of the analysis, as will be pointed out in this thesis, the regulation of religion is not independent of the capacity of religion and religious institutions to regulate society. Fox (2019), a leading scholar in the field, defines religious regulation as the state imposing a restriction or control on all religions in the country, including the majority religions. Restriction is intended to prevent religion in various forms, while control is often intertwined with the support of religion (ibid., 5, 19). Considering the particularities of the cases examined, in this

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that Huntington made these statements to draw the geographical boundaries of Europe: "*Where does Europe end? Europe ends where Western Christianity ends and Islam and Orthodoxy begin.*"

study, I use the term religious regulation to refer to all state interventions and adjustments to restrict or favour a religion.

This thesis focuses on religious regulations in the cases of Türkiye and Greece. The issue, which is quite comprehensive and multidimensional, will be analyzed within the framework of the restructuring of the established religious institutions, the Diyanet and the Church of Greece, in the public sphere. This study aims to show how changes in religious regulation policies have affected the social functions and status of these institutions. In this thesis, I argue that the restructuring of established religious institutions in the public sphere responds to the changing religious regulation needs of Turkish and Greek States in the 21st century.

This study addresses research questions below:

- How have the major political and economic developments in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (the 2000s and 2010s) affected or changed the policies of religious regulation in Türkiye and Greece?
- How have changes in religious regulation policies affected the social functions and status of established religious institutions? How and to what extent have established religious institutions adapted to these changes?
- How has the restructuring of religious institutions in the public sphere responded to the religious regulation needs of states?

Having mentioned the purpose and main questions of the study, I would like to briefly mention why I chose the cases of Türkiye and Greece. Although comparative research has many advantages, concerns about case selection are often unavoidable. As Adam Przeworski so aptly put it, “We cannot do good comparative research unless we worry about selection, that is, until we ask each time how our observations are produced” (cited in Ebbinghaus, 2005). In social sciences literature, Türkiye and Greece are compared in many ways. Historical commonalities, cultural affinities, and overlapping regional goals form the basis of these studies. Some comparative studies have also directly or indirectly examined religion and state relations in Türkiye and Greece. For example, in his master's thesis, Beylunioglu (2009) examined the relationship between religion and the state in Türkiye and Greece through the debates

that emerged over attempts in 2000 and 2004 to abolish or make a different religion on identity cards in both countries. Fabbe (2013) examined the relationship between state consolidation processes and acceptance of religious tolerance in Greece and Türkiye from past to present on a chronological basis. On the other hand, Grigoriadis (2012) comparatively examined how Turkish and Greek nationalism blended with religion.

Three main factors had an impact on the selection of cases. The first is that both countries have a tradition of state intervention in the religious sphere. In the literature, this is usually explained in terms of their religio-cultural character and the legacy they inherited from the previous empires. Let us elaborate on this issue further. Although Türkiye and Greece are two countries facing the West, the main issue where they differ from their "many" Western counterparts is the religion-state nexus. The basic assumptions underlying secularization theses, which constitute the general framework of debates on the regulation of religion-state relations, clarify this distinction. As Retoulas (2011:374-375) underlines, these theses are built on Catholico-Protestant values. Therefore, by defining the relationship between religion and the state according to the theo-philosophical presumptions of the Western social milieu, they portrayed the dualistic relationship between them as a universal reality. Religion-state relations in Türkiye and Greece, despite all their differences, reflect Eastern traditions. As Retoulas (2011) argues, the religion-state nexus is built on the values of "Islamic vahdet-i vücud (unity of existence) tasavvuf" in Türkiye, while it is based on the "Orthodox Christian" tradition in Greece. The main difference that distinguishes them from the Catholic-Protestant tradition is the monistic nature of the relationship between the secular and religious (religious hierarchy). In other words, there is no understanding of secularism based on religion-state dualism in a Western sense. Religion and state relations in modern Turkish and Greek states, which emerged from the Ottoman Empire, were founded on this heritage. However, pre-modern *synallilia*, which refers to collaboration and togetherness between state and religion, based mainly on religious ties between the worldly and the sacred, gained more secular content in the modernization process (ibid.).

Another factor that makes choosing these cases meaningful is that both Türkiye and Greece favour majority religions. Although the methods are different, the desire to

support majority religions is one of the main motives for regulating religion in Türkiye and Greece. Having been strongly supported by the State, these religions also became more and more dependent on it. This is mainly due to the strong ties between the state and Sunni Islam in Türkiye and Orthodox Christianity in Greece. In other words, because majority religions are seen as an important part of national identity and because of the importance of this nationalist-sacred identity in the mobilization of the society, states have favoured them since early years both in Türkiye and Greece . Grigoriadis (2012) underlines that Turkish and Greek leaders, who saw religion as an obstacle to establishing a modern, centralized, and Westernized nation-state, had to resort to religious symbols to increase popular support during the wars of independence. However, after the establishment of nation-states and the consolidation of autocratic rule, they made significant attempts to subordinate religious institutions to the state (ibid.,92). The secularist perspective the state elites had held at the beginning of the nation-state-building process found little response in both Turk and Greek societies. In the next period, the elites in both countries realized that the missing piece of their national identity was religion. They abandoned the religion policy followed in the foundation years. As a result, they moved towards "sacred syntheses," in which Greekness is blended with Orthodox Christianity (Heleno-orthodoxy) and Turkishness with Sunni Islam (Turk-Islam synthesis) (ibid, 92-95).

The third factor in the selection of cases is the fact that in both Türkiye and Greece, established religious institutions are objects of the regulation. In other words, religious institutions and clergy have been instruments for regulating religion in both countries since the nation-state-building process. Behind this practice lies the need to control the clergy and their capacity to mobilize society, which both countries inherited from the Ottoman Empire.

Karahanoğulları (2017) points out that the nexus between religion and the state can take different forms depending on the "cooperative agreement" (a kind of partnership) or "separation" decision of the parties in the process of state building<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> In his article, Karahanoğulları ( 2017) analyzes French secularism, which is claimed to be a role model for Türkiye. The regulation of religion and state relations in France had taken three different

In Türkiye and Greece's state-building processes, it is arguable that there was an implicit agreement between the clergy and the state elites who supported the independence struggles of these countries. For instance, during the construction of modern Türkiye, the religious institution (ulema) taken over from the Ottoman Empire supported the new republican regime and reconciled with the ruling elites (Lord, 2018:24)<sup>3</sup>. These actors were gathered under the umbrella of the Diyanet, which was established in 1924 as a part of the public administration. Thus, religion in modern Türkiye (as in France between 1801 and 1905) was organized as a public service (Karahanoğulları, 2017). Hence, religious actors transformed into civil servants within the body of Diyanet were absorbed by the new nation state (Lord, 2018: 24).

On the one hand, the Diyanet has been an instrument of state control over religion, and on the other hand, it has been a clear indication of the state's privileging of the majority religion. Turkish Diyanet has been a state legal entity from the very beginning. Therefore, the services offered by Diyanet are provided by clergy employed as public personnel. However, especially in the last 20 years, its budget exceeding many ministries, the rapid increase in the number of its personnel, and the expanding range of services can be read as a reflection of the change in the nature of this agreement.

During the construction of the Greek State, the high-ranking clergy of the Istanbul Ecumenical Patriarchate, to which the Orthodox Greeks were affiliated, was distant from the Greek revolutionaries' struggle for independence. They even supported the reconciliation of revolutionaries with the Ottoman State (Clogg, 2014: 28; Milas, 1994: 143, Stamatopoulos, 2014: 36-37). On the other hand, Capodostrias, the first

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forms since the revolution. The first is the "Revolutionary Laicism (1789)" based on anti-clericalism and the first attempt at separating religion and state. The second is Concordat Laicism (1801–1905), an outcome of the contract between the state and the clergy. With this contract, while the state repaid the clergy (*le clergé*), it also gained control over the Church. In other words, religion and state affairs are intertwined. Third, by a law enacted in 1905, France completely separated church and state. Third, due to a law passed in France in 1905, church and state were clearly separated. As a result, the majority religion, Catholicism, was set up in accordance with the idea of state neutrality. Assertive secularism/*laïcité*, which refers to a tight separation of church and state, is the foundation for how religion is currently organized in France. Karahanoğulları (2017) claims that secularism in Türkiye, contrary to the general acceptance, does not overlap with the third form but with the second form.

<sup>3</sup> As Lord (2018) stated, more Pan-Islamist or traditionalist actors who did not choose the path of reconciliation with the state were either exiled or pushed underground.

governor of the newly established Greek state, clearly rejected this request, while the pro-revolutionary Korais, who wanted to unite the Greek nation under an independent state, emphasized the unifying power of a national church and called for the pro-revolutionary orthodox clergy (ibid., 38-39). As a result, the Greek Church, organized by a commission of lay and clerics, was founded in 1833. However, as Stamatopoulos underlined, dependency on the patriarchate and subjugation to the state were two separate issues that the new church needed to simultaneously address (ibid, 35).

The Church of Greece eventually declared its independence from the Istanbul Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1850, but this time, it became reliant on the new Greek state. For instance, the king had right to confirm the five members who formed the holy Synod. In addition, he would also attend meetings of the holy synod (Veković, 2020:39). Until as part of the transition to democracy, the Church of Greece's autonomy was restored to some extent by the 1975 Constitution and the 1977 Statutory Charter (590/1977), which declares that the church is a "legal entity of public law"(Νομικό πρόσωπο Δημοσίου Δικαίου, N.P.D.D). This concept is used in the Greek legal system to describe self-governing public organizations authorized to exercise public authority to serve the public interest. Furthermore, this status brings financial resources and some tax privileges as well as state control. In addition, religious officials in Greece are paid by the state. In other words, religious officials are employed as public personnel. Although the church has obtained autonomy from the state in some matters, there are many vital issues in which their partnership continues.

Therefore, in both Türkiye and Greece, state control has been directed towards and ultimately succeeded in diminishing and limiting the former powerful religious institutions' scope of action, as Karagiannis (Karagiannis, 2009: 142) points out. At the same time, it is clear that the Diyanet and the Church of Greece enjoy many privileges, although the price is dependent on the state.

Turkish and Greek states experienced political and economic transformations during the 2000s and the 2010s. In Türkiye, Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP), the political Islamist party that came to power in 2002,

began to show strong authoritarian tendencies in the following years. Official religious policies have undergone significant changes. In Greece, the process of European integration, which has accelerated especially since the 2000s<sup>4</sup> and neoliberal austerity policies introduced in the aftermath of the great economic crisis of 2009 went hand in hand. Increasing poverty has undermined social cohesion, and the management of religious diversity has become a problem with the increasing flow of migrants from the Middle East.

In the first decade of the 21st century and beyond, a number of steps have been taken in Türkiye and Greece to restructure established religious institutions in the public sphere. In this process, both institutions turned towards more earthly problems and society-oriented services, underwent a process of central and/or local re-organization, updated their personnel structure according to the nature of their services, and established collaborations with their stakeholders. It should be noted that I operationalize the term public sphere as the whole of the sphere of worship or non-worship in which religious institutions engage in activities related to worldly affairs, such as social welfare services or spiritual counseling.

As mentioned above, I argue that the restructuring of established religious institutions in the public sphere responds to the changing religious regulation needs of Turkish and Greek States in the 21st century. To this end, I focus on the relationship between the restructuring process and the need for new regulations. To demonstrate this relationship, I conducted in-depth expert interviews in Turkey and Greece in 2018 and 2019 and collected primary data on these cases. When I started this study, it caught my attention that both institutions turned to services related to worldly life rather than services to the other world, that is, to services related to worldly life. To this end, I observed that there was a restructuring of some units of the Diyanet and especially the organizations affiliated with the Church of Greece. Therefore, I limited my fieldwork to these units and organizations. Interviewees in Diyanet consisted of one vice president, the four heads of the department under the

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<sup>4</sup> Greece became a member of the European Union on January 1, 1981, after six years of negotiations. In his article published in 2000, Ioakimidis (Ioakimidis, 2000) states that the Europeanisation process in Greece in those years was "intentional" rather than "responsive." For this reason, I assume the 2000s as the reference point, when more concrete steps were taken in the Europeanization process in Greece, and there was a partial moderation in the Church of Greece's approach to Europe.

General Directorate of Religious Services (Din Hizmetleri Genel Müdürlüğü), while interviews in Greece were conducted with interviewees from the church hierarchy as well as experts and managers of church-based organizations. I formulated semi-structured interview questions based on four topics that I considered to be the main axes of the restructuring and for which I needed additional data: the service content of these units, their re-organization process, their human resource structure, and their relations with other stakeholders. Furthermore, I completed and fortified the data collected from the fieldwork with the documents/publications obtained from both institutions, official protocols and news about Turkish Diyanet and the Church of Greece on the online platforms.

It is expected that this paper will make a contribution to the literature in three ways. The first relates to the way in which the concept is analyzed. The concept of religious regulation has gained more popularity in the social science literature, particularly since the 1990's with the supply-side theory of religious participation. Accordingly, the literature primarily discusses religious regulation through its impact on religious participation and vitality. In other words, the phenomenon of "religious regulation" is treated as an independent variable. For this reason, the concept is often operationalized in terms of "religious freedoms", which in many countries are violated by religious regulations. On the other hand, in this thesis, the concept is placed at the center of the study and focuses on the reasons for the changes in the need for religious regulation and its outcomes. Moreover, by focusing on the regulation of majority religions and their established religious institutions, this study has addressed a relatively unexamined dimension of the issue. The second is related to the originality of the cases chosen and the way in which the issue is dealt with. This thesis, focusing on the issue of religious regulation in two countries on the periphery of Europe with a common history but different religions, is expected to contribute to the literature by adopting sociopolitical and religio-cultural perspectives, which are relatively neglected by well-known theories such as classical secularization theory and religious economy model (Gorski, 2003: 110). Moreover, the particularities of these two countries make it possible to analyze changes in religious regulation policies through established religious institutions and the process of their restructuring. The third relates to the research methodology. comprehensive



studies in the relevant literature operationalize and discuss the concept of religious regulation through macro data. This thesis, on the other hand, by analyzing a smaller number of cases in much more depth with qualitative data obtained from fieldwork, is expected to fill some underestimated gaps.

### **1.1. Design of the Study**

This thesis consists of six main chapters. The first chapter, introduction, starts with the purpose of the study, research questions, selection of the cases to be analyzed in the study, research methodology and the contribution of the study to the literature.

Chapter 2 is devoted to the conceptual framework. This chapter begins with the definition of religious regulation. This is followed by a detailed analysis of the concept. Next, the factors that determine the regulation of religion and the demarcation of the relationship between religion and the state are discussed. The following section presents various theoretical approaches to the concept of religious regulation. The final part of this chapter demonstrates how religious institutions serve a dual function as both an object and an agent of religious regulation. This section also highlights the context in which the concept of the public sphere is used in this thesis.

Chapter 3 focuses on the practice of religious regulation in Türkiye. A special place is given to the role of the Diyanet, the established religious institution in Türkiye, in the context of religious regulation. This chapter is based on a twofold periodization. The first part deals with the practices of religious regulation from the early Republican period to the 2000s. In this section, the early Republican elites' understanding of religious regulation is presented along with the rationales behind it. It discusses how religious restrictions and favoritism operate simultaneously in Türkiye. The second period begins in the 2000s, when the political Islamist AKP government came to power and then embarked on the path of neoliberal authoritarianism.

This period includes some continuities and changes in the regulation of religion. This section provides a general framework for breaking the early republican understanding of religious regulation through the struggle between secular and

religious elites. How Diyanet was adapted to the new regulation policies is discussed in general terms.

Chapter 4 is devoted to the ecclesiastical regulation policies of Greece since its independence from the Ottoman Empire. As in the previous chapter, special attention is paid to the position of the Church of Greece in the religious regulation practices. This chapter is also divided into two periods. The first part deals with the main issues of religion-state relations in Greece and discusses the main indicators of religious restrictions and favouritism. The second part is more eclectic. I show how the steps towards Europeanization since the 2000s and the neoliberal economic policies introduced after the deep economic crisis of 2009 led to a change in the regulation of religion. I also point to the responses of the Church of Greece, which has historically been largely aligned with right-wing nationalist politics, to the rising social unrest and polarisation. Chapter 5 examines the restructuring of the established religious institutions of Diyanet and the Church of Greece in the public sphere. This chapter is based on a fieldwork that will provide a better understanding of the restructuring processes and outcomes. For this reason, the basic elements of the research methodology, including sampling, data generation, limitations, and data analysis, are first presented. This is followed by an explanation of the restructuring of both the Turkish Diyanet and the Church of Greece in the public sphere. In this section, where data from primary and secondary sources complete the findings of the field study, the restructuring process is examined in terms of reorganization processes, service content, and target groups, local organizations, human resources, and cooperation with stakeholders of established religious institutions.

Chapter 6 answers the research questions within the framework of the findings obtained in the previous chapter. In addition, this chapter includes the contribution of this thesis to the literature and the limitations of the study.

## CHAPTER 2

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: RELIGIOUS REGULATION AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

#### 2.1. Religious Regulation and its Operationalization

According to the Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology (1966: 752), the definition of “*regulate*” is “control” or “adjust”. According to Merriam-Webster (n.d.), the verb regulate has 3 different meanings. These are “*to govern or direct according to rule*”, “*to bring order, method, or uniformity to*” and “*to fix or adjust the time, amount, degree, or rate of*”. All these definitions point to an active power and to a phenomenon that is relatively passive and guided by this power. The concept of religious regulation is based on the assumption that a state is capable of controlling and regulating religion. In the literature, the concept of religious regulation is often used synonymously with religious restrictions. For instance, Fox (2019) uses the term in the sense of state regulation, restriction, and control of minority and majority religions. However, as will be discussed in more detail below, he also often underlines that religious favoritism and control are often intertwined. That is, instruments of religious regulation can be used to restrict religion and sometimes favor it. In this thesis, I use “religious regulation” as a generic term to describe any situation that implies all the state adjustments towards religious issues for whatever purpose. It should be noted that these interventions also utilize the capacity of established religious institutions to regulate society.

The official policy of the state on religious affairs, as set out in legal documents such as the constitution, laws, statutes, treaties, and court decisions defines the religion-state nexus as well as provides guidance on how and to what extent minority and majority religions are to be regulated in a country. As Ahdar & Leigh (2013) underline, official religious policies and the practices of religious regulation that are

a consequence of them should be considered across a broad religion-state spectrum. At one end of the spectrum are monistic systems of complete unity, and at the other end are dualistic systems based on complete separation. Both should be considered pure or ideal types (ibid: 88). Between these extremes, there are various hybrid models in which religion and the state cooperate at different levels. All these models correspond to different forms of regulation. For example, in models where religion controls the state (theocracy) or the state controls religion (erastianism), regulation is monopolistic. In models where the state is neutral with regard to religion, there is a deregulatory approach. In separation models, where the state develops a hostile attitude towards religions, partial regulatory practices are applied to keep religion in private sphere. (ibid: 89). Hybrid models, in which the state has a negative attitude towards religions, resort to partial regulation to keep religions in the private sphere and restrict them. In hybrid models closer to the monistic pole, partial regulation may be used to privilege or control one or more religions.

A research conducted by the Pew Research Centre provides a worldwide panorama of official religious policies. The research, which covers 199 countries, presents a current panorama of how religion-state relations are organized in the world through constitutional articles and practical applications (Pew Research Center, 2017a). In other words, the religion-state nexus has been operationalized under four categories: (i) states with an official religion; (ii) states with a preferred or favored religion; (iii) states with no official or preferred religion; and (iv) states with a hostile relationship toward religion. According to the research, 43 states (22%) have an official state religion, while 40 (20%) have a preferred/favored religion. On the other hand, 106 (53%) do not have any official or preferred religion, while 10 (5%) have a hostile attitude toward religious institutions.

Such classifications and statistics are derived from indices of the types of religious regulatory instruments used by states and their level of utilization. In other words, such indices render religious regulations measurable. In particular, since the 1990s, with the popularization of the religious economy model, which pays special attention to the effects of religious regulations on religious participation and vitality, different indices have been produced to measure the phenomenon of regulation. One of the

most systematic and pioneering indices for measuring religious regulations in the field is that of Grim and Finke (2006). Accordingly, religious regulation can be traced through three different indexes. The first is "*government regulation of religion*", which refers to restrictions imposed on the religious sphere through laws, policies and administrative actions. It should be noted in particular that although legislation often guarantees religious freedoms, in practice states can take actions that violate them (ibid: 5). The second is "*religious (government) favoritism*," which means that the state grants financial and moral privileges and positive sanctions to one or more than one religions. This approach is usually applied to majority religions but can sometimes be applied to minority religions. The third index, "*social regulation*," refers to the restrictions imposed by religious groups, faith-based associations, and other organizations that are part of the dominant culture regarding the practice and choice of another religion. In other words, non-state actors regulate religion in social regulation. However, states may ignore or even illegally encourage such regulations, even if they do not officially endorse them (ibid: 6).

These three indexes were created by categorizing different regulatory instruments identified in the light of qualitative and quantitative data collected from the field. Restrictions on issues such as missionary work, proselytizing, preaching and freedom of religion as well as negative attitudes of central and local governments towards religions are classified under index 1, "government regulation of religion". Index 2, "government favoritism of religion", takes into account the differences and asymmetries in the state's financial and moral support for different religions. This support is usually directed towards schools, clergy and religious institutions of a religious group. The third index, social regulation of religion, is operationalized through the level of non-state social actors' attitudes towards other religions, apostasy, proselytizing, newcomers and religious brands (ibid: 25).

Attempts to measure the regulation of religion appear to be cumulative in nature. For example, this is the case with Fox's analysis of "the Religion and State" Dataset (RAS), which contains 62 variables, each of which measures a particular form of government involvement in religion (see Fox, 2008). In conducting this analysis, Fox grouped these variables into five broad categories of "Government Involvement

in Religion" (GIR), coded annually for 175 governments from 1990 to 2002. These categories, which are graded according to different variables, include official involvement (whether or not there is a state religion), official restrictions, religious discrimination, religious regulations, and religious legislation. Fox also used another index, "Separation of Religion and State" (SRAS), to include cases where there was no government involvement in any religion (ibid., 32-104).

Besides all these quantitative analyses, why states regulate religion remains an important question. As discussed in the next section, the tendency of states to regulate religion is shaped by cultural, political, and ideological factors. Simply put, however, regulation serves two purposes: to restrict/suppress or favor a religion. Majority religions are often sought to be suppressed by anti-religious national ideologies, while the reasons for restricting majority religions are more varied.

For example, the institutional hegemony of a religious monopoly, the majority's perception of the religious group's actions as contrary to human rights and liberal values, the perception of other religions as a threat to nationalism and the dominant culture, ethnic conflicts, security concerns, etc., may be reasons for the regulation of minority religions (Fox, 2018: 157-160). Religious regulation is achieved by restricting religious actors (clergy, religious unions, associations, and political parties), religious institutions and organizations, religious practices, religious education, or the use of religious property (ibid: 152-157).

On the other hand, reasons such as the effect of religious beliefs on political behavior, the fact that religion is part of national identity, the fact that religion is a source of public goods, or the fact that religion provides legitimacy to politics may lead to state preference for that religion (ibid: 135-138). It is necessary to add a separate parenthesis concerning favoring one religion to control it, because it seems more paradoxical than the other reasons. As Fox (2018: 137, 2019: 5) underlines, one of the most effective ways to control religion is to support it. In other words, controlling a religion and supporting it are sometimes intertwined because the state's support for a religion or religious institution makes it dependent on itself and prevents it from going beyond the borders it has drawn. The religious sphere can be

regulated by many means, such as the de-secularization of legislation, the development of institutions for religious practice, the financing of religion, and the intertwining of state and religious institutions (Fox, 2018: 138-148).

## **2.2. Determinants of Religious Regulation**

The following questions guide this section: How are the boundaries of the religion-state nexus defined? What determines state attitudes toward religion? What factors are behind the emergence of different practices of religious regulation? What factors designate whether majority or minority religions should be regulated, and if so, how, and to what extent? These questions are answered under three different headings based on discussions in the literature. The first is cultural factors, which mostly arise from religious and denominational differences. The second is political factors, which emphasize the determining role of the political environment in the religion-state relationship. The last one is ideological factors, which discuss how major ideological transformations affect and change the religion-state relationship, especially through neoliberalism.

### **2.2.1. Cultural Factors**

Cultural factors are often emphasized when explaining differences in the formation of the religion-state nexus. Indeed, religious and sectarian differences are essential reference points in analyzing how temporal and spiritual authority relate. This type of analysis is often geographically based, that is, it emphasizes the differences between Western Christianity and others in the East. The starting point of cultural differences in the organization of the religion-state relationship is the great schism in which Eastern and Western Christianity were separated from each other.

In his book “the Great East and the Latin West,” Sherrard (1959: 201-206) underlines that the idea of the church and the role of the church in the West in the post-medieval period was different from that in the Byzantine world. Theoretically, in both traditions, there were two sovereign powers (dyarchy) as “regnum (secular political state) and sacerdotium (the religious one).” Each of them had sanctions for

citizens. Citizens were required to obey the political state. On the other hand, every citizen had to be a member of the Church. That is, his body belonged to the state and his soul belonged to the Church. Ideally, there seemed to be harmony between these two sovereigns, but in practice, their positioning and the balance of power between them were quite different geographically. At the end of the 11th century in Western Europe, the doctrine that these two sovereign powers were not equal or even complementary in terms of prestige emerged. With the Church in Western Europe ruled by the papacy, the idea that the church, the papacy, was a superior power prevailed. Briefly, the papal argument was that since spiritual or religious ends are superior to temporal or secular ends, the latter was meant to the former". Of course, this idea meant that the pope's authority, that is, spiritual authority, was above temporal authority. Thus, the pope is the supreme ruler who judges all men in both temporal and spiritual affairs. However, when this papal theory is compared to the traditional Byzantium arrangement, a different balance of power emerges. In the Byzantine tradition, the church was not a vis-emperor. In Byzantium, the church belonged to the emperor, and the emperor received his authority directly from God, not from the church (ibid., 201-202).

Jesus' statement, "*render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's*" is usually presented as an evidence of how Christianity sought to maintain the worldly and spiritual powers apart from one another. Thus, subjection to political power and its laws in worldly affairs, while obedience to the will and rules of God in spiritual affairs, is one of the basic acceptances of Christianity. This strengthens the idea that modernization and its necessity, secularization, are unique to Christianity. That is to say, according to this perspective, the only civilization in which spiritual authority exists as an actor separate from temporal authority is the West. The relationship between religion and state, which emerged in Eastern Christianity and non-Christian religions, is positioned opposite to the West. This acceptance finds its concrete expression in Huntington's much-quoted words:

Throughout Western history, first the Church and then many churches existed separate from the state. God and Caesar, church and state, spiritual authority and temporal authority had been a prevailing dualism in Western culture. Only in Hindu civilization were religion and politics as clearly separated. In Islam, God is Caesar; in China and Japan, Caesar is God; in Orthodoxy, God is Caesar's junior partner.



The separation and recurring clashes between church and state that typify Western civilization have occurred in no other civilization. This division of authority contributed immeasurably to the development of freedom in the West (Huntington, 1996: 70).

Theoretical discussions on how cultural differences affect the religion-state nexus can be traced back to Weber. According to Murvar (1967), some conceptual tools that Weber uses (such as hierocracy and Caesaropapism) can significantly facilitate discussing the state-church relationship in different cultural contexts, provided the ambiguities are removed or modified. Weber (Weber, 1978: 1159-1164) states that relations between secular and ecclesiastic powers exist in three different ways. The first is a ruler legitimized by priests through God's command or incarnation, and the second is a model with a high-ranking cleric who is also a king. Weber calls these two models as "hierocracy." On the other hand, he describes the cases as caesaropapism in which a "secular" leader is the highest authority in religious matters thanks to his autonomous legitimacy. That is to say, while the hierocracy means the political domination of priests; caesaropapism denotes the complete control of the secular ruler over the church, as Roth (1968, xcvi) states. In the hierocracy model, priests are agents. This means that they have a certain degree of autonomy from political power. In some cases, they may be able to exert pressure on political power and policies to influence them. In Caesaropapism, on the other hand, priests are hierarchically located under the political head and are in a passive state. Weber emphasizes how the Western medieval hierocracy was distinctively autonomous of political power and frequently even in opposition to it. The triumphs of hierocracy in Egypt, Tibet, Israel, Confucianism in China, Caesaropapism in Russia, and the caliphate in the Islamic world suggest that the east had a far more monistic culture than the West (cited in Murvar, 1967: 80). Murvar treats Weber's distinction between hierocracy and caesaropapism as dualistic (differentiation) and monistic (identification) systems. In Eastern tradition, the monistic system has a positive meaning, referring to the unity and solidarity of all forces in society. On the other hand, in the Western context, it refers to an artificial structure in which the opposing forces are gathered in a single whole to a greatly pejorative tone (*ibid.*, 72). Dualistic and monistic religion-state systems create different results in the organization of religion. Murvar categorizes the differences in the organization and regulation of religion in monistic and dualistic systems as follows (*ibid.*, 81):

- While there is a labile relationship between hierocracy (established religious organizations like churches) and politics in dualistic systems, there is a stable relationship between them in monistic systems.
- In dualistic systems, a hierocracy constantly challenges political authority, while in monistic systems, they are part of the political machinery and like a department of state.
- In dualistic systems, hierocracy tries to limit the dominant political authority by presenting revolutionary doctrines, while in monistic systems, it provides moral, spiritual, supernatural rationalization, or magical support for political authority.
- Religious affairs belong to the ecclesiastic sphere in dualistic systems, whereas they belong to the political sphere in monistic systems.
- In dualistic ones, there is an independent and rational canon law, including procedural law, while there is neither a canon law independent of the ruler nor procedural law in monistic structures.
- In dualistic structures, conflict is multifaceted. In monistic ones, if any conflict develops, it exists only until the ruler makes his choice by siding with one another.
- Dualistic structures do not tolerate the fusion of ecclesiastics and politics. In contrast, harmony between ecclesiastics and politics may be the highest cultural value among monistic ones.

The presupposition that Western Christianity is more compatible with the secularization pattern, because it allows a dualistic religion-state relationship, is often criticized on the grounds that it leads to the constant reproduction and generalization of a stereotype of modernity identified with the West. Accordingly, modernity in Western thought, which is based on the scientific and rational organization of society, coexists with secularization, which is defined as the decline in the social role of religion and the privatization of religious beliefs. Accordingly, modern societies are rationally organized societies that, unlike traditional (particularly Eastern) societies, do not need religion to organize themselves (Çınar, 2005: 19). In his previous works, Casanova, who saw the separation of worldly and religious institutional spheres as the basic condition of secularization, criticized this approach

in the following years on the grounds that it was Western-centered and led to an erroneous generalization (Casanova, 2008). Indeed, there are many different modernities and secularizations, even in the West. Diversity is associated with the fundamental historical divergence between the different denominations (Catholic, Protestant, Byzantine Christianity, Lutheran, and Calvinist Protestant). This diversity is also decisive in terms of the separation of secular and religious spheres. For example, there was a significant collision between religion (Catholic Christianity) and the differentiated secular spheres in the Latin-Catholic cultural sphere and much of continental Europe. Along with the secular character of enlightenment and modernization, this opposition, namely, the differentiation of the modern world from religion, has become even more evident. On the other hand, there is a collusion between the Anglo-Protestant and Calvinist cultural spheres, especially in the USA, between the secular and religious spheres, unlike the differentiation of secular spheres from religious norms and institutions in continental Europe. Therefore, it does not seem possible to accept the other differentiation thesis as a universal truth when there are different reflections even between two Christian cases (ibid., 104-105).

On the other hand, considering the very poor score of Muslim countries on “freedoms”(Global Freedom Status, 2021) , it strengthens the argument that “state regulation of religion is higher in Muslim states than in non-Muslim states.” There are two main explanations for this. First, Muslim states are, on average, much less pluralistic in religion than non-Muslim states, which tends to result in less tolerant attitudes towards minority religions. Second and more importantly, religion and politics are much more intertwined in Islamic culture than in many other major religious traditions. For this reason, organizing and regulating religion by state is seen as a legitimate and even positive favor in Islamic geographies (Bransen & Vermeer, 2019). L. Carl Brown (2000) opposes the stereotypical view that there is no distinction between religion and politics in Islam, championed by both radical Muslim ideologues and similarly various Western observers. According to him, "*they are conflating they conflate theology and history. They are confusing the ought and the is*" (ibid., 3). He argues that the point of view, assuming that there is an eternally militant, unchanging Islam outside history, is an erroneous belief. There is no single

and unchanging Islamic model that shapes religion-state relations. On the contrary, there is diversity in this area.

### **2.2.2. Political Factors**

One of the determining factors in the extent of religious regulation is the political regime that identifies the nature of the relationship between the state and society. Let us elaborate on this a little further. For instance, in democratic regimes, the state considers the public's expectations in the state's decision-making processes and inclusively addresses the entire population. For this reason, the state, in the normative sense, is expected to be at an equal distance from all religions, including the organized religion in the country. In other words, the separation of religion (church) and state is accepted as a principle of democratic regimes. At this point, some basic assumptions of the cultural perspective, which I examined in the previous section, reappear. This approach, which we can call Huntington's, is based on the argument that the roots of modern democracy lie in Western Christianity, which allows the separation of religion and state, and that the principles of liberal democracy are incompatible with the Islamic tradition. Minkenberg (2007: 891-895) underlines that his analyzes based on current data and period comparisons confirm this argument—religious traditions and institutions present constraints and opportunities for liberal democracies and democratization processes. More precisely, he emphasizes that religions that embody and command a holistic view of society, such as Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Islam, tend to restrict the emergence and development of liberal democracies and civil liberties. On the other hand, the author points out through Catholicism that external factors (such as rising multiculturalism) or political institutions can impact conservative religious traditions, and therefore, they have to align with democratic values. In addition, although at first glance it is seen that there is a much larger democracy deficit in Islamic countries than in Christian countries, the absence of secularization or religion-state separation in these countries cannot be shown as the only reason for this deficit (ibid., 901-904).

Stephan (2000) criticizes the Huntingtonian argument, seeking an answer through his comparative analysis of how politically compatible the world's religious systems are

with democracy. For example, he argues that in countries such as Türkiye, Pakistan, and Indonesia, the obstacles to liberal democracy are created not by Islam but by military and intelligence agencies that are not accountable to democratic authority (ibid.,52). Additionally, according to Stepan, although he accepts the character of Eastern Orthodoxy, unlike Catholicism and Protestantism, which are less resistant to state oppression, the main obstacle to democracy is not religious tradition but the anti-democratic attitudes of the leaders of the state and political society. Greece, which has been trying to strengthen its democracy since the collapse of the military regime in 1975, and the Church of Greece, which has supported this process, are indicators of this (ibid., 53). What is essential at this point is the existence of twin tolerances more than the church-state separation and a secular regime. For this, it is necessary to determine the minimum limits of freedom of action required for political institutions against religious authorities and for political institutions against religious authorities as well. One form of tolerance requires the state to defend and tolerate the right of religious institutions to exercise their freedom of operation in civil society, whereas the other necessitates religious institutions to tolerate one another by refraining from using constitutional privileges or state power to stifle rival religious groups.

It is also difficult to scientifically prove Western-centric arguments that claim that religion and the state are organized separately in democratic regimes. As Fox states, there is no consensus on what the separation of religion and state means. Moreover, even if the conceptual confusion is resolved, it is challenging to measure or rank it (Fox, 2007). Furthermore, the challenges associated with "defining" and "measuring" "democracy" are also actual. Fox created operational definitions that emphasize the separation of religion and state in order to overcome this difficulty. Based on these, he attempted to gauge the number of democratic states that truly separate religion and state. The survey, which included 152 democratic countries, shows that most of them do not have a distinction between religion and state. However, democracies have lower average levels of state involvement in religion than non-democratic countries. This is because, although there is no separation of religion and state in most democracies, there is an upper limit for the amount of interference in religion in democratic countries, unlike in non-democratic countries. All this demonstrates that

the right question regarding the relationship between religion and democracy is not whether there is a religion-state separation, but rather how much and what kind of state interference in religion democracy can tolerate (ibid., 20).

Unsurprisingly, totalitarian and authoritarian systems in the past and present have engaged in a high level of interference with religion (which may take the form of outright prohibition or even the promotion of religion). Based on totalitarian politics, Italian fascism built its own system of beliefs, myths, and rituals to sanctify the state (Gentile, 1990). The state intervened directly in the religious sphere and privileged the Catholic Church for political reasons. What fascism did was build its own system of beliefs, myths, and rituals through the sanctification of the state, i.e., establish a fascist religion. As Gentile puts it, fascist religion took traditional religion to its side and presented the church as an ally. By including the church within its own values, it would both control it and gain legitimacy in the eyes of the masses. It also did not hesitate to clash with the church for a monopoly in social institutions such as education (ibid., 230).

According to Schleutker (2016), although relatively neglected, the type of political environment (regime) is one of the most fundamental determinants of how a state regulates religion. She claims that the regulation of religion depends on the extent to which actors, such as political parties or religious organizations, can communicate their demands to policymakers. This is the reason for differences in religious regulations between democratic and autocratic countries.

Fox (2019) states that autocratic governments often try to restrict any aspect of civic culture they cannot control, including religion. Sarkissian (2015) underlines that in autocracies, which have always been hostile to dissent, major or minority religious groups are among the threats. Therefore, in autocratic regimes, religion is inevitably viewed as a phenomenon that needs to be regulated. Religious regulations take two forms. Religions perceived as a potential threat to the regime are restricted by various means, while permitted religions are closely monitored and controlled to prevent possible collaboration with the opposition. As Fox has often emphasized, the state's support or promotion of religion is a crucial means of controlling it. Examples of this can be found in regimes characterized as autocratic.

Reardon (2019) states that, all autocratic leaders strengthen their legitimacy by controlling rival centers of power within the autocratic state, whether religious, military, fascist, or communist. For this reason, autocrats want to control the ability of organized religion, which they both envy and fear, to mobilize citizens. Such political regimes may impose negative religious regulations to suppress or eliminate internal and external religious threats. In addition, they can make positive religious arrangements to strengthen and seize religious activities that reinforce their hegemonic rule. In this direction, they can resort to transformative religious arrangements that destroy old religious forms to create new religious institutions and belief systems that support hegemonic rule. There are examples of these practices from all over the world (see Reardon, 2019: 4-16).

### **2.2.3. Ideological Factors**

Ideologies that shape the political and social order are among the determining factors in the regulation of religions. The transition from liberalism to neoliberalism in the Western world and its reflections on the organization of religion are striking. Representatives of classical liberalism, such as Mill, Rousseau, and Kant, and critical theory, such as Rawls and Habermas, argued that for modern, liberal, democratic states to function best, religious authority and political authority must be organized entirely separately (Driessen, 2014: 23). Behind the liberal tradition's distant approaches to traditional religious authorities lies their resistance when liberal politicians try to establish their democratic rights of expression and association. Therefore, the liberal tradition, a product of the Enlightenment, has argued that democratic decision-making in the construction of modern society requires not resorting to religious reasoning or values (*ibid.*, 24). As Driessen underlines (*ibid.*), the state envisioned by liberal philosophers should act as an ideologically neutral mediator to best facilitate the formation of collective ideas and translate these decisions into national law.

It is seen that neoliberalism has challenged the secularization theories accompanying modernism and the practices that regulate the religion-state relationship. To illustrate this challenge, I can use Steger and Roy's (2010: 11-15) definitions, which points

three different dimensions of neoliberalism. First, neoliberalism is an ideology corresponding to the discourse of free-market capitalism. As it is known, in the first phases of neoliberalism, there was an understanding that condemned state regulation while flattering non-state actors. This mentality paved the way for religious organizations, which transferred many of their social responsibilities to the state with the separation of religious and secular areas in the 19th century, to be given importance again. Secondly, neoliberalism reflects entrepreneurial values such as competition, self-interest and decentralization as a mode of governance. In this context, religious organizations have been incorporated into the new governance model, particularly faith-based religious organizations that can quickly adjust to changes and competition. Many of these organizations have also kept up with managerial changes in their institutional structures.<sup>5</sup> Third, the term "neoliberalism" refers to a set of policies with the objectives of deregulation, liberalization, and privatization of the state. In the scope of neoliberal policy formulation, religious organizations serve to fill the void left by the withdrawal of the state, particularly in the fields such as welfare, social work, human aid, education and health.

The practical reflection of this formulation has been the faith-based movement initiated in the USA during the presidency of George Bush. This movement was based on the understanding of transferring some public services to faith-based organizations. From the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s, secular international organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) used some faith-based organizations to carry out their development plans. According to Haynes (2013), the background of the World Bank's cooperation with these organizations was the failure to achieve development goals with previous secular tactics and, among other things, the belief that religious civil society would be an effective tool to combat poverty.

Hackworth (2012) explains this process with the concept of "religious neoliberalism," a set of ideas aimed at replacing the traditional welfare state with religious charities and other private organizations. Accordingly, the term "religious

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<sup>5</sup> I will delve deeper into these arguments under the "network governance" topic.



neoliberalism" describes the alliance between social conservatism and neoliberalism. This is essentially a contradictory collaboration. Because while neoliberalism calls for a minimal state, social conservatism advocates a religiously interventionist state. However, Hackworth underlines that religious neoliberalism enables religious organizations to establish and maintain a presence in public life while also helping to soften the cruel edges of heartless, bare neoliberalism by promoting "faith-based" solutions that empower religious groups while compromising the state (ibid., ix). Therefore, neoliberalism, which is based on a vision of the state as minimal as possible, finds religious charities and organizations very useful for the continuity of the economic system. Moreover, Hackworth's analysis of protestant and catholic conservatives in the USA shows that while some of them think that social problems, especially poverty, should be solved with the state's resources, others point to non-state resources such as the church and other faith-based organizations in line with neoliberal ideals. However, Hackworth (2012) argues, neoliberals have largely convinced evangelical Christians and others of the inefficiency of the state and the need for private solutions to meet public needs.

To sum up, neoliberalization has produced two significant consequences for the organization of religion. The first of these is the diversification of the ecology of religious organizations and the regaining of their credibility through activities in the field of social welfare service. Although neoliberalization has also affected traditional religious organizations such as churches, the main actors prominent in this process are religious non-governmental organizations (RNGOs hereafter) and faith-based organizations (FBOs hereafter), which are used interchangeably and operate in the same way as their secular counterparts (NGOs, non-profit, independent, and voluntary organizations), contributing to the public good through the social services they offer (Berger, 2003: 16). Faith-based humanitarian organizations have similar features in common with their secular counterparts, and the same political, social, and economic factors influence both types. However, faith-based humanitarian organizations differ from most secular humanitarian organizations in two ways: they are inspired by their faith and have a constituency that extends beyond humanitarian issues (Ferris, 2005: 316). Furthermore, the primary distinction between traditional religious organizations such as congregations or denominations and RNGOs is that

the former focuses on increasing membership, while the latter focuses on achieving the public goals they seek (Berger, 2003: 16).

Second, the neoliberal mentality has seen no harm in adapting religion in civil society, which they see as an alternative to the state. Sinha (2005) remarks that the neoliberal narrative on the failure of growth fosters civil society at the same time while challenging the state. Advocates of this narrative claim that the allocation of social responsibilities that governments traditionally used to carry out to "civil society," mainly in developing countries with underdeveloped markets. Neoliberal international development organizations associate NGOs with "civil society." These organizations distribute large sums of development funding and participate in the formulation and execution of policies. Therefore, they attempt to clarify the structures and purposes of these NGOs (ibid., 165). Discussions in the literature draw attention to the increasing visibility and functions of RNGOs and FBOs in civil society, particularly in the USA and many developed countries. In other words, neoliberalization has redefined not only the state's relationship with civil society but also its relationship with religion.

Leblebici (2014:370-372) examines the neoliberal transformation of the state through religion. He claims that religion plays two main roles in neoliberal transformation. First, religion has been used as an instrument of superstructure to legitimize the neoliberal transformation of the state. Therefore, the reactions of different social classes, which would oppose this transformation, were alleviated. The second but most direct impact of religion on the neoliberal shift is that religious non-governmental organizations and foundations have undertaken the role of public institutions and have begun to implement public services carried out by the state in the recent past. This mentality is compatible with the aim of governance understanding, projecting a close relationship between state and non-governmental organizations and the target of the minimization of the state. It is questionable whether the state's involvement in the process is minimized or not when we consider the practical implications since one of the primary funding sources for religious organizations is still the state. What is more, whether governmental funds provided for these organizations violate the principle of secularism or not is a highly

controversial issue, notably in secular countries. According to Vanderwoerd (2003:11-12), government aid to FBOs is compatible with pluralism. FBOs have equal opportunities to access government funds from other NGOs. He also claims that access to public funds does not mean that the government's role in addressing social problems would be eliminated. Instead, they can enable potential partnerships between governments and religious sectors (ibid., 20).

Although discussions on how neoliberalism affects the organization of religion are mostly made in the context of Western Christianity, Haenni analyzes the relationship between neoliberalism and religion through Islam. Haenni (2014) handles this debate within the framework of the Islamic world by generating the term "market Islam" to indicate the rupture from the traditional Islamist movement motivated by ideas relying on the rebuilding of the caliphate, the promulgation of sharia (religious law), the foundation of an Islamic state, and so on. He claims that four factors paved the way for the emergence of market Islam as an atypical phenomenon after the second half of the 1990s. First, instead of a militant doctrine and politics-oriented Islamic understanding, a new approach to Islam, which interprets earthly affairs through the "individual," has come into prominence. Second, relations based on the interaction between economic and religious fields have replaced politico-centric Islamization. The third factor is the transfer of business culture and its value to the religious field. Last but not least is the "neoliberalization of Islam." In summary, he claims that market Islam is not a premise of the Islamic state or Sharia order. Instead, it must be seen as an instrument that facilitates the privatization and elimination of the social state. Neoliberalization of Islam redefines the relationship between the state and civil society through "faith-based organizations". Thereby, the state has begun to lose its service provider role, while religious non-governmental organizations have become actors in the provision of public services (ibid., 19).

### **2.3. Theoretical Approaches to Religious Regulation**

In this section, theories related to religious regulation are discussed. First, the role assigned to the state by the classical secularization theory, which explains religious participation from the demand side, will be discussed. Then, the theory of religious

economy, which explains religious participation and vitality from the supply side, is analyzed in the context of religious regulation, one of its keywords. Third, arguments in the context of the network governance approach, which is essentially a public administration theory that has been adapted to the management of the religious sphere, will be discussed. Finally, the state's position in the face of increasing multiculturalism and religious diversity is presented.

### **2.3.1. Secularization Theory**

Secularization theory focuses on the demand for religion, that is, religious participation and vitality. This approach assumes that religion will decline as societies develop and modernize. Before moving on to the criteria by which secularisation is analysed in the literature and the references to the state's relationship with the religious sphere in these analyses, let me take a closer look at the concept of "secular," which is the root of the term "secularization". The etymological origin of the concept "secular" is based on the Latin word "saeculum" which means "this age". The word saeculum symbolizes "the world", like the other word in Latin which has same meaning, "mundus" (Cox, 2013:22). The word 'saeculum' offers the possibility to distinguish between two groups of people or ways of life: the first group lives an ordinary time. In contrast, the other group focused on infinity and moved beyond "the temporal". They live in "high time" (Taylor, 2007:54-55). Certain periods, places, people, institutions, and activities were thought to be closely associated with sacred or higher times, whereas others were seen to be primarily associated with profane times. As a result, the "spiritual/temporal" dichotomy (e.g., the state as the "temporal arm" of the church) is frequently used to draw the same distinction (Taylor, 2011:32).

The emergence of secularism as an idea goes back to Anaxagoras, who lived in Athens to educate Athenians from 462 to 432 BCE. He rebutted supernatural ideas and assumptions such as the idea that the sun was the God Helios, who makes a daily pilgrimage across the sky. Instead, he brought irreligious and scientific explanations to some natural events. As a result, he was prosecuted by religious authorities (Smith, 2008: 21-22). Beckford states that the practical reflections of the concept

“secular” were seen primarily in the Roman civilization and the practices of the medieval Catholic Church. The term “secular” was introduced by the Church to describe priests who were ordained to function outside the supervision of monastic orders (Beckford, 2003:33). Ordinary parish priests were "secular" because they operated in profane time, whereas "regular" priests in monastic institutions lived in accordance with the rules of their order in sacred time (Taylor, 2011:32). Secularization gained its full meaning immediately after the Reformation, with the transfer of goods, institutions and some important functions from the control of the church to the laymen (Taylor, 2011:32, Turner, 2020:5).

While 17th-century European thinkers concentrated on defining the relationship between the church, monarchy, and the early modern state, philosophers in the late 18th-century, when significant scientific advances were made, focused on different ways of conceptualizing the boundaries between religion and non-religion (Beckford, 2003:34). The advent of industrial society, rising positivism, and the loss in the Catholic Church's power were all events that drastically altered social balances in the nineteenth century. The emergence of sociology as a branch of science with modernity allowed the issue of religion and secularization to be discussed academically. In the process, "what happened to religion?" became one of the primary questions sociologists sought to answer. The answer to this issue was simple: modernity is a process through which humanity progresses from religious to secular existence. The powerful indicators put forward in the work of early sociologists enabled secularization to be perceived as an undisputable paradigm (Martin, 2005:18). Sociologists such as Auguste Comte and Claude H. Saint Simon endeavored to address the question "which new consensus can keep society alive" as a result of these dramatic advances (Turner, 2011:134-135). Weber's idea on the relationship between rationalization and de-mystification of the world, as Turner points out, is the first expression of a fully developed secularization sociology (ibid., 137). According to this view, all of the occurrences of that time period ushered in the disenchantment process (*Entzauberung* in German), in which spiritual power is awoken or managed through magical or supernatural means (Grosby, 2013:301). To put it another way, as Weber explains in "Science as a Vocation," intellectualization

and rationality rendered everything calculable. As a result, humanity would no longer be enslaved by strange and unexpected forces (ibid., 301).

Throughout history, the term "secular" has taken on numerous aspects. In parallel, secularization is a highly complex topic that is analyzed on a variety of level (see Turner, 2020:3-4) and so, there is no single definition of secularization too. Casanova in his seminal work "Public Religions in the Modern World" (1994) offers to analyze secularization by evaluating three possible interpretations depending on different criteria (Casanova, 2007-7-8):

- a) *Secularization as the decline of religious beliefs and practices in modern societies*: Casanova states that academic debates are generally based on this definition of secularization. He underlines that those who apply to this definition often assume secularization as a "universal, natural and developmental" process.
- b) *Secularization as the privatization of religion*: This version of secularization has been perceived as a contemporary and normative situation and has been accepted as a prerequisite of modern liberal democratic politics. It is based on the understanding that with modernization, religion will be separated from the public sphere and become limited to the private lives of individuals.
- c) *Secularization as the differentiation of the secular spheres* (state, economy, science, art, welfare, etc.): According to this definition, secularization is considered as the separation of social institutions from religious rules. As Casanova underlines, this explanation is given as the equivalent of secularization in dictionaries of European languages. In this version of secularization, there is an emphasis on the transition of material and spiritual phenomena seen as belonging to the church or religion to civil life, use, property, or control.

According to Casanova, there is enough evidence to falsify the first two hypotheses of the secularization thesis. However (although he later updated his arguments) he states that the third hypothesis – the differentiation of the secular spheres (state, economy, science, art, education, welfare, etc.) from religion – corresponds to a

reality<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, he claims that the classical perspective cannot be dismissed as a myth at all (Casanova, 1994:6).

In secularization debates, we see the phenomenon of the state precisely in this third category identified by Casanova, the purification of secular spheres from religion. One of these spheres is the state. According to secularisation theorists, states are expected to become structurally separate from the Church as they modernize. However, in addition to structural differentiation, Bruce (Bruce, 1999: 8-9) underlines that modernization has brought about functional differentiation, namely specialization in social roles and institutions. When specialization is considered together with secularization, which is another output of modernization, it is seen that many social functions dominated by the Christian Church and clergy in the middle ages were affected by this differentiation. To be expressed more clearly, education, health care, welfare, and social control services, each of which corresponds to a separate field of expertise, were gathered in the field of religious institutions. However, with modernization, these fields have been secularized. Thereby, religious professionals who provide these services have been replaced by "lay professionals" who have received a secular education. After this phase, one might expect the state to remain neutral or indifferent to all minority and major religions, or to act as a mechanism to prevent the re-entry of religion into those spheres. This is where the question of religious regulation arises.

Considering the rivalry between church and state, it can be considered that secularisation debates on the decline of religious authority are particularly important for the regulation of established religious institutions. Chaves (1994) suggests examining and analyzing secularization as a "declining scope of religious authority" rather than "decline in religion". In other words, he proposes not to consider religion as an analytical category in secularization studies because today it does not seem possible to say that modernity and religion are "incompatible", that is, the antithesis of each other (ibid.,753). Religious authority, on the other hand, provides a more suitable basis for analysis. The defining criterion of the concept of authority in

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<sup>6</sup> Casanova (2008) reconsidered his view of "differentiation of secular spheres from religion" in an article he made self-criticism in the following years. As a result, he stated that this argument is also quite western-centric and cannot be generalized.

Weberian sociology is related to the means used to ensure obedience. As Chaves mentioned, Weber underlines that political authority is based on "physical coercion", whereas religious authority is based on psychic coercion<sup>7</sup>. According to Chaves, psychic coercion is not sufficient and satisfactory in establishing absolute authority, especially when vital breakthroughs in science and technology are taking place. Since, to impose its order, religious authority refers to supernatural powers and promises that individuals will have access to some "goods". In other words, the religious authority provides its continuity and legitimacy through the goods it promises with reference to the supernatural. These "goods" allegedly controlled by religious authority may be sickness, poverty, desires, relief from sin or undesirable conditions, or the prospects for wealth, nirvana, health. The cost of accessing these goods may be a set of rituals, spiritual diets, or obligations such as retreats. As a result, Chaves' treatment of "secularization" as "declining religious authority" refers to the diminishing sanction power of a social structure whose legitimacy is based on supernatural references (ibid., 756). The decline in religious authority is likely to have different consequences on religious regulations. For example, established religious institutions that have lost power in the face of secular authority in the process of modernization may become more controllable by the state, or the loss of authority may lead the state to adopt more neutral policies since they no longer pose a threat to it. However, these arguments require further investigation.

On the other side of this argument is the normative debate on how the secular state should deal with religion. As Madeley (2003) underlines, since the mid-1970s a number of distinguished political philosophers have developed the doctrine of state neutrality. A neutral state corresponds to a structure that stands at an equal distance to all its citizens and does not interfere in their way of life. This doctrine has been the starting point for the liberal approach in ethical debates on the state (ibid: 4-5). Undoubtedly, religion and religious preferences are among the most important issues that states should impartially act towards their citizens.

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<sup>7</sup> We see this expression in the Weber's conceptualization of "hierocratic organization" which is a "an organization which enforces its order through psychic coercion by distributing or denying religious benefits ("hierocratic coercion"). A compulsory hierocratic organization will be called a "church" insofar as its administrative staff claims a monopoly of the legitimate use of hierocratic coercion"(Weber, 1978: 54).



### **2.3.2. Theory of Religious Economy**

The fact that data on religious participation over the last 20 years has challenged the assumptions of secularization theory has been the impetus for the development of new approaches with a focus on the supply side of the religious market.

The religious market economy model, which has been developed since the 1970s with the contributions of academics such as Roger Finke, William, Sims Bainbridge, Rodney Stark, and Laurence Iannaccone, has enabled the production of many empirical findings regarding the place of religion in society. This approach aims to explain the roles of religion and religious actors in today's world through hypotheses inspired by free-market understanding. Accordingly, religious markets operate just like commercial ones. A religious economy consists of all the religious activities in any society: between producers (one or more organizations that want to attract or maintain potential adherents) on large scales to attract consumers (existing or potential adherents) or to ensure the loyalty of existing ones (Stark & Finke, 2000: 193).

The concept of the "religious market" is based on the understanding that competition among producers increases the production of religious "goods" or services of the kind demanded by "consumers," thus making religious markets similar to other types of markets. That is, religious pluralism and competition create a more religious social space.

Religious regulation is one of the key concepts used in this theory. As mentioned above, demand-side approaches such as theories of secularization, which argue that the demand for religion will gradually decrease with modernization, explain the changing demand for religion by the changing characteristics of social life. On the other hand, supply side theorists criticize demand-side analyses on the grounds that they do not take into account the supply of religion, that is, the quality and quantity of religious institutions and services through which people can meet their religious needs (Olson, 2011).

Undoubtedly, the most decisive factor in the supply of religion is the extent to which the state regulates religion. The basic assumption of Stark and Finke (2000), the

pioneers of the religious economy model, is that as the monopoly or involvement of the state and established religious institutions increases, religious participation and vitality in society decreases. In other words, society is desacralized. Within this theory, it is often discussed how state regulation of religion affects religious freedom. The general assumption is that there is an inverse relationship between religious regulation and religious freedom. For instance, Ahdar and Leigh (2013: 87-124) discuss the implications for religious freedom of state intervention in the religious sphere. They address the fact that regulatory practices are inevitably more prevalent in monistic and strictly dualistic models of the relationship between religion and the state, which lie at opposite poles of the spectrum. In a theocracy, worldly authority uses worldly instruments to guide the souls of citizens. What theocratic regimes forget is the principle of fallibility; that is, God delegates his powers to people who are always prone to error. On the other hand, erastianism is based on the claim that the state is superior to religion. Religion is an element that moves state policy forward. In this model, also called 'Caesaropapism,' the church (or other official religious organization) is directly under the control of the state. That is, religion is in a subservient position to worldly authority. In such monistic approaches, a worldly authority may try to coerce and control religious communities for its own political and secular purposes; thus, as in the theocratic model, the limits of delegated authority can be easily transcended (ibid., 90–91). According to Ahdar and Leigh, although the secular state model carries certain dangers regarding religious freedoms, structural separatism – in which state institutions and religious institutions are kept separate from each other – is the regime of organizing the religion not as problematic as the others. A wall built between institutions can protect religions from state intervention. However, the common trend in practice is the model in which the state is hostile to religion, which ignores the contributions of religion to the public sphere and pushes it into the private sphere by quarantining it (ibid., 92–100). However, religion and the state were not fully fused in the state religion model (ibid., 100–109). However, the state separates and supports a religion (or several sects of the same religion). The parties typically view this cooperation between religion and state as mutually advantageous. While the state provides the church with dignity, legitimacy, and financial support, the church supports the state, reinforcing a sense of national unity and purpose.

Pluralist models that emphasize the public dimensions of religion are compatible with freedom of religion (ibid., 109–112). Models of neutrality (which may overlap with pluralistic ones) can take various forms. What is decisive is how and to what extent the state is impartial. For example, the "principled pluralism model tries not to treat religious people and groups differently from their non-religious counterparts. On the other hand, being "blind" to religion (formal neutrality) can sometimes overlook the fact that faith communities can be subjected to discriminatory treatment (ibid., 111–112). A substantive (or positive) policy of neutrality (ibid., 115–119) seeks to minimize the potential for government actions to influence citizens' decisions on matters of belief and disbelief. In other words, this model aims to leave religious issues to the initiative of individuals in a free environment as much as is practically possible. Substantive neutrality can sometimes require government actions that support religion to equalize opportunities for different faiths and denominations. The last model highlighted by the authors is the competitive market economy approach (ibid., 119–122). They argue that this model provides some valuable insights, recalling that the government's policy of keeping faith markets open often works for the good of society. According to the authors, although the religious market, like other markets, has flaws, it can make it easier for citizens to make meaningful choices.

As in rational choice theory, religious market economy approach assumes that the actors in the religious market make rational choices. It is among the main issues for which this theory is criticized. For example, Bruce, one of the proponents of the secularization thesis, states that religious goods and services are not preferred in a "rational" way, unlike goods and services in commercial markets. Deeply held (religious) beliefs may prevent people from acting in a way that would maximize the benefits they receive from joining a religious eccl. This is because those who are completely committed to one perspective do not perceive other perspectives as genuine options (Bruce & Yearley, 2006:253).

The model of the religious economy may have the potential to provide a framework for some analysis of religious actors' relations with society. According to this approach, the activities of religious organizations are mostly considered part of the aim of reaching "customers" and attracting them. However, this theory may not be

compatible with the socio-politico-cultural characteristics of the environment that shaped the religious sphere. The first reason for this incompatibility is whether there is religious pluralism or not. For this reason, most of the data on the religious market structure was obtained from the USA, one of the most important cases of religious pluralism in the years when the theory was first put forward (Hamberg & Pettersson, 1994). Second, the state's role in the management of religion is another important variable for the applicability of this theory. Religious consumption is expected to be higher in a free and competitive market than in a monopolistic or oligopolistic market (Chaves & Cann, 1992). Third, the relations of religious actors in the public sphere with "production" and "consumption" are decisive in terms of the theory's explanatory power in specific cases. Possamai (2018: 19-31) explains this through the typology of consumerist religions. The relationship between economy and religion is different today when the neoliberal economy has taken over the field of religion. The two ideal types of religion fully embrace neoliberalism, albeit in different ways. The hyper-consumer type embraces neoliberalism, albeit in different ways. The hyper-consumer type corresponds to new-age religions. According to Possamai, they are trapped by philosophies and the famous cultural market. Hypo-consumptive types of religion engage in a more controlled religious market. Their products conform to the principles of their particular beliefs. Both religions engage in incremental work and produce for their adherents using various techniques. However, while the hypergroup takes a more eclectic approach, the hypo-type does not simply go beyond the religious text it follows (ibid., 21). As a result, it can be claimed that the religious economy model can be applied more in cases where hyper-consumerist religions, which are more compatible with liberalism, are more common, while the approach loses its explanatory power in cases where there are established religions.

### **2.3.3. Network Governance**

One of the questions network governance, a normative approach, answers is basically: "How should states regulate the religious sphere in the age of neoliberalism?" At the end of the 1990s, the administrative strategy prioritizing the state became ineffective since the neoliberal political economy approach was positioned as the only alternative. In other words, in this process, the state was

declared solely responsible for all the negativities, and other actors and public policy processes were needed for the solution of social problems. The "network governance" method is one of the theories that have been put forth in answer to this necessity. Network governance is a theory that focuses on the roles of different actors in policy-making and implementation processes in the neoliberal era as well as supporting cooperation between them. De Angelis defines "network governance model" as

a purposive act, usually by state actors, aiming at providing stability in socioeconomic flows, normally entailing more or less coercive systems of regulation, and crucially relying on the networked active participation and self-management of non-state actors such as NGOs and other civil society groups as well as business (2005:233).

In recent years, this approach has been applied to explain the roles of religious actors and organizations, which are more visible in the public sphere during public policy processes. Martikainen (2013:130) proposes employing a "network governance model" based on a multilevel and polycentric perspective to comprehend contemporary management of religion. According to him, today's state-religion relations cannot be explained by means of the classical, outdated model in which the state is mere arbiter. That is, the traditional state-church dualism is no longer valid. Therefore, a multi-actor system approach should be adopted, considering the changing balance of power today. Furthermore, due to public administration reforms and the rise of new public management understanding, the state-led, hierarchical steering mechanisms have begun to lose their importance in recent decades. Neoliberal policies have unavoidably led in a significant deterioration of social welfare services and a rise in wealth polarization. As a result, a tremendous gap in social reproduction has opened up. Given the private sector's incapacity to meet people's reproductive needs (despite neoliberal assurances), the growth of a "third sector" has become unavoidable (De Angelis, 2005:238-240). So, it is believed that both traditional and new age religious organizations have been a crucial part of the third sector.

The network governance model supports Miller's argument that religion and religious organizations are important components of the civil society ecosystem. Miller

(2011:259) states that the path of religious institutions intersects with civil society at 5 points: (1) Religious organizations in civil society can provide a platform for people to discuss ideas, policies, and what is right and wrong within the framework of moral communication. (2) Religious institutions can inspire and support the realization of their beliefs through public action or other political action in a way that embodies their moral values. (3) Religious institutions have a legacy of establishing social service institutions (or directly carrying out these activities), carrying out humanitarian aid activities, and responding to crises such as migration or disaster. (4) Religious institutions provide opportunities for people to come together through music, art, or other social activities. (5) Religious institutions have instruments that have been respected for generations and have traditionally brought people together, such as birth, puberty, marriage, child-rearing, death. These items support the idea that religious organizations – regardless of whether they are traditional or not – should be involved in the field of civil society.

Similarly, O'Halloran (2010:109) implies that the origins of civil society are in the religious sphere. In other words, he states that associations or guilds (confraternities in the Catholic Church) dedicated to the pursuit of religious goals constitute the first manifestations of civil society in organizational terms. This argument is not limited to the Christian world. The three main religions - Christianity, Islam, and Judaism - are based on a doctrine that advises the sick, poor, and needy to lend a helping hand. Therefore, similar organizations can be found in these religions as well. However, in the 20th century, the social welfare states' becoming the most basic provider of social services, and some failures of religion redefined the relationship between religion and civil society. In this process, it can be claimed that civil society had a more secular appearance. The dominant neoliberal ideology has brought the field of civil society to the fore as an alternative to the services provided by the state. As a result of neoliberal regulations, civil society has moved away from its relatively secular structure. Instead, it has become an area where organizations with a religious character are quite active.

Although the network governance model, a neoliberal technique, gives religious organizations a significant position in civil society, there are some concerns about

their involvement in the processes of both policy-making and policy implementation. There are questions about the extent to which other religious actors can be involved in policy-making in countries where the majority religion is organized and the state favours one religion over others. On the other hand, in cases where the state is neutral toward religions, it is debatable how and to what extent the state can cooperate with religious organizations. Moreover, the organizational structures of organized religions, such as churches, may be advantageous over other religious organizations in public policy-making due to their historical ties with the state, traditional accumulation of knowledge, and organizational superiority. According to Fergusson (2004:192), the church can contribute to broader public debates on the condition that it avoids the patronizing attitude of claiming that it knows best in all matters. In other words, it should not claim hierarchical superiority over other religious organizations. Miller (2011:257) states that the participation of historically established religious organizations such as churches in civil society and their contribution to society are subject to certain conditions. First, they must be completely independent of the state. In addition, they should be far from being blind advocates of certain groups and sects. Otherwise, religion has the potential to cause serious harm to civil society. Similarly, according to Strachwitz (2007: 32), although churches as established religious organizations have not yet fully embraced the concept of civil society, they are going through a transformation process in this direction. For this process to be completed, it should avoid appearing as a part of the state and should take on the appearance of a voluntary organization from the outside.

When it comes to policy implementation, the harmony between these organizations' spiritual and corporeal functions may suffer, especially in the neoliberal era. For instance, given that the Catholic Church is the largest provider of social welfare services globally, it stands to reason that both old but experienced and new yet dynamic religious organizations can significantly contribute to civil society. However, the fact that religious organizations actively provide social welfare services as a solid alternative to the state may lead to the instrumentalization of religion. It is stated that the Catholic Church's social teaching, which emphasizes the importance of values such as solidarity, charity and subsidiarity, is an argument or an alternative to neoliberalism, which undermines the sense of solidarity (see Annett,

2022). Muehlebach calls the articulation of Catholicism with contemporary neoliberals "Catholicized neoliberalism." She argues that Catholicized Neoliberalism's charisma does not come from its rejection of the market but rather from its directive that some of this income should be transferred through charity endeavours. The neoliberalism that has been Catholicized has embraced a kind, sympathetic discourse that repairs the harm caused by excessive marketization. That is to say, it, therefore, fuses the market with moral passion and economic reason with the emotional necessities of Caritas (Muehlebach, 2014).

#### **2.3.4. Multicultural Perspective**

Multiculturalism, as a social and political approach, emphasizes the importance of the coexistence of various cultural, religious, and ethnic groups in society. In the process of neoliberalization of the economy and politics, migration flows, which have become more intense all over the world, have brought opportunities as well as challenges in terms of multiculturalism. In other words, while increasing migration flows contributes positively to intercultural exchange, learning, and empathy, they inevitably lead to struggles and conflicts. Therefore, the regulation or management of multiculturalism remains an important agenda for states.

As Kymlicka (2013:107) states, the first-generation neoliberal reformers were critical of multiculturalism since they assumed it as a reflection of social liberalism or "pathology of the interventionist welfare state" that was prone to supporting ethnic projects and reform programs satisfying the demands of minorities such as employment equity laws, etc. However, their successors recognized the potential of neoliberal multiculturalism on the grounds that "ethnic identities and attachments can be assets to market actors and hence that they can legitimately be supported by the neoliberal state" (ibid., 109). Accordingly, multiculturalism has been pushed by international organizations promoting neoliberalism for years. On the other hand, in "Jihad vs. McWorld", Barber (1995) points to the connection and struggles between neoliberalism which have triggered globalization and parochial forces relying on religious, ethnic etc. motives. On the one hand economic, social and cultural borders among nations have been exterminated by global capitalism, on the other hand ethnic



and/or religious confrontations have sparked some severe conflicts by dividing the world into smaller parts. Although migration is part of human history, neoliberalism has played an important role in exacerbating the challenges posed by migration. Political unrest, wars, economic crises, climate change and the demand for low-wage labor as a condition of global capitalism have led to large migrations from the poor countries of the world to the rich countries. The economic principles imposed by neoliberalism have confronted the newcomers with problems such as not being able to reach a humane quality of life in the new settlements, difficulty in finding a job, not being able to earn enough income, and insecure employment.

The new environment created by globalization and neoliberal multiculturalism inevitably brought along a brand-new search for existing administrative practices. The great interest in the "management of diversity" literature from a Western European perspective can be explained as a reflection of this search in recent years. The religious diversity and even religious conflicts that emerged with the dissolution of religious monopolies in many regions forced religious institutions such as churches and faith-based NGOs, which are effective governance actors in this field, to take action. According to the network governance model, while the state has a regulatory role in the management of multiculturalism, established or non-established religious organizations should take an active role in the management.

The literature on this subject shows that religious institutions, especially in countries facing refugee and asylum-seeking flows, play an active role in solving related problems as much as faith-based organizations. For instance, Snyder (2012) points to the support of churches in the UK and North America for asylum seekers and how they encourage the settled community to engage more closely with people seen as the 'other'. Churches in European countries, which faced the wave of immigration from the Middle East in 2015, are also involved in migration management. For example, the active work of the Church of Sweden (see Idestrom & Linde, 2019), which was a state church until recently, and the Catholic church in Poland, where the right-wing is strong to improve the living conditions of Muslim refugees (see Narkowicz, 2018) can be counted among these. The main motivations behind these activities may vary such as the belief that religion provides psychological, social, and spiritual support to

refugees during the tough migration process (Eppsteiner & Hagan, 2016), Christian mission understanding fostering human solidarity (Groody, 2013), pro-refugee expressions used by Pope Francis (Brockhaus, 2016)<sup>8</sup>. In addition to these motivations, providing social cohesion, which we have listed among the social functions of traditional religious institutions in the previous section, is also important to understand the mentality behind the refugee integration programs effectively implemented by religious organizations. As a result, while the phenomenon of immigration and the resulting need for management of religious pluralism lead to the diversification and expansion of the religious organizations' ecology, it also means established religious organizations have undertaken a new set of social roles during this process.

In the network governance model, the active role of state in religious service delivery is not tolerated; however, the importance of its regulatory role is often emphasized in the mainstream literature. On the other hand, Bryan S. Turner (2013:7), an American sociologist, uses the notions of "managing religion" or "state management of religion" to refer to the strategy adopted by the liberal states in which religions have erupted in the public domain to avoid religious conflict in the public sphere. To put it differently, Turner states that liberal states are obliged to enter into the management of religion in order to protect civil harmony and solidarity, particularly in multicultural and multi-faith societies. It should be noted that, in this approach, the relationship between state and public religions has been taken into consideration in the context of Western, liberal, and non-Muslim countries in which Muslim people live. In this sense, Turner indicates a "liberal paradox." On the one hand, the liberal state declares that religion is a private concern in accordance with liberalism, encouraging religious freedom; on the other hand, it plays a persistent role in the management of religion (Turner, 2012). He claims that the intervention of a liberal state is inevitable in the religious domain due to mainly two reasons. The first is the fragmentation of the public sphere by the growing emphasis on cultural

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<sup>8</sup> For instance, in one of his speeches in 2016, the Pope used the following statements: "It is a commitment that involves everyone, without exception. Dioceses, parishes, institutes of consecrated life, associations and movements, as individual Christians, we are called to welcome the brothers and sisters fleeing war, famine, violence and inhumane living conditions." See <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/to-welcome-the-stranger-is-to-welcome-christ-pope-francis-says-31783> Accessed on: 11.01.2021

differences. Therefore, as such in the Amish and fundamental Islamist cases, multiculturalism has brought the presence of religious groups with illiberal values as well. Secondly, the fact that active citizenship has declined along with neoliberalism, Turner claims, has forced liberal states to take precautions. However, it should be noted that unlike the secular Western States, the rising religious pluralism might have caused different problems and consequences in non-secular states or those whose so-called secular identities have become questionable.

## **2.4. Regulation through Religious Institutions**

The capacity of religious institutions to guide and mobilize society has led them to become instruments of religious regulation. This chapter explores the literature that discusses how the political and social functions of religious institutions are instrumental in the state's regulation of religion. It must be conceded that the literature and debates here are primarily from the Catholic world. This can be attributed to two reasons. First, the presence of relative church-state dualism makes the state's approach to established religious institutions more visible. Second, the centralized structure of the Catholic Church has allowed a more consistent and similar pattern to emerge in church-politics and church-society relations. Moreover, Western-centered debates and concepts (such as the ideological apparatus of the state) have also been used to explain non-Western cases. It is hoped that the analysis of the two established religious institutions outside the Catholic world in the following chapters will reduce the Western-centric tendency in this section.

### **2.4.1. Religious Institutions in Politics**

Religious institutions' relations with the state and the ruling class have long been a contentious issue in politics. Throughout history, their ability to mobilize the masses has undoubtedly been the most significant rationale behind their political power. As the political anthropologist Balandier (1972: 117) points out, the "sacred" constitutes one of the dimensions of the political sphere from the early stages of human history: Religion can be an apparatus of political power, a guarantee of political power's

legitimacy or one of the tools used in political competition. He also claims that the "sacred" that has political ends is likely to serve two contradictory strategies: On the one hand, it may be functional for maintaining the existing social order and the continuation of the acquired positions. On the other hand, it can also serve those who aspire to seize and legitimize their authority (ibid).

For instance, in medieval Europe, the numinous legitimacy that emanates from the spiritual authority of a God was a precondition to ruling. In other words, the king was thought to have the divine right to govern because the prevalent belief was based on the idea that the king received power once it descended from God. The participation of the clergy in the ceremony and the coronation of the king were among the most important indications that the king inherited the right to rule from God (Fox, 2018: 61). As organizational body of the spiritual authority, Churches in medieval and early modern Europe, functioned to legitimize monarchical rule, although churches often acted as a rival source of political authority and power. Therefore, religion has not been in a disconnected position from the rise of the state (Grzymala-Busse, 2012:428).

In the modern era's understanding of political legitimacy, God has been removed from the equation (Fox, 2018:62). Henceforth, it has turned into a process that takes place between the (secular) ruler and the ruled. From the perspective of political science today, legitimacy is the belief that enables the ruled to obey the rules set by the ruler. In other words, it is possible to claim the existence of political legitimacy if the governed approve of the right of the rulers to make decisions that affect the society. Political legitimacy theories focus on the primary motivations behind this belief and the processes of gaining the consent of political power. Fox stresses, however, that the transition from numinous to civil legitimacy does not imply that religion's influence in politics and its legitimation role have vanished completely. He concludes that, based on referrals to "religion" and "God" in countries' constitutions, religion remains a substantial potential source of legitimacy for states, but to a lesser extent than before (ibid.,62-63). Through the concept of "religious legitimacy," Fox analyzes how religion can boost or undermine states, policies, political actors, and political institutions.

Gramsci and Althusser are the first names that come to mind among theorists seeking answers to the question of how traditional religious organizations legitimize political power. Gramsci touched upon the role of the Catholic Church in the (re)production of hegemony over the Southern peasants. Hegemony, which is the basic concept of the Gramscian approach, simply means that the ruling class gains power with the "consent" of the governed and thus acquires political power. However, the acquisition of political legitimacy does not happen automatically. This process is based on a two-dimensional consent engineering process (Zelditch, 2001:46). The first aspect of this process is coercive mechanisms prompted by state bodies such as courts, police, etc. The second dimension is the control of the ruled through ideological leadership and persuasion. In this process, organizations such as churches, voluntary associations, educational institutions, or the media in the field of civil society are in charge of the production and conduction of motivating ideas (ibid). In his seminal work, *The Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci draws attention to the Vatican's hegemony over the peasants in the South of Italy. The Pope was the most important political actor after the government through the church, which was a centralized and well-established organization. In other words, the Vatican could drive southern peasants, who are a vital component of a possible proletarian revolution in Italy, into opposition to the revolution (Forlenza, 2019:45). He emphasized the importance of fighting with Catholicism and the Vatican, which he saw as one of the biggest obstacles to the socialist revolution. He argued, however, that this would not be accomplished through hostile opposition and anti-clericalism alone, since such an attitude could potentially alienate the peasants in the whole south from socialism and revolution (ibid.,46). Instead, Gramsci proposed encouraging people to think critically, change their modes of action and thought, and create a new understanding of the world against the prevailing hegemonic existing belief system (ibid.,46). Only in this way could the consent-generating function of the Catholic Church, which has historically been allied with the political elite, be rendered ineffective.

Louis Althusser is another Marxist theorist who highlighted the role of the church in the political legitimation process. For the first time, he systematized Gramsci's arguments on ideology and put them in a theoretical framework (Althusser,

2014)The state is viewed as a repressive machine in the Marxist paradigm, allowing the ruling classes to maintain their rule over the working class through the coercive expropriation of surplus value. The word "state apparatus," as used in Marxist texts, refers to the police, courts, and prisons. If they are insufficient, direct intervention by the army, the head of state, and the government can be used as pressure devices. However, Althusser emphasizes the need for the Marxist state theory to consider an element other than the repressive state apparatus (RSA): There are many more separate "ideological state apparatuses" (ISAs) than RSA. They are relatively autonomous. One of the first that comes to mind is the religious ISA, which consists of church systems and their specialized organizations (such as youth organizations). In addition to this, the educational ISA, the family ISA, the trade union ISA, the communication ISA, etc. (Althusser, 2014:75-76). The state's (repressive) apparatus' function is to provide the political foundation for the reproduction of exploitation-based production relations. The state also uses coercion to create the political conditions for ISAs to work. The ruling classes that hold state power command the RSA from a single centre. From one centre, the ruling classes that control state power command the RSA. The RSA is entirely in the public domain, while the majority of ISAs are in the private domain. Churches, unions, families, some schools, and televisions are just a few examples. Although the RSA is based on coercion, no device is totally reliant on coercion. Ideology is a secondary function of repression devices. The ideological apparatuses of the state function by using ideology. ISAs, likewise, are not entirely based on ideology but repression can be used symbolically by these apparatuses, either muted or hidden (ibid.,76-77). In other words, the RSA and the ISAs, in other words, collaborate to keep the state in order (Ferretter, 2006: 84).

The RSA fulfils its social role, which is to maintain the ruling class's or alliance's economic dominance, by using force or the threat of force (such as trial, detention, physical violence, and even the death penalty). Because we all live in a series of ideological discourses that validate it, this compulsion is socially acceptable (ibid.,85). The ISAs, on the other hand, use ideological discourse to carry out their social role, which is to sustain the ruling class's or alliance's economic domination. People are forced to think and act in certain ways by religious institutions or schools,

for example. If someone refuses to think and act within these institutions' acceptable boundaries, they can give them low marks, remove them from prestigious groups, disregard their problems, and even expel them from the institution entirely (ibid.,85).

While the repressive apparatus has not altered much from medieval times to the present, the number of ISAs has expanded with capitalism, according to Althusser (2014: 142-143). During the Middle Ages, the religious ISA (church) fulfilled a number of cultural (such as press and radio) and educational functions. With the French Revolution, however, the religious ISA's prominent position exacerbated the reformers' attack against religion and the clergy. In other words, the handover of state power caused not only the repressive apparatus, but also the church, which was the dominant ISA of that period, to break down and lose some of its functions. The civil constitution of the clergy, the confiscation of church property, and the creation of new ISAs to replace the church are among the results of this process (ibid).

#### **2.4.2. Religious Institutions in Society**

Throughout history, in almost all organized and non-organized religions, religious organizations have been actors that shape society by taking on very important social roles. Moberg (1962) discusses in detail the role of the church in American society through different interrelated categories. By following these categories, the social role of religious institutions can be summarized in a general framework.

Firstly, Moberg (1962:131-132) states that church is an agent that provides “*socialization*”. Socialization is the process by which individuals' religious views and preferences are interactively shaped through some social agents (Sherkat, 2003:151). Among the agents that provide socialization, the first ones that come to mind are family, peers, and institutionalized church. As Cornwall (1987:45) underlines that religious socialization is important not only for providing people with a worldview, but also for connecting them to personal communities that help them maintain that worldview throughout their lives. Without a doubt, religious institutions' socialization capabilities can be a useful instrument for the ruling classes' and political power's continuation. The transformation of religious organizations into

the ideological apparatus of the state, as addressed in the preceding chapter, is the outcome of a desire to mobilize society in a desired direction.

Secondly, church gives a *social statue* to its members since childhood years, (Moberg, 1962: 132-134). To put it another way, the cultural cognitive foundations that give religious institutions their legitimacy are also a resource that their adherents use to obtain social status.

Thirdly, one of the responsibilities of religious institutions is to provide *social fellowship* (ibid.,133-134). Religious leaders and their representatives have always been concerned about increasing social interaction through public worship. The first step in evangelism and social sharing is to bring people together under the roof of a place of worship.

Fourth, one of the most underlined functions of religious institutions is *social solidarity*. It is widely accepted that the main task of religion from primitive societies to the present day is to keep society together. Accordingly, church reinforces “social solidarity and cohesion” through common faith, a common set of values, common sentiments, common worship etc. (Moberg, 1962:134-136). The church's role in fostering social cohesion is particularly obvious in the history of Christianity. For instance, as Moberg underlines, black churches are the main force behind the cohesion of a community that was discriminated against and lacked a cultural heritage (especially in the mid-20th century). More broadly, the global framework of Christianity and the power of Roman Catholicism during the Middle Ages prevented localities and contributed to the coexistence of different communities by uniting them (ibid., 135). It should be underlined that religious institutions that promote social solidarity and cohesion are not limited to the church. . In the US and Europe, for example, mosques have gone beyond being places of worship and have become centers of social solidarity for the survival and adaptation of asylum seekers and migrants, especially from Africa and the Middle East (see [eastlondonmosque.org.uk](http://eastlondonmosque.org.uk), 2021; Okare & Joseph, 2023)<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> See <https://www.eastlondonmosque.org.uk/news/east-london-mosque-helps-displaced-refugees>  
Accessed on 01.09.2023



Durkheim emphasized the function of religion in social life and focused on the importance of religion in keeping society together. He even claimed in his seminal work, *Suicide*, that the organization of religion is effective in reducing suicide rates, which is a psychosocial phenomenon. Accordingly, Protestantism's superiority in suicide rates is due to the fact that it is a less strongly integrated church than the Catholic Church (Durkheim, 2005). On the other hand, there are also arguments against the idea that religion can increase social solidarity. According to Aldridge (2000:65), religion and religious leaders' role in provoking social conflict and legitimizing inequality and oppression is often overlooked. He argues that Durkheim is uninterested in the tactics used by religious entrepreneurs to mobilize limited resources. Instead, his concentration is on the demand side of religion rather than the supply side, which is repeated in contemporary secularization approaches.

The fifth function of the church, according to Moberg (1962: 136-138), is *social stability*. Like other religious organizations, the church tends to preserve existing values and practices. In other words, as a reflection of the conservative point of view, religious institutions also show resistance to change. This is because the church is most effective where social change, mobilization, and differentiation are least. Similarly, the church will be much stronger in an integrated and integrated society where the society is not made up of different congregations (ibid.,138). However, at a time when globalization, immigration, and multiculturalism have increased so much, the efforts of the church to provide social stabilization seem futile.

The sixth function Moberg underlined is *social control*. The church strives to achieve social control by controlling human behavior. It tries to keep its members within certain limits by teaching, persuading and coercion when necessary. The church's control over physical and mental health still applies in the modern world. Many church rituals and services are employed as social control mechanisms. With the help of these tools, some values are expected to be internalized by churchgoers. Church-based health centres in Christian geography can be given as an example of these tools. In addition, we should not forget the medical institutions established for evangelistic proselytism in distant lands. The church provides a series of services to turn those it defines as deviants onto the right path. It can, for example, provide alcohol or drug addicts with recovery treatments. It offers therapeutic and

preventative therapies to people suffering from mental diseases. It organizes social and leisure activities for various social groups. The main motive behind these services is to keep the society under control. Furthermore, the church's social control has had the biggest impact on the family institution, since controlling the family is the first step in allowing the church to manage society. According to Moberg, the church's ability to exercise effective social control is contingent on a number of factors. The most essential of these is a religious institution's engagement with other institutions. This means that a church in collaboration with governmental authority strengthens both institutions (ibid.,142). In other words, Moberg contends that in systems where the religion-state relations are interwoven, dominant religious organizations' social control strategies will be far more effective.

The church, on the seventh point, is a *social reformer*. Many social reform movements were started by churches, even if they lost their religious qualities over time. However, because adherents of a religion may hold differing viewpoints on social matters, it is uncommon for the church to take a uniform stance on social concerns. We witness this condition now in a variety of sectors, including women's rights, racism, and immigration. In so-called post-secular period, a normative expectation from the dominant religious organizations is the contribution to social peace and harmony. This can only be possible with a social reform that the church will carry out within its own internal structure, rather than the social movements that the church will organize outside its borders. In this direction, changes in the social and political field in the 21st century force religious organizations to "institutional renewal". For example, according to Dillon (2018), who examines this process in the context of Catholicism, the Catholic Church can maintain its status quo to the extent that it integrates secular experiences and expectations into religious teachings. According to the author, Pope Francis, who adopted the approach of public Catholicism, achieved this with his open communication with the society and a pluralistic perspective. Francis' sensitive approach to issues such as economic inequality, climate change, LGBT rights, or women's ordination is an indicator of the Catholic Church's efforts to align with the contemporary world. In short, the Catholic Church restored its legitimacy through institutional renewal by strengthening the normative pillar.

As eighth function, the church is a *welfare institution* (Moberg: 1962:149-156). Social welfare services have long been provided by religious institutions. Churches have attempted to provide material or emotional help to persons in need through various services. The professional social work approach, according to Moberg, stems from the church's efforts to satisfy social needs. He points out that certain of the services provided by clergy for society's social, material, mental, and physical well-being coincide with those provided by secular social workers (ibid).

Niebuhr (1946) states that the church has three essential societal responsibilities. These are respectively the "apostolic responsibility" that aims to spread religion to the world, the task of being a "social pioneer" without forgetting that everyone is equal before God, and the responsibility of being "a shepherd of the lost." Here, the "lost," i.e., "sheep or flock," refers to the community, while the shepherd is the church, the clergy. The sheep and flock metaphor, as Foucault underlines (1979: 227-231, 2009: 163-175), has its origins in Egyptian, Assyrian, Mesopotamian, and Hebrew texts. This reflects the understanding of "people management," which was effective between the 13th and 16th centuries in the East, instead of the "land management" approach in the west. According to this understanding, the shepherd gathers the scattered flock together, guides them, takes care of their needs, and meets them. The Catholic Church took the "pastoral power" understanding from Eastern Christianity and institutionalized it within the Roman Empire. Foucault states that pastoral power is a "benevolent" power and the reason for its existence is to do good since, in this model, the shepherd aims to provide the salvation of his own flock (ibid.). This is a power that is ready to sacrifice itself (not just in a commanding position), caring for every individual in the society, and capable of directing the society (Foucault, 1982:783). However, by the 18th century, religious institutionalization weakened, and the pastoral power in the church was lost. However, with the advent of the modern state, this institutionalization spread beyond the church and, as Foucault put it, "new pastoral power" emerged. This new form of power, unlike the other, aims to ensure the salvation of this world (such as health, safety, protection against accidents). Moreover, the officials of the new pastoral power are not limited to the clergy. This power is sometimes used by the police, a branch of the state, and sometimes by some private companies, welfare associations,

and philanthropic foundations (Foucault, 1982:783-784). Foucault today shows the Christian Pastoral model as one of the sources of the governance of the state (Foucault, 1991:104).

Neoliberalism, which brought about important changes in the mode of governance, has produced its own pastoral power. Although the state seems to fall into the background in the neoliberal governmentality, interventionism is actually much stronger, and this requires the adoption of a mentality of active politics in determining the direction (Hache, 2007. 50-53). In other words, as Foucault underlines, neoliberalism aligns with an understanding of intervention that has become continuous rather than the principle of laissez-faire (ibid. 51). Government has spread to every moment of life in the neoliberal pastoral power model, as in the Christian pastoral power model. However, unlike it, it is not just about establishing a relationship of obedience and complete dependence on individuals. It is also not based on a commitment to the state, as it is in the welfare state. Instead, as Hache points out, it requires individuals to be independent and take responsibility. That is, the neoliberal organization of the state requires the transfer of traditional responsibilities of the state to individuals and non-state institutions (ibid).

### **2.4.3. Religious Institutions in Public Sphere**

As noted above, until the late 1980s, there was widespread acceptance in the social science literature of the classic secular theory that religion would decline in the modern world and become a matter of 'private space.' The private sphere was the place where individuals and families practice their religion in private, according to these theses. (Chelini-Pont, 2005). The public, on the other hand, was the organized and concretized shared space of a given population, albeit without a universal definition (ibid., 613-614). That is, the latter corresponded to a religion-free space at that time. In Jürgen Habermas's seminal work, "*The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*," written in 1962 and translated into English in 1989, his definition of the public sphere as a space for rational deliberation was criticized for neglecting religion. In fact, Habermas, who had no interest in religion in those years, had previously emphasized that reason should be the only language used in the public

sphere and updated this view in the late 1990s, reviving the concept of "post-secularism." According to Habermas, modernism no longer points to a trend toward secularism. On the contrary, in today's democracies, citizens with a secular mindset should be open to religious discourse and its effects (Habermas, 2008). According to Calhoun, post-secularism cannot be interpreted as a process by which religion returns to the public sphere because it has always been there. Instead, it is a challenge to a set of ideas that ignores the public character of religion and its influence on public life. Therefore, post-secularism also marks the end of an understanding that recognizes the existence of a clear, stable, and coherent boundary between the secular and religious dimensions of life (Calhoun, 2012: 335).

Religion in public sphere refers to *"the intermingling of religion with issues of politics, governance, the state, and institutions of civil society"* (Brennan & Stypinska, 2020). Religion in public life, a very complex phenomenon, can take many forms. For example, we can see religion in the public sphere as part of the state apparatus, as a civil religion independent of the state and established religious institutions, as an integral part of nationalism, as part of public discourse, and as an explicit way of legitimizing political power (Furseth & Repstad, 2006: 97-109). In this context, in the literature, discussions on religion in the public sphere are generally addressed under the headings of religious freedoms, religious identities, and debate on headscarves in public schools.

One of the areas where the phenomenon of religion can be observed in the public sphere is the services of established religious institutions or religious organizations of various scales, which are not directly aimed at worship but at solving worldly problems. These services can be categorized as material support (such as charity or philanthropy) and spiritual support (such as chaplaincy). Today, almost all over the world, such activities constitute a significant part of the public image of religion. Thus, in this dissertation, the term public sphere here refers to the whole of the worship or non-worship sphere in which religious institutions engage in activities related to worldly affairs.

Religious institutions give some (social) services other than worship in attempt to eliminate or at least mitigate the harmful impacts of social problems. Hjelm (2009: 7-

9) analyses religious groups' and organizations' responses to societal problems through the lens of a triple typology. The first category is material claims. It includes material resources provided to those in need by religious communities, such as food and shelter. He highlights that there are differences in how these material solutions are socially arranged (ibid.,7). In some circumstances, the state may collect church taxes and transfer them to dominant (usually constitutionally recognized) religious institutions. In this situation, the church remains stuck between the public and third sector (ibid.,8). Second, like in the United States, the state may fund the material services of faith-based organizations by direct fiscal contributions. Finally, material assistance for social problems is obtained through volunteer work, whether in the form of private donations or actual labour (ibid).

Material claims refers to some altruistic activities such as charity and philanthropy which are the manifestations of social welfare services offered by religious organizations as a form of missionary work, either locally or globally. The term "charity" is derived from the Latin word "caritas," which meaning "love." It is referred to in a variety of ways, including aid, assistance, assistance, help, charity, rescuing, generosity, humanitarianism, and beneficence (Lichtenberg, 2009:16). One of the earliest examples of a similar altruistic effort is "philanthropy". "Philanthropia," an ancient Greek phrase, has a lot of meaning. The term was first used to allude to citizens' affection for other citizens, the king's generosity/benevolence towards those under his rule, or a specific interest in social groups such as the old, sick, and orphans (Timms & Timms, 1982:139). As we come closer to the present, this notion appears to be utilized in a more limited meaning, as charitable activities directed towards specific marginalized populations (ibid).

Charity, as emphasized by O'Halloran (2010:111), is a social construct beyond being a legal body and it derives from the idea shared by all religions that only by doing good actions in this life can eternal salvation be ensured in the next. As a result, we may observe echoes of this practice in every faith. Christian faith requires fulfilling one's obligation to love one's neighbor, which is an unavoidable prerequisite for soul salvation. Similarly, Buddhism emphasizes that the highest form of morality is to love one's neighbor; Islam mandates a donation of one-tenth of one's wealth to be

given to those in need; and the Jewish religion encourages its adherents to help the destitute and practice charity (ibid.,111). Thus, various forms and functions of charities emerged in different regions of the world for comparable reasons based on religious motivations. Christian fraternities first formed in the Middle Ages, and Waqf, which flourished under Islamic law, might be considered as organized, early manifestations of this doctrine.

Nowadays, secular or religious charity organizations operate all over the world. Not surprisingly, in the aftermath of the World War II, the welfare states' undertaking of many social services in Europe undermined charity organizations' functional legitimacy. In the next century, in Lohmann's words, "public philanthropy" became a tool of the neo-conservative approach (Lohmann, 2007:440). In other words, this new system has been reintroduced as an alternative, and even a rival, to the welfare state, under the motto that the public sector should be as small as possible. As a result, vital public concerns like the care of the impoverished, mentally ill, elderly, and feeble are no longer considered appropriate issues for public engagement, unless policy delegates their care to non-governmental "volunteer" organizations (ibid). Today, faith-based charity organizations were among the important actors that filled the gap left by the withdrawal of the public sector.

It should be noted that the word charity is a morally and politically loaded concept (Lichtenberg, 2009). Undoubtedly, the current situation becomes even more complicated when such a structure is intertwined with religious motivations. As a result, different perspectives on them, especially church-run or other religious charities, draw attention. Especially in countries where social welfare systems are already weak or where these mechanisms are weakening day by day as a result of neoliberalism, charities are seen as compensation for this deficiency. On the other hand, some serious criticisms are brought to them. As Lichtenberg points out (ibid.,17), many people associate charity with "humanitarianism" and "beneficence." It brings up negative overtones such as smugness, condescension, paternalism, pity, domination, colonialism, humiliation, and self-deception. According to this viewpoint, the solution to problems like poverty, hunger, and inequality is not charity or humanitarian help, but laws that ensure equitable allocation. Otherwise, there will

be an eternal vicious circle that perpetuates inequity, between the side that hurts and dominates and those that are constantly indebted and submit (Lichtenberg, 2009:16-19).

Furthermore, religious or faith-based organizations, as O'Halloran (2010) points out, tend to be politically conservative. Simply put, they can be resistant to change or the need for a new order. There are essentially two explanations for this. The first is the proclivity of long-lasting institutional institutions and social norms to feed off one another. Naturally, this can be a hurdle to obtaining progressive results, particularly in areas where there is a strong demand for change. The pastoral concerns of philanthropic religious organizations, on the other hand, have the potential to conflict with a set of present standards. Supporting population growth control to minimize poverty concerns in regions such as Africa is an example of this (O'Halloran, 2010: 112).

The second solution Hjelm highlights is “claims of community” (Hjelm, 2009:9). Religious organizations may claim to provide material support as well as people with whom to relate in order to live a decent life. As a result, people coping with social difficulties become part of a broader group grappling with the same issue. As Hjelm underlines, this is especially critical for youth who are in the early stages of socialization, and particularly for those who are at risk of marginalization.

The last but not least solution religious actors generate as a response to social problems is spiritual claims (ibid.,9). Hjelm states that the feature that distinguishes religious communities from all other actors in the field of social problems is the claim of spiritual community. There are significant differences between religions and particular religious traditions in how the spiritual level affects social life, especially coping with social problems. However, here we will focus on pastoral care and counseling practices, which can be found in many religions.

While most theologian and scholar asserts that pastoral counseling is a more specialized and individualized version of pastoral care, O'Connor (2003) argues that they are almost same. Pastoral counseling is the process of conversing with



individuals, families, and especially young people, the elderly, people with mental disorders, alcohol and drug addicts, prisoners, to better understand emotional and religious difficulties and to help them overcome problems with the support of religious and other resources<sup>10</sup> (Pastoral Counseling, n.d.). The main objectives of pastoral care and counselling services provided by churches include establishing trusting relationships while supporting those who seek help, guiding church members and others seeking help under the guidance of the Bible, and providing a safe environment for people dealing with serious problems and issues (Allen, 2014:1295).

Pastoral counselors work both inside and outside of the church. They are, for example, charged in hospitals and nursing homes as part of palliative care. From a spiritual standpoint, they try to relax the sick and old. In addition, in prisons, they instill hope and consolation with references from the scriptures to prisoners and their relatives outside (ibid.,1296). Pastoral counselors are given varied names depending on the institutions for which they work (such as hospital chaplains or military chaplains). Today, pastoral counseling, which is a professional field, requires some training and diplomas. Pastoral counselors should pursue a variety of education and training options, including seminars, workshops, online learning programs, and college-level programs at the undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral levels (ibid.,1296).

Pastoral care and counseling are generally seen as a practice identified with Christianity. Today, we see that pastoral care is being provided by Muslim chaplaincies in many public institutions such as hospitals, courts, prisons and training centers to help people in need of support (Long & Ansari, 2018). Although Islamic pastoral care's institutionalization seems new in these institutions, it cannot be said that it is a new practice in essence. The foundations of the pastoral care and Muslim chaplaincy are based primarily on the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet

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<sup>10</sup> Here, a general definition of pastoral counselling is given. However, the scope and implementation of this practice may differ between religions or sects. For example, Mamalakis (2014: 1258) defines the Orthodox pastoral care as: "*Orthodox pastoral care treats people, not problems or diagnoses, and healing occurs within this encounter of "knowing" and being known in relationships. Pastoral care is focused on bringing healing through reconciling persons with God and his Church. Naturally, expressing feelings, gaining insight, changing destructive Church of Greecenitions, and solving problems are aspects of this process of personal encounter of reconciliation, wholeness, and healing. However, the pastor focuses on facilitating openness, rather than solving problems*".

Muhammad, which advised each individual to care for the other. This is the product of a very close perspective with the Christian approach that defines pastoral care within the framework of the shepherd-flock relationship. But the only thing new is that the pastoral care in the form of Muslim chaplaincy is professionalized based on expertise, differentiating from the imams known as classical religious officials in Islam (ibid:119).

## **2.5. Evaluation**

This chapter discusses the concept of religious regulation and religious institutions in this context. First, it examines the use of the concept in the literature and how it is operationalized. Although state intervention in the religious sphere has always been an important topic in social science literature, the concept of religious regulation has gained popularity since the 1990s with the religious market economy model. Most studies in the literature use the term religious regulation synonymously with religious restriction. In this dissertation, based on the dictionary definition of the verb 'to regulate,' I use the concept of religious regulation in a broad sense to characterize all state adjustments to religion with the aim of restricting, controlling, or favoring majority or minority religions.

Second, this chapter discussed the decisive factors in the emergence of differences in religious regulations between states. Based on the discussions in the literature, three main factors were examined: cultural, political, and ideological ones. First, arguments explaining the religion-state nexus, which varies from country to country through religious and denominational differences, were analyzed. Later, the findings and discussions on how differences in political regimes between countries shape the need for religious regulations were examined. Finally, I discussed how the dominant ideologies that are effective worldwide affect the state's intervention in the religious sphere. Such a classification is a fruitful starting point for analyzing the background of religious regulation and its alteration in Türkiye and Greece.

Thirdly, I examined theoretical approaches to religious regulation. According to secularization theories, religious participation and vitality would decline in the

process of modernization, while the modern state and its associated social institutions would completely differentiate from religion. Furthermore, secularization theories, on the one hand, discuss the decline of religious authorities and, on the other hand, underline that the secular state should ideally be neutral to the issue of religion. On the other hand, the theory of the religious market economy focuses on how religious regulations affect religious participation. Such supply side theories emphasize that religious regulation and vitality are inversely proportional. In addition, the network governance approach, which proposes a more polycentric governance process in line with the demands of neoliberalization, has opened religion-state relations to discussion. Finally, with the increase in religious diversity through migration, approaches to how the state will manage or regulate religious minorities in particular are analyzed under the title of multiculturalism. As previously mentioned, this section examined these theories because of their relationship with the concept of religious regulation. Although not discussed in detail in this section, it should be noted that most of these theories are based on a west-centric perspective.

Fourth, I discuss religious institutions' political and social roles and how they relate to religious regulation. Providing religious services that facilitate the worship of their members, maintaining and transmitting religious doctrines from generation to generation, training clergy, and defending religion and its believers are the main purposes of religious institutions and the clergy (Fox, 2019). However, they have always been actors with the power to influence political and social life, even though they do not exist for this purpose (Wald et al., 2005: 121). This makes them vulnerable to religious regulation.

Finally, by clarifying the debate on religion and the public sphere, I clarify how I operationalize the term public sphere in this dissertation. In this dissertation, I use the term public sphere to refer to the whole of the sphere of worship or non-worship in which religious institutions engage in activities related to worldly affairs, such as social welfare services or spiritual counseling.

## CHAPTER 3

### RELIGIOUS REGULATION IN TÜRKİYE AND DİYANET

#### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to discuss why and how the state has regulated religion since the founding of modern Türkiye to the present day and how the practices of regulation have been redefined in the historical process. It places the established religious institution, the Diyanet, at the center of the discussion. Thus, a special parenthesis will be opened on the role and importance of Diyanet in the state's regulation of religion.

This chapter traces religious regulation in Türkiye through the historical process. However, the temporal focus of this chapter is the post-2000s, when politics in Türkiye became increasingly neoliberalised and authoritarian.

As in many other countries, Türkiye has various practices regarding the regulation of both minority and majority religions. While the regulation of minority religions continues to be a very important research topic, it should be noted that this section focuses on the regulation of Sunni Islam.

#### 3.2. Organization of Majority Religion

This chapter examines regulation of religion in modern Türkiye on three axes. The first is the 'differentiation of secular spheres from religion' with reference to Casanova (1994). In other words, it examines how the social institutions inherited from the Ottoman Empire were secularized during the founding process of modern Türkiye. The second axis suggests that Turkish Islam is regulated along two separate lines, divided into popular Islam and de facto official Islam. The third focuses on the

emergence of Diyanet as a result of early religious policies focusing on secularism and state control of the religion. First, it addresses whether Diyanet is a continuation of the institutional heritage inherited from the Ottoman Empire. Second, the mission of early Republican cadres attributed to the Diyanet, the scope of religious services, and their changes over time are emphasized. Third, it sheds light on two critical organizational features of Diyanet: personnel and budget. The fourth part of this section presents the secularization process in Türkiye in the context of the politics-bureaucracy dichotomy.

### **3.2.1. Differentiation of Social Institutions**

The most important link in the establishment of the religion-state nexus in modern Türkiye is the "differentiation of secular spheres from religion", i.e., the secularization of social institutions, which started with late Ottoman modernization and accelerated with the establishment of the new republic. The process of differentiation or secularization of social institutions from religion is more commonly referred to as "secularization" in Türkiye. In the Turkish literature discussing religion-state relations in Türkiye, laicism (lacity) is used more frequently than secularism, but the distinction between these two concepts is blurred.

According to Kadiođlu (2010:492), secularism and laicism refer to the different sets of institutional arrangements. Secularism is derived from the Latin saeculum, meaning 'of the world' as opposed to 'of the church.' That is to say, it indicates "a distance between religious and worldly matters," whereas laicism emanating from the French word lai, or laique means 'of the people' as opposed to 'of the clergy.' Unlike secularism, it refers to a constructed project that controls religion (ibid). Thus, some scholars such as Kadiođlu claim that the latter is more suitable to define state-religion relations established in the early republican era of Türkiye. That is to say, "Laicism" is used as a solid alternative for the word secularism, as the French school inspired the founding elites. On the other hand, others use the concepts "secularism" and "laicism" in interchangeable manner. For example, according to Gölalp (2018:96), the mere difference between them is their etymological roots. While the concept of "secularism" is used in English documents published by some

international organizations, the use of the word "laicite" in the French version is an indication of this. Whichever concept we prefer, what is important here is that it should draw attention to the "specific" nature of the state's relationship with religion. In other words, it should not be ignored that fiction regarding the religion-state relationship has multiple definitions that vary from country to country (Yılmaz & Barry, 2020). For example, Türkiye, a constitutionally secular country, is a unique case in terms of the mechanisms and methods to implement this principle. Although the understanding of secularism in Türkiye is of French origin, "Turkish secularism" has several unique features.

Abolishment of the caliphate by the law enacted by the Grand National Assembly of Modern Türkiye on March 3, 1924, can be assumed to be the milestone of the secularization of the state in modern Türkiye. With a constitutional amendment made in 1928, the rule that "the religion of the state is Islam" was removed from the 1921 constitution. In 1931, the principle of secularism was first adopted by the Republican People's Party as one of its six guiding principles. The principle of secularism was made a fundamental constitutional principle with the 1937 constitutional amendment. However, the areas where the secularization efforts were most embodied and affected social life were related to social institutions.

In Türkiye, the process of "differentiation of secular spheres from religion", i.e., the secularization of social institutions, is usually initiated with the "Tanzimat period when reformist state elites de facto controlled the government" (Mardin, 2011:44). This was a period of reform in which secular alternatives to dominant social institutions, particularly law and education, were brought to the fore and partially implemented. Okumuş (2005) calls the period between 1839 and 1924, including the Tanzimat period, as quasi-laicism. This refers to a period in which the state continued to derive legitimacy from religion, but initiated attempts to establish secular institutions. The Tanzimat period, which symbolized a move towards secularization, also led to the growth of some contradictions in many areas related to law, education, and social life (İnalçık, 2016: 143; Ortaylı, 2007: 144).

**Education and Law System:** During the Tanzimat period, a dualist legal system emerged because of the tensions between Western and Islamic law. Based on the

ideas of Islamic Hanafi jurisprudence, Ottoman Code of Civil Law (Mecelle), which was in effect from 1868 and 1876, also contained elements of Western law. Similarly, although the "Land Code (1858)" introduced some regulations in accordance with the principles of Islamic law, it introduced significant secular provisions on property and inheritance (Ortaylı, 2007: 141-145). The most significant attempt to end the dualist structure of law was the abolition of the Ministry of Sharia and the Foundations (Şer'iyeye ve Evkaf Vekâleti) in 1924. Thus, the Sheikh-ul-Islam Office (şeyhülislamlık), Sharia courts, and the fatwa procedure became things of the past. Moreover, the Civil Code, Penal Code, and Commercial Code, which were adopted from Swiss, Italian, and German legal systems in 1926 to replace Ottoman Code of Civil Law, are considered indicators of "full radical secularization' (İnalçık, 2016:143).

A similar dualist structure existed in the field of education. This situation emerged in line with the Westernization ideals of 19th-century Ottoman reformers when high schools and military schools, where positive science education was provided, were presented as an alternative to schools based on religious teachings. As Berkes (2012: 532-533) states, in newly established modern Türkiye, the fundamental principle in this field, as in law, was based on the idea of unifying and integrating education. This meant, on one hand, the secularization of education for Muslims and, on the other hand, the nationalization of the education system in the country, including non-Muslims, under the state's authority. The promise of the unification of national education, discussed in the 1923 election campaign, was realized in 1924 with the the Law on the Unification of Education (Tevhidi Tedrisat). Thus, all education was placed under the authority of the Ministry of Education. Madrasas, which had been operating as educational institutions since the Ottoman Empire, were abolished. After the article stating that the state had a religion was removed from the Constitution in 1928, compulsory religion classes were removed from the programs of city schools in 1930 and village schools in 1933 (ibid., 533). The transition to co-education and the use of the Latin alphabet can be seen as a continuation of secularization policies in education.

Zürcher (2017: 188) calls the reform attempts in these two areas "the attack on the traditional strongholds of the institutionalized Islam of the ulema". However, with

the restoration of freedom of opinion from the late 1940s onwards, Islam became a political issue again (Lewis, 1968: 417- 425). One of the leading indicators of this is the efforts to bring religion back into secularized areas. The first fruit of these attempts was the introduction of religion classes back into the curriculum in 1949, albeit partially. With the 1982 constitution adopted after the military coup of 12 September 1980, the subject was made compulsory in schools under the name of "religious culture and ethics". In conclusion, although the founding cadres of the republic took some radical steps to secularize social institutions, it is not possible to say that they achieved lasting success (as will be discussed in the following sections) since religion (Sunni Islam) is an integral part of both political identity and social demands in Türkiye.

**Social Welfare Services:** Churches in the Christian West have always been organized in the social domain. In other words, since early Christianity, they have established a direct relationship with society through social welfare services to rehabilitate it. Although there is no church-like organizational structure in the Islamic world, faith-based foundations are essential for social assistance, education, and health. As an important institution in Islamic history and civilization, the foundation (waqf in Sunni jurisprudence) has been extremely influential in the social, economic, and cultural lives of all Islamic countries from the middle of the 8th century to the end of the 19th century (Yediyıldız, 2012).

Peri (1992) states that foundations functioned as a public policy tool during the Ottoman Period. Especially in some cities where there were no municipal officials, Ottoman sultans, and state officials saw the foundations as a means of providing basic and necessary public services. For example, in the religious field, foundations were responsible for the construction and maintenance of mosques and other places of worship as well as the salaries of religious officials. Foundations in the field of education contributed significantly to the establishment and operation of various cultural and educational institutions. Social welfare and needy charities, such as hospitals, soup kitchens, and various charities and funds, were financed by foundations. In addition, the entities generally established and allocated between the urban and financial sectors of the road inns, caravansaries, markets, trade, and light



industry facilities, which have an essential place in transportation (roads, bridges, etc.) and the economic development of cities, were also established through foundations (ibid., 167-168).

Fuad Köprülü (1938:1) defines foundations as a "religious legal institution" that influences social and economic life. The foundation system was based on the allocation of movables and real estates acquired by a person for charity with her/his free will to meet people's needs. Foundation is the name given to link the relations between the benefactors and the needy to legal status with a contract (Yediyıldız, 2012: 479).

Köprülü's student İnalçık (2013:177) states the following in a speech:

“It is not possible for the state to continuously provide the conditions and institutions necessary for the Islamic society to live safely within the framework of the rules stipulated by the religion. In the past, the Islamic State essentially fulfilled this duty through the foundation. Due to the instability and temporary character of politics, the state left the social services necessary for the Islamic society to the foundation institution as a continuous religious duty and a charity. In general, religious duties, mosque, masjid, madrasah, school construction and maintenance, establishment of lodges and imaret facilities for the protection of poor people and passengers, hospitals, medical services, even the supply of medicine, hundreds of social services such as these could be provided continuously only in this way. In the Islamic state order, these services are not left to the political authority, the institutions called charity are directly under the supervision of Allah, they are attached to an absolute, eternal, impartial institution, which does not deteriorate over time. In short, the foundation has undertaken the duty of the most secure social organization for the survival and welfare of the society”<sup>11</sup>.

During the Ottoman period, some vital public services for society, such as education, health, culture, social assistance, and solidarity, were covered mainly by foundations and not by the state. As stated above, the provision of religious services was also an

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<sup>11</sup> “İslam toplumunun, dinin öngördüğü kurallar dairesinde yaşamını emniyetle sürdürebilmesi için gerekli koşulları ve kurumları devletin devamlı sağlaması mümkün değildir. Tarihte İslam Devleti bu görevi esas itibarıyla vakıf yoluyla yerine getirmiştir. Devlet, siyasetin kararsızlığı, geçici karakteri dolayısıyla İslam toplumu için gerekli sosyal hizmetleri devamlı bir dini görev, bir hayır işi olarak vakıf kurumuna bırakmıştır. Genelde dini görevler cami, mescit, medrese, mektep inşası ve idamesi, fakirlerin yolcuların korunması için zaviye ve imaret tesisleri kurması, halk için hastane, tıbbi hizmetler, hatta ilaç temini, bunun gibi yüzlerce sosyal hizmet devamlı olarak ancak bu yolla sağlanabilmiştir. İslam devlet düzeninde bu hizmetler siyasi otoriteye bırakılmamış, hayrat denilen kurumlar, doğrudan doğruya Allah'ın gözetiminde, zamanla bozulmaz, mutlak, ebedi tarafsız bir müesseseye, vakfa bağlanmıştır. Kısacası, vakıf toplumun bekası ve refahı için en emin sosyal örgüt görevini üstlenmiştir.”

essential aspect of these charities. In other words, unlike today, the religious service itself was a charitable issue. Although religion and the state were intertwined in Islam and the Ottoman Empire, providing religious services and managing religious institutions were not among the duties of the state (Selçuk, 1965:22). The personnel they needed for constructing, maintaining, and repairing mosques, cleaning, lighting, and functioning were being met through “mosque foundations.” The imams received salary from the foundations of the mosques and masjids they served. However, as the foundations lost their influence and income over time, the salaries of imams started to be paid by the central administration (Beydilli, 2000: 181). Imams also had some duties on foundations. For example, charity funds (avarız akçesi) created with the support of donors and philanthropists in the neighborhood were under the responsibility of imams (Kazıcı, 1996:435). The money that was utilized was used to pay the salaries of the staff repairing mosques, the poor people, those who were going to marry in need, the funerals of the poor, the repair of the waterways, the settlement of the new arrivals, and the travel money for the returnees (ibid.,182).

Until the end of the 18th century, in accordance with the legal structure, the foundations of the Ottoman Empire had a pretty decentralized structure. In other words, while trustees managed each foundation under the control of a chairperson as a separate unit in the early periods, the foundation system began to be centralized in recent centuries (Çizakça, 2000:52-55; Yediyıldız, 2012:485). On the other hand, in the period of Beyazid II in 1506, the task of supervising the administrations of "sovereign foundations" (hükümdar vakıfları) in Istanbul and other cities was given to the Sheikh al-Islam of the period. Thus, a new body called the “Sheikh al-Islam ministries” emerged. Later, supervision of the foundations established by the members of ulema and meşihat was given to Sheikh-ul-Islam (Yakut, 2005:36).

Partly during Selim III’s reforms, but mostly after Mahmud II’s abolition of the Janissaries in 1826, rulers took control of important foundations. The first solution of the central government was to establish the Ministry of Evkâf-ı Hümâyun in October 1826. Legislation regulating the management of foundations and their properties was expanded with Tanzimat. The extent to which the state exercises its power to intervene in the control of the foundation is unknown. However, in the 19th century,

an infrastructure aimed at integrating the management of the foundations of the Ottoman Empire and the Young Turks' regime was gradually established (Günay, 2012).

The new assembly, which replaced Ottoman Chamber of Deputies (Meclis-i Mebusan), on 23 April 1920, established the Ministry of Sharia and Foundations (Şer'iyeye ve Evkaf Vekâleti) on 4 May 1920, which undertook the duties of the Sheikh-ul-Islam and the Ministry of Evkaf-ı Hümâyun. While Sheikh-ul-Islam was responsible for religious affairs and had legal, judicial, scientific, administrative, and political duties, its jurisdiction was narrowed by merging with the Ministry of Evkaf-ı Hümâyun. The Ministry of Sharia and Foundations was responsible only for religious affairs and foundations, but it was a very effective ministry-level institution in terms of administrative hierarchy (Gözaydın, 2009:15). With the Law No. 429 enacted on March 3, 1924, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Foundations lost its status as a ministry. The execution of religious affairs was transferred to Diyanet, established as a presidency (riyaset) under the Prime Ministry. Simultaneously, the General Directorate of Foundations responsible for supervising foundations was established. This situation can be seen as the move of separating foundations and religious affairs from each other, and making foundations gain a secular identity.

### **3.2.2. State Regulation of Religion**

Lewis (1968: 404-405) underlines that Turkish Islam has always functioned on two different levels: One is the official, legal, and dogmatic religion of the state, schools, and hierarchy. The other is the popular, mystical, and intuitive faith of the masses, which finds its main expression in great dervish orders. Policies regarding these two levels highlight how the state has regulated religion since the early Republican period.

In the dictionary, the adjective "popular" means including motifs and elements that live among the people, making use of them, suitable for the taste of the people, and favored by the people. The regulation of popular Islam in Türkiye refers to the exclusion of "heterodox beliefs" (Mardin, 2011: 69) and the restriction of religious

practices that are outside the acceptable range. In contrast to popular Islam, which is used to describe the naturally emerging and developing forms of Islam that resonate with a particular part of the population, there is official (Sunni) Islam, the framework of which is drawn and shaped by the state. This section takes a close look at these two levels that shape the regulation of religion in Türkiye.

### **Popular Islam and Tarikats**

The first social structure that comes to mind when popular Islam is mentioned is tarikats (sect), which have their roots in medieval Islam. In the Ottoman period, in contrast to the distant, traditionalist, and abstract doctrinal approach of ulema, the representative of orthodox Islam, the sects stood at a close distance to their followers through their collective forms of worship, rituals, and the relationships they established on a more personal level. In other words, while the ulema failed to satisfy society's expectations regarding religion, they responded to social needs by providing "religious guidance" (Lewis, 1968: 405-406).

Berkes states that until the 17th century, most of the sects living under the roof of the Ottoman political organization avoided open antinomianism. They preferred to remain silent and not take sides, especially in political issues and gradually concentrated on artistic subjects such as rituals, hymns, and poetry (Berkes, 1984: 65). There was an intertwining between the state, ulema, and sects. In other words, there was an interest in sects from different social groups, such as tradesmen and merchants, as well as from the ulema and even bureaucrats at higher levels of the state. Based on Lewis's findings, it can be said that sects, which were essentially a popular movement, became politicized in the 18th century. The differences in opinion and belief among the sects were also decisive in their relations with the ruling elites and ulema. Lewis (1968: 406) states that the Sunni sects of Naqshbandism, Qadirism, and Halvetis were more compatible with established Islam, while Shiite sects such as Bektashi and Mevlevism continued their existence more independently without being squeezed into narrow margins. During the reign of Abdulhamid II, several dervishes and sheikhs, taking advantage of the sultan's pious character, were close to the sultanate and gained positions of honor. Many of the

orders (such as the Bektashis and Malmis), who objected to authority both religiously and politically, seemed to have co-operated with the Young Turks who opposed the Sultan. According to Lewis, Young Turks' attempts to use sects as a means of political propaganda led to a habit of "confusing popular religion with party politics" that permeated the post-republican period (ibid., 408-409).

Some orders supported nationalists during the War of Independence. In fact, in the First National Assembly, there were ten sheikhs from the Naqshbandi, Bektashi, and Mevlevi orders and members from the *ilmiye* (scholar) class (Tunaya, 1958: 231). As Lewis (1968: 409) points out, the target of the secularization reforms of 1924 was not sects but *ulema*. However, the reactions against the reforms and especially against secularism did not come from the *ulema* due to their intellectual background, administrative discipline, and loyalty to the state, but from the sects, which were very difficult to bring under state control due to their popular support, deep-rooted traditions, and organizational forms. While the institutional structure of official Islam was being established on the one hand, a rebellion against the republic and its reforms began in February 1925 under the leadership of Sheikh Sait of the Naqshbandi sect. While martial law was declared in the eastern provinces to suppress the rebellion, the single-party government was given broad powers with the law on the maintenance of order (*Takrir-i Sükun*), which remained in force until 1929. Furthermore, Dervish lodges, *zawiyas*, and mausoleums were closed by a law enacted on November 30, 1925, based on the argument that "The Republic of Türkiye can no longer be the homeland of sheikhs, dervishes, and disciples." Additionally, some religious titles such as shrines, sheikh, dervish, disciple, *dedelik*, *seyitlik*, *celebilik* etc. have been removed. These practices are important steps for the ruling elite to individualize collective belief. However, this transition was not smooth. Another counter-attack against the new order was the "Menemen incident" (1929). This rebellion was led by low-level members of the Naqshbandi sect, who took advantage of the general discontent among the people in the regime (Azak, 2019: 51-54).

These arrangements in the early Republican period could not prevent sects and religious communities from continuing their *de facto* existence. However, since

1947, the state's involvement in religious education for various purposes has struck a blow to the most important field of activity in religious communities and sects, which endeavored to fill this field. In the 1970s, parallel to the rapid increase in the number of official Quran schools, Imam Hatip high schools<sup>12</sup>, and faculties of theology, serious conflicts and divisions emerged between the representatives of religious communities and official religious staff in the sharing of authority in the eyes of the public (Sarıkaya, 1998: 98). In other words, the state tried to keep this field under control by establishing its own religious education institutions.

Report on Sects (Tarikatlar Raporu), allegedly prepared by the Diyanet in 2016, points to the 1950s as a turning point in terms of the restriction of religion in modern Türkiye. Although this trajectory was interrupted by military coups, sects, and other religious organizations, which had continued their activities underground until then, it became relatively visible. In other words, even though their activities did not gain legal status, they have been ignored since then. In the 1980 post-coup period, the challenge to Kemalist regulation of religion continued to increase. The report explains the strengthening of religious structures during this period through so-called democratization and economic growth (Yıldırım, 2019: 21). According to the report, these structures have maintained their non-transparent nature while at the same time gaining credibility in the Turkish political and social environment, which was becoming more transparent at that time (ibid., 25). All political parties, especially conservative ones, cooperated with religious structures to utilize their voting potential. After 1985, religious communities have gone beyond religious and spiritual education. As Sarıkaya (1998: 98-101) states, congregations have established preparatory classrooms (dershane), private schools, broadcasting press organizations, private TV and radio stations, and hospitals in metropolises and small Anatolian cities. From the 1990s onwards, especially after the 2000s, they became even more powerful by establishing companies and holdings (Yıldırım, 2019: 26).

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<sup>12</sup> Article 4 of the Law on Tevhid-i Tedrisat, which regulated religious personnel's education and training, stipulated that separate schools would be opened to train religious officials, such as imams and orators, in return for the closure of madrasas (Çakır et al., 2004). In this context, Imam Hatip schools were opened in 29 centers in 1924 (ibid., 57). These schools were closed after six years because of a lack of students. In the 1950 elections, Democrat Party (Demokrat Parti, DP) came to power and opened the Imam Hatip Schools, which it had promised before the elections, in the first year of its rule (ibid., 59). By 1970, 72 Imam Hatip schools were in service (ibid., 60.)

### **(De facto) Official Religion**

The dichotomy of "religious society vs. secular state" often comes up when describing religion-state relations in Türkiye. This dichotomy usually stems from the fact that Kemalist elites are perceived as identical to the state, as they are alleged to undervalue the institutions associated with the Ottoman-Islamic past and the religious beliefs and rituals that are indispensable to Anatolian Muslim identity (Brockett, 1998: 48). On the other hand, there are also skeptical approaches to conceptualizing the "secular state." For example, according to Lord (2018), due to a path dependency from the Ottoman Empire to the present, "Muslim identity" has been an integral part of understanding the state in modern Türkiye from the past to the present. The early Republican period was no exception. The common denominator among the new and diverse power holders in the nascent state (the Kemalist cadre was only one of the factions involved in this coalition, even though they were the leaders in the state-building process) was their Muslim identity. This identity has always been glorified (ibid). In other words, the conception of religious regulation in this period did not have an "anti-Islamic" character, but it reflected an official understanding of religion that involved the modernization and nationalization of Islam (Lewis, 1968: 412), while aiming to reduce the role of religion, as in Western nation-states. According to Retoulas (2011), this tendency represents the Kemalist project's attempt to turn Islam into a "national religion."

Modern Türkiye's need for secularism was justified by the discourse that popular Islam was archaic, backward, anti-modern, and intended to seize state power. At the same time, an "enlightened" understanding of religion based on the Sunni interpretation of Islam (orthodox, official, or pure Islam) became one of the key pillars of the state-building process (Gürbey, 2012: 40). That is to say, first the Young Turks and then the Kemalists, far from suppressing religion or excluding it from the public sphere, supported pure Islam, which was rational, progressive (Zürcher, 2009: 46) in line with science and supported their understanding of the national interest (Zürcher, 2010: 280). Official Islam was thus integrated into the rationalisation, homogenisation and disciplining projects of the national state (Gürbey, 2012).

### **3.2.3. Regulation of Diyanet**

Islam does not have a church-like structure that universally corresponds to an organized structure in Christianity. However, when it comes to the organization of the majority religion in Türkiye, the first institution that comes to mind is the Diyanet. As a public administration unit organized within the state apparatus, Diyanet is both a producer and implementer of official Islam in Türkiye. On the one hand, it draws the general framework of religious practices that shape official (Sunni) Islam. On the other hand, it also provides religious services as a public institution. This chapter examines the organization, duties, personnel structure, and budget of the Diyanet on the road from state-building to authoritarianism.

#### **Historical Roots and Its Establishment**

The roots of the religious bureaucracy in Türkiye, namely, the Diyanet, are subject to much debate. Many studies on the Diyanet begin with the question of whether the Diyanet is a continuation of the Ottoman religious institution of Sheikh-ul-Islam. It is usually accepted that the Diyanet, a follow-up of the Sheikh-ul-Islam office in the post-Tanzimat period, was not an invention of the founders of the Turkish Republic. It was an attempt to blend the legacy acquired from the Ottoman State with the expectations of the new Republic's founding cadres (Erdem, 2008: 212) . On the other hand, this discussion can be taken back even further. In other words, another issue that is rarely discussed concerns the origins of the idea of Sheikh al-Islam. Some argue that the office of Sheikh-ul-Islam, organized as a state-subordinated structure, was inspired by the Orthodox Greek Patriarch, the established religious organization of Byzantium.

According to Veinstein (1991:230-231), there have been some important exchanges in terms of organizational structure between Sheikh al-Islam and the Orthodox Greek Patriarch, sharing the same geography. For example, before the 16th century, mufti was not participating in the state administration and council (divan). In other words, muftis who maintained their independence were not part of the religious hierarchy. However, with reference to the British historian R.C. Repp's report, Sheikh-ul-Islam Ebusuud Efendi (1545-1574), who was very close to Suleiman the Magnificent, gave



Istanbul's mufti a head place in the hierarchy of the ulema and brought him to an equal rank with the vizier in the protocol. With Veinstein's statement,

“Therefore, the Sheikh-ul-Islam who had authority over all the clergy had been a kind of Muslim symmetry of the Orthodox Greek Patriarch. The establishment of a kind of **Muslim church** [emphasis added] which is highly organized and prestigious, attached to the state and paid first, is a unique event in the Islamic tradition. Its emergence in the time of Suleiman the Magnificent may be due to its relation to the Byzantine example”(Veinstein, 1991).<sup>13</sup>

McNeill (2000:63) also states that, similar to Veinstein, Suleiman the Magnificent, while organizing the religious institutions of the Empire, radically departed from the Sunni tradition and followed a line that was suspiciously similar to the Byzantine model of church organization. This approach is only one of the interpretations of the origins of Ottoman religious organization. However, the subordination of religious organizations to the state in both Byzantium and the Ottoman Empire, that is, the coexistence of religion and state, is remarkably similar.

As mentioned above, it is usually assumed that Sheikh-ul-Islam of the Ottoman Empire and the Ministry of Sharia and Foundations, the transition institutions of the early republican era, were successors of the Diyanet. Although the existence of a continuous relationship among them is widely accepted, its level and extent remain controversial. At the organizational level, the office of Sheikh al-Islam was the highest and most prestigious office and organ of the state after the sultanate (caliphate) and the grand vizierate. On the other hand, the status, duties, and power of the Ministry of Sharia and the Foundations operating in Ankara between 1920-1924 were narrowed than those of Sheikh al-Islam. However, unlike Diyanet, it was an influential institution organized at the ministerial level (Kara, 2008:62).

There were also some differences in the levels of authority among these institutions. For example, the regulation of the relations between religion and politics in Ottoman society and the administration of religious affairs were under the authority of Sheikh-

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<sup>13</sup> The original of the quoted work is in French. The quote was taken from the Turkish edition of the book and translated into English by me. Its Turkish is as follows: “Böylece şeyhülislam, Ortodoks Rum Patriği'nin karşısında, din adamlarının bütünüünün üzerinde otoritesi olan, bir tür Müslüman simetrisi oluyordu onun. Alabildiğine örgütlü ve mertebeli, devlete bağlı ve aylığı önce ödenen bir tür Müslüman kilisesinin kuruluşu, İslam geleneğinde benzeri olmayan bir olaydır. Onun Süleyman'ın zamanında ortaya çıkışı, Bizans örneği ile ilişki sağlamak bakımındandır belki.”

ul-Islam, which was granted a certain degree of autonomy. Despite some limitations in its jurisdiction, this situation was largely preserved during the Republican period. In fact, the head of the religious administration in the Ottoman system was not Sheikh-ul-Islam but the sultan. Sheikh-ul-Islam was managing religious affairs in the name of the sultan (Bardakoglu, 2008:175; Gormez, 2008:242).

At the functional level, Sheikh-ul-Islam emerged as a modest fatwa authority in the 15th century. However, at the beginning of the 16th century, particularly during the rule of Bayezid II. and Yavuz Sultan Selim, Sheikh-ul-Islam's authority and responsibilities increased significantly (İpşirli, 2010). Sheikh-ul-Islam, representing the ilmiye class, was responsible for the conduct of justice services, education, and religious affairs. In addition, it would not be wrong to say that Sheikh-ul-Islam was a policymaker through the fatwas. On the other hand, the Ministry of Sharia and Foundation was equipped with first-degree authority and duties in religious services, religious life, religious publications, madrasahs, dervish lodges, and foundations.

However, Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Reisliği)<sup>14</sup> was established in 1924. In other words, the early Republican elites did not give Diyanet ministry status. Furthermore. In the first article of Law No. 429 establishing the Diyanet, it is emphasized that the Diyanet does not have any legislative authority and that this authority belongs only to the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye and the government. These features differentiate Diyanet from its successors.

Another dimension of this debate is the existence of an institution such as the Diyanet in a country that claims to be constitutionally secular. There are many arguments that the organization of the Diyanet as a part of public administration is contrary to the principle of secularism. There is much strong evidence for this when considering the activities and organizational structure of Diyanet today. However, although the Directorate of Religious Affairs was established before the constitutional "secular" characterization of the Republic of Türkiye, it is clear that the founding elites who constructed the administrative mechanism had a long-term projection. Law No. 429, dated March 3, 1924, abolished the Ministry of Religious

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<sup>14</sup> The institution was established in 1924 as the "Diyanet İşleri Reisliği" but was renamed as the "Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı" in 1950. Hereinafter, I will use only "Diyanet" when referring to the institution.

Affairs and Foundations, as well as the Ministry of General Staff (Erkan-ı Harbiye-i Umumiye Vekaleti), which had the status of a ministry and replaced it with Presidency of General Staff. In other words, the same law removed religion and the military from the political sphere. In the justification of the law, it was emphasized that the interference of religion and the military in political affairs had many drawbacks, and the importance of following the path of modern nation-states was reminded (Karaman, 2008: 284).

In other words, the founding elites did not grant ministerial status to Diyanet in order not to give it a policy-making position. According to Öztürk (2018: 3), the fact that the Diyanet was established from the very beginning as an administrative unit, not a political one, and that religious affairs were entrusted to an organization with the status of technical administration was in line with the principle of secularism. As will be discussed in the following sections, the subsequent resort to religious populism by the governments, which were the decision-makers on religious policies, inevitably led to the transformation of the Diyanet into an ideological apparatus.

### **Scope of Religious Services**

Law No. 429 provided a very narrow definition of Diyanet's duties. Accordingly, it was responsible for carrying out the religious affairs of Islam and administering mosques and other Islamic temples (Gözaydın, 2009:108). In 1931, another regulation provided the administration of mosques and other places of worship to the General Directorate of Foundations. Therefore, the organization's job description was further narrowed (ibid.,109). The first regulation regarding the organizational structure of the Diyanet was Law No. 2800, enacted in 1935. However, this law also avoided explaining the duties and responsibilities of the Diyanet. Görmez (2008:245) claims that although the Turkish legal system had given this institution a minimal area, the organization operated ahead of these regulations. With Law No. 5634, which came into force on April 29, 1950, the administration of mosques and masjids and the staff of mosque officials were re-assigned to the Directorate of Religious Affairs<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> With the same law, the name of the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Reisliği) was changed to “the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı)”.

Diyanet gained a constitutional ground with the 1961 constitution. In Article 154 of the 1961 Constitution, it was decreed that *"the Presidency of Religious Affairs, which is part of the general administration, shall fulfill the duties specified in the special law"*. In Law No. 633 enacted in 1965, the duties, responsibilities, and organizational structure of the Diyanet were specified in detail. The first article of the law indicates that the Diyanet has three main areas of activity which are

- implementation of the works related to the beliefs, worship and moral principles of the Islam
- illumination of the society about religion
- management of places of worship

Aydın (2019) underlines that the Diyanet had a minimal range of action until the 1960s because the legislation up to that date gave the organization a very narrow scope of duty and maintained its administrative structure. However, after Law No. 633, the effect of the organization on social life became more noticeable, and its regulatory role increased.

First, the previous laws and regulations limited Diyanet's responsibility to the domain of "beliefs and prayers". However, this arrangement has described the Diyanet as an organization that carries out works related to the moral principles of Islam in Türkiye (see Gözaydın, 2008:110-113; Kara, 2008: 65-66). In other words, using the word "morality" has given secular Türkiye's institution the function of governing religious morality. Given that Islam has a moral dimension, some academics and politicians assert that the inclusion of the moral dimension was an inevitable byproduct of the religious services that Diyanet was responsible for. However, others disagree, arguing that the Constitution did not assign the Diyanet to such a responsibility (Adanali, 2008:232). Bahri Savcı, on the other hand, states that with this new regulation, the Diyanet goes beyond being an organization that meets the metaphysical needs of society. Thus, the Diyanet had the authority to give a religious direction to the society (Savcı, 1967: 101).

Secondly, the law accepted "illumination of the society about religion" among the duties of the Diyanet. The task of enlightening the society on religious matters has

been carried out since the Regulation No. 7647 on the Duties of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, issued in 1937 in accordance with the Law No. 2800 on the Organisation and Duties of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, the first special law of Diyanet. It initially consisted of answering questions posed to the Diyanet about worship and printing publications on faith-related matters (Gözaydın, 2009: 113). Undoubtedly, this task was vital in producing and spreading official Islam that was compatible with the founding ideology of the republic. The committee's name carrying out this task was changed to "Consultation and Religious Works Investigation Board (Müşâvere ve Dinî Eserler İnceleme Kurulu)" in 1950. Afterward, with Law No. 633, which came into force on July 2, 1965, it was named "High Council of Religious Affairs (Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulu)." According to this arrangement, it has been decided that the highest decision-making body, the High Council of Religious Affairs, would share this task with the mufti offices and the Department of the Enhancement of Religious Services and Staff (Din Hizmetleri ve Görevlilerini Olgunlaştırma Dairesi). The High Council of Religious Affairs, which is a decision-making and advisory body, is tasked with responding to religious questions and preparing publications to illuminate society in this field. Two directorates subject to the Department of the Enhancement of Religious Services and Staff, working as an executive body, were tasked with "enlightening the public about religion inside and outside places of worship" (ibid:114-115). In the following years, the Branch of Guidance Services (İrşat Hizmetleri Şubesi) and Religious Publications Departments (Dini Yayınlar Dairesi) under the Religious Services Department (Din Hizmetleri Dairesi) carried out these services (ibid:115-116). As Yar (2001:43) stated and Gözaydın (2009:119) underlined, the task of enlightening society on religion is two-dimensional. One dimension is about understanding religion and the other is about transferring this reinterpreted religious understanding to society. In other words, while Diyanet produces opinions (içtihat) on religion, it also conveys these opinions to society through publications, sermons, or other channels.

Third, according to Law No. 633, managing places of worship is among Diyanet's primary duties. Although a relatively flexible procedure was followed at first, the role of the Diyanet in the construction and operation of mosques was strengthened

because of the measures taken on the grounds of the threat of reactionism (irtica) since February 28, 1997. In other words, as a measure against religious communities and sects that wanted to build their own mosques, the Diyanet was designated the sole decision-making authority in decisions regarding the construction of mosques. According to Kara (2008:68) , this was an attempt to expand and increase the political intervention of the ruling bloc in religion. However, when considered in the context of Turkish secularism, which views elements of popular religion as illegal, the desire to centralize mosque management and thus keep mosques under state control does not seem contradictory. It should be noted, however, that it was only after the failed coup attempt on July 15, 2016, that Diyanet could fully fulfill this task<sup>16</sup>.

### **Religious Personnel and Diyanet's Budget**

The "differentiation of social institutions" in the early republican period resulted in the division of the educational and judicial duties undertaken by the madrasa-based ulema class in the Ottoman Empire among secular actors. Having lost authority and power, some Ottoman ulemas chose to compromise with the nation-state. They were institutionalized within the Diyanet and ensured the continuity of the mission of Sunni Islam as the carrier, protector, and reproducer of Sunni-Hanafi orthodoxy (Lord, 2018). In addition to the Diyanet bureaucrats who are responsible for the reproduction of the ideology at the macro level, the legal status, educational opportunities, and the number of employment of religious officials at the micro level, who are in charge of spreading this ideology at the social level, are also part of the regulation of religious affairs. In other words, the personnel dimension of religious services is one of the parameters that reveal the changes in the religion-state nexus in Türkiye.

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<sup>16</sup> In the interview I conducted, a senior Diyanet official stated that the step towards the centralization of the mosque administration was largely completed today. The process proceeds as follows: Firstly, a mosque building association is founded at the request of the local people. Accordingly, the construction costs of mosques were met by the money collected through these associations and the support of municipalities (not always). The consultation process among the association, municipality, and Diyanet determines the architecture and capacity of the mosque. After the mosque is completed, its legal transfer from the association to the Diyanet is required. After the transfer, the appointment of mosque officials takes place. The interviewee stated that there were more cases in which the transfer process had not occurred in the past. However, nowadays, this is realized at a rate of almost 99%. According to him, the transfer of mosques to the Diyanet prevented the uncontrolled expansion of religious structures that could be dangerous to society.

It is understood that religious officials in the Ottoman Empire had a much broader job description than in the early Republican period. We have already discussed the broad role of ulama in state administration. Even the role of mosque imams in the neighborhoods was not limited to worship, they also played a role in the administration of the neighborhood. As Beydilli emphasized, the particular position of the neighborhood in the Ottoman city organization was very important. Although they did not receive their salary from the state until the Tanzimat era, the imams were like its leading representatives in the neighborhood. However, the imam's work and actions were controlled by the kadis, who made judgments in accordance with Islamic law and were an important part of the administrative hierarchy. At the same time, imams were their assistants in many works that the kadis had to fulfill (Beydilli, 2000:181).

In addition, as Beydilli highlighted, issues such as the order of the neighborhood, the determination of the places where alcohol was consumed, and the determination of the prostitutes and their expulsion from the neighborhood were controlled by imam. In addition, the imams observed whether the inhabitants of the neighborhood continued to live in the necessary Islamic manners and fulfill their religious duties. What is more, imams were expected to implement the decrees (ferman) sent in this way, due to the sensitivity shown by the government, especially regarding the negligence of daily prayers. Imams should have complete information about the residents of their neighborhoods. Thus, it was among their duties to collect demographic information about their neighborhoods and record changes in this regard. The administrative duties of Imams continued until the Tanzimat period. However, with the establishment of the mukhtar organization during the Mahmud II period, the imams started to lose their administrative identity (Beydilli, 2000:182). As stated by Beydilli (2001:76) , the gradual deprivation of imams' administrative and educational duties in the last period of the Ottoman Empire can be read as a result of the establishment of a modern state mechanism.

As a result of the expansion of secular areas with the modern republic, job descriptions of religious officials were limited to religious services. However, the fact that Diyanet personnel working in mosques were one of the public officials who

were most intertwined with society and guided it did not change. To convey the official understanding of religion to society correctly and to fill the gap left by the representatives of popular religion in accordance with the interests of the newly established state, the Republic of Türkiye undertook (or at least initially intended to undertake) the task of training the clergy. Accordingly, shortly after the announcement of the Law on the Unification of Education (Tevhidi Tedrisat) in 1924, all madrasas were closed down, and in line with Article 4 of the same law, 4-year imam hatip schools were opened in 29 centers under the Ministry of National Education. In the curricula of these schools, in addition to religious education, science disciplines such as physics and chemistry were given equal importance (Ayhan, 2000: 191). At a higher level, Suleymaniye Madrasah was reorganized as the Faculty of Theology at Istanbul University. As Lewis (1968: 414-415) underlines, this new faculty of theology was intended to serve as a new, modern, and scientific center for religious education in a secular, Westernized republic. In other words, the task of creating the profile of the "enlightened religious personnel (aydın din adamı)," which is frequently mentioned in the literature but whose meaning is ambiguous, was originally assigned to this faculty. It was closed in 1933 due to both the conflict between the teachers coming from the madrasa education and some of the "modernization" demands made by the faculty's board of directors and the decreasing number of students. Imam Hatip schools were closed in 1930 on the grounds of a "lack of students". According to Ayhan, the main reason behind this was the authorities' lack of interest in training religious personnel and the fact that the graduates of the school had no expectations for the future in terms of continuing their education and becoming professional staff (Ayhan, 2000: 191).

From the 1940s onwards, the problem of training religious officials began to be raised in the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye, especially in the context of personnel shortages and disruption of religious services. As quoted by Ayhan (ibid., 192), Ahmet Hamdi Akseki, the head of Religious Affairs at the time, drew attention in a report on the disruptions in the provision of religious services caused by the lack of imams and orators to lead prayers and read sermons in mosques. Moreover, he stated that this shortage led to an increase in superstitious beliefs and false tricks. To eliminate the socio-cultural threats within and outside the country, Akseki suggested



training "genuine religious men." According to Mardin (2011: 72), the main reason for the emphasis on "genuine" was that secular personnel were responsible for religious education within the Ministry of National Education.

Such criticism had to find a response in the single-party government, and imam hatip courses were opened in 1949. However, the DP government between 1950 and 1960, which had a conservative line and frequently resorted to populism, ushered in a new era of religious policies. In other words, important regulations regarding the education and status of religious officials occurred during and after this period. In the period 1954-1955, when Imam hatip schools, which were opened in 1951 at the secondary school level, gave their first graduates, Imam hatip high schools were also opened, and in 1959, "high Islamic institutes" at the higher education level were opened. From this date onwards, the content of religious education has been steadily improved, making it more attractive, and thus the religious profession in Türkiye has been dramatically professionalized.

Undoubtedly, an important dimension of the religion-state nexus in Türkiye is the employment of religious officials. The form of employment—that is, the fact that religious officials have the status of public personnel—is the first issue to be addressed. This form of employment has continued since Mahmud II. Religious officials, who had received their salaries from the foundations (vakıf) to which they were affiliated until that day, were included in the state payroll because of the centralization of the waqf system by the state. Hence, the foundations were laid for a large group of civil servants to be transferred to the new republic (Beydilli, 2001:75). However, for a long period, there was no clarity regarding the staffing of the Diyanet. Law No. 429 of 1924 gave the Diyanet authority over the management of mosques, masjids, lodges, and dervish lodges, as well as the appointment, transfer, and dismissal of imams, preachers, muezzins, and other mosque officials, and the supervision of muftis. However, the law did not include the organizational structure and staffing of the Diyanet, and until 1927, budget laws did not include details on the staffing of mosque officials. According to the 1927 budget law, the total number of imam, hatip, muezzin, and kayyım positions was 5668. This number decreased to 4264 by 1930 (Yücel, 2000:186).

Especially after 1960, the civil servant status of religious officials was criticized by different parties. For example, the Central Government Organization Research Project (MEHTAP), which examined Turkish public administration in detail within the context of the central government, also addressed the situation of Diyanet personnel. According to the report, it is suitable that Diyanet Personnel employed in central organizations and offices of mufti (müftülük) receive their salaries from the general budget. However, the report says this is unacceptable for imams, preachers (hatip), and other mosque personnel since local people with religious knowledge can carry out worship and other mosque-based services. Furthermore, religious services cannot be considered sources of income. The report also draws attention to the fact that their involvement in general administration positions/cadres, assuming them to be civil servants, would impose a massive burden on the state. The report also stated that it is against secularism to consider religious officials as civil servants (Gözaydın, 2009:211; Merkezî Hükümet Teşkilâtı Araştırma Projesi MEHTAP, 1963: 349-351). However, this report has not yet been implemented.

In Law No. 657, the religious services class (din hizmetleri sınıfı) was created in 1970. This set off the reaction of some groups on account of the fact that the principle of laicism was damaged. The Union Party (Birlik Partisi) requested the cancellation of the decision, claiming that this decision was contrary to some articles of the Constitution. However, the Constitutional Court stated that religious services are a collective need for the Muslim-majority society, and therefore, Diyanet personnel, who are part of the general administration, should be considered public servants(Gözaydın, 2009:177-180).

The relationship between religious services and religious officials with the state continues to be criticized today on the grounds that it contradicts the principle of secularism. Another theme that caused Diyanet to be severely criticized is its budget and staff numbers, which competed with many ministries. It is understood from the memories of Tayyar Altıkulaç, one of the former Presidents of Religious Affairs, that there was a very different picture in the 1970s than today<sup>17</sup>:

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<sup>17</sup> Burada Diyanet'in hizmetlerinin hangi imkansızlıklar içinde yürütüldüğünü ve devlet bürokrasisi içinde bu anayasal kuruluşun ne kadar ihmal edildiğini anlatması bakımından şu anımı da

Here, I should also describe my memory to explain the impossibilities of Diyanet's services and how this constitutional institution was neglected within the state bureaucracy. A comparison of Diyanet's budget with those of other public institutions revealed a striking and surprising picture. This situation made me think and disturbed me a lot (...) In the face of this neglected state of the Presidency in those days, it occurred to me to compare some expense items of the Diyanet's budget with those of some other ministries. In the budgets of 5 or 6 ministries such as the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, how many liras are allocated per personnel for expenses such as fuel, telephone and stationery, and how much are these amounts in the Diyanet budget? I made a chart for it. I have seen that the numbers we come across are terrifyingly striking. In other words, some of these expense items have a difference of 20, 30, and 50 times. If in any item, 50 Lira per personnel falls in the budget of the Ministry of National Education, this figure is not even 2-3 TL in the Diyanet's budget (Altıkulaç, 2011:260-261).”

It is possible to say that Diyanet, whose budget is constituted by taxes, exhibits an opposite trend in terms of neoliberal austerity measures, notably in recent years. If we count the year 1980 as a milestone to the transition to neoliberalism, three periods can be observed: While there had been a decrease in Diyanet’s share of the overall state budget throughout the 1980s, it increased in the first half of the 1990s. Mutluer (2018:4) underlines that the scope of Diyanet's activities narrowed down after February 28, 1997, military intervention, known as the postmodern coup, and its budget was significantly reduced in parallel.

### **3.3. Ties with Majority Religion**

The previous section focused on the restrictions of religion in modern Türkiye. This section discusses the sources of religious favoritism, another component of religious regulation in Türkiye.

#### **3.3.1. Turkish-Islamic Synthesis**

According to Mardin (2011: 82), the convergence between Islam and nationalism in Türkiye since 1910 has been an uninterrupted trend and social process. The ulema,

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anlatmalıyım. Şöyle ki: Diyanet’in bütçesini diğer kamu kuruluşlarının bütçeleriyle karşılaştırarak incelediğimiz zaman ortaya çıkan sonuç gerçekten çarpıcı ve şaşırtıcı bir tabloyu ortaya koyuyordu. Bu durum beni çok düşündürmüştü ve rahatsız etmiştir. (...) Başkanlığın o günlerde devlet içindeki bu ihmal edilmiş hali karşısında Diyanet bütçesi ile diğer bazı bakanlıkların bütçelerinin bazı kalemlerini karşılaştırmak aklıma geldi. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, Adalet Bakanlığı, Tarım ve Köy İşleri Bakanlığı gibi 5-6 bakanlığın bütçelerinde mesela yakıt, telefon, kırtasiye gibi giderlerde personel başına kaç lira ödenek konulmuştur ve bu rakamlar Diyanet bütçesinde ne kadardır.? Buna dair bir cetvel hazırlattım. Gördüm ki karşımıza çıkan rakamlar dehşet verici ölçüde çarpıcı. Yani bu kalemlerden bazılarında 20, 30, 50 kat fark var. Yani herhangi bir kalemden personel başına mesela Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı bütçesine 50 Lira düşüyorsa, bu rakam Diyanet bütçesinde 2-3 lira bile değil.” (Altıkulaç, 2011:260-261).”

which had lost its prestigious position in the Ottoman State, gained a new function; it undertook the task of nationalizing religion (i.e. invention of Turkish Islam) based on harmonizing religion with the Kemalist regime (Bora, 2017. 419-421). The implementation of the "Turkish ezan" during the single party period is one of the most concrete outputs of the Kemalist state's ideal of creating pure Turkish Islam (Azak, 2012: 61). The idea of the Turkish ezan is a legacy of the pre-republican Turkist ideology formulated mainly by Ziya Gökalp in the early 1900s (ibid.). Although many nationalist intellectuals supported the project of localizing Islam as a step towards creating a distinct Turkish culture by eliminating the influence of Arabic culture and language, it failed to adapt to the social fabric and was discontinued during the Democrat Party rule.

The relationship between official Islam and nationalism has never been severed but has undergone significant changes over time. The relatively liberal environment provided by the 1961 Constitution created an environment in Türkiye in the 1960s-1970s where different political ideologies could coexist in the political scene and the public sphere. Leftist groups from different factions, which were quite active during this period, had a distant attitude toward religion. On the other hand, throughout the 1960s, the intellectual part of right-wing groups tried to develop new arguments to oppose the discourses defended by the left. After a long maturation period, ideas found in Turkish historiography, history textbooks, and the writings of Turkish nationalist and Islamist intellectuals were compiled and brought together. These views systematized by the "Hearth of the Enlightened (Aydınlar Ocağı)," founded in 1970, were called the Turkish-Islamic synthesis. However, the synthesis is based on the argument that Turkishness and Islam are the two main components of the national culture and that Islam is the most suitable religion for Turkish culture and identity. The most concrete indicator of this argument is that other Turkish groups who did not choose Islam have lost their national culture and identity. Turkish Islamic Synthesis and Hearth of the Enlightened created an ideological-political framework that aims to unite the two extreme wings of the Turkish right- Islamism and Turkish nationalism - around a joint program to prevent and end the rise of leftist movements (Şen, 2010:61). Thus, the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis has begun to affect state policies since the 1970s (Grigoriadis, 2012:73). This effect was particularly

evident in the governments of the Nationalist Front, which was in power between 1975-1978. It consisted of a coalition of right-wing conservative parties. As Grigoriadis stated, the “Heart of the Enlightened”, the architect of the synthesis, did not directly identify with any party and preferred to stay in an “above party politics” position (ibid, 2012:73). From the mid-1970s onwards, the Kemalist mode of religious regulation faced strong resistance and began to be stretched in many respects. Şen (2010:66) calls this process “the permanent expansion of the religious sphere.” This expansion took place in the sphere of official religion and can be observed through changes in the religious apparatuses of the state, such as the Diyanet, Imam-hatip schools, and faculties of theology. Although these institutions had their roots in the early Republican period, their consolidation dates back to the Democratic Party era. However, the first expansion occurred in the mid-1970s when the politically Islamist National Salvation Party became a coalition partner in the Nationalist Front governments. According to statistics provided by Şen, the number of imam hatip students increased by approximately two hundred and six percent from 1971 to 1979. Between 1970 and 1981, the number of Diyanet personnel increased by 78 percent. 1980 coup conceived of Sunni Islam as an important tool for promoting social and political stability and legitimizing its authoritarian policies (ibid). The leader of the coup, Kenan Evren, frequently emphasized religious rhetoric to gain popular support, while simultaneously legitimizing the ideas advocated by Turkish Islamists (ibid., 67). Although the nationalist conservative political figures who carried the synthesis to the active political arena paid some price in the post-coup period, the Heart of Enlightened, the architect of the synthesis, gave open support to the September 12 Military Coup. It also became an influential actor in the post-coup restoration process. Undoubtedly, the most significant role the Heart of Enlightened played in this process was to draft the 1982 Constitution brought about by the military regime (Bora, 2017:402). In other words, Turkish nationalism and Islamic values were used to re-establish national unity and solidarity against the rising threat of communism, primarily through leftist groups.

Article 136 of the 1982 constitution is related to the Diyanet:

“the Presidency of Religious Affairs, which is within the general administration, shall exercise its duties prescribed in its particular law, in accordance with the

principles of secularism, removed from all political views and ideas, and aiming at national solidarity and integrity”.

In the 1982 constitutional article on Diyanet, the following two points should be underlined (Gözaydın, 2009:47): First, Diyanet has been included in executive power since the beginning of the Republic. Second, it is entrusted with the task of protecting Turkish national identity. Öztürk (2016), who evaluates the institutional development of the Diyanet through coups in Türkiye and the new constitutional arrangements that followed them, states that the emphasis on solidarity and national unity emphasized in Article 136 refers to the social division experienced in the 1970s. The new post-coup administration saw religion (more precisely, Sunni Islam) as a means of uniting society and resisting the spread of communism, which was popular in the 1970s' Türkiye. Therefore, Diyanet has been brought into a position to fulfil these duties intertwined with the regulation of religion.

Diyanet's expansion abroad coincided with these years. In other words, the link between Diyanet and national identity is also visible in Diyanet's activities abroad. Labor migration from Türkiye to Western Europe in the 1960s paved the way for Diyanet to expand its service area (Dere, 2008: 291). In 1971, a specific department was established to conduct Diyanet's activities abroad, and religious officials were temporarily sent abroad. In this context, religious affairs consultancies were established in Turkish consulates, and religious service attachés were appointed. According to the information provided on Diyanet's website<sup>18</sup>, since 1985, the salaries of Diyanet personnel assigned abroad have been covered by the "Fund for the Protection and Promotion of Turkish Cultural Assets (Türk Kültür Varlığını Koruma ve Tanıtma Fonu)." This can be presented as evidence that Sunni Islam is an integral part of Turkish culture. Diyanet's presence abroad was not limited to sending personnel responsible for managing the worship services to different countries. Since the 1980s, some associations and foundations have been established by Diyanet to meet the religious and spiritual needs of Muslim Turks living in Europe. It should be noted that the Diyanet did not establish these foundations from scratch (Gemici, 2015: 186). Since the early 1980s, mosque associations established by Turkish immigrants who were not affiliated with Türkiye -based religious communities and

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<sup>18</sup> See <https://disiliskiler.diyamet.gov.tr/sayfa/53/tanitim> accessed on 26.07.2023

groups have been united under the roof of Diyanet (Coştu, 2022: 215). These were brought together to establish Diyanet foundations and Diyanet's Turkish Islamic Unions (DITIB) in different countries. These provided not only worship services but also educational, social, and cultural services based on the Sunni doctrine and served the socialization of the Turkish population.

In 1983, the Motherland Party (ANAP) came to power in general elections and continued the military regime's policy of encouraging moderate religiosity to generate loyalty (Bora, 2017: 474-475).

### **3.3.2. Religious Politics vs. Secular Bureaucracy**

Throughout the history of modern Türkiye, religion has been an issue confronted by politicians and bureaucrats. In other words, there has always been tension between bureaucrats who insist on implementing policies to separate social institutions from religion and politicians who challenge these policies. Although the red lines of Turkish secularism have been drawn through the "irtica" (reactionism) discourse, this boundary has been tested frequently since the last years of the single-party period. Attacking political actors found bureaucratic forces, especially the judiciary, and army, counter-attacking them. The two main challenges faced by secularists within the bureaucracy were politicians who brought their religious identity into the political arena and the growing demands for the extension of religious freedoms. In Türkiye, the attempts of the bureaucratic forces representing the judiciary and the military tutelage to limit the potential power of religion in politics constitute an important intersection of the religion-state nexus. The most extreme point of these attempts has been political bans and party closures. The first time that political parties were associated with irtica and confronted with judicial bureaucracy was during attempts to transition to a multi-party life. The government targeted the Progressive Republican Party (Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası), since it was associated with the Sheikh Said Rebellion that broke out in February 1925. It was then closed down by Law on the Maintenance of Order (Takrir-i Sükun). The Free Republican Party (Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası), one of the three new political parties established after the abolition of the Takrir-i Sükun law, was another party associated with the reactionary movement because it was accused of provoking the Menemen incident.

One of the most important reasons for this accusation was the electoral victory of the Free Republican Party in Menemen in the 1930 local elections (Azak, 2019: 500-51).

The founding cadres of Türkiye sought the origins of the new Turkish national identity in pre-Islamic Anatolian civilizations such as the Hittites and Sumerians in order to get rid of the religious and cultural remnants from the Ottoman Empire as much as possible and to strengthen the understanding of Kemalist secularism. However, it has not been possible to erase religion from social and political memory. Notably, with the transition to multi-party life in 1945, the emergence of political parties with more moderate views of religion and developing discourses in this direction led to a re-evaluation of the role of religion and Islam in Turkish politics. Thus, secularization policies sparked a debate within Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP), the founding and first legal political party in the Republic of Türkiye. Especially at the CHP's congress on December 2, 1947, some delegates criticized the government's understanding of secularism on the grounds that religion, which constituted the basis of national solidarity, was being neglected and made a series of suggestions. Among these, there were many proposals that disturbed secular intellectuals, such as the introduction of religion classes in schools, the establishment of faculties of theology to train religion teachers, and granting of autonomy to Diyanet (Uzun, 2012: 127-128). It is possible to interpret this situation as a tension between two groups with different motivations for regulating religion. While one side advocated a regulatory approach based on religious control, the other advocated an approach that favoured religion (Sunni Islam). As Azak (2019:113-116) indicates, in the 1947 CHP Congress, ideas about the neglect of religious issues and proposals for solutions, such as introducing religious classes, were met with secular resistance both inside and outside the party. However, especially during the prime ministry of Şemsettin Günaltay, a theology professor, the government took steps parallel to these proposals. Binnaz Toprak evaluates this process as a new stage in which the defence of secularism was no longer made on behalf of the government but against the government (cited in Azak, 2019: 116)

In the 1950 elections, with the transfer of political power to the liberal-conservative Democrat Party (Demokrat Parti, DP), religious themes became more prominent in



Turkish politics. Especially in the 1951 by-elections, both parties made propaganda with their religious policies. While CHP members boasted about opening tombs to the public, the DP emphasized activities such as the Arabic ezan (call to prayer), religious classes, and reading the Koran on the radio (Eroğul, 2013:101). In Eroğul's words, although the CHP tried hard to eliminate the image of the "godless party", it could not succeed against the DP. While the state continued to control religion on the one hand through the mechanisms established by the early republic, on the other hand, the members of the DP, the new holder of political power, openly displayed some approaches that supported traditional Sunni Islam (ibid).

The visible use of religious references by political parties began immediately after the transition to a multi-party life. The Islamic Protection Party (İslam Koruma Partisi) the first party to use the name "Islam" in its party name, was closed down two months after its foundation (1949). Similarly, the activities of the Islamic Democrat Party (İslam Demokrat Partisi) were terminated one year after its establishment (1951) because of its anti-secularist attitudes and reactionary activities. Although these parties were short-lived, it is argued that the latter in particular led to the politicization of Islam in Türkiye and was the source of the Islamist politics that came to the fore with the "National Vision" movement in the 1970s (Bozkurt, 2013). The Millet Party (Millet Partisi), which had a religious-conservative line, was founded in 1948. However, with the initiative of the DP, which coveted the votes the party received in the 1950 elections, it was closed down in 1954 on the accusation of using religion in politics (Bora, 2017: 469).

Subaşı (2017) considers the 1970s, when the National Vision Movement (Milli Görüş Hareketi) was on the rise, as a new stage in the reflection of religious thought on the political scene. The political Islamist movement, which until then had preferred to take part in the center-right parties, emerged as a separate political force on 26 January 1970 under the name National Order Party (Milli Nizam Partisi, MNP). After the 12 March Memorandum, "violating the principle of secularism," one of the two actions the regime that did not tolerate<sup>19</sup>, ended the MNP (Sevinç,

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<sup>19</sup> The other issue that the regime did not tolerate, "posing a threat to the indivisible integrity of the homeland", led to the closure of the leftist Turkish Labour Party (Türkiye İşçi Partisi) on the same

2013: 268). The National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi, MSP), which is a continuation of the National Vision Movement, was founded in 1972. Although the political adventure of the National Salvation Party in the 1970s claimed to represent the third way in the radical left-right polarization of the period, it generally entered various alliances with these two poles. The MSP was unable to resist the radical Islamist wave that arose with the Iranian Islamic Revolution in 1979 (Bora, 2017: 474). After the 12 September military coup, the National Salvation Party was shut down like other parties, and its leaders were arrested for violating secularism. Both parties presented religion as an element regulating social life in their programs and actions. Subaşı (2016: 107-131) claims that after the 12 September coup d'état, the military government that took power formed an alternative front against the opposition, which used religion as a means of objection, with small-scale Islamisation initiatives.

With the lifting of political bans, the national view movement was re-partyised first under the umbrella of the Welfare Party (Refah Partisi, RP) (1983-1998), then the Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi, FP) (1998-2000), and the Felicity Party (Saadet Partisi, SP) (2001-present). The RP, which continued the legacy of the National Vision Movement, achieved success at the local level in 1994 and across Türkiye in the 1995 general elections. The RP formed a government with the True Path Party (Doğru Yol Partisi, DYP), and its leader, Necmettin Erbakan, became Prime Minister. However, relations between the government and the military began to deteriorate rapidly in 1997 as a result of provocative statements by some radical parliamentarians and mayors. Then, on 28 February, the military presented the cabinet with a long list of demands (officially "recommendations") aimed at reducing the influence of Islamists in the economy, education, and the state apparatus. In the later stages of the so-called post-modern coup, the leader of the RP was forced to resign. Both he and his party were banned from politics for five years. Restriction of the religious political party as a form of regulation was implemented.

In addition to the Felicity Party, which was founded as a continuation of the national opinion movement after the closure of the Welfare Party, the Justice and

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date. Both actions constituted grounds for party closures and political bans for the next 30 years (Sevinç, 2013).

Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP), which clearly distinguished itself from this movement despite the presence of many Islamists among its staff, was founded on August 14, 2001. According to Yılmaz, AKP represents politics that has emerged with the claim of restructuring the Islamist line, but has gradually centralized and become a central party (Yılmaz, 2005: 616). Nevertheless, the party could not escape the threat of being closed on the grounds of the irtica.

The last time the grounds of "contradiction to secularism" were invoked on March 15, 2008, when the chief public prosecutor of the Court of Cassation filed a lawsuit against the AKP. The most important factor distinguishing this case from the previous ones was that it was filed against the party that had come to power on its own with more than 47 per cent of the votes in the 2007 elections. The speeches and actions of the party's leading figures, including the president of the period, before and after they became AKP deputies, circulars issued by ministries, municipalities headed by party members, etc., were presented as evidence (Sevinç, 2013: 270). Although it was decided that the party was the focus of actions against secularism, the court decided for the first time to evaluate the facts in its favor (ibid., 278). As a result, the party did not dissolve, but the treasury aid received by the party was reduced by ½.

### **3.4. Towards Neoliberal Authoritarianism**

The effects of different political regimes on religious regulation were discussed in the second chapter. In the second part of the third chapter, the impact of Türkiye's shift towards neoliberal authoritarianism on the practices of religious regulation is analyzed.

Until the 2000s, discussions of authoritarianism in modern Türkiye were usually conducted with reference to the practices of religious regulation carried out by secular state elites since the single-party era. As Mert stated, the debate on secularism in Türkiye has largely been framed by criticism of the early republic's radical secularism policy. The application of the principle of secularism within the framework of Kemalism's "top-down policies" has long been questioned by

the leftists. Some Islamic circles, particularly after the 1980s, have embraced these criticisms (Mert, 1994:95). From Islamists to liberals, many different political groups have criticized Turkish secularism, which they see as a reflection of Kemalist ideology. The basis of these criticisms is the state's attempt to keep religion under control: the state's hierarchical positioning on religion. In other words, it is the state's effort to put religion in a passive position instead of taking an indifferent stance towards religion. According to these criticisms, the founding cadres of the new Turkish Republic focused on modernization and westernization, seeing the Islamic remnant they inherited as innovation and superstition and associated it with backwardness and bigotry (Gürpınar & Kenar, 2016:62). Yavuz (2003:46) also underscores that Kemalist ideology was preoccupied with “the security of secularism” which means an attitude towards different public manifestations of Islam. Accordingly, resisting or questioning secular goals was equated with treason. However, the void that would arise in the religious sense had to be filled in a "safe" way. Therefore, Kemalists have tried to construct an enlightened, secularism-friendly Islam according to positivism and modern republic mentality. That is, the founding cadres preferred to dominate and reshape Islam instead of trying to destroy it. Thus, the secularism perspective of the early republic created an official state Islam to the exclusion of all other forms of Islam. As a result, in Republican Türkiye, religion was brought into the service of the state and then turned into a tool to ensure its obedience (Kadiođlu, 2010:493). Within the framework of these criticisms, different names have been used to describe Turkish secularism. For instance, Delibas (2006), who calls it as “secularism from above”, argues that dominant perception of secularisation that is widespread among the country’s elite has been causing a lot of trouble in Turkish politics, particularly after 1990s. Çađlar (1994) uses the term “militant secularism” which is usually identified with fundamentalist French secularism (laïcité), whereas Göle (2005) and Öztıđ (2018) prefer to call Kemalist secularism as “authoritarian”.

Debates on authoritarianism returned in the 2000s during the golden years of political Islam, which was seen as a threat to Kemalist secularism. Drawing on different theoretical frameworks and points of analysis, the common point of these debates is that the political regime in Türkiye has become authoritarian during the

long AKP rule, which began with the promise of democratization. These debates differ in issues such as the source and level of authoritarianism and the periodization of the process. On one side of the debate, there are relatively more descriptive studies that explain authoritarianization within the framework of political-institutional transformations. Esen and Gumuscu (2016) argue that today's Türkiye is experiencing a "double regime transition" AKP, which came to power in 2002, seized state institutions with successive electoral victories, and established hegemony over society with the power it gained. Although the opposition continues to participate in general and local elections, the asymmetrical distribution of power and authority destroys electoral security. According to this approach, a competitive authoritarian regime has replaced tutelary democracies. In other words, the practice of democracy with flaws has not improved; in contrast, it has become authoritarian. There are also approaches that evaluate the course of the political regime in Türkiye in the context of populism through the rhetoric and actions of one person. Castaldo, for example, argues that the rise of competitive authoritarianism in Türkiye, as can be seen in the Latin American experience, is due to the election of a populist leader like Erdoğan (Castaldo, 2018). Similarly, Öztürk (2022) points out that the process of authoritarianization began after the core beliefs and personality of Erdoğan, who displayed relatively progressive and democratic leadership until 2007, came to the surface. He underlines that the "populist-authoritarian regime" led to the undermining of Türkiye's already fragile autonomous institutions, the reversal of the reforms undertaken until then, and inconsistent economic policies.

On the other side of the debate are those who argue that authoritarianisation is an inevitable symptom of neoliberalism. In other words, what is happening in Türkiye is "neoliberal authoritarianism". According to this perspective, the political-institutional transformations cited as evidence of authoritarianism cannot be considered independent of the structural dynamics and class power relations specific to capitalism. For this reason, Tansel (2018) criticizes periodization that evaluate the AKP rule in terms of a "turn" or "break" from democratization to authoritarianism. Contrary to what is claimed, mechanisms serving the state-led reproduction of neoliberalism have been active since 2003, and they have been shaped by authoritarian tendencies that manifested themselves at different stages of the

governance process of the Justice and Development Party 's early hegemonic activities.

Similarly, Babacan et al. (2021: 1-12) also argue that periodizing the AKP rule as liberal and authoritarian would mean ignoring the neoliberal cultural project in the early period of the party, which was characterized by the construction of judicial and political repression of dissent, the enactment of repressive security regulations and paternalistic paternalism. Altınörs and Akçay (2022) argue that the so-called democratization process that started in the 2000s has deepened the neoliberal authoritarian regime in Türkiye since the 2010s. In other words, the authoritarian correction strategy developed by nationalist-conservative forces as a reaction to the crisis of the state and the accumulation regime has strengthened the existing authoritarianisation dynamics. In 2018, as a concrete reflection of this strategy, the parliamentary system was switched to the Turkish-type presidential system; thus, the process of "authoritarian consolidation," which marks the transition to full authoritarianism, began.

The adjectives "Muslim" or "Islamic" are also used to describe authoritarianisation in Türkiye (see Arısan, 2019; Journo, 2020; Sekulow, 2017; Yenigün, 2021). These studies emphasize the relationship between Islam and authoritarianism in the authoritarianization process. Yavuz and Öztürk argue that with the rise of the AKP, the phenomenon of "religion" has replaced secularism as the founding principle of Turkish modernization. Moreover, they argue that religion has not only become a new or reborn element of Türkiye, but has also transformed many areas such as the media, the Kurdish issue, the implementation of the rule of law, foreign policy, and gender issues (Yavuz & Öztürk, 2019). Babacan (2021) suggests that approaches that instrumentalize religion, including class-based explanations such as the "understanding that religion is a tool in the hands of the elite or the bourgeoisie," are insufficient to explain the role of religion in the authoritarianization process.

Four separate sections below discuss how the political regime change has challenged the pillars of the religion-state nexus and religious regulation in Türkiye.

### 3.4.1. Elimination of Pro-Secularist Bureaucrats

The previous section noted that one of the most fundamental elements of traditional religion-state relations in Türkiye is the dichotomy between Islamist politicians and pro-secularist bureaucracy. It can be argued that this dichotomy indirectly motivated the establishment and rise of AKP. The closure of the Virtue Party, one of the representatives of the National Vision Movement, by the Constitutional Court in 2001 on the grounds of "contradiction to secularism" allowed the young cadre, who had conflicted with the traditionalists within the party for some time, to become a new political party. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, then Mayor of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and was in the young wing of the National Vision movement, read a poem with strong Islamic references at a meeting in 1997, for which he was sentenced to imprisonment under Article 312 of the Turkish Penal Code on the charge of "inciting people to hatred and enmity based on religion and race". A speech he made before his prison sentence is a concrete example of the "us and them discourse" that would deepen in the following years<sup>20</sup>

Coming to power in 2002, the AKP broke away from the national vision tradition and adopted Turgut Özal's economic strategy which paved the way for the growth of conservative capital. This orientation shows that the AKP aims to join the tradition of center-right politics that started with the Democrat Party (Demokrat Parti, DP) (Aydın & Yüksel, 2014: 471). However, Aydın and Taşkın underline the difference between the AKP's democratization style and that of previous center-right governments. While previous governments limited their democratization promises to economic development moves, the AKP was motivated by the view that a democratization effort in line with the EU (European Union) would be functional in overcoming some domestic political problems (ibid., 472). Çınar states that after taking over the government, AKP undertook the project of "reaching the level of contemporary civilizations," which until then had been embraced by the Kemalist

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<sup>20</sup> "I wanted to carry to the public space your wishes and aspirations. Those wishes and aspirations are locked up in the secluded rooms of your modest homes. They are conveyed to others only by the hopeless expressions on the faces of your children who have no jobs, and are silently kept in the wounded hearts of your mothers and fathers. I love your voices, because I am one of you. I do not regret what I have done, because we together have done it." (cited from Heper & Toktaş, 2003: 164, translation is belong to the authors)

paradigm. According to the party, EU membership was the current representation of civilization. In this process, the party adopted the discourse that the basic conditions for access to European civilization were economic prosperity and an understanding of democracy in which fundamental rights and freedoms, including the right to wear the headscarf in educational institutions, were guaranteed (Çınar, 2006: 480).

As Saraçoğlu and Yeşilbağ point out, the period between 2002 and 2007 was a period in which the party sought to gain legitimacy and recognition. Therefore, during this period, the AKP shared power with both internal and external forces and institutions and was subject to their limitations. In other words, it refrained from confronting and liquidating the institutions and power centers that questioned it internally. Externally, it followed a line with the expectations of power centers such as the US and the EU. The party made extensive use of notions such as democratization and national will in order to gain the support of society and to make itself acceptable to cadre forces (Saraçoğlu & Yeşilbağ, 2015: 875).

The long-standing “kulturkampf” among secularists and Islamic revivalists has intensified since 2007 due to various factors stemming from election laws, voting behavior, elite political culture, and the strategies of political party leaders (Kalaycıoğlu, 2012: 2). The most precise reflection of this tension was the 2007 presidential elections (Saraçoğlu & Yeşilbağ, 2015: 922-923). The concern about who will be the presidential candidate prompted the secular power centers within the state to warn the government. The president of the time, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, some university rectors and the Higher Education Council which was not under the complete control of the AKP at the time, some Supreme Court prosecutors, Ankara Chamber of Commerce, and some capital circles announced that the presidential candidate should respect “unchangeable values” of the Republic, in particular, “secularism and unitary structure” and that this candidate should be determined by broad consensus. Moreover, Chief of the General Staff Yaşar Büyükanıt, in an e-memorandum published on the website of the general staff, expressed the president in his heart with the words that “*he should be committed to the secular and unitary structure in substance, not in word.*” Certain events, such as the Constitutional Court's annulment of the presidential election, in which Abdullah Gul won the



election, whose candidacy caused controversy due to his wife's headscarf, kept the fear of a possible military coup alive.

On the other hand, the AKP abandoned its cautious position and adopted a more offensive stance; the war against the established order was concretized in the Ergenekon and Balyoz trials, which began in 2007 and 2010, respectively. Ergenekon, which is alleged to be a deep state organization with members from different professions, such as military, police, academics, and journalists, was associated with a series of crimes, including the preparation of a coup plot against the AKP in 2003-2004. Balyoz, on the other hand, alleged that in 2003 a group of soldiers plotted a military coup to overthrow the Turkish government.

The AKP's victory in the power struggle with the judicial bureaucracy and the military was confirmed by its victory in the general elections of July 22, 2007, with 47% of the vote. With the intensive propaganda of Gülen movement, which had infiltrated various levels of the state and its affiliated media outlets, AKP politicians portrayed the establishment as a gigantic, organized, and hierarchically interconnected structure ruled from a single center. The Ergenekon and Balyoz trials enabled the AKP to eliminate nationalist statist foci of resistance as a whole (Saraçoğlu & Yeşilbağ, 2015: 914-915). The investigation led to more than a hundred people arrested since July 2008, including military, party, and police officials and former secretary-general of the National Security Council. This accelerating authoritarianization had significant consequences for the religion-state nexus in Türkiye.

### **3.4.2. Desecularization of Social Institutions**

In his article, Sam Kaplan (2002) asked the question "*din-u devlet all over again?*", referring to the changes made by the military administration in the national education system after the 1980 military coup. Kaplan's primary motivation for asking this question was that during the intervening 20+ years, the military coup provided fertile ground for the implementation of the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis (discussed earlier), a cultural program in which religious intellectuals advocated for greater integration of

Islamic values into the political culture of the nation. In this sense, the post-coup period can be seen as the beginning of the systematic process of the desecularization of many social institutions. In this sense, a series of changes in the national education system confirms this argument. After the 1980 coup, unlike previous coups, institutional links between the armed forces and the national education system were strengthened (Kaplan, 2002: 119). Before handing over political power to civilian politicians, the military junta declared war on communism, which it claimed would fragment the nation in a politics of differences. Thus, it embarked on a series of educational reforms that sought to prevent the differentiation of identities. Sunni Islam was supposed to serve as a cement that would unite different identities. On the one hand, the military, which proclaimed itself as the defender of Atatürk's secular republicanism, continued to oppose religious and political parties openly. However, in a completely contradictory manner, the same military supported the reintegration of Sunni Islam's teachings into the national education system. In this context, the National Security Council approved the opening of 92 new imam-hatip high schools in addition to the existing 249. It also envisioned the opening of 35 more imam-hatip middle schools. Article 24 of the military-made 1982 Constitution made teaching religious culture and ethics compulsory. The Motherland Party, which came to power after the end of junta rule, took this policy even further and recalled the old Ottoman religion-state system (*din-u devlet*), in which every citizen child learned to identify himself as the defender of his faith (*ibid.*, 124).

The political Islamist AKP, which came to power in 2002, the year Kaplan's article was published, and remained in power for more than 20 years, followed this line. The reshaping of many social institutions secularized by early republican philosophy in line with Islamic references became easier in the process of authoritarianization. Continuing with the example above, the discourse of "raising a religious and (vindictive) generation," which has been voiced by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan since 2012, seems to have shaped today's education system. The policies of desecularization, the infrastructure of which was painstakingly laid in the first two terms, began to yield their fruits in the AKP's third term. For example, the trend of Islamization of education policies seems to have gained momentum during this period (Günaydın & Aşan, 2017: 41). There are many clear examples of

desecularization in education. For instance, in the 2012-2013 academic year, the transition to the 4+4+4 education system allowed children who completed the 4th grade of primary school to attend imam hatip middle schools, and some primary schools were converted into imam hatip secondary schools. According to current Ministry of National Education statistics, while the number of imam hatip secondary schools (including those opened under imam hatip high schools) was 1099 in the 2012-2013 academic year, this number increased to 3451 in the 2021-2022 academic year. This corresponds to an increase of 214%. Between the same periods, the number of regular secondary schools decreased by 2.53%. Another example is 'community-based institutions, most of which are affiliated to Diyanet and religious associations. The statistics on these courses, which target 4-5-year-old pre-school children, are also striking. In the 2020/'21 academic year, while the number of 'Community-Based Institutions' was 2,252 and the number of students was 50,220, by June 2022 the number of institutions had more than doubled to 4,651 and the number of students had increased to 2.5 times to 127,258 (Eğitim Sen, 2022:6). Ertem (2022) underlines that these courses, which serve as Islamic kindergartens, are an institutional link in the chain of desecularization in education that the AKP governments have been implementing since 2012.

Efforts to desecularise social institutions are not limited to education. For example, the AKP's special focus on social policy is among the areas in which Islamization is most visible. Kaya (2015) emphasizes that one of the most important tools of the AKP's project to Islamize Turkish society and politics since 2002 has been to add religious content to neoliberal social policies. In this project's scope, the AKP has partially used social assistance programs largely provided by Islamic FBOs and philanthropic associations as alternatives to welfare state services (ibid., 13). Turhan and Bahçecik (2021) point out that since the 2000s, a new understanding of governance has emerged. The relationship between non-governmental organizations and the state has evolved from a one-sided to a multilateral relationship due to this process (ibid., 6). With the effect of macro factors such as the EU accession process and neoliberal policies, some bureaucratic barriers in front of NGOs have been removed. As a result, the government began to approach non-governmental organizations as policy actors. As a result, both the functions and number of NGOs

rose after 2005. Given the current government's Islamist identity, it is hardly unexpected that many of these are faith-based organizations linked with Islamist communities.

In addition to these examples, Turkish foreign policy has also been reshaped by the hegemonic Islamic (neo-Ottoman) interpretation of the AKP elite following the end of the Kemalist hegemony of 'native aliens' (Yavuz, 2022: 660). As a result, Türkiye's foreign policy shifted towards anti-Westernism and pan-Islamism. The same process can be seen in the justification of economic decisions in reference to Islam<sup>21</sup>. All of these efforts are among the important signs that the "differentiation of secular spheres from religion," a crucial component of the early republican philosophy of the regulation of religion, has been completely reversed in the neoliberal authoritarian Türkiye of the 21st century.

### **3.4.3. Re-balancing of the Religious Regulation**

In the previous sections, with reference to the famous historian Barnard Lewis, I underlined that Turkish Islam can be understood on two levels. In the early republican period, while the state sought to produce an official and acceptable Sunni understanding of Islam, sectarian organizations representing popular Islam were pushed underground. However, they continued to maintain de facto relations with the state, especially through Sunni political parties in power<sup>22</sup>. This dualism has made the tension between the two levels inevitable. However, there are some strong indications that this tension has eased with the AKP era. This argument can be concretized in the relations between the Diyanet, the organizational structure of official Islam, and the congregations, the current representatives of popular Islam.

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<sup>21</sup>President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's attempt to justify the interest rate cut by the Central Bank of the Republic of Türkiye with the words "As a Muslim, I will continue to do what the 'nas' require. This is the command' is a concrete example of this. Nas is the general name given in Islamic jurisprudence to the verses in the Qur'an and hadiths, or the sayings of the prophet. For the full speech see: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/son-dakika-haberi-cumhurbaskani-erdogandan-tusiad-tepkisi-hukumete-saldirmanin-yollarini-aramayin-bas-edemezsiniz-41964443> accessed on 03.01.2023 (hurriyet.com.tr, 2021)

<sup>22</sup> For a study that reveals these relationships see (Çakır, 2014).

With the AKP period, allegations that the relations between the Diyanet and religious communities (official Islam and popular Islam) have loosened, and even that the communities are organized within the Diyanet have been frequently brought to the public agenda. This relationship, which is not easy to identify academically, was revealed in the purges carried out after the Gülen movement-backed military coup attempt on July 15, 2016. Through decrees having the force of law issued immediately after the attempt, 2835 Diyanet's personnel, most of which were imams, were dismissed from civil service because they were relevant to the Gülen movement.

Following the failed coup attempt, Türkiye's regime transformation (authoritarianization) deepened with state of emergency policies, new judicial repression strategies, and intensified crackdown on political opposition, academia, media, and civil society (Yılmaz & Turner, 2019). Especially in combating religious groups that could threaten political power, the question of the state control of religious life and the function of the Diyanet in this context became more widely debated. In other words, the fact that those who made the coup attempt were members of a religious movement prompted a re-examination of the state's and thus Diyanet's functions in this regard. In the report of the parliamentary investigation commission, which was in charge of investigating the coup attempt, both the commission and Diyanet included suggestions for combatting detrimental religious groups and restructuring state-controlled religion understanding. On the one hand, the report criticizes the "militant" or the aggressive" militant secularism practices in the past. On the other hand, it seeks to ensure state control over religious life on the condition that it respects and understands different interpretations of religion (TBMM Araştırma Komisyonu, 2017: 593). In addition to these statements, it would not be wrong to say that both the parliamentary commission's and Diyanet's proposals on the subject point to a search for a new balance between the two levels of Turkish Islam. The following are the main suggestions raised in the report on the Diyanet (ibid., 592-597):

- Reorganization of relations between civil religious organizations and the state, as well as clarification of Diyanet's position against these organizations and the policies that will be implemented.

- Making legal arrangements and the establishment of an administrative structure within the body of Diyanet for monitoring and supervising religious organizations and groups.
- Strengthening Diyanet's organizational structure in order to eliminate the damage caused by harmful religious movements and to prevent their threats.
- The close supervision of the Ministry of Interior and Diyanet's on international and national faith-based aid organizations
- The inspection of religious groups that exist in mosques independently and without permission from the Diyanet since the schisms that are organized in mosques create an internal security problem.
- Establishment of Diyanet Research Center (Diyanet Araştırma Merkezi) to operate in Ankara within the body of Diyanet (The main duty of the Diyanet Research Center will be to carry out projects on religious groups, religious developments, and religious problems in Türkiye and abroad, and share the results with the public.)
- Establishment of Diyanet Academy (The main duties of the Diyanet Academy will be to train qualified personnel, to offer graduate education opportunities, to develop projects, and to provide a more qualified religious education within the Diyanet)

In addition to these, some of the suggestions offered by the Diyanet to the commission are as follows (ibid., 597-598):

- Diyanet (through the High Council of Religious Affairs) should encourage the faith-based organizations that support religious services and religious education in Türkiye to act on the right path—without interfering with their freedom—and to be more transparent and auditable structures.
- Necessary legal arrangements should be made to provide "correct religious information" in all schools.
- While different religious interpretations are indicative of cultural richness, there must be consensus on the basic principles that promote unity and national solidarity.
- Diyanet should be able to work in coordination with all public institutions and organizations working on children, youth, family, and education issues in

Türkiye. Thus, real religious knowledge will reach large sections of society, and the unifying discourse of this knowledge will ensure social peace and tranquility.

- Mosques have the potential to carry out religious and cultural services effectively. Therefore, mosques should not be seen only as places of worship; they should be built in a way that will meet religious, social, and cultural needs and have the quality of a living space. Therefore, there is a need to make adjustments to the Zoning Law and other relevant legislation.

In light of the demands and recommendations of the report, two conclusions can be drawn. First, official religion will gain stronger content in every sense, and all gaps in religious affairs will be filled by a more functional Diyanet. Second, the Diyanet will no longer be an institution that ignores de facto religious formations in Türkiye but a supervisor positioned above them. In the next section, it will be shown that these demands and proposals have been realized to a large extent. Thus, the process was reversed, and the infrastructure of the official religion was strengthened, paving the way for it to become a strong alternative to popular Islam. However, this does not mean that popular Islam has been illegalized and ignored. The relationship of the religious groups with the Diyanet also seems to have changed. The Religious Council of the Presidency of Religious Affairs convened for the first time after the coup attempt on August 3-4 and discussed the relationship between religious formations and Diyanet. From the published decisions of the meeting (*Din Şûrası Olağanüstü Toplantı Kararları*, 2016), it was decided to

"work in cooperation with NGOs (meaning religious groups and communities organized as NGOs in order to gain legal status) in order to prevent the formation of similar structures and the repetition of similar mistakes"(...) Diyanet (The Presidency of Religious Affairs), especially through the Supreme Board of Religious Affairs, should work in cooperation with civil religious social organizations that support religious services and religious education in Türkiye—without interfering with their freedoms—to ensure that they do not deviate from the main path of Islam, which has established civilizations throughout history, that they stay away from all kinds of excess and extremism, and that they become more transparent and auditable structures. Additionally, supreme boards should be established within the Presidency of Religious Affairs for religious and scientific supervision and guidance (*Din Şûrası Olağanüstü Toplantı Kararları*, 2016).<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> “Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, özellikle Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulu marifetiyle - özgürlüklerine müdahale edilmeksizin- Türkiye’de din hizmetine ve din eğitimine destek veren sivil dini-sosyal

In this context, in 2017, Diyanet held preliminary meetings with about 30 congregations and sects to warn them against organizations that harm Islam, such as the terrorist organizations Fethullahist Terrorist Organization (FETÖ) and Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS). After the meetings, five principles such as "you will not marginalize" (ötekileştirmeyeceksin) and "you will not declare someone an unbeliever" (tekfir etmeyeceksin) were determined (Yenisafak.com, 2017)<sup>24</sup>. Moreover, Diyanet decided to organize a Meeting of Congregations and Sects.

However, despite the FETÖ experience and the measures taken above, there are still allegations that sects are organized within the Diyanet. In an interview with theologian Prof. Mustafa Öztürk, journalist Ruşen Çakır, who works on Islamic movements in Türkiye, made the following observations:

If we look at the relations of the congregations with the Diyanet, in the pre-AKP period, when Mehmet Nuri Yılmaz, etc. were presidents, these congregations were not liked, but they were not fought with. But there was a certain distance. When we look at the first years of the AKP, I observed that during the Ali Bardakoğlu or Mehmet Görmez period, theologians were more prominent in Diyanet. This is what I observed externally. However, recently it seems as if the religious communities are using the facilities of the Diyanet much more effectively. In the past, it was like two separate worlds. There used to be an atmosphere like tekkes on one side and mosques on the other. Now, it seems as if they have become more intertwined and are utilizing Diyanet's wide range of opportunities<sup>25</sup> (Çakır, 2022)."

In the same video, theologian Mustafa Öztürk interpreted this situation as "the Diyanet being taken over by the religious communities." He underlined that as a result of the current political climate, it is no longer possible to speak of two separate

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teşekküllerle, İslam'ın tarih boyunca medeniyetler kuran ana yolundan ayrılmamaları, her türlü ifrat ve tefritten uzak kalmaları, daha şeffaf ve denetlenebilir yapılar olması yönünde ortak çalışmalar yapılmalıdır. Ayrıca dini ve ilmi denetim ve rehberlik için Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı bünyesinde üst kurullar oluşturulmalıdır (*Din Şûrası Olağanüstü Toplantı Kararları*, 2016). "

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.yenisafak.com/gundem/diyanet-islerinden-tarikatlara-5-ilke-2591729> Accessed on: 18.03.2019

<sup>25</sup> "Cemaatlerin Diyanet ile ilişkilerine bakacak olursak, AKP öncesi dönemde Mehmet Nuri Yılmaz vs. onların başkan olduğu dönemlerde bu cemaatlerden pek hoşlanılmazdı ama kavga da edilmezdi. Ama belli bir mesafe vardı. Sonra AKP nin ilk yıllarına baktığımızda Ali Bardakoğlu ya da Mehmet Görmez döneminde de daha çok ilahiyatçıların Diyanet'te öne çıktığını gözledim. Bu benim dışarıdan gözledim. Ancak son dönemde sanki cemaatler Diyanet'te çok daha etkili bir biçimde Diyanetin imkânlarını kullanıyorlar. Eskiden sanki iki ayrı dünya gibiydi. Tekkeler bir yanda camiler bi yanda gibi bir hava vardı. Şimdi bunlar iyice iç içe geçmiş gibi ve Diyanet'in o çok geniş imkânlarından da yararlanıyorlar gibi bir görüntü var (Çakır, 2022)"



structures, the Diyanet (official religion) and the religious communities (popular Islam). These claims can indicate that some concessions have started to be made to acceptable congregations that do not contradict the government and thus the Diyanet.

#### 3.4.4. Expansion of Diyanet

The repressive secularism of the Kemalist regime was one of the most important trump cards in the march to power of the AKP, which defined itself as a conservative democrat. As Solgun (2021:17) reminds us, in the early 2000s, party leaders promised their supporters that the Diyanet would be autonomized and even opened the door to critical views, such as its abolition. However, this trend lasted until the third period of the party's long rule (2011 onwards), after which criticism of the Diyanet was ignored. Paradoxically, Diyanet, an outgrowth of Kemalist secularism, gained more organizational power under the AKP government. Its increased budget and personnel have reached a level that could compete with many ministries. Gülalp explains this contradiction as follows:

“If the state has the power to control religious life through Diyanet or a similar institution, such institutions can be used to suppress religion and bring it to the fore in political and social life. Although those who criticize secularism from an Islamic point of view seem to defend their political preferences with the thesis of the separation of religion and state, in fact, the only way for religion to occupy a broader area in social and political life is for the state to support it. Many examples of this can be mentioned in our political history, but we can clearly see this situation when we look only at the AKP period. The extraordinary growth of Diyanet in terms of budget, personnel, and provincial branches in recent years shows that it is not only a device that suppresses religion but also functions like a double-edged sword that can support Islamic politics when necessary (Gülalp, 2018:105)<sup>26</sup>.”

In short, Gülalp points out that Diyanet is a useful tool that can be articulated with the aims of different political projects. The most concrete example of this is

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<sup>26</sup> “Devlet, Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı veya benzeri bir kurumla dini yaşamı denetleme gücüne sahipse, bu gibi kurumlar dini sadece baskı altına almak için değil, onu siyasal ve toplumsal yaşamda ön plana çıkartmak için de kullanılabilir. Laikliği İslami açıdan eleştiren çevreler, her ne kadar siyasal tercihlerini din ile devlet işlerinin ayrışması tezini öne sürerek savunuyor görünseler de aslında dinin toplumsal ve siyasal yaşamda daha geniş bir alan kaplamasının tek yolu devletin buna destek olmasıdır. Bunun siyasal tarihimizde birçok örneğinden söz edilebilir, ama sadece AKP dönemine baktığımızda da bu durumu açıklıkla görürüz. Diyanet’in son yıllarda bütçe, personel ve il alanları açısından olağanüstü derecede büyümesi onun sadece dini baskı altına alan bir aygıt olmadığını, gerektiğinde İslami siyaseti de destekleyebilen, iki yamı keskin bir bıçak gibi işlev gördüğünü gösterir (Gülalp, 2018:105)<sup>26</sup>.”

undoubtedly experienced during the AKP period, which is in long-term enmity with Kemalism. In other words, as Gülalp's argument points out, the same institutions are able to operate with different types of regulation, initially restricting and controlling and then favoring and defining Islam.

Despite the downward tendency in the second half of the 1990s, there has been a gradual increase in Diyanet's share of the state budget since 2002, the year the AKP came to power the first. Diyanet's position was strengthened once again, and many improvements were made to its budget, staff, and employment conditions. Although it is possible to evaluate these improvements as compensation for the cuts in the military intervention period of 1997, the budget increase in 2010 exceeded the previous ones. Today, Diyanet's budget competes with those of many vital ministries. For example, compared to 2018, the Ministry of National Education's budget increased by 23%, which is close to the annual inflation rate. On the other hand, the Presidency of Religious Affairs budget increased by 34.4%, well above the inflation rate. According to Law No. 7197 (2020 Central Administration Budget Law), the sum of the funds allocated to Diyanet was ₺11.519.609.000 in 2020. As can be seen from Law No. 7258 (2021 Central Administration Budget Law) increased to ₺12.977.926.000 in 2021. As in previous years, personnel expenses constituted the largest portion of the total budget (81,88%) in 2021.

Considering the number of personnel employed by Diyanet in civil servant status, this would not be a surprising expense. During the AKP period, there was a significant increase in the number of Diyanet personnel. The number of personnel, which was 83,349 in 2010 (total of central and provincial organizations), increased to 106,275 in 2015 (T.C. Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı 2010 Faaliyet Raporu, 2011: 15 ; T.C. Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı 2015 Faaliyet Raporu, 2016:11-16). Through decrees having the force of law issued immediately after the coup d'état attempt on July 15 2016, 2835 Diyanet's personnel, most of which were imams, were dismissed from civil service. These dismissals were another issue that created legitimacy problems for the organization. As mentioned before, a vacuum emerged with the closure of dervish lodges and zawiyas and the outlawing of congregations in the early Republican period. This gap was intended to be filled by an understanding of Islam,

in which the state draws its borders. The provider was Diyanet. Today, however, the dismissal of many religious personnel because they are associated with a “unofficial” religious communities reveals a paradoxical picture.

Diyanet employed 141,149 personnel in 2022, 137,804 of whom worked in mufti offices. 1,752 Diyanet personnel were working for the central organization. A total of 504 Diyanet persone worked for Diyanet organizations abroad, and 1379 Diyanet staff worked in religious specialized centers (Dini İhtisas Merkezleri) (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, 2023: 29). Considering that the total number of personnel was 78,961 in 2006 (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Strateji Geliştirme Daire Başkanlığı, 2007: 8-14), there is an increase of more than 78%.

What made 2010 so crucial for Diyanet is Law No. 6002, which brought fundamental changes to Law No. 633, which regulates the institutional structure and duties of Diyanet. Law No. 6002 on the Amendment of the Law on the Establishment and Duties of the Presidency of Religious Affairs and Certain Laws (6002 sayılı Diyanet İşleri Bakanlığı Kuruluş ve Görevleri Hakkında Kanun ile Bazı Kanunlarda Değişiklik Yapılmasına Dair Kanun), was adopted on 01 July 2010 in the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye. with the consensus of all parties in parliament (Bulut, 2010:44). It was published in the Official Gazette on July 13, 2010, and then entered into force.

Some regulations were enacted in 1976 to eliminate deficiencies and meet the new requirements of the Law on the Establishment and Duties of the Presidency of Religious Affairs Law No. 633, dated 22/6/1965. However, these regulations were canceled in 1979 for various reasons at the request of the president of the period. According to the justification of Law no 6002, the fact that no regulation has been implemented in 31 years has left Diyanet's activities unfounded. According to its preamble, the primary rationale behind Law No. 6002, which came into force in 2010, is to fill the existing legal gap. According to this law, which reorganized the Diyanet, Presidency's status was increased from the general secretariat to the level of under secretariat. Moreover, the president's term of office was limited to five years. As explained in detail in the next section, many new departments were founded to establish direct relations with society.

Today, Diyanet is a massive organization that consists of central, provincial, and foreign representation. In the central organization, many units are affiliated with the head of the Diyanet and his deputies. At the beginning of the departments related to the main service area of the Diyanet, the High Board of Religious Affairs (Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulu) was the highest decision and advisory body of the Diyanet on religious issues. Another board is the Board of Inspection and Recitation of the Quran, established in 2010 under Law No. 6002. In addition to boards, there are directorates and general directorates. General directorates consist of “religious services,” “Hajj and Umrah Services,” “Foreign Relations,” “Human Resources,” “Educational Services,” “Religious Publications,” “Guidance and Inspection” and “Management Services” which are organized as general directorates. The impact of the new understanding of religious regulation on how religion is organized will be thoroughly investigated in the following chapter in the context of the reorganization of the "General Directorate of Religious Service."

The provincial organization of the Diyanet consists of mufti offices in every province and district and directorates of education centers in some cities. The external establishment of the Diyanet is organized in the countries where Turkish citizens live as the Councilors of Religious Services connected to the Turkish Embassies and as the Attachés of Religious Services connected to the Consulates General (Gazi, 2008). Following the transition to the presidential system in 2018, the Diyanet was subjected to the President of the Republic with Decree No. 703, published in the Official Gazette on 09/07/2018.

The Diyanet has faced criticism from international organizations. In the early 2000s, when harmonizing with the EU gained momentum, some demands were made for the Diyanet within the framework of the Copenhagen criteria. Among these, the issues are autonomy, representation of different religious groups (especially Alevi), religious services, and non-formal religious education (Turan, 2011). However, especially in recent years, when Türkiye's efforts to join the EU have gradually faded, no progress has been made on these issues, which have already created a national and international legitimacy crisis for Diyanet. The 2020 European Commission report underlines that the work of the Diyanet spread to all areas of

public life, and the increase in the 2020 budget of the institution was also emphasized (European Commission, 2020:32-33). Türkiye is among the countries followed by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). This independent bipartisan US federal government commission oversees universal rights to freedom of religion or belief outside the USA. In the report they published in 2020 (USCIRF, 2020), the commission, which drew a very negative picture of religious freedoms in Türkiye, also presented a series of criticisms of the Diyanet. According to the report, although Türkiye, a constitutionally secular country, declares that it provides assurances regarding freedom of conscience, religious beliefs, and opinions, this is a different situation in practice. The Turkish government heavily influences both majority Muslim and non-Muslim groups through the Diyanet, which oversees Islamic practices, or the General Directorate of Foundations, which regulates the activities of other religious communities. Another criticism of the report is about Diyanet's activities abroad. Observers report that President Erdogan "used the Diyanet into his party's political and ideological agenda" abroad and used Turkish nationalism and Sunni Islam as foreign policy tools.

### **Notes on Türkiye Diyanet Foundation (TDV)**

It is necessary to open a parenthesis here for the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı/TDV hereafter), which has become more functional and active in Türkiye's authoritarianization process. Although TDV is not included in the administrative body of Diyanet, it is not like a separate entity because of its organic ties. TDV, which frequently resorts to the discourse of social solidarity, can be considered as the first channel through which Diyanet opens up to different segments of the society.

Undoubtedly, the memories of Ahmet Uzunoğlu (see Uzunoğlu, 1999), Tayyar Altıkulaç (see Altıkulaç, 2011:254-261) -who are among the founding members of the TDV- provide the firsthand information about the establishment of the foundation. Uzunoğlu states that the purpose of the establishment of the foundation was "the desire to raise the Diyanet to the level of other organizations (Uzunoğlu, 1999:31)."

However, both Diyanet bureaucrats underline that financial difficulty was the biggest obstacle to enhancing Diyanet. As Uzunoğlu (1994: 461) notes, some associations established throughout Türkiye to support religious services were not able to fill this gap. What is more, due to the takeover of association administration by different (ideological or religious) groups, the Diyanet faced several problems. Diyanet bureaucrats' search for extra-budgetary resources - along with the effect of the Law on Foundations<sup>27</sup> (Vakıflar Kanunu) enacted at the end of the 1960s - brought the idea of establishing a foundation.

After the necessary preparations, Turkish Diyanet Foundation was established on March 13, 1975. Naming the foundation as Diyanet is one of the most important signs of the organic relationship between the presidency and the foundation. Uzunoğlu tells the story of naming the foundation as follows:

“What should the name of the foundation we will establish? The word Diyanet was a prestigious and magical word. I found it appropriate to use this word in the name of the foundation. The name of the foundation would be "Diyanet Foundation". Given the fact that this foundation will serve throughout Türkiye as well as abroad, putting the word “Türkiye” in front of the foundation’s name would be benefit of the foundation in order to gain more credibility both in Türkiye and abroad. Thus, the name of the foundation we will establish would be Turkish Diyanet Foundation”<sup>28</sup> (Uzunoğlu, 1999: 33).

Another indicator of this organic relationship is the composition of the foundation's administrative board. Its board of trustees is chaired by the President of the Diyanet, while the other members are predominantly senior Diyanet bureaucrats. The foundation has been among the tax exempted foundations since 1977. Turan (2008) states that the Hajj organization is one of the most significant financial sources of the Foundation's income as well as donations and partnerships. What is more, TDV has

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<sup>27</sup> In 1967, with Article 3 of Law No. 903, enacted to ensure the development of foundations, the establishment of foundations was encouraged by the council of ministers to give tax exemption to foundations established to fulfill the services within the budgets of general, special and annexed budget administrations.

<sup>28</sup> “Kuracağımız vakfın adı ne olmalı idi? Diyanet kelimesi itibarlı ve sihirli bir kelime idi. Vakfın isminde bu keşimeyi kullanmayı uygun gördüm. Vakfın adı “Diyanet Vakfı” olacak idi. Bu vakıf Türkiye çapında hizmet göreceğine göre, gerek yurt içinde gerekse yurt dışında daha itibarlı bir vakıf olması için başına “Türkiye” kelimesinin ilave edilmesinde fayda vardı. Böylece kuracağımız vakfın adı “Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı” olacaktı” (Uzunoğlu, 1999: 33).

its own properties. According to the author's information received from the General Directorate of TDV, the number of properties the Foundation owns was 4,720 in 1991, 5,812 in 1994, 9,466 in 2005, and 10,108 in 2007 (ibid., 372).

The foundation has a vast field of activity which is categorized under five topics. These are education and training activities, philanthropic aid and social services, cultural activities, support for Diyanet's services and mosques services and construction activities abroad.

**Table 1.** TDV 2017-2019 status report on expenditures classified according to their purposes (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı 2019 Faaliyet Raporu, 2020:47)

Expenditures	2017	2018	2019
Social Services	165.746.750,07	307.459.615,43	324.903.193,17
Philanthropic Works	278.303.302,04	361.218.898,42	315.789.624,97
Education Services	123.267.089,38	133.063.915,05	167.321.089,15
Culture and Art Activities	25.891.004,69	16.388.719,09	19.723.438,80
Other	46.461.625,05	83.692.620,61	105.595.477,19
TOTAL	639.669.771,23	901.823.768,60	933.332.823,28

TDV's objectives are described in Articles 2 and 3 of the foundation vouchers. In these articles, it is stated that the primary purpose is to support the services provided by the Diyanet. At the same time, it is also aimed to provide other social services that are beneficial for society, but the main focus is primarily on religious services (Uzunoğlu, 1999). Although TDV is the biggest financial provider of the presidency (Gözaydın, 2009:233) the foundation's current vision and mission show that the priority order between religious services and social services has changed. TDV's board of trustees Vice President Mazhar Bilgin also stated that *"the foundation, which was founded 40 years ago for religious services, has transformed into a kindness movement"*<sup>29</sup>. In the TDV's activity report in 2019, it is stated that the requests from the Directorate of Religious Affairs *"are evaluated first and meticulously, and are fulfilled to the extent possible"* (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı 2019 Faaliyet Raporu, 2020:35). On the other hand, TDV's mission and vision, as stated on the website, indicate that the foundation's primary agenda and priority have become charitable and social services. Accordingly, its mission is "to provide material and moral support to people and the institutions that strive for goodness to

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.dailysabah.com/life/2015/02/01/turkish-ngo-to-open-two-new-schools-in-africa> accessed on 30.11.2020

prevail in the world." Its vision is to be a foundation in the service of humanity and on all seven continents as well as Türkiye. The foundation defines itself as a "kindness movement" whose motto is "the best of people, the one who is beneficial to people" and which works with the aim of being in the service of humanity. As can be seen, the main emphasis is on social and charitable services. Considering the 2019 annual report of the Diyanet Foundation, there is a significant increase in expenses in other fields, except for activities in the field of culture and arts, compared to 2017 (see the table above).

It is observed that while the foundation has expanded in the organizational sense, it has specialized in some areas. For example, the TDV Women, Family and Youth Center (KAGEM), which was established in 1996, but restructured in 2011, expanded its field of activity, particularly in cooperation with the Ministry of Family and Social Policies. The remarkable projects carried out by KAGEM will be mentioned later. In addition, at the present time, TDV has become a giant foundation with three affiliated institutions which are İslamic Research Center (İSAM), İstanbul 29 Mayıs University and Science, Culture, Arts and Publication Board (İLKSAY), two companies on publications and dormitories, and two subsidiaries which are KOMAŞ A.Ş and Fairs, Advertising, Publishing, Promotion, Organization Ltd.

It should be noted that, in the legal documents defining and regulating working procedures of the Diyanet, many references are encouraging the cooperation of the Diyanet with the TDV in social service delivery. The foundation is a very fundamental part of the Diyanet that opens up to society. Notably, in recent years, the dramatic increase in TDV's services, which targets the people in need in Türkiye and other parts of the world, has been the primary indicator of this tendency.

### **3.5. Evaluation**

In this chapter, I have focused on the continuities and alterations in the practices of religious regulation in modern Türkiye. My primary aim was to show how the rise to power of a political party with an Islamist identity in the 2000s and the increasing neoliberal authoritarian tendencies in the following years have redefined the



practices of religious regulation that have been in place since the early Republican period.

Religious regulations during the single-party period functioned along two lines. The first line includes "*negative religious regulations*" (Reardon, 2019)" or, in other words, religious restriction practices. With this end, social institutions such as education, law, and social welfare were comprehensively differentiated from religion; religious organizations such as dervish lodges and zawiyas were closed down with the Takrir-i Sükun law enacted in 1925, and some political parties were shut down because of their alleged links with reactionism. These regulatory practices were implemented to minimize potential threats to the hegemony of the single-party government and the modernization ideals of the early republic. In the religion-state debates in modern Türkiye, the early Republican period is referred to as "assertive secularism" (Kuru, 2007) or "hostile separation" (Casanova, 2009) due to these religious regulation practices.

The other axis of religious regulation in the early Republican period was state favoritism. In this context, an official understanding of Islam was developed with the Ottoman ulema collaborating with the new state elites. Official Islam was organized under the Diyanet as a public administration organization, while the rest were declared illegal and pushed underground. In other words, the state and the established religious institution have become intertwined in Türkiye. This is a clear example of a state controlling religion through favoritism. Critics of the "secular state" thesis in Türkiye argue that Muslim identity was an integral part of the understanding of the state (Lord, 2018), including in the early Republican period, and that regulatory practices in this period were far from being anti-Islamic. Accordingly, attempts to regulate religion involved favoring or privileging modernized and nationalized religion (Lewis, 1968; Retoulas, 2011).

Crises, such as the closure of Islamist parties, political bans, and using religious symbols in public (the headscarf crisis in universities) continued up to the 2000s. Although they were never legally recognized, sects and religious communities that were considered elements of popular Islam were ignored by the state and continued

to exist de facto. Their visibility in the public sphere has increased since the 1980 coup d'état (Yıldırım, 2019).

On the other hand, the state continued to favor the majority religion more intensively. One reflection of this trend is in the field of religious education. Initiatives such as the inclusion of religion classes in the curriculum from the late 1940s onwards, the reopening of Imam Hatip Schools from 1950 onwards, the rapid increase in their number in the following years, and, in parallel, the opening of faculties of theology are examples of this. Furthermore, Turkish-Islamic synthesis, presented as a systematic ideology in the 1970s, began shaping state policies (Grigoriadis, 2012). In addition, the Diyanet, a public institution, was constitutionalized in 1961, and its mandate was expanded by Law No. 633 on the Establishment and Duties of the Presidency of Religious Affairs in 1965. Its relatively low budget increased in the first half of the 1990s but was reduced again after the process on February 28, 1998 which is called as "postmodern coup". In other words, while one pillar of religious regulation has receded over time, the other has continued, "largely" consolidated.

In 2002, the AKP, which has a religious identity, came to power alone, and the authoritarianization of the political regime during its long rule marked the beginning of a new era in terms of the religion-state nexus in Türkiye. In this process, the dichotomy between secular bureaucracy and Islamist politics ended in favor of the latter. The process of desecularization was accelerated in social institutions, such as education and social welfare. The balance between official religion and popular Islam has been redressed. Diyanet has become an established religious institution with enormous size in terms of personnel, budget, and, as will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters, a range of services. As the discussions in this chapter show, the state's role in the organization of religion and its ties with the majority religion continue to strengthen.

As Öztürk (2019: 94) puts it, the Kemalists focused on restricting the visibility of religion in public life. On the other hand, the AKP regulates the public sphere by

openly favoring religion. The consolidation of authoritarianism seems to have increased the capacity of religious symbols and assumptions to shape social life and institutions, while the restrictions on the presence of Sunni Islam, the majority religion in the public sphere, have faded. Religion has become an integral part of the national identity.

To sum up, while some pages of religious regulations were closed in Türkiye after the 2000s, new ones were opened. As I argued earlier, the authoritarianisation process created new needs for religious regulation. Both the early Republican cadres and the AKP government resorted to religious regulation policies. In other words, state intervention in the religious sphere in modern Türkiye remained essentially the same. However, techniques of the religious regulation changed dramatically since particularly 2010s. In reference to Reardon (2019), this change can be interpreted as a transition from the negative religious regulation of early Republican cadres to the positive regulation mechanisms of the AKP government. Positive regulation means that the state is more supportive in matters relating to religion. There are two reasons for the need for a new regulatory policy. One is, unsurprisingly, the political Islamist character of the AKP. The other is the use of the power of organized religion to promote the long-term goals of the leader to consolidate the hegemonic power of an authoritarian government (ibid:9).

In chapter 5, I will discuss my argument the restructuring of Diyanet in the public sphere is a result of the need for a new understanding of religious regulation that emerged after the 2000s and particularly the 2010s.

## CHAPTER 4

### RELIGIOUS REGULATION IN GREECE AND THE CHURCH OF GREECE

#### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to reveal the foundations of official religion policy and the characteristics of religious regulation from the foundation of Greece, which broke away from the Ottoman Empire and became an independent nation-state, to the present day. In doing so, it puts the Church of Greece, the representative of Greek Orthodoxy, and the established religious organization of Greece at the center of the discussion. In this way, this chapter discusses why and how the state has regulated religion from the and the transformations in this field through the basic pillars of the religion-state nexus.

This chapter traces the practices of religious regulation in Greece through the historical process. However, it should be noted that the temporal focus of this chapter is on the 2000s, when the process of Europeanisation gained momentum and the post-2010 period, marked by neoliberal austerity policies that radically transformed the cultural, political, and economic spheres in Greece.

#### 4.2. Organization of Majority Religion

Articles 3, 13, and 16 of the current Greek constitution<sup>30</sup>, which came into force in 1975 after the end of military dictatorship in Greece, refer to the issue of religion. This section outlines the religion-state nexus in Greece through the elements identified in the light of the emphases in these articles. First, the concept of "prevailing religion," a constitutional term, is examined, but there seems to be no

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<sup>30</sup> The 1975 constitution was amended in 1986, 2001, 2008 and 2019.

consensus on its scope. Second, the Church of Greece, the established religious organization in Greece, is analysed under three headings: the historical origins and foundation of the Church, its institutional structure and ties with the state, and the social mission of the Church. Thirdly, how the Greek state supervises religions is demonstrated, particularly in the context of the organizational structure and activities of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Education which is the other component of Greek religious administration. Fourth, the process of Orthodoxy becoming a part of Greek national identity is discussed within the conceptualization of Hellenorthodoxy. Fifth and finally, the challenges that Greece faces in the process of Europeanization due to the eastern tradition of religion-state relations are presented and different perspectives on this issue are gathered.

#### **4.2.1. Regulation of the Church of Greece**

The Church of Greece, a constitutional institution, is undoubtedly the main pillar of the relationship between religion and the state in Greece. In order to show how the Church has been institutionalized in the shadow of the state, this section is divided into four sections. Although the relationship between the Church of Greece and the state has been continuous from the past to the present, this relationship has taken on a new form during certain periods of rupture. Therefore, the first two sections are based on simple periodization. First, from the Byzantine period, the construction of the Church of Greece as the official religious organization of the state was examined. This section extends to the period of the military junta in Greece. The second part highlights the contradictions encountered by the church and Greek state during the process of democratization that began after the junta. The third part demonstrates the administrative structure of the Church as an arm of the state organization and clarifies issues that are controversial in Greek public opinion, such as the personnel and income of the Church. Finally, the social mission of the Church of Greece, the clearest and most continuous indicator of its cooperation with the state, is discussed.

#### **State involvement in Church Administration**

Without considering its Byzantine past, it is practically impossible to comprehend the Orthodox Church of Greece as it exists now and its relationships with the state.

This is because as the leading and fundamental institution of Orthodox Christianity, the Church was founded, gained its identity, and strengthened during Byzantine history. In other words, the development of the Church as an Orthodox Patriarchate occurred after A.D. 325 under the protection of the Byzantine state (Milas, 1994:37-38).

Christianity was legalized in 381 when Theodosius, Roman emperor of the East, convened the First Council of Constantinople, establishing it as a state religion in the eastern part of the Roman Empire. In the seventh century, the region began to show signs of Hellenization. This means that in Byzantium, centered in Constantinople, Greek took the place of Latin and was characterized by Orthodox Christianity (Polyzoidis, 2019:136). As Polyzoidis points out, the relationship between religion and the state at this time can be seen in the symbol of the double-headed eagle, the official state symbol of the late Byzantine Empire. The cross and the globe held in the eagle's talons represent the union between the Byzantine Orthodox Church and the state, and the harmonious coexistence of the civil and religious duties of the emperor (ibid.,136). During Byzantine period, the Orthodox Church played an important role in civilizing, humanizing, and uniting many people who had to live in peace within the Empire. Therefore, Byzantine culture and Orthodoxy became synonymous concepts (ibid).

Conquest of Constantinople in 1453 initiated not only a new century, but also a new era for the Orthodox Church. Mehmed the Conqueror issued a decree declaring that no one would be able to dominate the Patriarch, that the Patriarch and priests would be exempt from certain obligatory duties, that churches would not be converted into mosques, and that marriages, burials, and other worship services would continue to be conducted in accordance with the Orthodox Church's procedures (see Macar, 2003: 39). Later on, the position of the Patriarchate was further strengthened. For example, the Ottomans gave the Patriarchate the right to judge its subjects, which it did not have under the Byzantium (ibid., 40). Moreover, the Ottoman administration, which was largely tolerant about education, left this issue to the will of each "millet"<sup>31</sup>. The Greek Orthodox Church, pioneered by the Patriarch of

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<sup>31</sup> It is a term used to denote different religious-ethnic groups in the Ottoman Empire.

Constantinople, was in charge of educating members of the Greek Orthodox millet (Kazamias, 2009). Local communities or parishes in greater Constantinople, as well as most cities and towns in Anatolia and the Greek peninsula, financed "common" and/or "Hellenic" schools with church and private donations. In the villages, the local priests worked as the teacher as well. Schools linked to the Patriarchate, such as the Great National School in Constantinople's Fanari District, trained well-known intellectual and religious leaders, as well as many school teachers of the Greek Orthodox millet (*ibid.*, 241).

In return for these privileges, the church undertook the role of a loyal intermediary legitimizing new political power in the sight of Christian subjects. For this reason, Neoklis Sarris argues that, in this process, the church became the ideological apparatus of the state in the Althusserian sense (cited in Macar, 2003: 50). Moreover, the fall of Constantinople was traumatic for the Orthodox Christians due to the dominance of the state, even though it had given the church a very important status during the Ottoman period (Karalis, 2007: 156). For instance, the Patriarch and the aristocracy around him had to be loyal to the Sultan, who could be very cruel at times, because they were his civil servants and one wrong move could cost them all their profits. As well as Orthodox clergy, the Ottoman political system demanded obedience to the Sultan from its Orthodox subjects as a totalitarian autocracy. The sultans sometimes imposed unbearable taxes on the Orthodox millet to cover the cost of war. In this respect, they were not very different from the Byzantine emperors, who considered religious opposition to be an insurrection against their authority (*ibid.*, 156-157).

The gradual weakening of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century and the struggle for independence of the millets subject to it brought about the fragmentation of the Orthodox world. Orthodoxy lost its central doctrine and administrative center, in contrast to its Catholic counterpart and Protestantism's strong international connections. With the establishment of their own nation-states by the orthodox nations that left the Ottoman Empire, the Orthodox church fragmented among many national, self-governed churches (Keridis, 2009:123). While patriarchates and national churches were achieving autonomy (autocephaly), administrative and

doctrinal authority of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Istanbul, first among equals, bottomed out (Danopoulos, 2004:49-50).

One of the newly established national churches was the Church of Greece. In 1822, during the War of Independence, the first modern Greek constitution, enacted by the first national assembly of Epidaurus, established the Orthodox Church as a definitive symbol of Greek ethnic identity. The first article of the new constitution's chapter 1 addressed religion. It stated that "*the established religion of the Greek State is the Eastern Orthodox Church of Christ, the government of Greece, however, tolerates every other religion, and its services and ceremonies may be practised without interference*" (Frazee, 1969:47).

Initially, the Orthodox Church of Greece was united with the Ecumenical Patriarch in Istanbul, and thus fell under its hierarchical control. Later on, the government invited the Synod, the Church's ruling unit, in 1833, and the organization of the Church in Greece under the state was discussed and voted on. As a result, the National Assembly of Naphilio enunciated the Church of Greece autocephalous from the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. It denoted the Orthodox Church of Greece's independence from the Patriarch of Constantinople's ecclesiastical authority. However, at the same time, the royal decree issued in 1833 indicated that the church was designed to be under the dominance of the state. According to the Organic Law on the Autocephaly of the Church of Greece was promulgated on 23 July 1833, the spiritual head of the church was Jesus Christ. However, in terms of its governance, it now had the king as its head<sup>32</sup>. A five-member Holy Synod of the King of Greece was established as the highest ecclesiastical governing body. Its members were appointed by the King, and a royal counsellor attended its meetings. Besides the higher clergy, priests and monks were also entitled to participate in the Holy Synod. The king would have the right to convene the body, but not to intervene on doctrinal

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<sup>32</sup> Here, it is necessary to explain Greece's political conditions at that time briefly. The assassination of Kapodistrias, the founder of the modern Greek State, in 1831 caused great internal unrest in the country. As a result, in 1832, the great powers placed Prince Otto of Bavaria on the throne of the new kingdom. The young King Otto ruled the country together with the Bavarian regency council until he came of age. It should be noted that King Otto was a Roman Catholic with a Protestant wife. This was one of the causes of tensions in Orthodox Christian Greece. He was forced to abdicate and leave Greece in October 1862 (see Hatzis, 2019).



matters (Stamatopoulos, 2014: 38-39). In other words, this regulation gave the king wide power over the administration of the church.

As can be seen, this regulation made in 1833 is a turning point in terms of religion-state nexus in Greece. Sherrard calls this process as “Henrican Change” which refers to Henry VIII establishing the Anglican Church in England by denying Papacy's rights over the Church in England”. Thus, the idea of church and state, which was seen as two separate aspects of a society in medieval Europe, was replaced by a model in which the state was dominant in the alliance with the church. According to Sherrard, such was the case in the Greek Kingdom in 1833. The Greek Church became a state department, and church officials became more or less state officials (Sherrard, 1959:200).

According to Frazee (1969) , the period from the Ottoman Empire to Independent Greece did not open a new chapter for the Church. Although the Church under the sultans during the Ottoman Empire preserved its Hellenistic linguistic, cultural and religious heritage, it was corrupted by the system in which it existed. The Organic Law adopted in 1833 did not restore the Church to its proper position. Frazer states that the greatest weakness of the Church in both periods was its submission to state power and the consequent interference of civil authority in its internal affairs. As mentioned above, the Church was unable to make its own way in the Ottoman period due to its close allegiance to autocratic rulers and corrupt administrators. The situation of the holy synod, which became subordinated to the king during the period of independent Greece, could not be considered a significant improvement compared to the Ottoman period. Neither in the Ottoman period nor in Independent Greece did the Church have the intellectual and determined religious leaders and bishops to free it from this vicious circle (ibid., 196-197).

Papastathis argues that the Organic Law of 1833, which subordinated the church to the state, established state-rule law, even though it contradicted constitutional provisions. Although the constitutions of the revolutionary period (1822-1827) emphasized that the Greek Orthodox Church was the prevailing religion they did not address the state’s right to legislate in ecclesiastical matters (Papastathis, 2010: 339).

It seems that the nexus that these constitutions aimed at was to establish some kind of system of coordination between the state and the church. This system was structured in such a way that church and state cooperated only in matters of common interest and did not interfere with each other in other matters. However, through the Organic Law, the Bavarian Regency had implemented a model in which the state had hierarchical supremacy over the church. Papastathis argues that behind this model, which subordinated the Church to the state and even made it its "maidservant", was the Bavarian regent's fear that the Orthodox Church might use the cultural and political influence it had enjoyed during Ottoman rule against him. Consequently, by operating the state-law rule, the Bavarian regency inherited to the Hellenic State a kind of caesaropapism, which was first constitutionally established in 1844 (ibid., 340). Therefore, even if the 1864, 1911, 1927, and 1952 constitutions conferred on the church's self-governed status, they ignored the state's legislative power over the legislative power of the Orthodox Church via ecclesiastical decrees and charters, which allowed the state to intervene in the church's internal affairs. Papastathis calls this exceptional situation constitutional fallacy (ibid., 340-341).

Indeed, attempts to liberate the Church from state interference in the first decades of the 20th century were often undermined by the more extensive interventions that followed. An example is the dictatorship of Metaxas (1936–1941), which replaced the elected Archbishop Damascenes with Chrysanthos, whom he supported, as archbishop (Konidaris, 2023). Furthermore, as Veković (2020:37-62) points out, the state's institutionalized control of the church continued even during periods when the church was ideologically aligned with political powers. The most concrete example of this is the military junta regime of 1967–1974. Throughout this process, the church sided with military rule on the basis of anti-communism. Veković emphasizes that it even continued to support the junta regime despite its inhumane practices (ibid., 41-43). However, this partnership did not prevent the military government from interfering with the church. The military junta wiped out the current then church charter in the late 1960s and replaced it with a new one that gave the state more room for intervention. According to new regulation, for example, the junta had a say in the election and removal of the church leader. They also intervened in the composition of the Holy Synod, the chief organ of the church hierarchy.

Although this situation disturbed some clergy and churchgoers, they did not oppose these practices due to the fear that the church would lose all its privileges in the scenario where the communists seized power (ibid., 43-48).

The end of the military rule in 1974 and the beginning of the democratic restoration process marked a significant turning point in the relationship between the church and state in modern Greece. The conservative New Democracy Party (Νέα Δημοκρατία, ND), which came to power in the first elections, displayed a gradualist approach (the view supporting that the reform should be done gradually) on church-state separation while the 1975 constitution was being written (Moskoff, 2005:66). On the other hand, the opposing Panhellenic Socialist Movement (Πανελλήνιο Σοσιαλιστικό Κίνημα, PASOK) was supporting a clear separation of church-state relations. The resulting model was neither a full Synallilia nor a strictly religious-state separation (ibid.,66). Article 3, section 1 of the constitution adopted in 1975 is the primary reference to the status of the Church in the Hellenic Republic:

“The prevailing religion in Greece is that of the Eastern Orthodox Church of Christ. The Orthodox Church of Greece, acknowledging our Lord Jesus Christ as its head, is inseparably united in doctrine with the Great Church of Christ in Constantinople and with every other Church of Christ of the same doctrine, observing unwaveringly, as they do, the holy apostolic and synodal canons and sacred traditions. It is autocephalous and is administered by the Holy Synod of serving Bishops and the Permanent Holy Synod originating thereof and assembled as specified by the Statutory Charter of the Church (...)”

The autocephalous structure of the Church of Greece is preserved by the 1975 Greek Constitution, despite the fact that it is stated to be inseparably joined in spirit with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and all other churches of the same denomination. That is to say, the church is a self-governed institution. As stated in Article 3, the administration of the Church is based on a dual synodal system consisting of the Holy Synod of the Hierarchy and the Permanent Holy Synod<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>33</sup> The Holy Synod is the highest administrative body of the Orthodox Church of Greece. The Archbishop of Athens preside the Holy Synod, according to the statutory charter, the Law No. 590/1977, meets just one time each October in an ordinary session. There is another relatively small synod which is the Permanent Synod consisting of 12 Bishops. The Archbishop of Athens also preside at this synod functioning all year long, except from the period in which the Synod of Hierarchy, i.e. the Synod of all the Bishops which govern the Metropolises, is convened. Except for those outlined in

On the other hand, Papastathis (2010) challenges the claims that the 1975 constitution established a more equal and coordinated relationship between church and state. He argues that the drafters of the 1975 constitution, like the drafters of the constitution of the military dictatorship of 1968, neglected to include clauses limiting the extent to which Parliament could regulate matters concerning the Church. He also points out that Article 72, Section 1, of the Constitution provides that the state can legislate on religious matters. In other words, the plenary session of the parliament is the legislative body authorized to discuss and vote on legislative proposals and bills referring to matters under Article 3 and Article 13 of the constitution, which cover the Orthodox Church and related matters. On these grounds, Papastathis argues that according to the 1975 constitution, the rule of State supremacy (*Staatskirche*) or state-law regulating the relations between the Greek State and the Orthodox Church continues (*ibid.*,. 341-342).

### **Statutory Charter of the Church (590/1977)**

Attempts to abolish dictatorial regulations in Greece's democratization process led to the restoration of the ecclesiastical organization. The first important step in this regard was, as mentioned above, the articles of the 1975 constitution addressing religious matters. This step was followed by efforts to create a new Church statute, and a commission was established for this purpose by the decision of the then Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs. Chaired by the Archbishop of Athens, the commission was composed of both church officials and state representatives, including the Director General of Religious Affairs and experts in ecclesiastical law. As a result of intensive commission work, the Statutory Charter of the Church No. 590 (*Ο Καταστατικός Χάρτης της Εκκλησίας*) (590/1977) was published in the official gazette on 31 May 1977 and entered into force.

Let us take a closer look at the articles of this charter that set out the links between church and state. First, according to the fourth paragraph of Article 1, the Church of Greece and other ecclesiastical entities such as the Metropolises and the parishes are

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the specific clauses of the Orthodox Church of Greece's Constitutional Charter, the Permanent Holy Synod has the same authority as the Synod of Hierarchy (See Kyriazopoulos, 2016).

Legal Entities of Public Law (Νομικό πρόσωπο Δημοσίου Δικαίου, Ν.Π.Δ.Δ.). It means that, as an Ν.Π.Δ.Δ., the Church is a self-governing public organization that applies public authority in order to generate a particular public interest. According to the Greek legal system, all the Ν.Π.Δ.Δ.s are founded and abolished only by law. Additionally, they have the financial resources and special tax privileges required to carry out all duties delegated to them by the state. Therefore, it can be asserted that the Church and its affiliated organs provide a kind of public service.

Article 46, paragraph 1, of the Charter regulates the issue of the financial resources of the Church, which is one of the most controversial issues in Greece in terms of the religion-state nexus. The Greek Church's financial resources for continuous operations come from rental income from church properties, voluntary contributions from its members, and state subsidies. The question of the Greek Church's properties is still "a great enigma" as Dimitropoulos (2001) puts it because it's difficult to estimate the actual value of church property. Dimitripoulos underlines that this is due to the fact that the Church of Greece is a complicated organization comprised of a number of diverse legal bodies, both public and private, each with its own administration. In other words, in addition to the central legal entity, there are metropolises under the administration and control of the metropolitan, parishes, monasteries, and other legal entities that support the metropolitan's work. Their independence from the Church's central administration entails property and revenue independence, as well as a separation of controls in their management. In short, this disorganized structure makes calculation almost impossible (ibid.,111). For this reason, there are different opinions about the amount and quality of the material assets of the church. Roughly speaking, at one end of the spectrum there are those who claim that the church does not have many properties with high returns (Impantokratoros.gr, 2000)<sup>34</sup>, while at the other end there are those who say that the properties owned by the church are enough to cover Greece's debts (Anaximandros, 2021)<sup>35</sup>. According to the news in some newspapers, it is estimated that the church

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<sup>34</sup> For instance see <https://www.impantokratoros.gr/BC976C30.el.aspx> accessed on 09.03.2022.

<sup>35</sup> For instance see <https://nikolaosanaximandros.gr/i-periousia-tis-ekklisias-anerxetai-sta-5-tris/> accessed on 09.03.2022.

owns approximately 1,300,000 acres, including the monastery land, and the value of its property is around 14 billion euros (www.fpress.gr, 2018)<sup>36</sup>.

As Article 46 of the Charter points out, state subsidies are another source of financial resources for the Church. This largely refers to the payment of the salaries of the clergy by the state. Undoubtedly, this issue is one of the main sticking points in the debate on the nexus of church and state in Greece, and its roots can be traced back to the role of the Church in the construction and consolidation of the Greek State. When the Greek Orthodox Church declared autocephaly in 1833, the state dissolved many monasteries and confiscated their properties. Many church and monastic properties were expropriated for reasons such as to land the landless or small peasants or to use them for the rehabilitation of refugees, especially those who arrived after 1922. It had been promised that the revenues from the expropriations would be put into the Church Fund and this fund would be used for the financing of education and religious activities. However, this project was soon abandoned and the funds from the monastic estates were combined with other revenues of the new state (Dimitropoulos, 2001: 119).

Law 536/1945 provided for state subsidise of the payroll of the clergy through a special account (Clergy Salary Fund- Κεφάλαιον προς πληρωμήν μισθού εφημεριακού κλήρου in Greek). Additionally, 6,000 places for regular clergymen were created. Orthodox families contribute to the state with an annual "parish tax" (abolished in 1962), while a church contribution of 25% before 1968 and 35% thereafter is allowed through taxation of church income<sup>37</sup> (Mitralexis, 2017a). A significant portion of the real estates of the remaining monasteries were allocated to the State in 1952. Due to state threats such as cutting the salaries of the clergy and the forced expropriation of church lands, the Church had to accept the concession of thousands of acres of pasture and agricultural crops. Still today, the issue of the transfer of monasteries' real estate remains a constant subject of negotiation in the regulation of church and state relations (Dimitropoulos, 2001: 119).

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<sup>36</sup> <https://www.fpress.gr/oikonomia/story/56860/ayti-einai-ayti-i-perioysia-tis-ekklisias> accessed on: 08.03.2021

<sup>37</sup> The tax paid by the church since 1945 was abolished by the government of Kostas Simitis with the law no 3220/2004. As of this date, the responsibility of the clergy's payroll has passed completely to the state (Mitralexis, 2017a : 20).

Consistent with the new framework of Church-State relations established by the 1975 Constitution, this chart was generally seen as a progressive step, since it guaranteed the free and democratic functioning of the Church's governing bodies. For example, among many other advantages, it left the election of high priests (Metropolitans) to the Holy Synod of the Hierarchy, which is the fully competent body (Mylonas, 2017)<sup>38</sup>. As Androutsopoulos points out, although the charter has mainly been successfully implemented, it has not been entirely free from legislative interference. An example of this is that in 1983, with Law No. 1351 (Article 15), the state made changes in the article of the chart on the dismissal of metropolitans without the consent of the church on this issue (Androutsopoulos, 2022)<sup>39</sup>.

Similarly, Karagiannis (2009) argues that it is difficult to say that the Church of Greece is independent although the 1975 Constitution and 1977 Statutory Charter of the Church, discussed below, provide the church with a degree of autonomy. He justifies his argument with practices such as the state-law regime that allows the state to intervene in the internal affairs of the church, the church's inability to change these regulations unilaterally, the fact that the canonical edicts of the church are not valid until they are published in the official gazette, and the election of the Archbishop of Athens, albeit symbolic, in the presence of the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs (ibid., 150).

Finally, the first paragraph of Article 2 of the 1977 Statutory Charter is one of the most important articles referring to the Church's relationship with the state:

“The Church of Greece cooperates with the state on subjects of common interest, for example, the Christian education of the youth; religious service in the army; the upholding of the institution of marriage and family; *the care of those in need of general protection*, the protection of the holy relics and ecclesiastical and Christian monuments; the establishment of new religious holidays; and seeks the protection of the state whenever our religion is insulted<sup>40</sup>” (translation belongs to Sakellariou: 2019).

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<sup>38</sup> See <https://www.pemptousia.gr/2017/09/to-elliniko-sintagma-tou-1975-ke-o-katastatikos-chartis-tis-ekklisias-tis-ellados-tou-1977/> accessed on 01.07.2023

<sup>39</sup> See <https://www.kathimerini.gr/world/561704785/o-katastatikos-chartis-tis-ekklisias/> accessed on 01.07.2023

<sup>40</sup> Η Εκκλησία της Ελλάδος συνεργάζεται μετά της Πολιτείας, προκειμένου περί θεμάτων κοινού ενδιαφέροντος, ως τα της χριστιανικής αγωγής της νεότητος, της εν τω στρατεύματι θρησκευτικής

The importance of this article comes from the fact that it defines the church as an actor complementary to the state. The following section opens a parenthesis on the cooperation between church and state on a historical level through the social functions of the church.

### **Collaboration of the Church with the State**

In modern Greek, the church corresponds to Ecclesia (εκκλησία), a word that comes from Ancient Greek. Before versions of the word Ecclesia used in the early Christian and Jewish world, there was a secular civic Ecclesia in classical Greek (Korner, 2017). Korner states that in early Greek literature and epigraphy, the word Ecclesia is mostly used in the meanings of "public gathering (assembly) of the citizenry (demos) of a polis" and "collective identity (congregation) of assembly." Later, Christians started to use this word to mean the meetings where their communities came together (ibid., 1-2), and then it got its present meaning by moving away from its secular meaning. Ecclesia in modern Greece, albeit to a much lesser extent than the western churches, has always been one of the leading institutions supporting society materially and spiritually in difficult times<sup>41</sup>.

Since the 4th and 5th centuries when Christianity was well established in the Roman Empire, the economically enriched church was very effective in the emergence of charitable homes for the sick, elderly, orphans, poor or widows (Dionysios, 2018: 61). Accordingly, even when we go to the early periods of Eastern Christianity, we encounter the charitable activities of the Church to solve social problems. In the long history of Byzantium, the activities in the care system contributed by the Church was including collecting money and distributing it to widows, orphans, the homeless, the poor, the foreigners, caring for the slaves, the captives, the prisoners. To release them from death, The Church provided training programs teaching art or work for

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υπηρεσίας, της εξυψώσεως του θεσμού του γάμου και της οικογενείας, της φροντίδος διά την περίθαλψιν των δεομένων εν γένει προστασίας, της διαφυλάξεως των ιερών κειμηλίων και εκκλησιαστικών και χριστιανικών μνημείων, της καθιερώσεως νέων Θρησκευτικών εορτών, ζητεί δε την προστασίαν της Πολιτείας οσάκις προσβάλλεται η θρησκεία (Sakellariou, 2019).

<sup>41</sup> The traditional and theological differences between eastern and western Christianity have also led to a natural differentiation in terms of institutions and forms of social protection in the east and west (Stathopoulos & Burikos, 2007: 14). However, a socio-theological debate goes beyond the limits of this study.



unemployed people in parishes, charitable institutions, etc. (Stathopoulos & Burikos, 2007:16-17). Moreover, the deaconesses, women assigned by the Church for caring and charity works, were taking care of the special needs of the poor and sick. In each parish, there were lists of all those who needed help. Charity and welfare activity in general were being exercised through institutions as an expression of collective responsibility. All those in need, including pagans and opponents of the church, were able to benefit from it (ibid).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the newly established Autocephalous Church of Greece, founded in 1833, supported the Greek State responsible for meeting many social needs with limited resources after declaring its independence from the Ottoman Empire. As Anastassiadis (2010) explains in detail, probably since it had not undergone the Enlightenment, the social action of the Church of Greece and its adaptation to charity work was delayed compared to other Christian denominations. Greek church reformers, who observed what happened in Western Europe in the 19th century, had a large share in this adaptation. Despite some objections from religious traditionalists, they initiated church's action in the fields of education and charity. While doing this, they were inspired by non-orthodox denominations, who were very active in Greece at that time, without losing the "intra-national protection" of the church. Thus, while the Greek Church found the opportunity to increase its social action in the competitive liberal market at the beginning of the 20th century, it cooperated with the state to eliminate the danger of foreign interference (ibid., 46-52). In addition to providing material aid to those in need at the local parish level, the newly established Autocephalous Church of Greece played a significant role in addressing the social needs of the Greek citizenry by donating its lands and Orthodox monasteries for the construction of hospitals, schools, and orphanages (Fokas & Molokotos-Liederman, 2004:293).

Although the church was under the control of the state, it was not in a passive position over the course of the state-building process. One of the issues that strengthened the state-church relationship was that the church undertook many social service activities needed in the post-war period. After the War of Independence, many people in need were left behind. Besides local governments, social work was largely carried out by the church and some philanthropists from abroad. At the

beginning of the twentieth century, the church continued its activities, both through its local organizations and through the institutions of the Archdiocese. Its priorities were the maintenance of institutions and the protection of children and the needy elderly. During the German occupation, metropolitans (ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the church) all over Greece played an active role in the distribution of food, medicine, and clothing (Polyzoidis, 2019:138). In other words, the church functioned as a public social service institution.

In early 20<sup>th</sup> century Greece, church-society relations also developed outside the “official church”. Religious brotherhoods, the best-knowns are Zoe ("Life"), Sotir ("Saviour"), and Stavros ("Cross"),” played a crucial role in the Church life as a missionary movement to evangelistic and social work (Ware, 1997:306-309). According to Makrides (2000:2494) their appearance was caused by the official Church's inability to deploy a necessary missionary program in the country. Particularly Zoe, whose members were consisted of clerics and lay theologians, was a very active missionary organization that was not disconnected from the world. It actively and efficiently carried out diverse activities included the publication of the Bible, religious books and journals, preaching, Sunday schools, and Bible study groups, charitable work, summer camps, various affiliated sisterhoods of devoted celibate women, and numerous other associations for various social groups (e.g., parents, students, workers) (ibid.,2495). Later on, Zoe, which contributed to the restoration of Greece after World War II and the Greek Civil War (1946-49), focused on creating a new Orthodox Greece in the line of Helleno-Christian Civilization in the 1950s (ibid.,2496). The influence of Zoe began to diminish along with the accusation of its link with the military junta (1967-74). Ware (1997:309) claims that its moralistic, puritanical tone, which characterizes its publications, has little appeal for today's Greek youth.

Katrougalos (1996:48) expresses that almost no progress was made in the field of social policy during the Second World War and especially the civil war in Greece between 1946-1949. After the military coup in 1967, the civilian government was re-established in 1974. According to Katraouglas, the period between 1975 and 1981, in which social expenditures increased, constitutes the second period of the welfare state in Greece. However, social spending lagged behind the military budget to

which the civilian government allocated a larger share (ibid., 52). It would not be wrong to say that the state's inability in the social field in this process increased its dependence on the social benefit provided by the church.

In 1981, when Papandreou's party, PASOK, established Greece's first 'socialist' government, economic and social planning initiatives gained momentum. As a reflection of this, the economic plan covering 1983-1987 included many social provisions such as the establishment of nursing homes, health centers, and daycare centers for school-age children. Although the Greek public sector made significant progress in the 1980s, social service institutions (child welfare homes, nursing homes, etc.) run by the Church of Greece and Red Cross in the voluntary sector were among the important actors in this field (Cannan, Berry, & Lyons, 1992: 49). Towards the end of the 1980s, the political and economic transformation in the following years led to restrictions on public expenditures, and the potential contributions of the private sector were emphasized (ibid.).

#### **4.2.2. State Supervision of All Religions**

In addition to Church of Greece, Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs is the other half of the religious bureaucracy in Greece. Article 20 of Chapter 3 of the first constitution of Greece, adopted in 1822, provided for the establishment of 8 ministries, one of which was the Ministry of Religion. One of the most ardent supporters of the revolution, Bishop Joseph of Androusa, was appointed head of Ministry of Religion (Frazee, 1969:47-48). In 1829, education and religion were combined under the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Education (Fabbe, 2019:71-72). The name of the ministry has changed many times until today. The current name of the ministry is "the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports". It is in charge of supervising religions in Greece as well as the national educational system.

According to Presidential Decree 18/2018 on the Organizational Structure of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs<sup>42</sup> Article 1 points out objectives such as

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<sup>42</sup> See <https://www.kodiko.gr/nomothesia/document/349509/p.d.-18-2018> and [https://www.minedu.gov.gr/publications/docs2018/FEK\\_organismos\\_ypovrgeioy\\_paideias2018.pdf](https://www.minedu.gov.gr/publications/docs2018/FEK_organismos_ypovrgeioy_paideias2018.pdf) accessed on 13.02.2023

the moral, spiritual, and physical education of Greeks, the development of national consciousness, the protection of freedom of religious conscience and worship, the supervision of religious ministers of all known religions, the promotion of respect for freedom of speech and expression, tolerance of differences, and education based on the principles of democracy, equality, solidarity, non-discrimination, transparency, and merit. As can be seen, religion is of interest to the ministry as part of both education and freedom of conscience and worship. It is entrusted with keeping alive the role of orthodoxy in Greek national identity (the moral dimension of education and expressions of national consciousness), as well as the supervision of other recognized religions present in Greece.

The department related to religious affairs is "the General Secretariat for Religious Affairs." This department was established with reference to articles of Greek constitution regulating religious issues. These are Article 3, which regulates religion and state relations; Article 13, which protects religious freedoms; and Article 16, which regulates education, art, and science.

Article 57 of the Presidential Decree 18/2018 on the Organizational Structure of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs (amended by Law 4589/2019) regulates the General Secretariat for Religious Affairs. It is in charge of "protecting the freedom of religious conscience and religious practice, supervision of the religious education system and the religious ministers of known religions, education and promoting actions against fanaticism and intolerance, as well as interreligious relations and dialogue in the interest of religious peace and social cohesion." The General Secretariat for Religious Affairs consists of two directorates. One is the Directorate for Religious Administration while the other is the Directorate of Religious Education and Interreligious Relations.

The Directorate for Religious Administration's objective is the supervision of the implementation of government policy in the field of religion. This supervision covers both the prevailing religion, Orthodox Christianity, and other known religions. The Directorate includes Department A of Ecclesiastical Administration, Department B of Administrative Affairs and Registry, and Department C of Muslim Affairs.

The Directorate of Religious Education and Interreligious Relations has important responsibilities for matters related to the supervision and control of Orthodox Christianity. Some of its tasks include the following:

- the establishment, abolition, and merger of Metropolises
- the control and supervision of the financial management acts of the other ecclesiastical legal entities of the Orthodox Church of Greece, the Orthodox Church of Crete, and the Holy Metropolises of the Dodecanese
- the supervision and implementation of the provisions of the legislation for all types of personnel of ecclesiastical legal entities
- the establishment, merger, abolition, reconstitution, renaming, and conversion of Parishes, Temples, Monasteries, and Hermitages and the supervision of their operation,
- expressing an opinion regarding the expropriation of real estate for ecclesiastical purposes,
- monitoring the service changes of the clergy and church employees quarterly and annually.

The Department for Islamic Matters deals with matters related to Islam in Greece, such as the organization, functioning, supervision and control of the muftis, while Department for Administrative Matters and Registry focuses on the matters concerning the religious communities, apart from the matters of competence of Ecclesiastical Administration and the Department of Muslim Affairs.

The other Directorate is in charge of Religious Education, which includes the Department for Ecclesiastical and Religious Education, the Department for Religious Freedoms and Interfaith Relations, and the Department for Islamic Medresses (see Article 59). One of the aims of the Directorate for Religious Education and Interfaith Relations is to organize "religious education" in Greece. Religious education (of the dominant religion and known religions) includes the education of the clergy as well as the religious lessons given to both Greek Orthodox Christians and the Muslim minority in Thrace in the Greek formal education system. The task of the Department for Religious Freedoms and Interfaith Relations is to design policies to ensure interfaith peace, support, promote and function properly. To this end, it carries out

programs and actions that contribute to the development of tolerance, as well as relations of reciprocity and reconciliation, for the peaceful coexistence and common life of all residents of the region, regardless of their religion. Finally, the Department for Islamic Medresses deals with the matters concerning the formal and non-formal Religious Education of the Muslim Minority of Thrace and the Muslims of the rest of the territory,

#### **4.2.3. Tradition-Modernity Tension**

State- religion relations in Greece is the reflection of the tension between tradition and modernity, as underlined by Makrides (2003:113). This tension can be understood within the framework of the East-West debate, which is a historical phenomenon. At one end of the tension are the orthodox anti-Westernists, who represent tradition. Anti-Westernism, which is historically rooted in the schism between the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Patriarchates known as the Great Schism, continues today in different forms (Makrides, 2009). Some prestigious social groups in Orthodox geography, which experienced Western modernization in various ways, particularly from the 18th century onwards, supported Westernization, while Orthodox opponents of the West tried to cover up the West's progress in secular matters by claiming that it lacked religious authenticity (ibid., 213-214). On the other hand, the west-centrists doubted the Europeanness of the continent's Eastern and Southeastern regions because they were Orthodox and associated the East with a sense of backwardness (ibid., 221-222).

It would not be wrong to argue that this tension was resurrected along with the collapse of the military junta and then Europeanization efforts accelerated by Greece's accession to the European Union in 1981. The concrete reflections of this tension are embodied in the resistance of the Church, the representative of tradition, to the attempts of secular power to secularize the legal framework. Sakellariou (2022) argues that in this process, the church as a traditionalist institution exhibited some fundamentalist tendencies (non-violent) in the face of secularization steps, such as the introduction of automatic divorce for married couples without the intervention of the church in 1976, the introduction of civil (secular) marriage in 1982, the legal establishment of cremation centers, and the removal of religious designation from

identity cards in 2000. These tendencies are embodied in the discourses of the metropolitans and the Holy Synod, which emphasize the crisis, the attack on religious and national identity, degradation, rebirth, and the importance of preserving biblical teaching and Greek-Orthodox culture and tradition (ibid.).

Western analysts have often debated whether the main pillars of Western European modernity—such as rationalization, secularization, democratization, etc.—are possible in countries like Greece, where the Orthodox tradition prevails and there is no religion-state dualism. On the other hand, objections to Western-centric analyses of the Greek case have an important place in the literature. In particular, Greek scholars have challenged the thesis that Orthodox Christianity is irreconcilable with the values of modernity, which some Orientalist analysts have given negative connotations, and argued that one-size-fits-all prescriptions cannot explain the Case of Greece. For instance Karagiannis (2009) criticizes western-centric modernization understanding, which imposes a single model of secularism. In other words, he argues that the confusion between state and church in modern Greece does not mean incomplete modernity or incomplete secularism. Instead, a distinctive model of secularism already exists in Greece. Contrary to the modernists' claim, the church, which has been under state control throughout the history of modern Greece, is a structurally weak organization. Similarly, Hallikopoulou asserts that the church's subordination to the state, that is, to the secular authority, contributes to modernization rather than preventing it (Halikiopoulou, 2011:66). Thanks to the unity and subordination between the church and the state, the church could not resist the modernization efforts of the secular authority and had to respect its preferences.

According to Molokotos-Liederman (2009:42) Greece, as a border between the West and the Muslim world, is an example that secularization theses fail to explain (ibid., 42). She underlines that its Orthodox character does not make it entirely non-secular because, contrary to popular belief, Orthodox Christianity may be more prone to secularism than its western counterparts due to factors such as its decentralized structure, its flexible belief system, and its close relationship with national identity (ibid.,42-44). When all these factors are considered religion-state relations in Greece involve many contradictions. For instance, even if the Orthodox Church has political influence, it does not directly impact state affairs (ibid., 45-46). On the other hand,

there is no separation of church and state at the political level in Greece. In fact, the Church is a technical extension of the state. Moreover, religion in Greece is not limited to the private sphere. In light of these and other contradictions, Molokotos-Liederman argues that Greece has undergone a process of "selective secularization" at its own pace and according to its own religious, political, social, and historical profile (ibid., 52-53).

Regarding the tension between tradition and modernity, Danopoulos (2004) questions whether the Orthodox Christian tradition, and in particular the lack of religion-state dualism in Greece, is an obstacle to democratization, one of the cornerstones of Western European modernity. He conducts his analysis within the framework of the freedom of worship and association of religious minorities, which is a very controversial issue in Greece. The complex relationship between the Church of Greece, the dominant religious institution in Greece, and the state (i.e., their lack of autonomy from each other) has prevented the demands of minorities from reaching policymakers and taking steps to democratize that space. According to Danopoulos, this has not prevented the foundation and consolidation of democracy in Greece, but it has reduced its quality.

### **4.3. Ties with Majority Religion**

The previous section focused on the traditional practices of religious regulation in modern Greece. One important aspect of this is the state's control of the church, while another is the regulation of both majority and minority religions through the ministry.

This section discusses the sources of religious favoritism, which is another aspect of the religious regulation policies in Greece.

#### **4.3.1. Prevailing Religion**

According to a previous International Religious Freedom Report, in 2000, about 94 to 97 percent of Greece's population of 10.6 million adhered to the Greek Orthodox faith (the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights & U.S. Department of State, 2000).



By 2022, according to surveys, 81–90 percent of the population of 10.5 million identify as Greek Orthodox, 4–15 percent as atheists, and 2 percent as Muslims (Office of International Religious Freedom, 2023). Considering the influx of immigrants from both the former Soviet countries and the Middle East since the 90s, it can be argued that religious homogeneity in Greece is on the decline. While these developments are taking place, according to Article 3 of the Greek Constitution, the Orthodox Church of Greece remains the country's prevailing religion.

The term "prevailing religion" refers to the fact that since 1821 until the present day, all Greek Constitutions have considered the Orthodox Church the "prevailing religion" and granted it privileges. This term also constitutes one of the most contentious issues in the debate on the religion-state nexus in Greece. Alivizatos (1999: 25) states that the debate proceeds along two lines. The first line concerns the meaning of the term "prevailing." The second is whether Article 3 of the Constitution conflicts with European Union's norms. As Alivizatos underlines, this expression has no normative content and refers to a factual situation, according to the predominant view. This factual situation is that an overwhelming majority of the Greek people are Orthodox Christians.

On the other hand, Papastathis (2010: 343) claims that the meaning of prevailing religion is not limited to the religion of the majority of the Hellenic people. Rather, the concept is multi-layered. First, the Orthodox Christianity constitutes Greece's official religion. Second, the Church representing Orthodox Christianity has its own legal existence. In terms of legal relations, it is a legal entity of public law, and the same applies to church-based organizations. Third, the state explicitly protects orthodox Christianity and grants it institutional, moral, and/or financial privileges that it does not legally grant to other faiths. However, the author emphasizes that this does not mean that the prevailing religion is dominant. In his view, the preferential treatment of Orthodox Christianity concerns the Church and not individual believers. Otherwise, it would lead to different treatments of Orthodox and non-Orthodox citizens by the State, which would violate the principle of equality.

Gromitsaris (2016:57) states that the concept of prevailing religion has three different meanings in the case of Greece. In the old interpretative version, "prevailing" refers

to “State Religion” or “official” religion, which acquires special, privileged treatment. According to its second interpretation, “prevailing” points to the religion of most Greek people. The last interpretation implies the Orthodox Church’s honorary distinction of being the first among equals. Gromitsaris claims that the second and third interpretations diverge sharply from the first, denying the existence of special privileged treatment for the status of the "sovereign" religion at the constitutional level.

He (*ibid.*, 57-58) emphasizes that church-state relations in Greece cannot be analyzed from a Western modernist perspective. Such analyses consider the term "prevailing religion" in Article 3 of the Greek constitution as anti-secularism or the absence of religious freedoms, and underline the need to amend this article in line with Western standards. He claims that this perception is the result of an incomplete interpretation of the constitution. The main challenge is not to reform Article 3 of the Constitution. The important thing is to ensure the implementation of the liberal interpretation of the current constitutional framework regulating religion-state relations. It is a preliminary analysis for modernists to claim that there is a state church or state religion in Greece by focusing only on Article 3 of the Constitution. In other words, Gromitsaris states that Article 3 should not be considered alone, but together with Article 13, because the latter provides religious neutrality to the state by guaranteeing the freedom of religion in a society with an overwhelming orthodox majority. That is to say; Article 3 shows that the presence of prevailing religion's symbols in the public domain is acceptable and that the society has traditionally been accustomed to it, on the one hand. On the other hand, Greek state must protect and enable the religious life of religious minorities (Article 13). According to Gromitsaris, if Article 13 is respected, the Greek Constitution currently in force has all the necessary normative elements to ensure the state’s religious neutrality (*ibid.*,69). This indicates the existence of Greek secularism, if not Western secularism.

Kyriazopoulos (2001) (2001) addresses this issue from a legal perspective. He claims that if the term "prevailing religion" implies that Greek Orthodox Christianity is the religion of the Greek state, then there is an inherent contradiction between Article 3 and Article 13 of the Greek Constitution. In other words, the concept of prevailing

religion creates a legal situation in which freedom of religion is violated according to Western legal understanding. Article 13, which guarantees the right to freedom of religion, is compatible with Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). However, Greece cannot fully comply with its European obligations if any interpretation of 'prevailing religion,' which privileges the Greek Orthodox Church over other faith communities, is adopted in the constitution (ibid., 524).

Gemi (2021), on the other hand, addresses the issue of "prevailing religion" within the framework of the management of religious diversity in Greece and focuses on its practical consequences. Freedom of religion is guaranteed in the Constitution of Greece, and the Orthodox Church is considered tolerant of diversity. However, it is undeniable that the fact that Orthodoxy remains the 'dominant' religion in Greece gives the Church a privileged position. For example, the privileged position of the Church of Greece gives it the right to have a say in state affairs, such as regulating the religious education curriculum in schools, textbooks, or morning prayers, as well as in some activities of "known religions" (ibid., 88). Gemi underlines that religious differences cannot explain the relationship between the prevailing religion and known religions alone. In Greece, Muslim identity is paired with Turkish identity, with which the Greeks have been in historical and cultural competition for centuries. While Greece has gained experience in managing the religious institutions of the "old Islam" in Thrace, it does not seem willing to solve the religious freedom problems of the "new Islam" that has arrived in the last 30 years with immigration from the Middle East (ibid., 89).

In addition to the theoretical and legal debates, it is also necessary to look at how and to what extent the Church, as the prevailing religion, enjoys privileges in practice. For example, as a legal entity of public law, The Church of Greece has the right to set official holidays that adhere to its principles and the ability to send priests to participate in public ceremonies (Papadopoulou, 2014: 10). Greek state also finances the establishment and operation of state ecclesiastical schools<sup>43</sup>, as well as religious instruction in public schools. The Church of Greece keeps on receiving financial

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<sup>43</sup> See the law 476/1976 "On Ecclesiastical Education" (Government Gazette 308 - 18.11.1976)

support from the government, including funding clergy salaries, estimated to be worth €200 million (\$213.7 million) annually (Office of International Religious Freedom, 2023). However, it should be noted that these privileges granted by the state sometimes limited the church. For example, as will be mentioned later, the number of priests employed has been fixed and set by the state for many years, although church authorities claim that they are short of staff.

It should be underlined that there are other religious groups besides the Church that enjoy privileges. As mentioned above, the Orthodox Church, which is the prevailing religion, has a legal religious personality under public law. In addition, until recently, only the Jewish community of Greece and the Muslim minorities in Western Thrace were included in the category of "known religion" with a legal religious personality. These are religious communities with a historical presence in Greece. As legal persons under public law, the privileges enjoyed by these three religious communities included, inter alia, the enactment of administrative laws, the payment of clergy from the state budget, the recognition of tax exemptions and tax-deductible donations (Markoviti, 2019). The second paragraph of Article 13 of the Constitution, which protects religious freedom, states that all known religions shall be free and that worship services can be conducted free of restrictions and under the protection of the law. However, the practice of worship services is not allowed to violate public order or the rules of good use. The third paragraph of the same article states that the ministers of all known religions are under the supervision of the state and that the obligations applicable to the prevailing religion also apply to known religions.

The country's changing religious demographics and its ties with the European Union seem to reinforce the assumption that prevailing religion will conflict with the religious freedoms of religious minorities. However, regulations have been introduced over the last few years to address this contradiction. A law introducing the concept of a "religious legal personality" was passed by the Greek Parliament in 2014. A structured framework for obtaining legal status for religious communities was established by Law 4301/2014 on the Organization of the Legal Form of Religious Communities and their Organizations in Greece. This was a big step in generating a reliable official registration system that explains how other religious

entities may obtain official status. As pointed out in 2022 Report on International Religious Freedom of Greece, the documentation required for granting legal status to these entities includes proof that the group has "open rituals and no secret doctrines," a list of 300 signatories, a qualified leader who is legally present in the country, and evidence (such as each group's charter of association) that their practices do not endanger public order. Therefore, thanks to the 2014 Law, religious entities such as the Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Rite Catholic Church, Anglican Church, two evangelical Christian groups (the Evangelical Church of German-speakers and the Greek Evangelical Church), and the Ethiopian, Coptic, Armenian Apostolic, and Assyrian Orthodox Churches are qualified as religious legal-entity status. Moreover, other religious groups, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Scientologists, and Baha'is, have a civil association legal status (Office of International Religious Freedom, 2023).

With a new regulation (Law 4559/2018) passed in August 2018, the scope of the application has expanded. It mandates that all religious officials, including the Greek Orthodox Church, the Muftiates of Thrace, and Jewish communities register within a year in the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs electronic database. Moreover, circular 128231/ 2016 regulates the issuance of licenses for places of worship (Gemi, 2021: 91). Gemi underlines that while there are still problems in the implementation of the law, the overall Greek policy and legal framework for religious minorities has been largely reformed on the basis of liberal principles and human rights standards, recognizing the equality of individuals before the law, regardless of their religion (ibid., 96 ). Although these legal arrangements are very important decisions to loosen religious restrictions on minority religions, their practical implications should be evaluated separately.

#### **4.3.2. Helleno-Orthodoxy**

Karalis (2007:181) and Karalis argues that the Greek Orthodox Church has been enslaved by secular authority since the earliest. This captivity began with Constantine and continued with the Greek nation-state. However, this state of captivity does not mean that the state strictly controls the church and that the church's

function is limited to religious service. Instead, the church first functioned as a palace institution and later as a state apparatus. (ibid.). The state made the church functional in line with national interests, especially after the 19th century. In line with Hellenorthodoxy, a nationalist ideology whose content has matured over time, it has played an important role in the preservation and strengthening of Greek identity throughout history.

The Orthodox Church was an accepted and largely independent institution under the rule of the Ottoman state. Polyzoidis draws attention to two perspectives in the literature regarding the function of the Orthodox Church during the Ottoman Period. One sees the Church as merely a tool the Ottomans used to keep the Greeks under absolute control and financially exploit them. At the same time, the other argues that the Orthodox religion and its priests are an essential element for preserving and defining Greek nationality, language, culture, traditions, and history. In other words, according to the second view, orthodoxy has been embedded in the Greek identity since then (Polyzoidis, 2019:137).

The Church's contribution to the maintenance of the Greek identity in this period and the attitude of the patriarch in the struggle for independence should be emphasized. Namely, with the Ottoman conquest, there was an increase in the power of the Orthodox Church, which had not only an ecclesiastical but also political meaning. As an Ottoman official, the patriarch had an institutional status quo. Although the Church was subject to the Ottoman state, it did not adopt a completely passive role and became an important actor in the continuity of the Greek identity. For example, the patriarch was able to establish schools that gave education in Greek both in the borders of the Empire and in the regions outside it. This is also an indication that Orthodoxy and Greekness have been intertwined since the Ottoman period (Halikiopoulou, 2011:46-47).

Although minorities were not subjected to severe persecution in the Ottoman Empire, they were treated as second-class citizens and were deprived of political rights. Both this deprivation of political rights and the rising nationalism trend since the beginning of the 19th century increased the “self-perception” of Orthodox subjects

and reinforced the distinction between Orthodoxy and Islam (ibid). In the 1800s, religious principles and nationalist political goals were intertwined in the Balkans. While the local bishops legitimized the independence movements with some religious arguments, the revolutionary leaders presented Christianity against the Muslim Turks as an integral part of their nationalism (Geffert & Stavrou, 2016: 367). Orthodoxy had also become the most important symbol of the demands of Greek nationalism for self-determination against the Ottoman Empire (Halikiopoulou, 2011:48).

In this process, the Orthodox Church was entrusted with the task of being the protector of the oppressed Greek identity during Ottoman rule and the architect of a modern republic. However, the patriarch and other religious elites were undecided about which side they would take in this process. Therefore, the background of the alleged romantic collaboration between the church and the founders of the new Greek state during the Greek War for Independence is different (Fabbe, 2019:59). More precisely, while the low-ranking local clergy were fighting on the same fronts with the political revolutionaries who challenged Constantinople, other religious elites, especially the patriarch, abstained from the struggle for independence (Geffert & Stavrou, 2016: 364-366). The latter, however, reluctantly joined the war of independence, with the promise that they would not lose their social status in a newly independent Greece compared to the Ottoman tutelage and that they would even have better conditions (Fabbe, 2019). However, after establishing the Greek State, the church's authority weakened and became subject to the state as a result of the concessions made by the church to the state, especially on education and legal reforms (ibid.,60). Since then, the Orthodox Church has declared itself a national political force and a protector of Hellenism. The state has used it as a political tool for its purposes, but it has also enjoyed state protection (Zoumboulakis, 2013:137). Oulis et al. (2010:193-194) state that the church, which declared its independence (autocephaly) in 1833 from Ecumenical Patriarchate and later became a state religion, contributed to the nation-building process at least as much as the state. The church, which became an aspect of nationalism, played an active role in critical national conflicts such as the Macedonian Campaign in 1905, the Balkan wars of 1912–1913, and the Asia Minor Campaign of 1919–1922 (Zoumboulakis, 2013:135).

In short, with the establishment of modern Greece in the 19th century, the church became one of the ideological apparatuses of the state that reproduced and circulated the ideology of the state (Sakellariou, 2019).

In these national conflicts, the church followed different nationalist ideologies. For example, until 1922, the Megali Idea (Great Idea) based on the concept of the resurrection of the Byzantine empire, which was claimed to be the continuation of the ancient Greeks, dominated the church's discourse. Helleno-Orthodoxy or Helleno-Christianity took the place of this ideology, which the Greeks abandoned after their defeat in Anatolia and the population exchange process. This new approach and interpretation of history are based on the idea of a unique Greek nation blessed by God, and the Greek identity passed down from generation to generation with historical, cultural, and biological continuity. According to this ideology blending national elements from the Ancient Greek, Byzantine, and modern Greek periods, religion or orthodoxy is an integral and indispensable part of the Greek identity (Sakellariou, 2019). As Milas underlines, we encounter a paradox here. Christianity, and especially the New Testament, opposed to Ancient Greece. Orthodoxy, through the Church, had maintained a negative attitude towards Ancient Greece and therefore against Hellenic culture for centuries. The main reason for this was that church members associated the "Hellen civilization and the name Helen," which corresponds to the pre-Christian period, with paganism (Milas, 1994:39-42). In the 18th century, when nationalism was on the rise, Ancient Greece gained importance again, especially among the Greek intellectuals. While the legacy of Byzantium was losing its ground, ancient Greece was once again extolled. In other words, everything that was bad was attributed to the conservative, backward, and religious-dominated Byzantium since it was considered the opposite of the Ancient World and by extension of the Ottoman order. The same approach was repeated by the Greek democrats, as in the West, the "democrats" opposed the feudal aristocracy and church institutions (ibid.,54).

Especially with the support of the authoritarian right regimes and the Church, the spread of this new ideology, on which the Greek identity is based, has become more systematic. The state encouraged the Orthodox Church to represent an ethnically



based national religion for nation-building. Thus, the Church fully embraced the logic of ethnic nationalism—that is, Helleno-orthodoxy—and became politicized. With the enthusiastic support of the Church, the Greek identity was intertwined with being Orthodox (Danopoulos, 2004:48-49).

Karagiannis (2009) defines the integration of nationalism with the church as the “secularisation of the church's ideology”. Accordingly, this move results from the state's strong and comprehensive control of the church in the modern period and the church's transformation into a mechanism that provides legitimacy to political power. He claims that this secularization act of the church through nationalism was a defence mechanism designed to demonstrate that despite its questioning of its status and its inherent shortcomings, it still had a crucial and functional social role to fulfil.

The Orthodox Church has always been hand and glove with right-wing governments. The identification of far-right politics with the Church, on the other hand, was fully realized and fully visible during the civil war years (1946-1949) (Zoumboulakis, 2013:135). In particular, collaborations with authoritarian regimes reveal how it functions as an ideological device (Sakellariou, 2019). The Church continued to support the dictators, although there were some interventions by the political powers in the church administration (for example, the election of archbishop) both under the authoritarian Metaxas administration (1936-1941) and during the military junta period (1967-1974). In turn, it gained some privileges in accordance with its internal affairs (clergy salaries, tax exemptions) (ibid). The communist threat discourse brought these two structures closer, and they attempted to fight communism and socialism, which they declared as national enemies, with the "Helleno-orthodoxy" weapon. Religious and political elites often used this weapon throughout modern Greek history.

On the other hand, the political actors supporting the church's function as an ideological device were not limited to right-wing and authoritarian governments. Even the policy followed by Papandreou, the leader of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), which was in power in Greece between 1981 and 1998, supported the institutional separation of church and state. However, it certainly did

not advocate the cultural split between church and nation. In other words, for Papandreou, the separation of church and state certainly did not mean the separation of church and nation. Although the PASOK leader had a left-wing and democratic vision, he did not reject the cultural coexistence between church and nation (Prodromou, 1993:279-280).

Throughout the modern Greek political life, the Greek identity defended by the Church within the framework of Helleno-Orthodoxy generally gained its strength through the created other (such as communists, Catholics, Muslims) or "external threat discourse" (with Türkiye and North Macedonia) (Halikiopoulou, 2011:79). Greece's accession to the European Union (1981) has led to some new challenges for the Greek Orthodox Church. That is to say, in the post-1980 period, some western socio-political approaches- multiculturalism and pluralism- created pressure for a functional and discursive change on the Church (Oulis et al., 2010:194-195).

On the other hand, as mentioned before, Archbishop Christodoulos (1998-2008) presented an approach against the rising norms of the West by conveying his traditional nationalist discourses to the society with effective rhetoric. Analysing the archbishop's statements, Oulis et al. (2010:197-206) draw attention to three anti-modernization themes in his discourse: The first was the threats from the west to the Greek identity based on the Helleno-Orthodoxy ideology. Accordingly, the west, the source of cultural imperialism, was the other because of its non-orthodox identity. Moreover, the cultural, political, and economic policies produced by modernity could corrupt the traditional Greek identity. Christodoulos thought that the Schengen and Maastricht EU Agreements, imposed by the globalization process, posed a danger to the orthodoxy identity, which had been kept away from external threats until then. The second theme emphasized by the archbishop is about the threats coming from the neighbors of Greece (Türkiye, North Macedonia, Albania), some groups within the country (communists, atheists, etc.), and western currents (globalization, amoralism, nihilism, etc.). Both themes were based on the idea that the Orthodox Helleno-Christian tradition was threatened by godless western modernism and eastern barbarism. The third theme was for the youth, who was the guarantor of the continuity of the Helleno-Christian tradition. Christodoulos used his strong

communication skills at every opportunity to engage the youth in the church and inject Hellenic-orthodox ideology.

Halikiopoulou (2011:67) emphasizes that the Orthodox Church of Greece has never been able to focus on welfare institutions such as schools and hospitals because it was more involved with nationalism compared to its Catholic counterparts. In other words, although the Church was an important institution for the construction of Greek identity and nationalism rather than social welfare, its presence or influence in welfare institutions was rather limited. However, the death of Christodoulos in 2008 meant the beginning of a new era for the Church of Greece. Since then, it can be observed that Ieronymos II, the Archbishop of Athens and all Greece, has focused more on social welfare than in the past. In the latest decades, the Church has been focusing on corporal services and projects for different social needs rather than nationalist discourses. In other words, its "role in the social sphere" has begun to precede its "role in the political sphere." As will be discussed in the next section, it seems that the Church has become more at peace with the movements such as pluralism and multiculturalism brought about by modernization, especially considering the services of the Church for refugees. However, as Fokas (2010) points out, although the Church's activities in the social sphere in recent years have been a crucial turning point in terms of its social and political role, there are still steps to be taken for a complete modernization.

#### **4.4. Towards Neoliberal Austerity Policies**

The process of European integration, which has accelerated especially since the 2000s and neoliberal austerity policies introduced in the aftermath of the great economic crisis of 2009 brought about some developments in terms of the religion-state nexus in Greece.

Neoliberalization went hand in hand with the process of European integration in Greece. In 1981, Greece joined the European Economic Community (which later became the European Union), and after the signing of the Single European Act in 1987, the integration process into European capital accelerated. This meant a shift in

the external dependence of the Greek economy away from US capital and towards European capital and EU cohesion funds (Gönenç & Durmaz, 2020: 621). After some unsuccessful attempts, Greece's neo-liberal modernization literally started after 1996 under the leadership of the Greek Socialist Party (PASOK) and its new leader, Costas Simitis (Laskos & Tsakalotos, 2013: 34). Simitis established himself as the leader of the modernization trends in Greece and sought to put an end to the culture of clientelistic politics deepened by the junta regime and the tradition of inward-looking development. Under the Simitis government, market liberalization, privatization of public services and enterprises, and the downsizing of the welfare state accelerated. The deregulation of markets, the privatization of public services and enterprises, and the downsizing of the welfare state accelerated under the Simitis government. However, neither Simitis' "modernization" and "anti-tax evasion" programs (1996–2004) nor similar "modernization" programs carried out by the New Democracy (ND) cabinet under his successor Karamanlis Jr. (2004–09) brought any benefits to state finances. On the contrary, the public debt doubled from 2000 to 2009, causing great damage to Greece's social fabric (see Fouskas & Dimoulas, 2013: 157-158). Income inequality and poverty inherited from Greece's authoritarian and conservative past were not addressed through social spending, while labour market developments further reinforced the sense of social injustice. These social issues were to become explosive material when the crisis developed and austerity measures were implemented (Laskos & Tsakalotos, 2013: 40-42).

In 2009, Greece was plunged into the most severe debt crisis in its history. In 2010, the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies was signed with the Troika," consisting of the European Commission, the European Central Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, which included a financial rescue and bailout program worth €110 billion. Following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding and other financial bailout packages, a series of austerity measures were imposed on the Greek people. A state of emergency was declared in the public sector, and vital reforms were introduced in public administration. The failed bailout was followed by others. Between 2009 and 2014, cuts in state spending, particularly in public health and education, had devastating effects on vulnerable groups in society. Comprehensive austerity measures have led to an almost complete commodification

of labor and a serious humanitarian crisis on the streets of Athens. The lives of most of the working class have been turned upside down, while the number of homeless people increased by more than 20,000. More than 50 percent of young people and 25 percent of the labor force became unemployed in the first years of the crisis (Kretsos, 2012: 517). According to e-Kathimerini's news, the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) reported that more than 1,200 people committed suicide between 2009 and 2011, while police records show that 3,124 Greeks committed or attempted suicide between January 2009 and August 2012 (E-Kathimerini, 2013). As a result, Greek society, deeply depressed, voted the left-wing Syriza political party into power in January 2015, promising to stop privatization and abandon austerity policies.

Under the influence of neoliberalization and European integration, some important developments have occurred in Greece, shaking the pillars of the religion-state nexus. It is possible to categorize these under three main headings. The first is the "Europeanization of religious realm," which helps to understand the changing relationship of the state, which is transformed within the framework of European norms, with religion, and especially with the dominant religious institution, the church. The second is the church's more systematic involvement in social welfare (secular affairs) as an alternative to the state because of the deepening poverty due to neoliberal policies and the diminishing role of the state in welfare services. The third and final chapter is about the deepening of the problems faced by migrants in the process of neoliberalization, the Church's approach to the humanitarian crisis that has emerged, and developments in the management of religious diversity in a country with a dominant religion.

#### **4.4.1. Europeanization of Religious Realm**

Especially two periods were decisive in terms of church and state relations in post 80s. The first of these is between 1981-1998 when the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) was in power. PASOK leader Andreas Papandreu followed a "dual religious strategy" in this process (Prodromou, 1993). In this strategy, on the one hand, he advocated a radical separation of the church-state (legal/institutional distinction). On the other hand, he recognized the importance of the church's role in

reproducing Greek identity because he avoided triggering the rupture between church and nation (cultural divide). Due to this hesitation, although the government tried to push the church into the background for western modernization, the church did not lose its importance. The continuation of issues such as the religious inauguration of each new cabinet in parliament, the presence of church leaders at public ceremonies, the Orthodox education in the Greek education system, the difficulties Roman Catholics and various Protestant churches face in obtaining legal status, the effective thwarting of plans to cremate the dead, and the ongoing tax immunity of the Church of Greece 's vast estates show that it has managed to maintain its central role in the discourse of the hegemonic state in spite of the rule of "socialist" government in the last 17 years (Oulis, Makris, & Roussos, 2010:194-195).

### **Church Involvement in Politics, Concessions and Cooling Off**

Another period that marked the church-state relations after 1980 was the years between 1998 and 2008 when Christodoulos was the archbishop. The main factor that makes this period important is that Archbishop Christodoulos has a perspective that favors preserving tradition in the western modernization process. The discourses of Archbishop Christodoulos were considered by some to be patriotic and faithful to tradition, by others as nationalist, anti-democratic, fundamentalist, traditionalist, even reactionary, and, last but not least, as populist (Stavrakakis, 2002). Stavrakakis characterizes the Christodoulos era as a period in which Orthodox Christian discourse became politicized and transformed into religious populism. While Prodromou considers the period of Archbishop Christodoulos a break from the accommodationist policy that guides Church-state interactions (ibid.,473-475), some have described it as the "return of the church" period (Oulis et al., 2010). One of the leading indicators supporting this alteration is undoubtedly the identity card issue, which occupied the Greek public in the early 2000s. The PASOK government's attempts led by Costas Simitis to remove the religion from the identity cards in 2000 in line with the policies of harmonization with the European Union norms was strongly opposed by the Church of Greece and conservative clergy. A campaign initiated by Christodoulos to change the government's decision in this direction lasted for 15 months. The campaign actively included criticism of the state, signature

campaigns, demonstrations against the government in some big cities, seeking alliances with the opposition ND against the PASOK government, especially using mass media devices (Prodromou, 2004:473-474). Even though the Church tried to increase the opposition, in the end the political power prevailed in this conflict.

On the other hand, Anastassiadis, looking at the other side of the medallion, implies that the Christodoulos period initiated a concession bargaining process between the state and the church (Anastassiadis, 2004:22-25, 2010:53). In other words, the church, which offered an opinion against some of the decisions of different government(s), gave up its insistence on the opposition due to the legal gains it had made. Some of the legal achievements that contribute to the church's budget and accelerate its activities and projects in the social field are as follows:

“It is interesting to note, in the first place, that when Archbishop Christodoulos was about to be elected in 1998 and church–state relations were not at their best, law no. 2646 was passed. Article eight of this law asserts that the Greek Church is a *de jure* member of the Greek Council of Social Welfare, thus reaffirming all previous legislation that acknowledged the church’s role in this field. At the same time, although the church gave up the battle over identity cards, law no. 2873 of 28 December 2000 increased the tax-free limit on donations to the church from about 300 euros to 3,000 euros. Finally, the socialist government passed, just before the elections in 2004, law no. 3220 abolishing the obligation for the church to contribute 35 per cent of all its ordinary revenues to the state budget in order to cover that part of the clergy’s salaries paid by the state since 1945. Immediately after the 2004 elections, the new centre-right government passed law no. 3296 abolishing by 2008 the 10 per cent tax on church revenues from land property rental and numerous other fiscal deductions and incentives in favour of the church’s charity work and NGOs. In a recent meeting between the prime minister and the archbishop, the latter obtained the assurance that its leading NGO, Solidarity, will play a pivotal role in the handling and distribution of European funds directed towards welfare programmes. These are not pure coincidences (Anastassiadis, 2010:53).”

What is more, Anastassiadis (*ibid.*) draws attention to the co-operation of the Church of Greece with both European churches and the European Union in the 90s. In 1994, the Ecumenical Patriarchate opened an official representation office in Brussels under the name 'The Liaison Office of the Orthodox Church to the European Union.' Although this naming implies that it aimed to represent all Orthodox members, the Church of Greece chose to stay away from it (Leustean, 2019: 148). However, it was soon realized that the development of the dialogue of the Church of Greece with the EU and other churches in Europe would have many benefits. For example, inter-church lobbying was of great importance in shaping the draft EU constitution.

Furthermore, inter-church cooperation was crucial in emphasizing the role of the church in charity and volunteer activities within the EU (Anastassiadis, 2010:52-53). Ultimately, Christodoulos, who was Metropolitan at the time but became Archbishop in 1998, had a significant role in establishing the dialogue between the EU and the Greek Orthodox Church. As a reflection of this dialogue, an office representing the Church of Greece was established in Brussels in 1998. This convergence had potential to increase the church's capacity to receive funding from the EU for its social activities. According to Anastassiadis (2004) the improvements in relations with the Vatican after the Pope's visit to Greece in 2001, the rapid integration of the Church into the Europeanization process, and the increase in the power of the Church to govern society with effective and modernized charity practices (ibid.: 16) are major indicators that the church has entered "the conservative modernization process" after the 1990s. This conceptualization points out that the church, albeit rather timidly, could not remain indifferent to the intense pressure of modernization coming from the West.

In the light of these developments such as leaving the nationalist rhetoric and anti-western discourses, ending traditional tensions with the Roman Catholic Church, opening its own Brussels office, accessing EU funds by joining the World Council of Churches, etc., Makris & Meichanetsidis (2018:249-250) object to the essentialist and oversimplified judgment in which the Greek Church is paired with tradition and the state with modernity. Rather than representing the two opposing poles of modernity and tradition, the state and the established Church of Greece have become a partner in the country's modernization process. The authors, with reference to the developments described above call this process as a quiet modernization policy followed by the Church of Greece. In other words, the Church in Greece should be seen as a transformative part of Greek secular modernity, historically hegemonized by the state, rather than the guardian of tradition in a rapidly modernizing society.

### **Unsolved Issues**

After the death of Archbishop Christodoulos, Archbishop Ieronymos II was elected in February 2008. In comparison to his predecessor, Ieronymos II is viewed as a moderate religious leader (Molokotos-Liederman, 2009:46). This moderate attitude



was most concretely evident in the constitutional amendment proposal process of the ruling radical left coalition SYRIZA (ΣΥΡΙΖΑ) in 2018. In this context, SYRIZA proposed some alterations to 23 articles of the Constitution, including the "recognition of the state's religious neutrality." Archbishop Ieronymos II gave the green light to the proposal of SYRIZA leader and Prime Minister of the time Alexis Tsipras in this direction. While the Archbishop expressed a positive view of the German model, where the state was religion-neutral and helped the Church (E-Kathimerini, 2018a)<sup>44</sup>, he stated he was unwilling to the French model, in which the Church and the state were at opposite ends (E-Kathimerini, 2018b)<sup>45</sup>. At the top of the issues that the agreement planned to regulate were the status and salaries of the clergy, which is still a widely discussed dimension of church-state relations in Greece. According to the agreement, the clergy would no longer be employed as civil servants, and therefore, they would be excluded from the Single Payments Authority (the official payroll). However, the state would pay the annual subsidy of 189 million euros to a special Church fund, which was to be used only to pay the clergy. In other words, the state would guarantee to pay the salaries of the country's approximately 9,000 clergies, and in return, the Church would not object to the state's religion-neutral stance<sup>46</sup>. However, maintaining its conservative position, the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece responded negatively to a change in church-state relations and stated that they found the regulations of the 1975 Constitution sufficient (E-Kathimerini, 2018c)<sup>47</sup>. Despite objections from the opposition and pro-church groups, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and Archbishop Ieronymos II reached an agreement. As a result, the constitutional revision started by the leftist coalition SYRIZA administration in 2018, which included a proposal to separate the Greek state from the Church, was rejected after the New Democracy came into power. Therefore, this agreement remains incomplete.

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<sup>44</sup> <https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/234380/archbishop-seeks-details-of-church-state-separation/> accessed on 15.08.2021

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/234364/greek-archbishop-asks-for-clarifications-on-states-religious-neutrality/> accessed on 15.08.2021

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/234417/ieronymos-accepts-religious-neutrality-in-exchange-for-clergy-men-s-wages/> accessed on 15.08.2021

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/234230/holy-synod-says-no-change-needed-in-church-state-relations/> accessed on 15.08.2021

As mentioned before, the Orthodox Clergy has served as civil servants in Greece since 1945. Clergy employment and the number of the priests still constitutes one of the most criticised issues in terms of church-state relations in Greece. In Europe, religious officials' wages are typically paid by the church or by taxes collected from the church community; however, Greece is an outlier in that the state pays for religious officials' salaries (in other words, religious officials are civil servants). Furthermore, the clergy had enjoyed almost all the benefits available to civil servants from the 1990s to the 2000s (Mavrogordatos, 2003:121). For example, clergy, as a result of pressure from the church, were included in the performance allowance (productivity bonus) granted to civil servants. According to claims of Mavrogordatos, the absence of tangible objection to the situation refers to the implicit or unquestioned recognition that the status of the church is a private part of the state and its civil service system (ibid.). On the other hand, the employment of clergy is a separate issue. Zoumboulakis (2013) states that the question as to who will become a priest in Greece is entirely a matter of chance and rests at the discretion of the local metropolitan.

This issue has also been addressed in neoliberal austerity programs before. At present, under Law 3833/2010, which suspended all state appointments as part of the EU-Greece Memorandum of Understanding, one new cleric can be appointed for every five retiring clerics (Mitralexis, 2017a: 11). In the document on the analysis of public personnel in 2015" issued in 2016 by the Ministry of Interior's Public Human Resources Directorate, the number of religious officials in 2015 was reported as 9298 (*Ανάλυση Τακτικού Προσωπικού Δημόσιας Διοίκησης Για Το Έτος 2015*, 2016)<sup>48</sup>. The number of physicians in the national health system is 7221, which is less than the number of religious leaders, according to the same data. There is a statistic showing that Greece has the most priests in Europe, in proportion to its population (87,7 priests per 100,000 inhabitants) (Kathimerini.gr, 2018).<sup>49</sup> Apostolos Lakasás (2018) explains the increase in the number of clergies with the interest of young

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<sup>48</sup> [https://www.ypes.gr/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/20160318\\_analisi\\_metabolon\\_taktikou\\_prosopikou2015.pdf](https://www.ypes.gr/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/20160318_analisi_metabolon_taktikou_prosopikou2015.pdf) accessed on 08.03.2022

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.kathimerini.gr/society/994608/ellada-i-chora-toy-ayxanesthe-kai-plithynesthe-gia-toys-iereis/> accessed on 15.09.2021 As a source of the statistics, Kathimerini shows <https://jodi.graphics/380>

people to become clergy due to the acute economic crisis and unemployment in recent years. Greece's four religious academies are a step up for future priests, but joining them is not a prerequisite. All persons with higher education degrees can become priests as long as they meet certain quality requirements<sup>50</sup>. On the other hand, church members complain that the number of clergies is very insufficient, especially in the diocese and parish churches, which are the local organizations of the church (Orthochristian, 2015)<sup>51</sup>. Archbishop Ieronymos II, in a meeting with Prime Minister Mitsotakis in December 2021, complained about the decrease in the number of religious officials. The Archbishop stated that salaried clergy fell from 9,018 to 8,300 from 2011 to September 2021. Underlining that the population of the country was approximately 7.5 million during the law enacted in 1945, the archbishop demanded an increase in the state positions allocated to the clergy in accordance with the current population (Orthodoxianewsagency, 2021)<sup>52</sup>.

Another unresolved issue is state interference in the use of Church property and the right of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs to have a say in the appointment of Church personnel. It is noteworthy what Archbishop Hieronymos said in an interview:

“(…) my vision and desire are to forget the mentality of King Otto and the Ottomans that "what belongs to the church belongs to the state." No, the state has its own, and we have our own. Here, we are at such a time. At a meeting in Schistos, I publicly stated that we wanted to use our property. Not only for us but also for the benefit of the state, our people, and our institutions. I heard with great joy that Mr. Mitsotakis said that the purpose of the church was not to have 1,000 or 2,000 acres but to cultivate these lands to meet people's needs and help them. The Church does not want to become rich for any other reason. The Church wants to be able to stand on its own feet. (...) and the church does not want to beg for oil from the stadium or anyone else for nursing homes; it wants to be independent. (...) The autonomy of the church. It is not possible for me to ask for a driver or secretary, and expect the minister to appoint them according to their own criteria. The Church must have its own movement to move forward (enikos.gr, 2023).<sup>53</sup>”

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<sup>50</sup> <https://www.kathimerini.gr/society/994608/ellada-i-chora-toy-ayxanesthe-kai-plithynesthe-gia-toys-iereis/> accessed on 08.03.2022

<sup>51</sup> See <https://orthochristian.com/87876.html> accessed on 15.09.2021

<sup>52</sup> [https://www.orthodoxianewsagency.gr/aytokefales\\_ekklisies/ekklesia\\_ellados/me-arithmetic-milise-i-ekklisias-gia-tis-organikes-theseis-ton-klirikon-ti-anamenei-apo-tin-politeia/](https://www.orthodoxianewsagency.gr/aytokefales_ekklisies/ekklesia_ellados/me-arithmetic-milise-i-ekklisias-gia-tis-organikes-theseis-ton-klirikon-ti-anamenei-apo-tin-politeia/) accessed on 08.03.2022

<sup>53</sup> (...) η επιθυμία μου είναι να ξεχάσουμε αυτή τη νοοτροπία του Όθωνος βασιλιά, την Οθωμανική, του «ό,τι είναι της Εκκλησίας, είναι του κράτους. Όχι, το κράτος έχει τα δικά του και εμείς τα δικά

These words indicate that the Church wants to continue its partnership with the state, especially in the area of social welfare services, but demands full autonomy from the state in other areas.

#### 4.4.2. Church Involvement in Social Welfare<sup>54</sup>

In many ways, Greece's economic situation, which began as a financial crisis in 2009 but eventually evolved into a debt crisis, marked both an end and a new beginning. As Matsaganis (2013) puts it, the Greek welfare state, which is typical of the Southern European model, was both the villain and the victim of the crisis. On the one hand, the welfare state's severe shortcomings, including significant deficits in vital issues such as pensions and health care, contributed to the financial crisis. While the crisis and neoliberal prescriptions based on bailout packages and austerity programs depleted the welfare state's resources, they also introduced new changes (ibid., 152-177). High taxes, rising unemployment and poverty led to civil unrest accompanied by racism and anti-immigrant (see Ioakimidis, Santos, & Herrero, 2014; Ioakimidis & Teloni, 2014). In this process, austerity policies had a very negative impact on the field of social work. Decreased number of social service providers, increased workload and budget cuts, which are very important components of the public service, are some of the complaints (Pentaraki, 2019).

The economic crisis in Greece has revealed the importance of social services. While the government was compelled to withdraw from many service sectors, civil society

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μας. Είμαστε λοιπόν σε μια τέτοια εποχή, σε μια συνάντηση στο Σχιστό, το είπα δημοσίως ότι θέλουμε να αξιοποιήσουμε την περιουσία μας. Προς όφελος όχι δικό μας αλλά και του κράτους και του λαού μας και των ιδρυμάτων μας. Και με μεγάλη χαρά άκουσα από το στόμα του κ. Μητσοτάκη που είπε ότι περιουσία στην εκκλησία δεν είναι να έχει 1.000 στρέμματα και 2.000 στρέμματα, αλλά να τα καλλιεργεί αυτά που να τους δίνουν χρήματα, όπως να εξυπηρετεί τις ανάγκες της και να βοηθάει τον κόσμο. Αυτό είναι ένα δεύτερο σύνθημα, ένα όραμα δικό μου, που πιστεύω ότι θα το προχωρήσουν οι ιεράρχες. Η Εκκλησία δεν θέλει να γίνει πλούσια για άλλο λόγο. Θέλει να στέκεται στα πόδια της, να μπορεί μόνη της να τακτοποιεί τις ανάγκες της και να μη ζητιανεύει από το τάδε γήπεδο και από τον άλλον πετρέλαιο για τα γηροκομεία, να είναι ανεξάρτητη. (...) Την αυτονομία της. Δεν είναι δυνατόν να θέλω εγώ, οδηγό ή γραμματέα και να περιμένω να μου τον διορίζει ο υπουργός με δικό του κριτήριο. Θα πρέπει η Εκκλησία να έχει τη δική της κίνηση για να προχωρήσει (enikos.gr, 2023).

<sup>54</sup> This chapter presents a review of the literature that analyzes the activities and social role of the Church of Greece in the field of social welfare in the context of European integration and neoliberal austerity policies. The social welfare services which the Church has carried out since this period will be fleshed out in the next chapter.

became even more important. Particularly at the beginning of the economic crisis, Greek civil society was undeveloped compared with political parties and the state. Sotiropoulos (2014) explains this situation as the domination of political parties over civil society through party-led associations and patronage-based funding of NGOs by Greek Ministries. A report on volunteering in Greece (GHK, 2010) explains why civil society is underdeveloped by three characteristics: the intervention of the state and the Church of Greece in providing social services, a lack of government backing for non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and an individualist culture based on strong family relationships. Despite these drawbacks, Sotiropoulos (2014:12-15) identifies four reasons that have been effective in reviving civil society since the 2000s. First, the crisis exacerbated the requirements of irregular migrants who did not have an official record. The flow of immigrants to Greece became evident, especially with the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, and in the years following, it received significant immigration from the Middle East and Africa. The second is the growing attention to environmental issues due to the increasing damage to forests and coastlines and civil society actors organizing to combat it. The third factor is the burgeoning awareness of corruption in the bureaucracy and politics. The last is the extreme poverty caused by the aforementioned economic disaster. Social solidarity networks, which were formed in response to the detrimental effects of poverty, have proven to be beneficial in providing healthcare, communal and educational services, as well as addressing people's basic needs for food and clothing (ibid.,16-19).

As will be shown in the next section in the context of the restructuring of the church in the public sphere, the Church of Greece has undoubtedly been one of the most important institutions to confront the social problems created by the economic crisis and neoliberal policies in this process. While the state was downsized within the scope of the austerity measures, the assets of the church and the clergy, who received their salaries from the state, were always on the agenda. However, this process also necessitated redefining the church's social role as a social service actor to fill the void left by the state. Indeed, during the most difficult periods of the crisis, the church has and continues to carry out activities to strengthen social welfare, notably the establishment of soup kitchens in the center of Athens, which are not only for

Orthodox Christians but for all segments of society. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that the Church was a victim of the economic crisis and the policies pursued. Polyzoidis (2019:146-147) highlights that the financial crisis had affected the church in three ways: First, the number of social assistance seekers increased even more when the state was incapable of fulfilling its obligations. Second, the drastic reduction of new hires in the public sector due to the financial consolidation of the Greek economy has deprived the church of necessary human resources because, as mentioned earlier, the clergy in Greece are employed as civil servants. Undoubtedly, this meant a staff shortage for the church, which provided many services such as establishing a soup kitchen for the needy in the most challenging times of the crisis. Finally, with the increasing burden of the economic crisis, there has been a dramatic decline in donations to social and charitable work. With the statements of Polyzoidis:

“Driven by the cruelty of the crisis, the church has gone far beyond the rigid notions that it should focus on its spiritual mission and not deal with worldly problems or get involved in political and economic issues; now it plays an important role in stemming the effects of this crisis, using every means at its disposal to provide an enormous amount of charitable and social work (2019: 147).”

The need to provide more comprehensive social services and raise funds for these services (as will be examined in detail in the next chapter) initiated a process of reorganization and institutionalization of the church. In this process, church-based NGOs gained importance. However, this has also led to the question of whether the Church has become part of civil society. Let us look at this discussion a little closer.

In Greece, the Church has an ambiguous position between the state and civil society. As Hantzi points out (n.d.: 53-54) , on the one hand, official and/or unofficial initiatives and actions taken by the Church (especially regarding social problems) seem to be part of the conceptual definition of civil society. On the other hand, both the fact that the Church of Greece and its legal entities are characterized as “Legal Entity under Public Law’ (N.P.D.D) and the fact that it is called a state church deter it from being a part of civil society. Mesthos (2009) defines the Greek Church as a "social institution." According to Mesthos' approach, although the Church is an actor in civil society, it is too large and comprehensive compared to non-governmental

organizations. It is also dependent on public culture. Thus, by using the term social institution, Mestos aims to summarize the Church's role in the Greek state, society, and history, while distinguishing it from other non-governmental organizations. Sotiropoulos & Bourikos (2014) argue that the Greek Orthodox Church stands at the intersection of civil society and the state. On the one hand, the Church, similar to non-governmental organizations, provides food, drinks, clothing, shelter, etc., to many needy people through church members or volunteers. On the other hand, given factors such as the fact that religious officials receive their salaries from the state, the official recognition of the Church as the bearer of the dominant religion in the country by the Greek Constitution at the national level, or the monitoring of church activities by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, considering the Greek Orthodox Church as a typical non-governmental organization, is unacceptable<sup>55</sup> (Sotiropoulos, 2014:17).

According to Makris & Meichanetsidis (2018), in the framework of the Greek crisis, philanthropy surpassed traditionally respected practices as the preferred area of action by the Church. These services in the social domain have been implemented more socially and actively, largely embracing structural, organizational, and (perhaps) ideological innovations. Organizational change may lead to alterations in the social and political roles of religious organizations. As discussed in the next chapter, important “church-sponsored non-governmental organizations (NGOs)” were established, or existing organizations were restructured in Greece after the 2000s. These organizations strengthen the relationship between the Church of Greece and society. One of the most striking parts of the author’s interviews with people from the Church hierarchy is the statement strongly emphasizing that the Church cannot be seen as an NGO (ibid). In other words, clerics strongly disagree with the perception that the Church is NGO. The Church's seemingly secular philanthropy should be viewed not as a strategic decision based primarily on secular political calculations but as the functionalization of its spiritual mission worldwide.

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<sup>55</sup> To see a counter-argument see <https://www.parembasis.gr/index.php/337-the-civil-society> )accessed 19.08.2022

“I claim that the Church, the way it is organized especially here in Orthodox Greece where the ancient Greek system of cities as a way of administration is maintained in the Bishopricks, the Parishes, and the Monasteries, is a well-organized «civil society(Parembasis, n.d.)

It is unsurprising that during this difficult period, the Church emphasized philanthropic activities and social services. As mentioned earlier, Law 590/1977 on the Statutory Charter of the Church of Greece declares that the Orthodox Church is the official and legal partner of the state in social welfare matters. The economic crisis has resulted in the revision and restructuring of the Church's role. However, from a theological perspective, the active position of the Orthodox Church in the face of problems created by the economic crisis is also surprising. This is due to the differences between the Orthodox churches of the East and Latin West in terms of their approach to social problems. In fact, both in the East and West, philanthropy and welfare activities have been known since the first Christians, and they have continued throughout history (Makrides, 2013). However, the Roman Catholic Church has been dealing with social issues in a very systematic way since the 19th century. It even succeeded in developing his own social doctrine (ibid., 283). Protestantism, on the other hand, has a far more worldly understanding than the Orthodox tradition, which is founded on the other world. As a result, it emphasized the social aspects of the Bible and concentrated on aspects of daily life (ibid., 284). On the other hand, Orthodox traditionalists considered the expansion in the Church's secular services as a Protestantization of Orthodoxy and reminded reformers that '*Orthodoxy is liturgy, not charity*' (Anastassiadis, 2004: 50-51). As Kessareas (2022) points out, the Orthodox Church has a strong sense of transcendence. Therefore, whereas in Western Christianity, the church tries to remedy social problems through social welfare and services, in the Orthodox tradition, the church reminds people facing the harsh sociopolitical problems that they belong to the temporal world and gives them solace and hope for real eternal life. Underlying this is the belief that the complex world's personal misfortune and problems can only be explained by theology (ibid. 66-67). Therefore, the Church of Greece's increased involvement in the social sphere and the search for solutions to the problems of this world during the crisis period has brought back to the agenda of the debate on whether the social role of the Church has changed.

### **A rupture?**

Whether the church's status and social role in Greece have changed in recent years is a crucial but not new question. Considering the enhancing and professionalizing



activities of the Church in the social domain, in particular, Greek researchers who have worked on church-state relations in the last 20 years have asked about it in different ways. The Fokas' article "Religion and Welfare in Greece a New, or Renewed, Role for the Church?" focused on the church-social welfare link at the local level. The main question of the study is as follows:

"Throughout Europe, the role of welfare provider is a new or renewed role that is claimed by majority churches in the context of both secularization (in terms of institutional differentiation) and increasingly challenged state welfare systems. To what extent is welfare provision a potential new or renewed role for the Orthodox Church of Greece? or, rather, is church welfare provision in the Greek case simply part of a perpetuation of the church's 'old' role in relation as 'partner', so to speak, to the state?" (Fokas, 2010: 175).

Fokas underlines that the church's relationship with social welfare is a reflection of the Orthodox tradition, but that this relationship has progressed with ups and downs throughout history. Another dimension of the church's involvement with social welfare is political, that is, it should be evaluated in the context of the church-state relationship. In her fieldwork, which she built on this historical, theological and political ground, she examines the relationship between religion and social welfare at the local level through the cases of the diocese of Thiva and Livadeia. Fokas observed in the field study that the state-church cooperation continues. Although she analyzes the role of the church in her study through social projects and services, she states that this is not enough alone. Since social role and function of the church should be considered in the context of the modernized church-state relationship in line with the expectations of pluralism and a more secularized Greek society (Fokas, 2010:189-190). According to Fokas, the abolition of the constitutional privileges of the Greek Orthodox Church is a crucial starting point; however, it is not enough alone. Some extra steps are also needed, such as a system of condemnation for politicians who manipulate church-state relations for their political interests, removal of religion and church themes from curricula, supporting politicians who refuse political interference coming from the Church, promotion of 'progressive' clerics who resist the ordinary and stereotypical connections between Church and state. Only after these crucial steps can the Church entirely focus on social welfare.

Mesthos analyzes the role of the Church through the efforts of "immigrant integration," which has been one of the most visible dimensions of the Church's

social services in recent years. According to Mesthos (2009:2), the role of the church in immigrant integration also gives clues about the status of the church's role in the state. The Church continues to be a partner of the state today, both with its traditional role in society and its bureaucratic ability (perhaps, as stated above - even the state at the local level does not have enough). Although there are some changes in the point of view of the Church to social issues, it is useful to approach the subject with caution. For example, on the one hand, the Church provides essential services in the integration of immigrants utilizing the large amounts of funds it receives. On the other hand, the Church gave harsh responses to secularization attempts of the curriculum in public schools, which is likely to facilitate the effective integration of immigrants. According to Mesthos, the Church's piecemeal advocacy of immigrant integration raises questions about the extent to which the Church's role has changed (ibid).

The question of whether the social role of the Church of Greece changed during the economic crisis that hit Greece has attracted so much attention in the relevant literature, which may be due to this change in the Church's understanding of how to find solutions to social problems. However, there are also important objections that, in order to discuss a real change, it is necessary to challenge the source of the problems rather than their consequences. In other words, the attitude of the Church of Greece towards neoliberal philosophy is among the issues addressed. According to Makris & Bekridakis (2013), although the Church has been providing temporary solutions to the consequences of the crisis deepened by neoliberalism, the Church of Greece remained indifferent to the structural causes of the deep economic crisis after 2009. Kessereas (2019) provides an explanation for this finding through the church-state relationship. He argues that the structural position of the Church in the current system, especially in countries where the Church functions as a close ally to the state, prevents church authorities from challenging state policies that produce and deepen inequality. Accordingly, although the Church has partly criticized neoliberalism, it has nevertheless provided significant support and legitimacy to political authorities that have implemented austerity measures that have increased poverty and inequality. As exemplified by Kessereas (ibid., 61), the higher clergy somehow favored a spiritual exit rather than an anti-systemic one. In the Bailout referendum, it aligned

itself with the Greek right, especially the upper middle class, giving tacit or explicit support for a 'yes' vote. Finally, at the cost of abandoning the activist stance of meddling in worldly political affairs, it conforms to the predominant inward-looking mystical current in Orthodox theology, which glorifies sacrifice and silence in this process. Otherwise, church activism would have been in danger of losing its legitimacy as a loss and even protestantization of the supposed ontological, agapeist essence of Orthodoxy (ibid.). Thus, Kesseris argues, it is difficult to assess the church's prominent social role and philanthropic activities during the debt crisis as genuine activism.

#### **4.4.3. Regulation of Religious Diversity**

The issue of migration, one of the problems deepened by neoliberalism, has led to a reexamination of religion-state relations in Greece. Between 1991-2001, approximately 600 thousand migrants from Soviet countries, mainly Albania, came to Greece, most of which were not documented. During the 2000s, a large number of asylum seekers from war zones in the Middle East came to this country, which they saw as a gateway to Europe. According to Report on International Religious Freedom, an estimated 520,000 Muslims currently live in the country, largely as asylum seekers, refugees, and other migrants from Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa. Many are grouped into communities according to their places of origin or reception centers. According to official estimates, half of these live in Athens. (US Department of State, 2022).

Therefore, neoliberal urbanization, which has been implemented effectively in Athens, has deepened the problems created by migration, especially poverty (see Dalakoglou, 2013: 26-29); while factors such as racism and inequality, which have increased with the economic crisis, have caused great damage to social cohesion, even in rural areas (see Lawrence, 2005). This situation, caused by migration together with neoliberalism, has led the church, which is identified by right-wing governments and nationalism, to reconsider its position in restoring social cohesion. On the other hand, the religious diversity created by immigration, especially from the Middle East, has become an issue faced by a country where the majority of the

population belongs to the same religion, which has included "prevailing religion" in its constitution.

The rights of religious minorities have always been a controversial issue in Greece, which had a relatively homogenous demographic structure until approximately 30 years ago. As discussed before, the main reason for this is that orthodoxy is an integral part of Greek identity. Today, 80 to 90 per cent of the Greek population identify themselves as Orthodox Christians. Increasing religious and ethnic diversity, especially with immigration from the Middle East in the 2000s, is perceived as a threat to Greek national identity synthesized with nationalism and orthodoxy. As a concrete consequence of this perception, the neo-fascist party Golden Dawn rose to prominence during Greece's 2009 financial crisis and became the third most popular party in the Greek parliament in the January 2015 elections. Fortunately, it failed to win a parliamentary majority in the 2019 election.

In their comparative analysis, Magazzini et al. (2022) found that majority religion still occupies a much more privileged position in Greece than in other Southern European countries. Therefore, the contradiction between the privileged position of the state religion and increasing religious heterogeneity has become even more pronounced. In other words, there is also criticism that the constitutionally prevailing status given to orthodox Christianity has disadvantaged other religious communities in many areas, including the legal status of religious minority groups, freedom of worship and religious expression, education, financing, and the establishment of places of worship. The issue of building a mosque in Athens is a case in point. The Greek government announced that the first official mosque in Athens would open before the 2004 Olympics. This decision was crucial because Athens was the only European capital without an official mosque for Muslims. According to the BBC, from the outset, objections from the Church of Greece and the choice of a location far from the city center for the mosque signaled the beginning of a difficult process (Cacanas, 2002). Indeed, the decision took years to be realized due to the backlash and reluctance of Greek Governments. The strongest reactions came from the far-right neo-Nazi Golden Dawn party and its supporters, who protested the state-funded construction project. In August 2016, members of

parliament voted to support speeding up the construction process, but it was not open until the end of 2020. Until then, the only alternatives to mosques for Muslims in Athens were unofficial masjids with basements and garage entrances (ft.com, 2019).

According to Markoviti (2019), the fact that Greece has the highest number of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights concerning violations of Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights concerning freedom of religion among the member states of the Council of Europe is one of the leading indicators of the disconnection between human rights norms and Greek policies on religious freedom. Studies on religious freedoms in Greece point out that the problem is not the existence of egalitarian policy texts but rather problems of implementation. Current policies towards the religious minority of 10% and new legislation, such as the citizenship law adopted in 2010, are major steps towards reform, albeit reluctantly, on the basis of liberal principles and human rights standards. However, tolerance of religious and cultural diversity continues to be perceived as liberal tolerance, which means refraining from interfering with practices, individuals, or groups of which one disapproves. The acceptance of multiculturalism only in a normative sense leads to the parallel existence of various ethnic and cultural groups in Greece rather than social integration (Triandafyllidou & Kokkali, 2010:3-4) In his research on the legal position of Islam in Greece, Tsitselikis explains this situation as a contradiction arising from the coexistence of a liberal legal system in accordance with the European human rights legal order and communitarian culture. In other words, despite all the reforms undertaken with the aim of Europeanization, the intellectual background of both the subjects in the state mechanism and a part of society is the belief that the liberal ideal of society, which emphasizes the rights and freedoms of the individual, is detrimental to public culture, which leads to some tensions in the implementation of regulations on religious minorities. Tsitskelis points out that liberal legislators and the judiciary feel uncomfortable when they have to deal with a 'foreign' culture and religion (Tsitselikis, 2011).

As Gemi notes, despite recent reforms in the governance of religious diversity, central state policy appears fragmented, and this fragmentation hinders the implementation of laws. While the legal context has been modernized, the mentality

and social attitude have not been modernized in the same way (Gemi, 2021). According to a survey conducted by the Pew Research Centre, 76% of the respondents in Greece say that "*being Orthodox is important to truly share the national identity of their country*," which almost confirms the above arguments (Pew Research Center, 2017: 12).

The influx of immigration is a major challenge to the dominant Greek understanding of ethno-religious identity, as well as to the role of the Church of Greece in the twenty-first century as a cultural, spiritual, and political actor in Greece. How it aligns with the reality of the twenty-first century's multicultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious Greek society is a matter of debate. The Church's approach to Muslim immigrant communities, which has been identified as nationalism due to past experiences, is undoubtedly important in terms of society's attitude toward this issue. For example, the Church seems to be divided on the Golden Dawn, the neo-fascist party that has risen after the economic crisis (Lakasas, 2012). While some criticized the Church in the past for not issuing an official condemnation of the values advocated by this party, others point out that the Church, through its discourse and actions in different arenas, attaches importance to social integration and fights anti-refugee sentiments in its own way. Demetrios Bathrellos, a theologian at Cambridge University, describes the Church's efforts as follows:

It is true that the Orthodox Church in Greece has had the tendency to be too interested in defending or promoting the interests of the Greek nation. Moreover, due to the overwhelming anti-religious rhetoric of leftish politicians and intellectuals, many Church members are instinctively inclined to see the right with a degree of sympathy and to view the left with suspicion. This, however, does not turn Orthodox Christians into Golden Dawn sympathizers, let alone supporters. The Church is nowadays responding to the financial crisis by preaching the Gospel - for instance, by retelling the parable of the Good Samaritan and by reminding that Christ identified himself with the immigrant and the poor. Moreover, it is responding to the social tensions associated with austerity with distinctive forms of Christian praxis - for instance, by feeding the immigrants, illegal or otherwise, as much as it feeds the Greeks. It is in this way that the Church is waging a peaceful war against Golden Dawn, which is often in stark contrast with the violence that prevails in many Greek anti-fascist rallies. This silent and yet resounding praxis is contributing to forging and sustaining social bonds in the face of anti-immigrant paranoia and financial hardship. It is also changing hearts and minds. Many people, including politicians, journalists and intellectuals with long-held anti-religious prejudices have only now begun to see the Church's true face in a better light. Newspapers of the left have published articles by Orthodox bishops (for instance by Metropolitan Pavlos of

Siatista) that castigate Golden Dawn. Radio stations publicize and support the Church's philanthropic activity. It is being gradually recognized that the Church is not an enemy of democracy and of human rights, but an ally against Neo-Nazism (Bathrellos, 2013)<sup>56</sup>.

As will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, the Church of Greece and its affiliated NGOs are currently engaged in programs and activities to meet the needs of asylum seekers coming to the country and integrating them. These initiatives and activities of the Church indicate that it can play a decisive role in the immigration policies of the state and, to some extent, fill the gaps left by the state in this field. This can also be interpreted as a change in the Church's mentality. Diamantopoulou underlines that the slow reinvention of the Christian Orthodox theological "ethic of hospitality (philoxenia)" is a promising sign that the Church of Greece is indeed moving towards rediscovering its universal religious and pastoral vocation (Diamantopoulou, 2018).

#### **4.4. Evaluation**

This chapter focused on the main trends in the practices of religious regulation in modern Greece and how these practices have changed over time. I aimed to shed light on the developments in the policies and practices of religious regulation in Greece, especially during the Europeanization process that hastened in the 2000s and after the neoliberal austerity policies implemented in the aftermath of the great economic crisis of 2009.

In Greece, where Orthodox Christianity is the official religion, religious regulations have historically been twofold, which are religious favoritism and religious restrictions. More precisely, on the one hand, Orthodox Christianity, the majority religion, has been promoted by the state, while religious restriction policies have been implemented, especially in matters concerning religious minorities. In addition to this observation, it is worth emphasizing once again that the situation of the Church in ecclesiastical regulation is much more complex. On the one hand, the

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<sup>56</sup> <https://www.abc.net.au/religion/the-golden-dawn-nightmare-the-orthodox-church-and-greeces-war-ag/10099592> accessed on 20.02.2023

privileged position of the Church is recognized by the country's constitution, while on the other hand, the Church has remained in the shadow of secular authority since the foundation of modern Greece.

According to a research, Greece has the highest religious favoritism among European countries (see Pew Research Center, 2019: 123). Article 3 of the Greek Constitution declares that Orthodox Christianity is the prevailing religion in the country and gives the Church of Greece constitutional status. The Church is a "legal entity of public law." The Greek state continues to subsidize the Church of Greece in the areas of financing clergy salaries, which is estimated at €200 million annually, religious and vocational training of clergy, and religious education in schools (Office of International Religious Freedom, 2023). According to the Church's Charter, the Church cooperates with the state in matters of common interest, such as youth education, providing religious services in the army, caring for those under protection, etc.

There are several reasons why the majority religion is preferred. I have tried to show these reasons in this section. Let me summarize them again. Orthodox Christianity is considered an integral part of Greek culture. In the past, left-wing parties stressed the importance of cultural unity between the nation and the church, even if they did not institutionally support the separation of the church and state (Prodromou, 1993). Furthermore, although the church has sometimes been at odds with governments on issues within its remit, it has often been able to legitimize state policies. The Church's support for the anti-communist propaganda of the military junta regime between 1967-1974 (Veković, 2020) or the legitimization of neoliberal austerity policies implemented by the government with theological discourses (Kessareas, 2019) can be cited as examples of this. Finally, although the Church in Greece has always prioritized the transcendentalist aspect compared to the catholic-protestant tradition, in Greece, where there is a relatively weak civil society structure, the Church has been one of the most important actors contributing to the public good through its social welfare services, especially at the parish level. Therefore, it is understandable that majority religion is favored to such an extent in Greece.



As mentioned, the other side of the coin has religious restrictions. Greece has been one of the countries most frequently mentioned in European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) reports in recent years for restrictions and violations of the rights of religious minorities (Markoviti, 2019). Examples of these restrictions include the government appointment of the muftis of the Muslim minority in Thrace, difficulties in exempting religious classes in schools, and the prohibition of proselytism, which is enshrined in the constitution, although rarely applied (US Department of State, 2022), the legal status of religious minority groups, freedom of worship, and the establishment of places of worship.

The restrictions are not confined to minority religions. As mentioned above, regulation of the Church deserves a separate parenthesis as it is a case that clearly demonstrates the relationship between state favoritism and state control of religion. In the Bavarian period, the state's establishment of the autocephalous Church of Greece resulted from the state's desire to benefit from the Church's spiritual power in the nation-state formation process and control the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Mitralaxis (2017b) draws attention to the unequal relationship between the state and church from the very beginning. He claims that

“the relation of the autocephalous Church of Greece to the Greek State is not, then, one of interaction and mutual influence between two naturally different and independent institutions/organizations: it is, rather, a relation between creator and creation, user and tool, framework and content (2017b: 166).

Although important legal regulations have been taken to ensure the autonomy of the Church, especially since the end of the military coup and the beginning of democratic restoration in the late 1970s, the hierarchical supremacy of the state over the Church has never completely ended. The President of Greece officially has still the power to appoint all bishops of the Church, although candidates are proposed by the Church hierarchy. The Greek government also has the power to amend the church's charter and suspend non-compliant synods (church councils) (Fox, 2018: 154). Moreover, the state also organizes the religious sphere through the "Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs." The tasks of the Ministry regarding religious affairs indicate that the state in Greece is the leading actor not only in the management of the majority religion but also in the regulation of minority religions.

The Ministry's terms of reference are broad, ranging from religious education to issues related to religious personnel.

On the other hand, as Koliopoulos and Veremis (2002) underline, there are privileges that the Greek State has granted to the Church and majority religion. For example, the Church has been attributed to an important role in the country's national development; since the War of independence, the Church has been presented as an integral part of Greek nationalism and culture. The clergy has civil servant status. Orthodox Christianity is the prevailing religion. The Constitution protects Orthodox Christianity by prohibiting proselytization. While these privileges made the Church of Greece a more conservative organization than intended, they also led the Church to resist the structural changes required by Greece's EU membership (Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002: 148-149).

The European integration process and the neoliberal austerity policies seem to have revealed the need for a new understanding of religious regulation in Greece. The first relates to the regulation of minority religions. Immigrants from Soviet countries after the 1990s and especially from the Middle East in the 2000s inevitably led to increased religious diversity in Greece, a country with a fairly homogeneous population. On the other hand, a study conducted in 2009 showed that social hostility in the country was considerably higher than in other European countries (Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, 2009: 22, 25). At the same time, especially after the economic crisis, the far-right political party, Golden Dawn, became more visible. It is understood that these problems, which potentially seriously damage the country's social cohesion, have forced Greece, a member of the European Union, to make updates in government policies towards minorities. Although a relatively recent study shows that the rate of religious restriction is still high compared to other European countries, research indicates that Greece is one of the few European countries where the rate of religious restriction has decreased between 2007 and 2017 (see Pew Research Center, 2019: 94).

The second one is related to the regulation of the Church. The economic crisis of 2009 and subsequent deepening of poverty due to neoliberal austerity policies led to

increased social unrest. The state's inevitable decline in the provision of public welfare services and the lack of a strong civil society tradition in Greece opened up a new space for the Church, an experienced institution in this field. This allowed the church to renew its legitimacy and position vis-à-vis the state as an alternative actor capable of providing the public good.

In the following chapter, I will discuss my argument that the restructuring of the Church of Greece in the public sphere is a consequence of the need for a new understanding of religious regulation as a result of the developments of the 2000s and 2010s, in light of the findings obtaining from the fieldwork.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CASE STUDY: RESTRUCTURING ESTABLISHED RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN PUBLIC SPHERE**

In this chapter, I use fieldwork to support my argument that the restructuring of religious institutions in Türkiye and Greece in the public sphere results from a need for new instruments of religious regulation that emerged in the 2000s and 2010s. It should be re-emphasized that the term public sphere here refers to the whole of the worship or non-worship sphere in which religious institutions engage in activities related to worldly affairs such as spiritual counselling, chaplaincy or charity. In this context, I will shed light on restructuring both institutions in the public sphere through the criteria of reorganization, the content of services, local services, new staffing needs, and collaborations. Based on the findings of this chapter, I aim to show how their restructuring in the public sphere has increased the capacity of the Diyanet and the Church of Greece to regulate and control the society in which they operate.

#### **5.1. Research Methodology**

This thesis uses "cross-national case analysis" as its research design. Cross-case analysis is a research approach that makes it easier to compare similarities and differences in situations, actions, and processes that constitute the unit of analysis of a case study (Khan & Vanwynsberghe, 2008). The research methodology is qualitative. In comparison to quantitative research, "understanding" is more important for qualitative research than for measuring differences (Lewis, 2003: 50). More clearly, the qualitative methods employed in comparative studies can contribute to determining whether certain phenomena are absent or present in the accounts of various groups, assessing the differences between the manifestations of

phenomena, exploring the reasons for, or explanations of, phenomena, or their various impacts and consequences; evaluating the interactions between phenomena in various settings; and, more broadly, analyzing the variations in the contexts in which phenomena arise, or the research issue is experienced (ibid.: 50-51).

### **5.1.1. Sampling and Participant Selection**

The data collection method in this thesis is in-depth "expert interviews". Accordingly, the "purposive sampling" method has been applied in this study. It can be defined as follows:

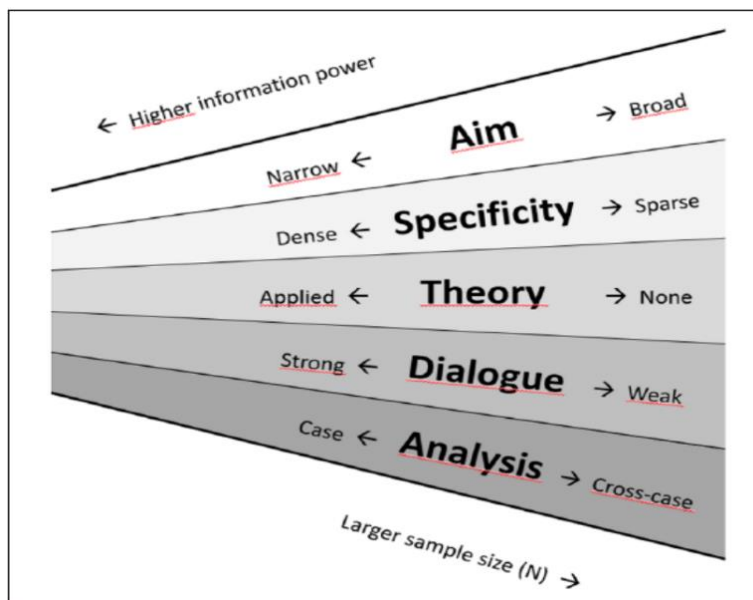
“A purposive sample, also referred to as a judgmental or expert sample, is a type of nonprobability sample. The main objective of a purposive sample is to produce a sample that can be logically assumed to be representative of the population. This is often accomplished by applying expert knowledge of the population to select in a non-random manner a sample of elements that represents a cross-section of the population (Lavrakas, 2008)”.

This dissertation focuses on Diyanet and the Church of Greece's restructuring in the public sphere in the transition to the 21st century. The restructuring includes updating the service ranges of these organizations and the reorganization processes carried out accordingly. For this reason, sampling is limited to the related units of these organizations and affiliated organizations that carry out these services. Hence, the respondents were chosen from among those who could provide information from units, departments, and affiliated organizations operating in the social field.

In the scope of this study, 11 in-depth interviews were conducted in Türkiye and Greece. Although the 11 interviews seem quantitatively low, they provide data saturation considering the quality of the interviews. In the scientific data collection process, data saturation, which means "the point where new data that will contribute to a conceptual category cannot be obtained," is a handy guide for qualitative studies based on interviews, where the distribution of experiences or opinions gain importance (Francis et al., 2010). However, while it is theoretically apparent what data saturation is, it is unclear what it means in practice. Therefore, there is no

agreed-upon method for determining when data saturation has been reached (ibid.,1229-1230).

In addition, Malterud, Siersma, & Guassora (2015) propose the concept of "information power" to determine the number of interviews that are sufficient for qualitative studies. Accordingly, there is an inversely proportional relationship between the information power and the required participant. In other words, as the amount of information contained in the sample regarding the study increases, fewer participants will be sufficient to complete the study. In light of the explanations below, it can be easily claimed that the "information power" of the interviews conducted in this study is quite high.



**Figure 1.** Information power—Items and dimensions (Malterud et al., 2015: 4)

As shown in detail in the figure “ above, according to the authors, a sample's sufficient information power depends on five factors. In the light of these factors, if we evaluate in terms of this study,

- (a) This thesis aims to discuss the religious regulation, a comprehensive and multidimensional issue, through a relatively specific dimension. Therefore, administrative units and activities related to this dimension were selected for fieldwork.

- (b) In this study, the sample specificity is pretty dense due to the reason stated in the previous item. Therefore, the number of people to be interviewed is limited to those working in the relevant unit and service areas.
- (c) This thesis is not based on theory testing. However, its limits are clear since the study proceeds through a specific conceptual framework and the concept is operationalized.
- (d) As mentioned above, most of the interviews (except one of them) lasted more than one hour. All questions asked were answered. However, in Greece, interviews were conducted in English with the participants whose native language is Greek. Therefore, compared to the interviews in Türkiye, it may have been language- asymmetry in terms of the amount of information. It should be stated that the interviews conducted in Türkiye are more in-depth and detail. However, throughout interviews in Greece, the questions were not left unanswered because key figures involved in both the policy-making and implementation process were reached<sup>57</sup>.
- (e) Before moving on to the cross-case study section, the religion-state nexus in Türkiye and Greece was examined comparatively in detail. In this dissertation, the cross-case study corresponds to a specific part of the multifaceted nexus. In other words, the focus is on specific parts of specific organizations. The interviewees were selected from this limited area and attempted to reach the maximum number of people who could contribute to the subject from both sides of the comparison.

### **5.1.2. Data Collection**

In this study, two essential instruments were used for data collection. The first was semi-structured expert interviews conducted in Türkiye and Greece. The interviews were conducted in 2018 and 2019. The expert interviewees were reached by using

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<sup>57</sup> For instance, I had an opportunity to interview with a Metropolitan. I made a considerable effort to meet with him because he has a great interest in social problems such as the refugee crisis in Greece. First of all, I had the chance to listen to him at a church event. Then I had a very long interview with him. Compared to other clergy members, he was younger and studied abroad. So, he was a person who was able to bring different and solution-oriented approaches to social issues. He often emphasized the role of the church in solving social problems. During our interview, I noticed that he represents the new face of the Church of Greece, which is more active in solving social problems.

the snowball technique or calling the institutions with which they were affiliated to make an appointment.

Ethical principles were strictly followed during interviews. The interviewees were informed of the study before the interviews. They were assured that they could not answer the questions they did not want to answer or that they could terminate the interview at any time. Voice recordings were made during the interviews with permission from the interviewees. Only one person interviewed in Türkiye did not permit recording of conversations during the interview. Interviews were included in the study based on the notes taken.

Although the interviews were based on semi-structured questions, many unstructured questions were answered with the guidance of the interviewees. In-depth expert interviews were conducted with each interviewee for more than an hour. The interviews in Türkiye were Turkish, whereas those in Greece were in English. However, Subsequently, the author deciphered each recording.

Interviewees in Diyanet consisted of one vice president, the four heads of the department under the General Directorate of Religious Services (Guidance Services, Mosque Services, Social and Cultural Religious Services, and Migration and Spiritual Support Services), and a specialist (from the Family and Religious Guidance Department). The interviewee, the Vice President of Diyanet, will be called Interviewee 1. The other interviewees from the Department of Guidance Services, Mosque Services, Family and Religious Guidance Services, Department of Socially and Culturally Oriented Religious Services, Migration and Religious Support Services, respectively, are named Interviewee 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

In Greece, interviews were conducted with one metropolitan bishop occupying a significant position in the church hierarchy and officers of church-based organizations (Apostoli, KESO, NEOTITA, and KSMP-ERP<sup>58</sup>). These interviewees were referred to as interviewees A, B, C, D, and E. In addition, interviews were

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<sup>58</sup> The name of the organization was altered after interview process I conducted in Greece. In order to avoid confusion, only the abbreviation SYNYPARX-ERP will be used for the name of the organization in the following parts of the study.



conducted with five Greek academics researching the church, its social services, and international publications on the subject.

Another instrument used to collect data in this study was the documents/publications obtained from both organizations, including online newspaper news in Turkish, English, Greek, and official protocols. These were examined in detail, and the internet resources used were shown using a footnote.

### **5.1.3. Limitations**

Each study has some limitations. This study has two main limitations. Although these limitations have been overcome, they must be emphasized. The first concern was the data collection process. Due to limited scholarship opportunities, the field study in Greece had to be conducted within 3.5 months. Reaching respondents was very difficult because of the limited network. In addition, as the church was conservative, it was challenging to arrange interviews as a foreigner. Moreover, the fact that many church members did not speak English was a limitation of the sampling process.

In the fieldwork in Türkiye, it has been challenging to obtain appointments from interviewees who are relatively senior bureaucrats. However, compared to fieldwork in Greece, the interview process was more manageable because there was no time limitation for the interviews planned in Türkiye. However, the Covid 19 outbreak began in March 2020 and specifically interfered with the interviews scheduled for the Religious Foundation of Türkiye. However, this deficiency was primarily overcome thanks to the sufficient number of documents and the knowledge of other interviewees regarding the foundation.

### **5.1.4. Analysis of the Data**

The data analysis is based on the main components of restructuring established religious organizations in the public sphere.

- Whether there is historical continuity in terms of organizational form and the content of services
- Purpose and content of services (type of services following social segments such as family, women, youth, and elderly)

- The level of organization as center vs. local (such as central administration of Diyanet vs. mufti's offices or mosques or the central hierarchy of the Church vs. dioceses or parish)
- Personnel structure and employment type
- Relations with non-governmental organizations at the national and international level as well as governmental institutions

The audio recordings obtained during the interviews were deciphered by the author and then transferred to the computer. In the process of data classification, MAXQDA2020- qualitative data analysis software- was used. According to the above classification, interviews held in Türkiye and Greece spread across under the relevant heading.

## **5.2. Restructuring Diyanet in Public Sphere**

This chapter discusses how the Diyanet has been restructured in the public sphere since the 2000s, especially after 2010. Restructuring the Diyanet in the public sphere refers to the steps taken to create a separate service area called outside mosque activities or socially oriented religious services (sosyal içerikli din hizmetleri).

This section focuses on the relationship between Diyanet's efforts to reach different segments of society and neoliberal authoritarianism. To this end, the socially oriented religious services that Diyanet has systematically implemented in recent decades will be analyzed in five stages. The first is the reorganization process, which is conducted in line with this perspective. The second concerns the content and target groups of the services. The third is the transformation of mosques, which can be seen as the smallest unit of the Diyanet at the local level. The fourth one is the status of the "street level" bureaucrats who provide this new service model, while the fifth one is the collaborations made by Diyanet to reach different segments of society in providing these services.

### **5.2.1. Reorganization and the New Units**

In the past, the mosque was the central unit in which Diyanet physically encountered society. Therefore, the audience for Diyanet's goal of enlightening society on religion

was predominantly male and relatively religious citizens who benefited from classical mosque services. The first signals that Diyanet's target audience would be expanded was given in the late 1990s. In 1997, guidance (irşad) services began to be provided through male and female Diyanet personnel employed in mufti offices, without establishing new units. Diyanet personnel tried to solve the religious questions and problems of citizens who applied to them by phone or face-to-face, mostly related to all kinds of religious issues, social life, interpersonal relations, family life, and mental problems (Peker, 2009:162). One of the first concrete steps was taken in the 2nd Religious Council held on November 23-27, 1998. After the negotiations, it was decided to establish the religious counseling and guidance centers affiliated with the Diyanet, which can reveal the methods of guidance within the framework of the needs of today's people by benefiting from the research findings of religious studies and the humanities (II. Din Şurası Tebliğ ve Müzakereleri II 23-27 Kasım 1998, 2003: 778). Most discussions are on the name and function of the new centers to be established (ibid., 718-723). Although the final decision was reached, there was no concrete consensus on the nature of these centers. However, it would not be wrong to say that the contributions and demands of the participants during the discussions may have inspired the current family and guidance centers of Diyanet.<sup>59</sup>

Some steps were taken to institutionalize family-oriented religious services in the following years. In 2003, the Family and Religious Guidance Bureaus Project was initiated as a pilot project in some cities.

In addition to these initiatives, Law No. 6002 amending the Law on the Establishment and Duties of the Presidency of Religious Affairs and Certain Laws that was approved on July 1, 2010, in the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye (TBMM) with the consensus of all parties in the parliament (Bulut, 2010:44), is the most systematic step towards restructuring Diyanet's relationship with society. It was published in the Official Gazette on July 13, 2010, and then entered into force.

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<sup>59</sup> Particularly, Nevval Sevindik, who attended the Council as the guest of the Diyanet, stated that the centers in question could be organized in small cities with a "missionary spirit" rather than big cities, and women could be reached through female religious officials to be employed by Diyanet. His advice on issues such as the fact that mosques should be a social and cultural space beyond their traditional functions - when current practices are considered - seems quite remarkable.

In the justification of the law, it is stated that it provides a legal basis for some of Diyanet's services. In other words, the main reason for Law No. 6002 is to fill the existing legal gap that has been neglected for many years<sup>60</sup>. With this new regulation and Decree-Law No. 703 , which introduced some revisions, significant arrangements have been made in the field of duty and authority of the General Directorate of Religious Services in line with “socially-oriented religious service” perspective. For example,

Article 7, Paragraph 3: "To provide guidance services to citizens in penal execution institutions and detention centers, juvenile detention centers, nursing homes, health institutions, and similar places." In this paragraph, the concept of religious services has been extended beyond mosques. Furthermore, in 2018, with Decree-Law No. 703, this article was amended as "Providing spiritual counseling and religious services in student dormitories, educational institutions, youth centers and camps, penal institutions, health institutions, social service institutions and similar places on a cooperative basis." This amendment means that both the scope and manner in which the services are provided have changed. In addition, the word "irşat" has been replaced by the term "spiritual counseling."

Paragraph 6: To provide spiritual counseling services for people in need of support, such as migrants, disabled people, and addicts. (These phrases were added in 2018 with an amendment made by the Decree-Law No. 703).

- Paragraph 7: To enlighten and guide the family, women, youth, and other segments of society on religious matters

- Paragraph 9: To open reading halls, family and religious guidance centers, youth work centers and similar places where needed and to carry out related works

According to Law No. 633, Diyanet’s central organization consisted of service units, departments, and branch offices before the amendment. However, the justification of

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<sup>60</sup> Some arrangements were made in Law No. 633 on the Establishment and Duties of the Presidency of Religious Affairs in 1976 in accordance with the then-emerging necessities. These regulations, however, were repealed in 1979 at the request of the then-president for a variety of reasons. The justification for the law points to the legal gap created by this annulment.

Law No. 6002 claims that this type of organization leads to inefficiency because Diyanet is a larger organization than many ministries and public organizations. For this reason, the lawmaker envisaged that the service units of Diyanet would be structured as a general directorate. After the enactment of the draft law, the unit, which was previously organized as a religious services department, was brought to the status of the general directorate. Previously, four departments were established under the General Directorate of Religious Services. In 2017, Diyanet issued a directive to redefine the duties of its units. With this directive, the duties of all units within the Diyanet were elaborated. In addition, a new department was established to work on solving the religious, cultural, and social problems caused by internal and external migration. The final versions of the departments under the General Directorate of Religious Services (all these departments were interviewed within the scope of the study) are as follows:

- Department of Guidance Services (İrşat Hizmetleri Daire Başkanlığı)
- Department of Mosque Services (Camii Hizmetleri Daire Başkanlığı)
- Department of Family and Religious Guidance Services (Aile ve Dini Rehberlik Daire Başkanlığı)
- Department of Socially and Culturally Oriented Religious Services (Sosyal ve Kültürel İçerikli Din Hizmetleri Daire Başkanlığı)
- Department of Migration and Spiritual Support Services (Göç ve Manevi Destek Hizmetleri Daire Başkanlığı)
- Department of Zakat Services<sup>61</sup> (Zekat hizmetleri Daire Başkanlığı)

According to the Duties and Operational Instruction<sup>62</sup> of the Diyanet, duties of the Departments affiliated to the General Directorate of Religious Services are as follows:

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<sup>61</sup> It was established with the regulation made in 2021

<sup>62</sup> Görev ve Çalışma Yönergesi  
<https://hukukmusavirligi.diyamet.gov.tr/Documents/G%C3%B6rev%20ve%20%C3%87al%C4%B1%C5%9Fma%20Y%C3%B6nergesi.pdf> accessed on 02.03.2023

**Table 2.** Duties of the Departments Affiliated to the General Directorate of Religious Services

<p><b>Department of Mosque Services</b></p>	<p>a) To follow the works and procedures related to taking over the management of mosques and masjids, opening them for worship, managing and conducting worship, adhan and sala services.</p> <p>b) To carry out the works and procedures related to Keeping Mosques Open and Mosque Lessons Programme.</p> <p>c) To organise programmes in mosques on religious days and nights and to carry out the works and procedures related to the broadcasting of these programmes on radio and television.</p> <p>ç) To determine the standard of religious services carried out in mosques.</p> <p>d) To follow up the works and procedures related to mosque guidance.</p> <p>e) To follow up the works and procedures related to the establishment and provision of bookshelves/libraries in mosques and masjids.</p> <p>f) To follow up the works and procedures related to the problems of mosques and masjids in the resting facilities and shopping centres on the road routes.</p> <p>g) To ensure that work is carried out on the opening of religious counselling offices in mosques in need and to follow up the related work and procedures.</p> <p>ğ) To carry out studies on the efficient execution of mosque services during Ramadan.</p> <p>h) To carry out works and procedures for developing projects, organising symposiums, conferences, panels, etc. in cooperation with relevant units and institutions in order to increase interest in mosques and to make mosque services more effective and efficient.</p> <p>ı) Carrying out activities to ensure that all segments of society benefit from the worship services carried out in mosques.</p> <p>ii) To work on improving the relations between the mufti's office, mosque officials, mosque associations and foundations and the community in order to carry out worship services in mosques efficiently.</p> <p>j) To follow up the procedures related to research and filming permits in mosques.</p> <p>k) To organise certificates of appreciation for those who build mosques, to carry out the works and procedures related to participation in mosque opening ceremonies.</p> <p>l) To co-operate with the relevant units for the training of mosque officials according to the professional development and career system.</p> <p>m) To carry out activities to increase the professional motivation of religious officials and to carry out the works and procedures related to the organisation of experience sharing meetings.</p> <p>n) To fulfil the requests, suggestions and complaints regarding mosque services.</p> <p>o) To ensure that the necessary measures are taken to carry out funeral, burial and burial works in places where there is no municipal funeral organisation.</p> <p>ö) To carry out the works and procedures related to the Week of Mosques and Religious Officers.</p> <p>p) To carry out and plan the activities to be carried out in mosques on religious/national special days and weeks (mawlid, Qur'anic feast, hatim, prayer, etc.) and their continuation activities.</p> <p>r) To perform other duties assigned in matters related to the field of duty.</p>
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Table 2. (continued)

<p><b>Department of Guidance (İrşat) Services</b></p>	<p>a) To provide effective and efficient implementation of the guidance services in mosques and masjids in accordance with the procedures, to monitor the work and procedures related to this.</p> <p>b) Organising panels, conferences, seminars, symposiums and similar scientific meetings.</p> <p>c) To follow up the works and procedures related to the activities organised by the mufti's offices to enlighten the society about religion through radio, television and other broadcasting organisations and to prepare reports.</p> <p>ç) To carry out the works and procedures related to sending preaching and guidance teams to the places deemed appropriate by the Presidency.</p> <p>d) To prepare the preaching and guidance programmes of the preachers of the Presidency and to carry out their procedures.</p> <p>e) Preparing/ensuring the preparation of sermon texts and sample sermon texts when necessary.</p> <p>f) To follow up the procedures related to those who have converted and to keep records of the certificates of conversion</p> <p>g) To carry out the works and procedures related to Mevlidi Nebi Week.</p> <p>ğ) Carrying out studies on the training of preachers according to the career system in co-operation with the relevant units</p> <p>h) To carry out studies to increase efficiency in counselling services and to follow up the works and procedures carried out by mufti offices for this purpose</p> <p>ı) To carry out the works and procedures related to cooperation with relevant units, institutions and organisations in order to carry out guidance services effectively and efficiently.</p> <p>i) To perform other duties assigned in matters related to the field of duty.</p>
<p><b>Department of Family and Religious Guidance</b></p>	<p>a) To organise/ensure the organisation of events with religious, social and cultural content in order to raise social awareness on the establishment, protection and strengthening of the family.</p> <p>b) To provide spiritual counselling and religious guidance services to strengthen the family and solve family-related problems in the face of risks and problems arising from social and cultural changes.</p> <p>c) To develop projects, programmes and studies on religious issues for families and family members.</p> <p>ç) To ensure that the necessary trainings are given to the personnel assigned in family and religious guidance offices or centres.</p> <p>d) To provide spiritual counselling and religious guidance services in social service institutions such as children's homes, children's home sites, child support centres, nursing homes, women's guesthouses in cooperation with relevant institutions.</p> <p>e) To ensure the preparation of written and visual materials on the family.</p> <p>f) To carry out the works and procedures for cooperation with national and international institutions and organisations related to the field of duty.</p> <p>ğ) Ensuring the opening and coordinated operation of family and religious guidance offices or centres.</p> <p>g) To perform other duties assigned in matters related to the field of duty.</p>

Table 2. (continued)

<p><b>Department of Socially and Culturally Oriented Religious Services</b></p>	<p>a) To carry out social and cultural studies to keep the national and spiritual values of the society alive.</p> <p>b) To carry out studies on different religious interpretation circles, religious-social organisations and traditional religious-cultural formations belonging to the Islamic Religion.</p> <p>c) To carry out studies to contribute to the spiritual development of young people.</p> <p>ç) To determine the physical and functional standards of Diyanet youth centres, Diyanet reading halls and Diyanet youth offices, to ensure that these places are opened in places deemed necessary and that they work in coordination.</p> <p>d) To ensure that spiritual counselling and religious guidance services are provided in places such as Diyanet youth centres, Diyanet reading rooms, Diyanet youth offices and student dormitories and youth centres in cooperation with other institutions and organisations.</p> <p>e) To ensure that the necessary training is provided to the personnel assigned within the scope of this paragraph.</p> <p>f) To coordinate and follow up the works and procedures to be carried out with relevant institutions, organisations and non-governmental organisations in order to prevent negativities such as terrorism and violence that threaten social peace.</p> <p>g) To produce projects and work in cooperation with institutions, organisations and non-governmental organisations in order to disseminate and increase the efficiency of religious services with social and cultural content.</p> <p>ğ) To plan and carry out activities to be carried out outside mosques on religious/national special days and weeks.</p> <p>h) Determining the physical and functional standards of religious reading halls and ensuring that they are opened where deemed necessary.</p> <p>i) To ensure the preparation of written and visual materials for service areas.</p> <p>i) To perform other duties assigned in matters related to the field of duty</p>
<p><b>Department of Migration and Spiritual Support Services</b></p>	<p>a) To carry out studies for the solution of religious, cultural and social problems caused by internal and external migration.</p> <p>b) To plan and follow up spiritual counselling and guidance services for foreigners who seek asylum in our country, citizens who have had to migrate within the country for any reason and seasonal workers.</p> <p>c) To plan and implement spiritual counselling and guidance services to be provided in case of disasters and emergencies in cooperation with relevant institutions, organisations and non-governmental organisations.</p> <p>ç) To ensure that spiritual counselling and guidance services are provided for the disabled.</p> <p>d) To follow up the work and procedures regarding spiritual counselling and guidance services provided in health institutions.</p> <p>e) To coordinate and follow up the work and procedures to be carried out with relevant institutions, organisations and non-governmental organisations in the fight against addiction.</p> <p>f) To ensure that spiritual counselling and guidance services are provided in penal execution institutions, children's education homes and probation directorates; to coordinate the related works and procedures.</p> <p>g) To perform other duties assigned in matters related to the field of duty.</p>



Table 2. (continued)

<p><b>Department of Zakat Services</b></p>	<p>a) To carry out necessary works for the fulfilment of zakat, fitrah, ransom and similar financial worships in accordance with the procedures and principles of the Islamic Religion.</p> <p>b) To carry out works for the fulfilment of the worship of qurban in accordance with religious provisions, health conditions and environmental cleanliness in cooperation with the relevant institutions.</p> <p>c) To supervise the services and activities of institutions and organisations organising sacrifices by proxy.</p> <p>ç) To carry out activities in cooperation with the relevant units in order to raise awareness about financial worship such as zakat, fitrah, ransom and similar financial worships and the worship of sacrifice and to ensure that these worships are duly performed.</p> <p>d) To carry out activities to increase the awareness of the decisions, opinions and views of the Supreme Council of Religious Affairs on financial worship and Qurban worship in the society.</p> <p>e) To carry out activities for the organisation of sacrifice by proxy.</p> <p>f) To ensure the preparation of written and visual materials on financial worship and Qurban worship.</p> <p>g) To coordinate and follow up the works and procedures to be carried out with the relevant public institutions and organisations on halal food.</p> <p>ğ) To develop joint projects with relevant units, institutions and organisations in order to carry out the services related to the field of duty effectively and efficiently and to ensure the execution of these projects.</p> <p>h) To carry out the works and procedures regarding the services to be provided during Ramadan and to ensure the necessary coordination.</p> <p>ı) To carry out the necessary works and procedures for the celebration of religious holidays.</p> <p>i) To perform other duties assigned in matters related to the field of duty.</p>
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### Centers and Other Units

The bureaus and centers, which have increased in number since the 2000s, have become significant units that enable Diyanet to reach out to different parts of society. As mentioned earlier, family and religious guidance bureaus have been active in provinces and districts within the mufti offices since 2003. In 2003, the Family and Religious Guidance Bureaus Project was initiated as a pilot project in some cities. Then, Family and Guidance Bureaus (Aile ve İrşad Bürosu) have been widespread in Türkiye's 81 cities. Parallel to these bureaus, the number of professional female preachers engaged in illuminating women and providing them with an appropriate

religious education has increased (Maritato, 2016). Until 2014, Family and Guidance Bureaus had been named as Family and Religious Guidance Bureaus (Aile ve Dini Rehberlik Bürosu). It is stated that the aim of the establishment of these bureaus

“is to provide the accurate religious information about the family, to contribute to the protection of the family structure, to solve the religious questions and problems of the people, especially family and family members in this context, when necessary, to make joint studies with relevant public institutions and organizations, universities and non-governmental organizations.”<sup>63</sup>

In the 2021 Religious Services Report (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, 2022: 130-160), it is stated that since its establishment in 2003, Family and Religious Guidance Offices/Centres have been serving in 81 provinces and 356 districts in 437 locations, including 423 offices and 14 centers. 3,729 personnel with the titles of preacher, religious services specialist, Qur'an course instructor, imam-hatip, and muezzin kayyim work in these offices. Of these, 1,628 are male, and 2,101 are female, and according to the report, the number of staff is increasing at an incredible pace every day (ibid., 130). Moreover, these bureaus and centers can be contacted in person, by phone, or by email.

It should be noted that the bureaus are not just located in mufti buildings. Instead, it can be founded as a separate unit such as the family and religious guidance bureaus opened in the temporary sheltering center where Syrian refugees resided in Kahramanmaraş in 2019 (diyanethaber.com.tr, 2019)<sup>64</sup>. Moreover, with Decree Law no. 703 enacted in 2018, the Law No. 633 on the Establishment and Duties of the Presidency of Religious Affairs was amended and the concept of “center” gained a broad content. Accordingly, it has been stated that Diyanet can open a reading room, family and religious guidance center, youth study center, and similar places where a center is needed and carry out works related to these. It can be claimed that this is an essential alteration in the local organization of Diyanet. As understood from the

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<sup>63</sup> <http://www2.diyamet.gov.tr/DinHizmetleriGenelMudurlugu/Sayfalar/Gorevler.aspx> accessed on 05.10.2020

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.diyanethaber.com.tr/kahramanmaras-muftulugu/gecici-barinma-merkezinde-aile-ve-dini-rehberlik-burosuna-acildi-h8232.html> accessed on 05.10.2020

Operational Instruction for Diyanet's Family and Religious Counseling Bureaus or Centers<sup>65</sup>, which entered into force with the approval of the Presidency dated January 10, 2019 and No. 8150, these new centers are bigger and well-equipped than bureaus. It has facilities such as meeting rooms, training halls, a children's playground, a library/reading hall, masjid. In other words, it is seen that these are transformed into new living spaces where people can spend time beyond counseling.

Article 6 of Operational Instruction on Youth-related Activities<sup>66</sup> (Gençlik Çalışmaları Yönergesi) issued within the framework of Law No. 633 declares that it is aimed to establish a systematic and dynamic organizational structure that will enable communication with the young masses. In this context, new units have been established within the Diyanet for youth activities. Undoubtedly, the most full-fledged one is the Diyanet Youth Centers. Diyanet Youth Centers should have an interview room, training hall, multi-purpose gymnasium, library, prayer room, kitchen, and wet ground. Places that do not meet these criteria are opened and served as Diyanet's reading hall or young office. It is stated that residential centers and places close to school environments would be preferred for youth centers. In addition, if necessary, mosque outbuildings can be arranged as the Diyanet Youth Center and Diyanet Reading Hall. The instruction underlined that the spaces opened should be made versatile and functional by transforming them into an attractive and peaceful environment as much as possible. In addition to these places, Diyanet establishes "youth offices," which are places that do not have the qualifications required to be found in the Diyanet Youth Center. These offices set up in places like campus areas, student dormitories, bus stations, shopping malls, city centers, etc., for young people to be used in spiritual counseling and religious guidance activities.

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<sup>65</sup> Aile ve Dinî Rehberlik Büro veya Merkezleri Çalışma Yönergesi  
<https://hukukmusavirligi.diyamet.gov.tr/Documents/D%C4%B0YANET%20%C4%B0C5%9ELER%C4%B0%20BA%C5%9EKANLI%C4%9EI%20A%C4%B0LE%20VE%20D%C4%B0N%C4%B0%20REHBERL%C4%B0K%20B%C3%9CRO%20VEYA%20MERKEZLER%C4%B0%20C3%87ALl%C5%9EMA%20Y%C3%96NERGES%C4%B0.pdf> Accessed on 10.01.2023

<sup>66</sup> Gençlik Çalışmaları Yönergesi  
<https://hukukmusavirligi.diyamet.gov.tr/Documents/Diyamet%20%C4%B0C5%9Fleri%20Ba%C5%9Fkanl%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1%20Gen%C3%A7lik%20C3%87al%C4%B1%C5%9Fmalar%C4%B1%20Y%C3%B6nergesi.pdf> Accessed on 10.01.2023

The centers are not limited to family and youth themes. Diyanet opened an "immigration and spiritual support center" in Ankara's Çankaya district in 2019, with ten classrooms, meeting and conference halls, and halls for social, cultural, and sports activities. It was stated that the provision of services in this center would be carried out in cooperation with the TDV and the "Social Support and Education Center (SODEM) affiliated with the TDV." In this center, educational activities, language courses, vocational training courses, social, cultural, and sports activities will be organized with relevant institutions and organizations for people in need of moral support, especially immigrants (diyanet.gov.tr, 2019).<sup>67</sup>

### 5.2.2. Socially-Oriented Religious Services

In 2019, during one of the interviews at the Diyanet's Directorate General of Religious Services, a department head made the following statements:

(...) Diyanet is in a central place. Because why? The Diyanet has the following features: it reaches millions of people through a very common tool such as the sermon. Approximately 25 million people listen to the sermon every Friday. They are only those who listen directly (referring to the mosque congregation). Frankly speaking, there is no such widespread network, even if you take all media elements. A network that reaches citizens in a widespread manner Since we have a widespread organization with its imams and Qur'an course instructors all the way to the villages, we have a structure that directly contacts the citizens. Therefore, the Diyanet is an invisible but effective apparatus (emphasis added).<sup>68</sup>

Although the interviewee made significant observations about the outreach of Diyanet to society, it should be noted that contrary to what he claimed, Diyanet has become highly visible in the social sphere in the last 20 years. In Chapter 3, the duties of the Diyanet were mentioned. One of them is to "enlighten the society on religion." This duty requires the transfer of "authentic (sahih) religious knowledge" to society. The duty to enlighten society on religious matters was included for the

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<sup>67</sup> <https://www.diyanet.gov.tr/tr-tr/Kurumsal/Detay/25726/goc-ve-manevi-destek-merkezi-dualarla-acildi>  
accessed on: 14.05.2022

<sup>68</sup> (...) Diyanet aslında çok merkezi bir yerde duruyor. Çünkü niye Diyanetin şöyle bir tarafı var. Hutbe gibi çok yaygın bir araçla milyonlarca kişiye ulaşıyor. 25 milyondur her Cuma hutbeyi dinleyen kişi sayısı. Sadece dinleyen doğrudan (cami cemaatini kastediyor). Bu kadar yaygın bir ağ yok açıkçası. Bütün medya unsurlarını bile almış olsanız, bir yaygın bir şekilde vatandaşa ulaşan bir ağ, işte imamıyla Kuran kursu hocasıyla köylere varıncaya kadar yaygın bir teşkilat olduğu için doğrudan vatandaşa temas eden bir yapımız var. Dolayısıyla çok **görünmeyen** ama etkili bir aygıttır Diyanet kurumu (vurgu eklenmiştir).

first time in Statute No. 7647 on the Duties of the Diyanet (Diyanet İşleri Reisliği Teşkilatı'nın Vazifelerini Gösterir Nizamname) issued in 1937, in accordance with Law No. 2800 on the Organization and Duties of Diyanet (Diyanet İşleri Reisliği Teşkilat ve Vazifeleri Hakkında Kanun), the first special law of the Presidency of Religious Affairs. Accordingly, in addition to answering the questions addressed, Diyanet fulfilled this duty by engaging in publishing activities (Gözaydın, 2009: 113). Clearly, over the years, the content of this task and Diyanet units in charge of fulfilling this task have changed.

Although Law No. 633 on the Establishment and Duties of the Presidency of Religious Affairs has undergone many changes since 1965, the duties of the Religious Affairs Presidency specified in Article 1 have remained the same. However, instruments related to the duty of enlightening society on religious issues started to diversify significantly. For example, in 2012, the Alo Fatwa Line, which operates 24/7, was opened to answer citizens' questions on religious issues. In addition, in 2012, it was decided that Diyanet would publish written, audio, and video publications on religious issues, prepare radio and television programs, and cooperate with the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) and other media organizations in these matters. In 2018, the channel ended its cooperation with TRT and continues to broadcast Diyanet TV. In this context, religious programs (within the framework of Sunni Islam) are broadcast by the state throughout the day.

Another component of Diyanet's duty to enlighten society regarding religion is socially-oriented religious services (sosyal içerikli din hizmetleri). It is also understood that these services are referred to as "religious services outside mosques" (cami dışı din hizmetleri). It is observed that these services date back to quite old times. For example, spiritual support services for convicts and detainees in prisons were provided in the 1970s when Diyanet assigned religious officials to these prisons (Işık & Demir, 2012: 30). In addition, in 1983, 67 religious personnel positions were created in Social Services and Child Protection Institutions as a outside mosque area<sup>69</sup>. In 1996, Circular No. 506, issued by Diyanet's Religious Services Department,

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<sup>69</sup> See Official Gazette dated May 27, 1983 and No. 18059  
<https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/18059.pdf>

defined "outside mosque religious services" as a special field of service areas such as hospitals, prisons, detention centers, homes for the elderly and nursing homes, detention centers, child welfare homes, factories and large workplaces, and charity organizations.

However, it was not until the 2000s that these services were systematically implemented. Since the 2000s, there has been a remarkable increase in emphasis on the social dimension of religious services in some publications and meetings of the Diyanet. For example, in the Diyanet Monthly Magazine published in October 2008, the topic of "social expansion in religious services" (din hizmetinde sosyal açılım) was included. The magazine includes articles emphasizing the ability of religious services to regulate society. In his article published in the same magazine, Halil Altuntaş, a member of the High Council of Religious Affairs, emphasizes the importance of "social expansion in religious services" (see Altuntaş, 2008:4-7). The article emphasizes that religious services should not be limited to the mosque and that "the most difficult and important task should be carried out in the environment outside the mosque, in daily life in society" and "by communicating with people one-to-one." The need for a more society-oriented perspective in religious service was brought to the fore in the 4th Religious Council organized in 2009 with the theme of religion and society. One of the commissions established within the scope of the council was (sosyal açılımlı din hizmetleri) (IV. Din Şurası Tebliğ ve Müzakereleri, 2009). Emphasizing that Islam cannot be kept away from social problems, the final decisions of the Religious Council (Din şurası) pointed to the perspective of socially oriented religious services:

"In parallel with social change and development, the Presidency of Religious Affairs must consider both inside and outside the mosque in its religious services, increase its social outreach, and reconsider religious services with an understanding that encompasses all segments of society. For this reason, new structures and arrangements are needed to achieve significant results in various service areas, such as family, social service units, hospitals, prisons, and detention centers. It is vital for the Presidency to establish protocols and cooperate with other institutions and organizations providing services in the social field, and efforts in this direction should be increased. In this context, it would be useful to equip the existing in-

service training curricula and activities of the Presidency with programs related to outside mosque service areas (yenisafak.com, 2009).<sup>70</sup>

In other words, the approach of socially oriented religious services (socially oriented or socially inclusive religious services) differs from traditional religious services in terms of their spatial organization and target group.

In a speech in 2010, Ali Bardakoğlu, then President of Diyanet, spoke of a "project for religious services outside mosques":

We launched a project called Religious Services outside the mosque. With this project, we are trying to show that religious services are not only about praying or fasting but that religion covers the whole social life. Our religious personnel is not just an officer who leads prayers in the mosque. He should be an opinion leader who intervenes in the whole social life of society. We are experiencing outstanding examples in this project(ntv.com.tr, 2010).<sup>71</sup>

The first systematic implementation of socially-oriented religious services was the family and counselling offices established within the mufti offices. It reached its peak with the Law No. 6002 on the Amendment of the Law on the Establishment and Duties of the Presidency of Religious Affairs and Certain Laws, which entered into force in 2010.

The booklet "Religious Services Strategy (DİB Din Hizmetleri GM, n.d.)" published by the Diyanet points to the rationale behind the Diyanet's new understanding of religious services. According to this booklet, by adopting a new socially-oriented religious service perspective, it is possible to more effectively address the evolving and diverse societal needs. Socially-oriented religious services are primarily

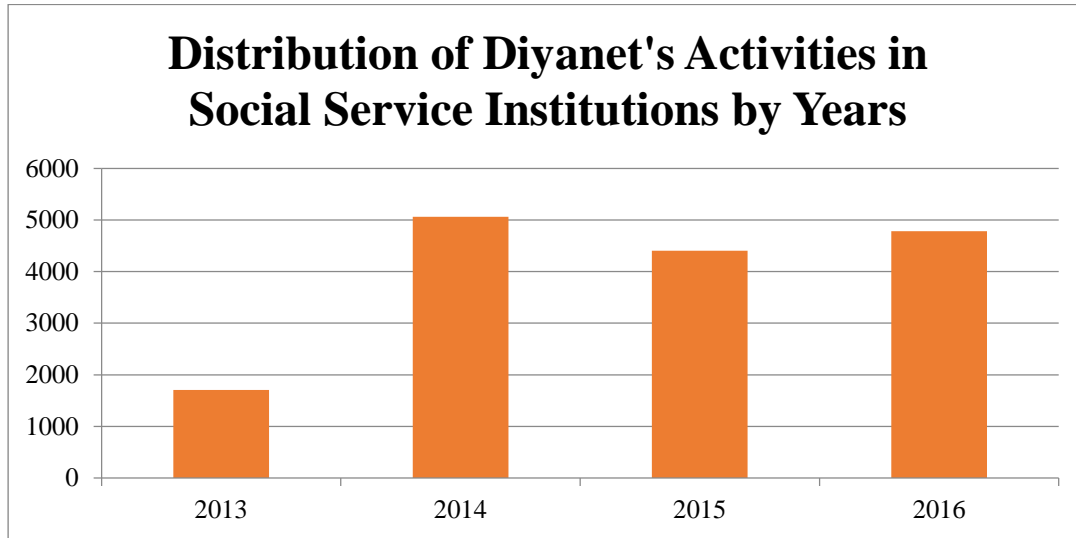
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<sup>70</sup> "Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı toplumsal değişim ve gelişmeye paralel olarak sunduğu din hizmetinde cami içi ve cami dışını birlikte düşünmek, sosyal açılımı artırmak ve toplumun her kesimini kuşatan bir anlayışla din hizmetlerini yeniden ele almak zorundadır. Bu nedenle başta aile olmak üzere, sosyal hizmet üniteleri, hastaneler, ceza ve tutukevleri gibi değişik hizmet alanlarında kayda değer sonuçlar alabilmek için yeni yapılanma ve düzenlemelere ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Başkanlığın, sosyal alanda hizmet üreten diğer kurum ve kuruluşlarla protokoller yapması ve işbirliğine gitmesi son derece önemli olup bu yöndeki çabalar artırılmalıdır. Bu bağlamda, Başkanlığın mevcut hizmet içi eğitim müfredat ve faaliyetlerinin cami dışı hizmet alanlarıyla ilgili programlarla donatılması yararlı olacaktır (yenisafak.com, 2009)." See <https://www.yenisafak.com/gundem/iste-iv-din-surasi-kararlari-221638> Erişim Tarihi: 23.12.2022

<sup>71</sup> "Cami Dışı Din Hizmetleri adıyla bir proje başlattık. Bu proje ile din hizmetlerinin sadece namaz kılmak ya da oruç tutmak olmadığını, dinin bütün sosyal hayatı kapsadığını vermeye çalışıyoruz. Din görevimiz sadece camide namaz kıldırmanın bir memur değildir. Toplumun bütün sosyal hayatına müdahale eden kanaat önderi olmalıdır. Bu projede de çok güzel örnekler yaşıyoruz."

distinguished from traditional religious services by taking place outside of the mosque. There are two main reasons for this. Islam is a phenomenon that aspires to solve worldly problems as well as issues related to the transcendent. As a result, a mosque-based understanding of religious service contradicts this claim. The second is the "individualization of religion," or the separation of the individual from the religious community. According to the booklet, areas such as technology, economy, culture and health, which determine the basic dynamics of social life, develop independently of religion (ibid.:4-5). In this direction, social religious services aim not to leave the individual who is faced with the problems caused by this development on his own. For this reason, the basic strategy in the understanding of social religious service is based on reaching different segments of society.

In addition to the centers, which aim to attract different parts of society, such as families, women, or young people, Diyanet personnel are assigned to different social service institutions within the scope of socially-oriented religious services.



**Figure 2.** Distribution of Diyanet's Activities in Social Service Institutions by years<sup>72</sup>

Diyanet provides spiritual guidance utilizing its staff appointed to the other social work institutions such as nursing homes, student dormitories, orphanages, prisons,

<sup>72</sup>See: <https://dinhizmetleri.diyamet.gov.tr/detay/100/sosyal-hizmet-kurumlarında-dini-danışmanlık-manevi-destek-faaliyetleri> accessed on 14.05.2022



rehabilitation centers, women's hostels, etc. The chart above shows the number of services offered by Diyanet according to the years.

Socially-oriented religious services are organized under the General Directorate of Religious Services (Din Hizmetleri Genel Müdürlüğü). The General Directorate of Religious Services is responsible for a number of duties, some of which are related to worship or religious ceremonies (see Table 2: Duties of the Departments affiliated to the General Directorate of Religious Services); however, other duties, which refer to religious services with social context, are concerned with the control of society through religious precepts.

There are various departments under the General Directorate of Religious Services. For instance, the Department of Guidance Services, which was organized as branch office before the amendment of Law no. 633 in 2010, has been in charge of preaching and sermons in mosques and masjids, conferences, seminars, panels, symposiums outside the mosque, within the scope of the "enlightening the society on religion." In other words, before the legal regulations that redefined the organizational structure of the Diyanet, guidance services were the most direct channel of Diyanet's communication with the society - primarily through sermons and khutbas.

The departments established after the legal regulation have focused on generating religious solutions to social problems and begun to practice their projects in the social domain. Each of them targets different social groups. For example, the target audience of the Family and Religious Counseling Department is family and women, while the Social and Cultural Religious Services Department is mostly young people<sup>73</sup>, and the Immigration and Spiritual Support Department, as the name suggests, immigrants and refugees. On the other hand, the task of the Department of Mosque Services is not limited to the classical mosque and worship services. As will be discussed below, this department has been given the authority to transform mosques not only into places where the community can receive worship services, but also into a social and cultural space.

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<sup>73</sup> Diyanet bureaucrats underlined that 70% of the work is for youth..

There are different arguments on the reasons and purpose of the structural-functional change experienced in Diyanet and the Diyanet's interest in problems concerning different social groups. Critical perspectives usually interpret these alterations as a social engineering project in line with policies carried out in Türkiye<sup>74</sup>. On the other hand, advocates point out that this is an alteration in line with changing social needs. For example, Interviewee 6 stated that the reason for the structural change Diyanet experienced is due to the change in society:

"Now society has changed. I mean, everybody used to be on their own. There is not much opportunity to continue with the classical method anymore. For example, most people used to live in villages, now 92% of them live in cities. There are things that city life forces us to do. Individualization is increasing, transportation and communication opportunities are increasing. So naturally, you have to force different channels. So, if you just read your prayer and wait for people to come to the mosque, you will wait a long time. That's why we use different channels, prisons, hospitals, immigration centers, centers established for the disabled or addicts... In other words, social areas. And that's what people expect<sup>75</sup>."

From these statements, it is understood that Diyanet is trying to reach especially vulnerable groups struggling with some social issues by offering solutions with religious references.

According to interviewee 1, the activity of the Diyanet personnel in the social domain is a part of worship and being civil servant at the same time:

"There is such an expectation in the society. So, you get a salary from the state. You have your office everywhere. Mosques, Quran courses, and official employees here... Employees of the state. Instead of just saying that "I will do this (just their job description) between these hours", employees should offer an area where they can contribute as a conscious person and an educated person. In fact, religion has such a perspective. Religion is not just worship. The definition of worship is also comprehensive. In other words, worship is not limited to just praying. To give a

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<sup>74</sup> It should be noted that critical approaches that see the Diyanet as a tool of social engineering do not attribute this function only to the AKP period. In other words, Diyanet has continuously undertaken this function since the early republican period, albeit with different methods (A. E. Öztürk, 2018: 4; Yılmaz, 2021: 219-271)

<sup>75</sup> "Artık toplum değişti. yani eskiden herkes kendi köşesindeydi. Artık klasik yöntemle devam etmenin çok bir imkanı yok. yani mesela insanların çoğu köylerde yaşıyordu artık şehirlerde yaşıyor %92. Şehir hayatının zorladığı şeyler var bizi. Bireyselleşme artıyor, ulaşım, İletişim imkanları artıyor. Dolayısıyla doğal olarak farklı kanallar zorlamak zorunda kalıyorsunuz. Yani siz sadece ezanınızı okuyup insanların camiye gelmesini beklerseniz çok beklersiniz pozisyonuna düşüyorsunuz. Onun için farklı kanallar işte bu cezaevdir hastanedir göç merkezidir bu engellidir bu bağımlıdır. Sosyal alanlar. Bir de insanlar bunu bekliyorlar."

smile to a person, to help a person, to guide a person. I don't know. Listening to people is worship in this sense. So, this area is opened up in front of us with the force of life<sup>76</sup>."

From these expressions, we understand that the scope of the concept of "religious service" has expanded in today's Türkiye. The following sections will take a closer look at services towards different social groups carried out by Diyanet.

### **Family as a Place of Social Revival**

It would not be wrong to say that the family is seen as an institution that keeps society alive not only in İslam but also in all other religions. Therefore, family issues have always been at the heart of Diyanet's social projects and services in the social domain. One of the senior Diyanet's bureaucrat claims that family institution would be "place of a social revival"<sup>77</sup>. However, from a conservative point of view, individualization and modernization are among the main threats to the breakdown of the family, and these menaces are prompted by trending social factors such as industrialization, urbanization, and migration (see DİB Din Hizmetleri GM, n.d.: 18-21). There is a concern stated in many of Diyanet's reports and publications that the family institution has grown increasingly fragile and is in danger of losing credibility and collapsing. In this sense, Diyanet has been given the mission of protecting and supporting the family institution in the light of the teachings of Sunni İslam.

The main agents that fulfill this mission attributed to the Diyanet are the Family and Religious guidance bureaus and centers. The preachers and female preachers employed in these places produce solutions to the family and other problems of the people from Sunni-İslam perspective. Depending on the size and content of the

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<sup>76</sup> "Toplumunda yani böyle bir beklentisi var. Yani siz devletten maaş alıyorsunuz. Heryerde sizin büronuz var. Caminiz Kuran kursunuz, resmi bir çalışan... Devletin çalışanı. Bu sadece ben şu saatler arasında şunu yaparım demek yerine bilinçli bir insan olarak, eğitilmiş bir insan olarak dokunabileceği bir alan varsa, baktığımız zaman dinin de böyle bir perspektifi var aslına. Din, sadece ibadet. Ki ibadet tanımı da çok geniştir. Yani ibadet sadece namaz kılmakla sınırlı değildir. Bir insana tebsüme etmek, bir insana yardım etmek, bir insane yol göstermek. Ne bileyim insanı dinlemek ibadettir bu anlamda. Biraz hayatın zorlamasıyla bu alan açılmış oluyor önümüze yani.

<sup>77</sup> The statements belongs to Sedide Akbulut, head of the Family and Religious Counseling Department see <https://www.diyanehaber.com.tr/ordu-muftulugu/aile-toplumsal-bir-dirilis-yeridir-h7959.html> accessed on: 07.10.2020

problem, the applicants are directed to the relevant units of the Provincial Directorates of Family, Labor and Social Services, High Board of Religious Affairs, Provincial Health Directorates, law enforcement, and judicial authorities (for the detailed information see Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, 2022: 134).

According to the Diyanet report, there has been an increase of more than 200 percent in the number of people applying to centers and offices for counseling from 2017 to 2021 (ibid., 131). Although the report states that one of the important reasons for this increase is the attention paid to data entry, it can be argued that these services respond to demand. However, Diyanet not only expected people in need of assistance to reach these offices. Diyanet also tries to reach out to different members of a family, including the mother, father, and child, through some projects and services. The main factor distinguishing these from the projects and initiatives of secular social service organizations is that they address the family phenomenon with religious references and try to shape it in this direction. For instance, Department of Family and Religious Counseling initiated the Father School Project in 2019 (aa.com.tr, 2019)<sup>78</sup>. The project aims to remind fathers of their responsibilities and enhance the relationship between fathers and mothers in light of psychology, communication techniques, and the Quran. Moreover, family education during and after the divorce process carried out by the family and guidance bureau/centre in Sivas can be given as an example of such projects. For example, it is noteworthy that in this project, in addition to civil law, Islamic Law is also one of the referenced sources (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, 2022: 141). The report also includes projects and training that do not directly aim to solve social problems. For example, the "Hello to Life" project in Erzincan aims to reach out to families who have recently had children and provide religious and spiritual guidance (for the other recent projects, see ibid., 140–148). In addition, "First Step to Marriage" seminars are organized by the General Directorate of Religious Services under different topics in order to inform newly married and engaged couples about the values that sustain the family, such as love, compassion, justice, and a sense of trust, in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah. The aim of this training is expressed as "the importance of values such as

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<sup>78</sup> <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/egitim/diyanetten-baba-okulu-projesi/1627351> accessed on: 07.10.2020

love, compassion, justice, and trust in the construction of the family, from the perspective of the Qur'an and Sunnah" (ibid., 143).

In addition to the family, the social services provided by Diyanet also target individuals who are away from the family institution for various reasons. For this purpose, the category of "religious and spiritual guidance was created in social service institutions. Children under the protection and care of the Ministry of Family and Social Services constitute the target group for these services. Religious personnel are assigned to provide spiritual support services to children residing in social service institutions such as children's homes, children's home sites, and child support centers. They provide "Values Education with Activities" for at least two hours a week. As stated in the religious services report, this education aims to transfer "national and spiritual values" to children who cannot be with their biological families and to reinforce these values (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, 2022:155-156). In addition to orphans and children under state protection, the target group of these services includes the elderly in nursing homes, women in women's shelters and guesthouses, and their children (ibid., 157-158).

It should be noted that Diyanet-enabled projects on family go beyond its administrative structure. Hence, it is necessary to mention the "Women, Family and Youth Center (KAGEM)" under the roof of TDV whose organic connection with Diyanet was mentioned before. This center was established in 1996 to reach out to all parts of the society and bring them together with religious knowledge, thought, culture, and art based on the main sources of Islam; to produce knowledge, discourse, and projects in the face of social problems. Moreover, in 2011, the center underwent a restructuring process that aims to expand its areas of interest and responsibility. In particular, social projects carried out by the center such as "Two People and One Life: Marriage School Project (İki İnsan Bir Hayat Projesi)" which includes religious themes, "the Love Bridge Project" (Sevgi Köprüsü Projesi) / for orphans under state protection, the Spiritual Bridge (Maneviyat Köprüsü Projesi) for the elderly living in retirement homes and the prisoner mother-child projects draw attention<sup>79</sup>.

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<sup>79</sup> <https://tdvkagem.org.tr/sosyal-projeler/> accessed on 28.10.2023

## Services for Youth

During the interview with the head of the Social and Cultural Religious Services Department in 2019, I noted that youth-related issues have been among the Diyanet's top priorities in recent years. Since 2009, according to the Diyanet Monthly magazine, youth has been a popular topic among Diyanet Presidents. They highlight out the roots of problems impacting today's youth in Türkiye in their editorials. For example, Bardakoğlu (2009) prioritizes short-term goals based on pleasure and interest, rampant secularism, and limitless freedom, whilst Görmez (2013) indicates popular culture and corruption. Individuality, secularism, virtual life, popular culture, fashion trends, marginal approaches, warped ideologies, and terrorist organizations<sup>80</sup> are all highlighted by Erbaş (2018), the current president of the Diyanet.

With the Presidency Approval No 10079/2018, Operational Instruction on Youth-related Activities (Gençlik Çalışmaları Yönergesi), which were prepared on the basis of the cooperation protocol signed between Diyanet and the Ministry of Youth and Sports in 2015, came into force<sup>81</sup>. Its aim is to establish procedures and principles for services provided to young people by Diyanet. It is possible to claim that the rationale behind this regulation is to create the ideal youth by means of Sunni İslam motives.

Youth activities, which are carried out in a comprehensive and systematic manner, are a solid example of how the spatial dimensions, service range, and human resources of the Diyanet have expanded in recent years. Diyanet's services for young people are offered in a wide range of areas, such as Diyanet youth centers, Diyanet youth offices, reading areas established in mosques, centers, youth camps affiliated with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and student houses opened by TDV. In other words, Diyanet's services in the youth centers, youth offices, and reading halls are coordinated with various stakeholders. When necessary, Diyanet uses TDV houses

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<sup>80</sup> After the failed coup attempt on July 15, the terror threat is frequently underlined in the printed publications of the Diyanet.

<sup>81</sup> <https://hukukmusavirligi.diyamet.gov.tr/Detay/150/gençlik-çalışmaları-yönergesi> accessed on 28.07.2022

and dormitories. It is envisaged that Diyanet works in coordination with TDV, especially with the Ministry of Sports and Youth, where the protocol was signed. What is more, Diyanet personnel is contact university, high school, and secondary school administrators to disseminate the studies.

Youth work does not only consist of religious and spiritual guidance. It also includes sportive, cultural, etc. activities. The interviewee 5 stated that scattered services and other activities have become more systematic with the introduction of this new instruction. Our dialogue on the scope and purpose of youth centers' activities is as follows.<sup>82</sup>

I5: Our aim here is to provide recreational activities especially for young people in mosques. Our idea is that our young people should not only come to the mosque for praying. For example, before I took this job, I had 12-13 gyms that I was interested in. These are the halls where karate, taekwondo, and archery are practiced within the mosques of our provincial mufti. We have more than 700 licensed youth. These are still going on. We took the second place in the world and the first place in the Balkans. They have still continued to do sport.

Me: With the support of the Diyanet, right?

I5: Of course. This is an event that is fully supported by our provincial and district mufti. We are now setting up a similar system. What is that? We are establishing at least one youth center in 81 provinces. We already have youth centers, but we do it more professionally. These centers include gyms, study centers, and kitchenettes. For instance, there are places we refer to as wet ground. In other words, young people will do their sports there. There, they will learn their different lessons and foreign language. There they will be able to drink their tea and eat their toast. We want to create a space where you can easily access the internet. We do not say come if you are praying, do not come if you are not. It doesn't matter if our families are

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<sup>82</sup> I5: Şimdi burada özellikle gençlerimizin camiler bünyesinde faaliyet yapabilmeleri. Kurgumuz şu gençlerimiz sadece namaz kılmak için camiye gelmesinler. Benim mesela ilgilendiğim daha göreve gelmeden önce 12-13 tane spor salonum vardı. İl müftülüğümüze bağlı camiler bünyesinde karate, taekwondo okçuluk yapılan salonlar. 700'den fazla lisanslı gencimiz var. Hala bunlar devam ediyö. Dünya ikincisi çıkardık, balkan birincisi çıkardık. Ve halen devam ediyor bu çocuklarımız.

Ben: Diyanet desteğiyle değil mi?

I5: Tabi tabi. Bu tamamen il müftülüğümüz ve ilçe müftülüğümüz desteğiyle olan bir hadise. Şimdi benzer bir çalışmayı kurduyoruz. O da nedir? 81 ilde en az 1 il gençlik merkezi kuruyoruz. Halihazırda gençlik merkezlerimiz var ama daha profesyonel bir biçimde yapıyoruz. İçerisinde spor salonlarının olduğu içerisinde etüt merkezlerinin bulunduğu içerisinde mini mutfaj yer aldığı. Efendime söyleyim ıslak zemin diye ifade ettiğimiz yerlerin olduğu. Yani gencimiz gelecek spronu yapacak. Orada işte farklı derslerini yabancı dilini öğrenecek. Orada çayını içebilecek, tostunu yiyebilecek. Rahatlıkla internete girebileceği bir alan oluşturmak istiyoruz. Bunun için ilaki namaz kılıyorsan gel, kılmyorsan gelme tarzı bir şey yok. Böyle gelecek ve böylece aslında ailelerimizin de açık kapalı fark etmez, işte efendim cami bir şemsiyedir. Cema kökünden geliyor zaten toplayan demektir. Herkesin gelmiş olduğu bir yapıdır ve şu anda bizim camilerimize açığından kapalisına pek çok insan geliyor bu salonlara özellikle. Faaliyetlere katılıyorlar. Ben çocuğumu oğlumu kızımı güvenilir bir yere emanet etmek istiyorum. Artı bu esnada onların anne babaları da orada duruyorlar. Bu da işin başka boyutu. Yani sadece çocukları almıyoruz ailelerini de bir nevi orada eğitmiş oluyoruz.

veiled or not; the mosque is an umbrella. The word mosque comes from the root "Jama", which means the one who gathers. Currently, many people come to our mosques and especially to our centers, veiled or not. They participate in activities. I want to entrust my child, son, and daughter to a safe place. In addition, their parents are standing there at the same time. This is another dimension of the situation. In other words, we not only take the children but also educate their families there.

Moreover, youth coordinators have been established within Mufti's office to carry out Diyanet's youth work. There is a working group consisting of a coordinator, a deputy coordinator, and other Diyanet personnel involved in youth work. In addition, as a public institution, Diyanet also accepts volunteering young people to participate in these services.

Not surprisingly, Diyanet's work with young people emphasizes "national spiritual values" rather than universal values. It is underlined that educational materials are prepared in line with young people's national and spiritual values, such as homeland, nation, call to prayer and flag.

### **Services for Refugees and Other Social Groups**

Due to internal turmoil that started in Syria in April 2011, approximately 3.6 million people came to Türkiye as refugees. This situation has forced many public institutions and non-governmental organizations to produce new policies in this regard. One of these public institutions has been the Diyanet. In 2015, Circular for the Asylum Seekers (Sığınmacılar Genelgesi) was issued, and Diyanet became one of the institutions responsible for religious services, financial and moral support, education, cooperation, and other social services for refugees. In 2017, the Department of Immigration and Spiritual Services was established under the General Directorate of the Religious Services in the Diyanet's central organization. The head of the department we interviewed explained the purpose of establishing this unit as follows:

(...) Today, we see that nearly five million foreigners with different legal statuses, such as asylum seekers, migrants, and refugees, are living in our lands. Since most foreigners come from Muslim countries, they express themselves as Muslims. Naturally, their paths intersect with those of Diyanet. Just as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Internal Affairs deal with the security or political



dimensions (of migration), migration also has religious dimensions. Because the people who come have a belief, they have (religious) orientations, and there are teachers they listen to. In fact, a part of this great mobility is related to DAESH. Therefore, some structures exploit religion in Türkiye. Migrant groups are among the vulnerable groups worldwide and are not prone to crime but are open to abuse. They are not prone to crime but are open to abuse. (...) Therefore (the establishment of a new administrative unit in this field) was not the only decision of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. For example, the Ministry of Health has established a department (for migration). The Ministry of Family Affairs has established a department for migration. The Ministry of National Education has established such departments. In meetings held for this purpose in Diyanet, the opinion was that establishing such a unit would be beneficial. This issue had to be addressed at a single center.<sup>83</sup>

As understood from the interviewee's statements, the purpose of the establishment of this department is to control the religious dimensions of migration and guide migrants in this respect. Religious services to be provided to foreigners in temporary accommodation centers and other settlements are regulated by the instruction that entered into force in 2017 with the Diyanet approval no 10113<sup>84</sup>. This instruction aims to determine the procedures and principles of Diyanet services offered to foreigners within the scope of the Temporary Protection Regulation. According to this instruction, women and foreign religious officials are employed in temporary protection centers or outside these centers to provide religious, social and cultural services to persons under protection. Moreover, Diyanet, in cooperation with TDV, conducted some aid campaigns for migrated people (Demirtaş, 2018:26-27).

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<sup>83</sup> (...) Bugün geldiğimiz noktada 5milyona yakın sığınmacı göçmen mülteci farklı hukuki statülerde yabancının topraklarımızda yaşadığını görüyoruz. Dolayısıyla bu kadar yabancı ki bunlar kendilerini müslüman olarak ifade ediyorlar çoğunluğu müslüman bir ülkeden geldikleri için. Doğal olarak yolları bir şekilde diyanetle de keşişiyor. Nasıl dış işleri bak, iç işleri bak güvenlik boyutlarını siyasi boyutlarını ilgilendiren tarafları varsa aynı şekilde olayın dini boyutlarında da var. çünkü insanlar geliyorlar bir inançları var. yönelimleri var, dinledikleri hocalar var. ki oradaki bu büyük hareketliliğin bir parçası da DEAŞ'la ilgili zaten. Dolayısıyla dini istismar eden yapılar Türkiye'de olduğu gibi orada da var ve genellikle ki bu hep böyledir. Göçmen gruplar bütün dünyada kırılan kesimler içinde yer alır. Tabi bunların yanlış anlaşılması gerekiyor. Suça meyilli değillerdir ama istismara açıktır. Yani bu bağımlılık için suç için ve farklı terör örgütleri için aynı zamanda buralar istismar edilebilecek alanları oluşturur. Dolayısıyla sadece diyanetin bir kararı da değildi. Mesela Sağlık Bakanlığında ilgili bir daire başkanlığı kuruldu. Aile Bakanlığında ilgili bir daire başkanlığı kuruldu göçle ilgili. Milli eğitimde de kuruldu. Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı'nda da bu amaçla yapılan toplantılarda kurulmasının daha faydalı olacağı görüşü hakim oldu. Bunun çünkü tek elden yürütülmesi gerekiyordu.

<sup>84</sup> Geçici Koruma Kapsamındaki Yabancılara Dair Yönerge  
<https://hukukmusavirligi.diyamet.gov.tr/Documents/Diyamet%20%C4%B0%C5%9Fleri%20Ba%C5%9Fkanl%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1%20Taraf%C4%B1ndan%20Ge%C3%A7ici%20Koruma%20Kapsam%C4%B1ndaki%20Yabanc%C4%B1lara%20Verilen%20Hizmetlere%20Dair%20Y%C3%B6nerge.pdf> accessed on 01.10.2023

While the services provided by the abovementioned department received some criticism, some opinions underline the importance of these services. For instance, Sev (2017) claims that the foundation of this department is a result of the strategy which aims to alleviate the troubles of the people suffering from some detrimental drawbacks of the capitalist system through religious indoctrinations. Therefore, according to Sev, the real guilty can be hidden, the people's reaction can be softened, and the capitalist order can be enfranchised (Sev, 2017)<sup>85</sup>. On the other hand, Jacoby, Mac Ginty, & Şenay, (2018) in their studies examining the contributions of preachers to the management of migration in Türkiye, draw a more positive picture about the role of Diyanet in the field of social policy. Regarding the field research, they conducted between 2015-2017 in Bursa, they claim that preachers play a significant role materially and spiritually in solving the problems caused by migration. For example, they stated that the potential conflicts between the Syrian migrants and local people are prevented thanks to the awareness raised by the preachers. Authors claim that preacher in Türkiye has "spiritual capital." The work underscores the role of preachers as "mediators" and "entrepreneurs" in the field of social welfare.

The target group of this brand-new department is not limited to immigrants. Immigration and Spiritual Support Department offers religious and spiritual services to those who emigrate in Türkiye for various reasons, to disaster and emergency victims, seasonal workers, the disabled, health institutions, prisons, and those found in children's education at home and substance addicts. Interviewee 3 emphasized the importance of assigning Diyanet personnel to different public institutions with the following statements:

For example, it has been reported that 100 students commit suicide in credit dormitories every year. This number decreased to 25. After our officers went there.... What does this mean? I mean, when you touch people, when you are intertwined with society when you say this is our people. Whether they are addicts or convicts in prison, when you care for these people, you can be sure that both crime rates and societal problems will decrease. (...) Wherever there is a problem in the world, this should concern us. In this respect, we do not distinguish between prisons, hospitals, and mosques. We look at all of these as people. We have endeavored to save people.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> <https://haber.sol.org.tr/yazarlar/kadir-sev/diyanet-durumdan-vazife-cikardi-siginmacilara-din-hizmeti-verecek-206365> accessed on 31.08.2021

<sup>86</sup> Bakın gerçekten mesela kredi yurtlarda her yıl 100 öğrencinin intihar ettiği söyleniyordu. Bu rakam 25lere düşmüş. Bizim oraya görevlilerimiz gitti en son. Bu ne demek? Yani siz insanlara

These services not only show that Diyanet is spatially spread across the entire public service areas but also point out how Diyanet's field of duty is expanded. These services are placed on legitimate grounds by the interviewee, based on their results. Another discourse that Diyanet officials use to legitimize these services is that spiritual counseling services have long been institutionalized in Christian geography.

### **Practice Transfer from Western-Christian Tradition**

Policy transfer, called by different names such as lesson-drawing, policy convergence, and policy diffusion, refers to the adaptation of policies, administrative regulations, institutions, or ideas that have initially emerged in a political system to another political system (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000). The possibility of such a transfer is open to discussion in terms of religious systems. However, especially with the effect of increasing globalization, it is quite possible that the practices of a religious bureaucratic organization representing any religion may be adapted to a religious organization representing another religion. During this study, it was observed that Western Christianity's spiritual guidance and support practices have shaped and enlarged the service range of the Diyanet in recent years.

Some participants in the IV. Religious Council (4. Din Şurası), held in 2009, emphasized that Western Christianity's understanding of worship is not limited to the church community. Accordingly, it was recommended that a similar approach might be adopted by the mosque staff in Türkiye. In the same council, Gündüz stressed "religious services outside the church". Although the employment of clerics in places such as nurseries, health centers, universities, or penal institutions, etc., is quite prevalent in Western countries, even attempts to appoint religious personnel to such positions in Türkiye result in some rigorous reactions in Türkiye (Erdem, 2009). However, in recent years, the appointment of Diyanet personnel to many places, such as prisons and dorms, has become extremely widespread.

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dokunduğunuz zaman, toplumla iç içe olduğunuz zaman, bu bizim insanımız dediğiniz zaman. Bu bağımlıdır hapisaneye düşmüştür vs vs. ilgilendiğiniz aman emin olun hem suç oranları azalıyor hem de toplumdaki sıkıntılar azalıyor. Bu böyle. Yarın öbür mahallede de bir gün bana gelecektir. Yarın işte filanca ildedir bana gelmez diye bir şey yok. Dünyanın neresinde bir sıkıntı varsa onun bizi ilgilendirmesi gerekiyor. Biz bu bakımdan hapisaneyi de, hastaneyi de, camiye de birbirinden ayırmıyoruz. Hepsi bizim insanımız gözüyle bakıyoruz. Çabamız insanları kurtarmak.

Interviewee 4 stated that, compared to Europe, spiritual and pastoral counseling is a relatively new issue in Türkiye. However, it is known that the Diyanet has carried out some studies on this issue for years. For example, in the Monthly Diyanet Magazine issued in August 1997, an article by Diyanet staff Ahmet Çekin, who was working in Germany, was published on the spiritual support services provided by church staff hospitals in Germany, based on fieldwork (Çekin, 1997: 50-51).

This indicates that since the end of the 1990s, religious personnel have been sent abroad to observe western practices. Accordingly, interviewee 6 stated that, although it was suspended as of 2019 due to austerity measures, Diyanet specialists were sent abroad, mainly to Europe, for a long or short term by the Diyanet. He also pointed out that these specialists in the European countries had closely examined the services of churches in hospitals, prisons, and some youth centers. After returning to Türkiye, they wrote a report about them based on their own observations. As pointed out in the news (Haber7.com, 2010) <sup>87</sup>, Diyanet sent Harun Işık, a prison preacher in Kayseri, to examine the second largest prison in England for eight months. Then he presented a report to the Diyanet. In the same news, İzzet Er, vice president of Diyanet at the time, states,

"We aimed to examine the religious services in prisons in Western countries both theoretically and practically. There are many points on which we can benefit from Işık's work. 69 imams are currently working in 96 prisons. We are unable to catch up"<sup>88</sup>.

While this statement points to a policy transfer, it also highlights the high demand for such prison services. Similarly, Aybey (2015:143), who is working for the mufti office, went abroad to see how religious counseling is practiced in different areas in the West (hospital, nursing home health centers, dormitories for children and older people, rehabilitation centers, workplaces, etc.). He visited the pastoral counseling center in the "Erasmus MC: Universitair Medisch Centrum" (Erasmus University

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<sup>87</sup><https://www.haber7.com/guncel/haber/645689-cezaevlerine-ingiliz-usulu-din-hizmeti-geliyor>  
accessed on 18.11.2020

<sup>88</sup> Batı ülkelerindeki cezaevlerindeki din hizmetlerini hem teorik hem pratik açıdan incelemeyi amaçladık. Işık'ın çalışmasından yararlanabileceğimiz pek çok husus var. 96 cezaevinde 69 imam görev yapıyor. Yetişemiyoruz'

Medical Center) in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, met with clerics, and got information about the services. These few examples are an indication that Diyanet is trying to understand the services of religious organizations in the West in the social field by sending personnel abroad.

The Diyanet bureaucrats, who answered the question, "Are practices from Europe being implemented in Türkiye?" agree that implementing these practices here would contribute to the current services of the Diyanet. However, it is seen that the spiritual counseling services provided by Diyanet in hospitals, prisons, and student dormitories received some criticism both from inside and outside the institution and from groups with different views<sup>89</sup>:

Diyanet personnel hold classes with these people (meaning those in prisons or in dormitories) at certain times. They are chatting. You mean rehabilitation? We are trying to win back them. What's a preacher doing in prison? It is our duty to save these desperate people. So, consider a blind. There is a well. Can you let it fall? A hole anyway. We cannot say that. Our goal is to save each and every one of these people. Whoever it is, that is our aim as Diyanet. Spiritual support for them both in the hospital and in prison. These have been around for years in Europe. The priest has a private room there (in hospitals). There are places for those who come to worship. *We take Europe as an example in all circumstances*<sup>90</sup>. Then, there should be a mosque in the hospital. There should be a clergyman in the hospital. Europeans did it years ago (from the interview with interviewee 3).

It is clear from the interviewee's statements that he is making a reference to individuals who object to religious services held in secular institutions. He legitimizes the Diyanet's presence in social service institutions through practices in Europe.

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<sup>89</sup> "(...) Bunlara (hastanelerdeki, cezaevlerindeki ya da öğrenci yurtlarındaki kimseleri kastediyor) belirli zamanlarda dersler yapıyorlar. Sohbet ediyorlar. Rehabilite mi diyorsunuz? Kazanmanın yoluna gidiyoruz. Cezaevinde vaizin ne işi var? Ya mübarek bu düşmüş insanları kurtarmak bizim görevimiz. Yani bir amayı düşünün. Bir kuyu var. Ama gitsin düşün diyebilir misiniz? Bir çukur neyse yani. Diyemeyiz. Bunların her birisini kurtarmak. Kim olursa olsun bizim amacımız o. Diyanet olarak. Onun için hastanede de hapisanede de manevi destek. Bunlar Avrupa'da yıllardır var. Papazın orada özel odası var. Gelenlerin ibadetini edeceği yerler var. Şimdi biz Avrupa diyoruz. Hastanede mescit olur. Hastanede din görevlisi olur. Adamlar yıllar önce yapmışlar (from the interview with interviewee 3)".

<sup>90</sup>It should be noted that I have translated this statement in the context of the meaning of the sentence by adding a commentary. I interpreted the statement as "Why do we take Europe as an example in everything, but not in this?".

Interviewer 6 also stated that he worked in Sweden for 3.5 years and that he closely followed the church services in hospitals and prisons during this time. He claims that the reports obtained as a result of personnel mobilization have improved Diyanet's understanding of service:

“(These) both strengthen the legislation and strengthen the implementation, so we usually include European examples in training. A friend of ours was angry with us: Why are you telling us about European examples? Why don't you talk about the Ottoman Empire?” When you give an example, it is perceived as an (inferiority) complex. So if you want to misunderstand the event, of course. It is not caused by a complex or anything. It is also said as a hadith: "Knowledge is the lost property of a Muslim, find it even if it is far as China." Nobody has a monopoly on this (science). This is scientific knowledge. Scientific knowledge and religious knowledge are not contradictory. (...) So this knowledge is the common property of all humanity. This is the case in social sciences. It is the same in social sciences as it is in the technical field. Therefore, in this sense, how do we try to follow these things in Europe, the world, and the USA. How do we follow them? Firstly, through the personnel we send, and secondly, through academic studies. We share this information with our friends. "We tell it in training, we tell it in our books. In summary, we have such personal experiences. We already have such an advantage. I cannot give exact statistics, but most of our personnel working in this field have seen Europe.<sup>91</sup>”

As can be seen in the above statement, it is understood that there are some opposing views also within the Diyanet on policy transfer from experts sent abroad. Critics point out that benefiting from non-Islamic traditions would create a risk in terms of adhering to Islamic traditions.

### 5.2.3. Creating the Living Mosques

As mentioned earlier, the primary discourse on which social religious services are based is that religious services cannot be offered in an area limited to mosques.

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<sup>91</sup> “(Bunlar) Hem mevzuatı güçlendiriyor, hem de uygulamayı güçlendiriyor ki biz genelde Avrupa örneklerini eğitimlere de koyarız. Bir arkadaşımız bize kızmıştı: Niye bize Avrupa örneklerini anlatıyorsunuz? Neden Osmanlı'yı anlatmıyorsunuz?” Osmanlı'yı da anlatırız sorun yok. Yani o da bizim tarihimiz kültürümüz ama dünyada da durum değişiyor (...) (Örneğin) Avrupa'ya bakmıyorsunuz, diğer örneklere bakmıyorsunuz. Sonra deniyor ki dünyadaki gelişmelerden haberiniz yok. Avrupa'yı örnek verdiğinizde (aşâğılık) kompleksi olarak algılanıyor. Yani olayı yanlış anlamak istiyorsanız tabi. Kompleksten falan kaynaklanmıyor yani. Bu hadis olarak da söylenir: "İlim Müslümanın yitik malıdır. Çin'de de olsa almız." Bu (ilim) kimsenin tekelinde değil yani. Bu bilimsel bilgi. Ki bilimsel bilgiyle dini bilgi birbirine zıt değildir. (...) Yani bu bilgi bütün insanlığın ortak malıdır. Sosyal bilimlerde de böyledir bu. Yani, teknik alanda böyle olduğu gibi sosyal bilimlerde de böyledir. Dolayısıyla biz bu anlamda Avrupa'da, dünyada, Amerika'da bu işler nasıl takip etmeye çalışıyoruz. Nasıl takip ediyoruz? 1.gönderdiğimiz personel vasıtasıyla 2.si akademik çalışmalar vasıtasıyla. Bu bilgileri arkadaşlarımıza eğitimlerde anlatıyoruz, kitaplarımızda anlatıyoruz. Özet olarak böyle. Şahsi tecrübelerimiz de var. Zaten bizim şöyle bir avantajımız var. Tam istatistik veremeyeceğim ama izim bu alanda çalışan personelimizin, çoğu Avrupa görmüştür. “

However, at the same time, both the related publications of Diyanet and the interviews show that the mosque phenomenon has strikingly changed in recent years. It is clear that the Diyanet no longer considers mosques a classical place of worship where only the mosque community participates in prayer or attends sermons voluntarily. In the Religious Council IV, Dr. Gazi Erdem, the specialist in Diyanet's High Council at that time, gave a presentation in the name of "socially-oriented mosque services" and critically claimed that mosques and imams in Türkiye had lost all functions. As a result, mosques are just functioning as places of worship today (Erdem, 2009). He underlined that the mosque should be restored to its former functions by means of establishing education, youth, women, and social service commissions under the leadership of Diyanet staff (ibid., 248-256). The increasing number of "mosque-centered activities" in recent years is an indicator of this mentality. The understanding of "putting the mosque at the center of life," which is Diyanet bureaucrats' statement, has gained momentum in recent years.

Mosques have always been of central importance to the Diyanet. For example, "Mosques Week," whose name was changed to "Mosque and Religious Officials Week," has been celebrated between 01-07 October since 1986. However, the idea of transforming the mosque into a living space rather than a place of worship became more visible after the 2000s. In parallel, the content of "Mosques and Religious Officials Week" was enriched in 2003. In the scope of celebrations, Diyanet organizes campaigns, award-winning poetry and composition competitions, radio and TV programs, and sports activities throughout Türkiye. As stated on Diyanet's website<sup>92</sup>, the Mosques and Religious Officials Week has been held since 2011 with a specific theme determined "taking into account the social needs and expectations". In this context, Mosques and Religious Officials Week was celebrated with the main themes of "Mosque and Child" in 2011, "Mosque and Disabled" in 2012, "Mosque-Woman and Family" in 2013, "Mosque and Youth" in 2014, "Purification with Mosque and Prayer" in 2015, "Mosque and Book" in 2016, "Mosque, City and Civilization" in 2017, "Mosques and Lives Dedicated to Religious Service" in 2018, and "Mosque and Life" in 2019.

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<sup>92</sup> <https://dinhizmetleri.diyamet.gov.tr/detay/98/camiler-ve-din-gorevli-leri-haftasi> (accessed on 21.09.2020)

It is possible to say that one of the most important initiatives of the Diyanet towards socializing the mosque is the actualization of the "living mosque model," as its name suggests. This model aims to restore mosques' functionality and bring them to the center of life again, as in the past. In this context, in addition to religious lectures and religious conversations one day a week, mosque meetings for youth, children, women-families, and disabled individuals are planned to be organized in mosques. In addition, in mosques with suitable physical infrastructure, religious counseling offices, reading rooms where children and young people can come and spend their time, read books under the supervision of a religious official, do homework, and research, etc. venues are opened and various activities are organized by forming mosque youth groups on a voluntary basis.<sup>93</sup> In this context, a circular was issued on March 5, 2013 on "keeping mosques open", and a decision was made to keep mosques open outside prayer hours in order to reach more people during non-prayer hours.

Interviewee 3 explained the living mosque model as follows:

"(...) even if you build the most beautiful mosque with tiles, ornaments, minarets, if you can't fill it and increase its effectiveness, you're wasting your time. It has no merit. If you build 100 mosques but you can't fill them, if you don't serve people, that is, if you don't build mosques according to need, you will be waving a shovel and maybe even committing a sin, wasting it. Therefore, a mosque that is built must be a living mosque. What does the mosque live with? It lives with people. The ornament of the mosque is the people; it is the community. Therefore, our priority is that the mosque is not perceived as a place where only men come from over a certain age. We want a mosque where all kinds of facilities are available for young people, children, women and girls, for example, special places where women can pray, a library, playgrounds where children can play billiards, table football, etc. (...) Mosques should not be isolated from the public, mosque visitors should not be isolated from the public, the doors should be open to everyone. This is the living mosque<sup>94</sup>."

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<sup>93</sup> <https://dinhizmetleri.diyamet.gov.tr/detay/94/cami-merkezli-etkinlikler> (accessed on 06.09.2021)

<sup>94</sup>"Yani bina beton yığını, işte çiniler süslemeler minareler falan en güzel camiyi yaparsanız içini dolduramadığımız zaman, orada etkinliğini artıramadığımız zaman boşuna harcadınız hiçbir sevabı olmaz. 100 tane cami yaparsanız içini doldurmazsanız, insanlara hizmet etmezseniz, yani ihtiyaca göre cami yapmazsanız boşuna kürek sallamış hatta belki günah işlemiş olursunuz, israf etmiş olursunuz. Dolayısıyla yapılan bir caminin yaşayan bir cami olması lazım. Cami ne ile yaşar? İnsanlarla yaşar. İnsanlardır caminin süsü, cemaattir. Dolayısıyla bizim önceliğimiz yalnızca erkeklerin belirli yaş üstü insanların geldiği değil genci çocuğu hanımıyla kızıyla herşeyiyle müstemilatında külliyesinde her türlü alanın bulunduğu efendim oyun alanında hanımların namaz kılacağı yere kadar herşeyin olabildiğince, kütüphane hakeza, çocukların bilardo langırt vs yani oynayabileceği oturabileceği



The "living mosque project", the details of which we have learned from the press<sup>95</sup>, was initiated in 2010 by the Diyanet in order to "turn mosques into places where social support is provided for people's problems, and especially into centers of attraction for youth and children". The project has been implemented in four mosques of Istanbul and some other mosques in 20 pilot cities throughout Türkiye, primarily in Ankara, Konya, and Samsun. In this context, engaging activities for children and young people are offered in mosques. It was reported that, in the time remaining from religious education, music lessons, sports activities, conferences and panels were held in mosques. It was stated that conferences and information meetings on domestic violence attract significant attention. In addition, it was underlined that the elderly, young people, and children who attend mosques undergo free health screening at contracted health institutions. In the news, the following words of the imam who works in a pilot mosque in Bağcılar district of Istanbul are remarkable:

“The main purpose here is to show that anything can be done in the mosque. We show an (specific) interest in people outside rather than the mosque community. The aim of this project is to attract young people, children, wine addicts, high society, Alevi and Sunnis to the mosque<sup>96</sup>.”

According to the news, project's main purpose is to make the youth and children love the mosque (and religion) through certain social and cultural activities. The Bağcılar mufti states that these developments should not be considered as a reform in religion. Instead, as he underlines, all these practices are "the re-implementation of what has been forgotten. In other words, the whole efforts are for the fact that the mosque must be in the center of society. A circular on increasing the efficiency of mosques

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yerlerin hatta benim şahsen düşündüğüm etrafında oyun salonlarının olduğu, çocuklar oynarken annelerinin babaların zaman zaman camiye girdiği, çocukların girdiği, böyle bir yer olmalı. Cami milletten halktan cemaatten, bu manada cemaat bütün halktan kopuk olmamalı kapılar herkese açık olmalı. Yaşayan cami budur.”

<sup>95</sup> “Çocuk ve gençler için yaşayan cami projesi” <http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/al-jazeera-ozel/cocuk-ve-gencler-icin-yasayan-cami> (accessed on 21.09.2020)

<sup>96</sup> “Burada temel amaç camide her şeyin yapılabileceğini göstermek. Biz cami cemaatinden çok dışarıdaki insanlarla muhatabız. Bu projenin gayesi camiye genci, çocuğu, şarapçıyı, sosyeteği, Aleviyi, sünniyi herkesi çekebilmek.”

was issued in 2019.<sup>97</sup> It is clear that the primary purpose of this circular, which defines the mosques as the center of life and places of socialization, is to bring the mosque closer to society.

In 2019, Mosque Staff Workshop IX, where Diyanet staff working in mosques in different cities, was held in Ankara. The workshop aimed to present new projects that have the potential to integrate and bring the mosque closer to society and discuss the results of the projects currently carried out in mosques. The workshop report based on the projects of the participants reveals the expanding framework of social activities in mosques (IX. Cami Görevlileri Çalıştayı Raporu, 2019). In this scope, the living mosque model is based on the enrichment of mosque services and brings many brand-newness such as the establishment of libraries and sports halls in mosque outbuildings, organization of youth groups under the leadership of religious officials, sports tournaments, etc.

On the other hand, the statement of Professor Nükhet Sirman explains the current situation of the mosques in Türkiye in comparison to the church:

“Such a system is not something that has ever been seen in Islam. In Christian societies, while the church has always been organized in daily life, the role of the mosque in Muslim societies is great, but it has not entered into the daily life in an organized way up to recent years (Sirman, 2013).<sup>98</sup>”

All these developments point to the fact that mosques in Türkiye have become the center of Diyanet's efforts to establish close relations with society. Mosques have been reshaped with a model beyond their classical functions in order to convey the religious teaching that is said to be "correct" to different segments of society, especially to the youth.

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<sup>97</sup> Cami Hizmetlerinde Verimliliğin Artırılması Genelgesi  
[https://webdosyasp.diyamet.gov.tr/muftuluk/UserFiles/ankara/ilceler/cankaya/UserFiles/Files/Cami%20Hizmetlerinde%20Verimlili%C4%9Fin%20Art%C4%B1r%C4%B1lmas%C4%B1%20Genelgesi\\_2\\_bdf080d-332b-437e-9826-bdc8089fea95.pdf](https://webdosyasp.diyamet.gov.tr/muftuluk/UserFiles/ankara/ilceler/cankaya/UserFiles/Files/Cami%20Hizmetlerinde%20Verimlili%C4%9Fin%20Art%C4%B1r%C4%B1lmas%C4%B1%20Genelgesi_2_bdf080d-332b-437e-9826-bdc8089fea95.pdf) accessed on 04.04.2022

<sup>98</sup> <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/48611/aile-irsat-merkezi-aslinda-ne-ise-yarar> accessed on 10.04.2020

“Böyle bir sistem Müslümanlıkta bu güne kadar görülmüş bir şey değil. Hıristiyan toplumlarda kilise gündelik hayatta örgütlü olarak yer alırken, Müslüman toplumlarda caminin rolü büyüktür ama gündelik hayata örgütlü bir biçimde girmiyordu (Sirman, 2013).”

#### **5.2.4. Professionalization of Diyanet Personnel**

Considering the increasing activity of Diyanet in social fields in recent years, it is possible to say that this situation has created some consequences in terms of the professional status of the religious officials compared to the past. Accordingly, this topic discusses alterations in the personnel structures of the Diyanet, particularly emerging along with the rise of its socially-oriented new religious service understanding.

According to Er (2007), one of Diyanet's former vice presidents, the concept of the religious officer has changed over time in line with social needs. In the historical process, religious officials who were sometimes employed voluntarily and sometimes on a paid basis were known as "hademe-i hayrat" (those who serve charity and kindness). The author also pointed out that religious officials had many duties regarding the administration of the neighborhood, apart from religious services until the establishment of the mukhtar organization in the Tanzimat period of Ottoman rule (ibid., 6). During the Mahmud II period, when foundations were taken under the control of the central administration, religious and mosque officials were begun to be paid by the state. In other words, they became civil servants. Religious officials in Türkiye have become a part of street-level bureaucracy since the early republican period. In other words, they are public officials who work in even the most remote parts of the country, with the state employing just like teachers or doctors.

The Diyanet's re-institutionalization process began in the 2000s, particularly with the goal of more comprehensively regulating the social sphere. As a result, both the diversity of religious services and the expectations and qualifications of Diyanet personnel have expanded.

According to Diyanet's website,

Our religious officials, who have always kept their altars without imams, minbars without preachers, and minarets without prayer, are not content with only calling the

prayer and leading prayers, but also work as religious and social service volunteers in the society and worry about the problems of the people around them.<sup>99</sup>”

Diyanet's publications and website frequently state that religious officials should work as social service volunteers and be directly related to society beyond just providing a religious service. In other words, it is expected that both the mosque and religious officials should go beyond prayer and integrate with society. The employment area of religious officials has now exceeded mosques, as can be seen in the statements of Interviewee 5:

"When you say youth work, we have spiritual guides working in Credit and Dormitories Institution (KYK). Their number was 569 in the 2018-2019 academic year. While some of them serve as KYK spiritual guides, some of them work in Türkiye Diyanet Foundation's (TDV) dormitories. We currently have around 450 personnel working in KYK dormitories. In other words, they work in 450 dormitories and 19 dormitories of TDV. Some of them are female; some are male. So, there are differences. They are made by appointment within our department. Apart from this, we have youth coordinators in every province and district, both within the mosque and within the mufti offices. In other words, we have youth coordinators in 922 districts, both male and female, in 81 provinces as well as provincial youth coordinators in total in 2006. They also work under this department. Apart from this, we send spiritual guides to all camps, especially in all camps made with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, as many camps as the Ministry of Youth and Sports have. So, we have a spiritual guide in each camp.<sup>100</sup>”

Accordingly, the first half of the 2020-2021 academic year, a total of 922 spiritual counselors of the Diyanet were employed in KYK dormitories<sup>101</sup>. On the other hand,

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<sup>99</sup> “Öteden beri mihrapları imamsız, minberleri hatipsiz, minareleri ezansız bırakmayan din görevlilerimiz, sadece ezan okumak ve namaz kıldırmakla yetinmeyip toplumda din ve sosyal hizmet gönüllüleri olarak çalışan, çevresindeki insanların derdiyle dertlenen kimselerdir. <https://dinhizmetleri.diyanet.gov.tr/detay/96/din-gorevlisi-mesleki-gelisim-calismalari> accessed on: 10.09.2021

<sup>100</sup> “Gençlik çalışmaları dediğiniz zaman bunların içinde kyk manevi rehberlerimiz var. 569 adet. 2018-2019 eğitim öğretim yılı içerisinde. Bunların da bir kısmı kyk manevi rehberler olarak görev yapıyor, bir kısmı da TDV yurtlarında görev yapıyor. Hali hazırda 450 civarında kyk yurtlarında görev yapan arkadaşlarımız var. Yani daha doğrusu 450 yurt ve 19tane de TDV nin yurtlarında görev yapıyorlar. Bunların bir kısmı bayan, bir kısmı erkek. Yani farklılıklar var. Onlar bizim daire bünyesinde görevlendirmeye yapıyor. Bunun dışında cami bünyesinde de müftülük bünyesinde de her il ve ilçede gençlik koordinatörlüklerimiz var. Yani bizim 922 ilçede, hem erkek hem kadın olmak üzere halihazırda 81 ilde de il gençlik koordinatörlüklerimiz olmak üzere toplamda 2006 civarında gençlik koordinatörlerimiz var. Bunlar da bu daireye bağlı olarak çalışıyorlar. Yine bunun dışında özellikle gençlik ve spor bakanlığı ile yapılan bütün kamplarda, yani gençlik spor bakanlığının elinde ne kadar kamp varsa o kampların hepsine biz manevi rehber gönderiyoruz. Yani her bir kampta bir manevi rehberimiz var.”

<sup>101</sup> <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/diyanetten-kyk-yurtlarina-922-manevi-danisman-1764569> accessed on 11.10.2021

with the increase in spiritual counseling services for the family and therefore for women, there is a significant increase in the employment of women preachers (Hassan, 2011; Maritato, 2015). The employment areas of religious officials are not limited to student dormitories. As stated in the previous sections, Diyanet personnel are employed as guides in many places such as prisons, nursing homes, and social service institutions.

These new job descriptions have increased the need for the professionalization of Diyanet personnel. The establishment of Religious Higher Expertise Centers (Dini Yüksek İhtisas Merkezleri) was brought to the agenda in 2010, with an amendment to the Law on the Establishment and Duties of the Presidency of Religious Affairs, in order to increase the knowledge and specialization of personnel with at least a graduate-level religious higher education on matters falling within the scope and activity of the Diyanet. In the parliamentary research report published in 2017 (TBMM Araştırma Komisyonu, 2017), it was proposed to establish a "Diyanet Academy" within the scope of the measures that the Diyanet can take against harmful religious entities. The bill of law to establish the Diyanet Academy was approved by the parliament in March 2022.

In the Diyanet Academy, qualified personnel for the internal service of the Diyanet will be trained. Besides in-service training in the field of religious services, postgraduate study opportunities, preparing projects, etc., will be provided to preachers, muftis, religious attaches, and other officials. It is also underlined that since studies will be carried out directly within the body of Diyanet, they will have the advantages of providing a healthier religious education. In the interview with Interviewee 1, who is one of the top bureaucrats of the Diyanet, she expressed that the necessary preparations were made for the establishment of the Diyanet Academy, and the approval of the president is awaited. In addition, Interviewee 1 stated that with the legal expansion of Diyanet's service range, new services have begun to be offered to different parts of the society, and of course, the need to train suitable personnel has emerged. She underlined that in-service training is not enough and that even a preacher who preaches very well cannot be guaranteed to be successful in communicating with children's houses (sevgi evleri) unless s/he is educated on this subject. Interviewee 1 also underlined that the places where the Diyanet officials

should be trained are imam hatip high schools or theology faculties, but they do not have a suitable curriculum.

As previously stated, Diyanet personnel have been appointed as "Spiritual Counselors" at institutions like as hospitals, student dormitories, and penal institutions as of 2015, as a consequence of protocols signed with the ministry and other public institutions. Professional groups including as social workers, psychiatric counselors, psychiatrists, and child development specialists have opposed to the notion that such a service will be given by Diyanet professionals with theological degrees. Diyanet applied to the Vocational Qualifications Authority (Mesleki Yeterlilik Kurumu-MYK) in order to establish a National Occupational Standard and to give the title of spiritual advisor an official status. The "National Occupation Standard for Spiritual Counselor (Manevi Danışmanlık Ulusal Meslek Standardı) was developed as part of the protocol signed on February 20, 2018. Mental Health Platform (Ruh Sağlığı Platformu) criticized this situation with a manifesto published in 2019. They objected to the classification of spiritual counselors in the "health and social Services" category in the Draft of National Occupational Standards. In recent years, "spiritual counseling and guidance" graduate programs have been opened in many universities in order to provide a more academic qualification to the "spiritual counselors" employed by the Diyanet. For instance, the protocols signed with Marmara University in 2019<sup>102</sup> and Istanbul University in 2021<sup>103</sup> enable these universities to train Diyanet personnel who provide spiritual and religious guidance in student dormitories, family offices, prisons, social service institutions and disaster and emergency areas when necessary. In this context, it was decided that these two universities would open postgraduate programs for Diyanet personnel, to which academics working in fields such as psychology, sociology, social services, psychological counseling and guidance, psychology of religion contributed.

The relationship of Diyanet officials with society is not limited to religious guidance. According to the booklet titled "The Strategy of Religious Services" published by

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<sup>102</sup><https://dinhizmetleri.diyamet.gov.tr/Documents/Marmara%20%C3%9Cniversitesi%20ile%20MDR%20Protokol%C3%BC.pdf> accessed on 16.09.2021

<sup>103</sup>[https://dinhizmetleri.diyamet.gov.tr/ResimKitapligi/Istanbul\\_Universitesi\\_Ile\\_Imzalanen\\_Manevi\\_Danismanlik\\_ve\\_Rehberlik\\_Protokolu.pdf](https://dinhizmetleri.diyamet.gov.tr/ResimKitapligi/Istanbul_Universitesi_Ile_Imzalanen_Manevi_Danismanlik_ve_Rehberlik_Protokolu.pdf) accessed on 16.09.2021

Diyanet, imams and other religious officials should investigate the religious, cultural, and social structure of the neighborhood and village where their mosques are located. While serving society, they should consider all the data they have obtained (DİB Din Hizmetleri GM, n.d.: 15). In a way, this strategy can be interpreted as an effort to give back the duties of religious officials in the Ottoman State until the Tanzimat period in the neighborhood administration.

As can be seen, the re-institutionalization and reorganization process that Diyanet has experienced in recent years has also had consequences for religious personnel. The ideal religious official of our day is expected to be not only mentors during the prayers but also professionalized, equipped beyond undergraduate education, establishing close relations with the public and able to influence them, producing projects and implementing them.

#### **5.2.5. Collaborations**

As Çekin (2013:35) stated, although there is no direct regulation regarding the relations of the Diyanet with outside organizations, it can be seen that there are many cooperation initiatives, especially through the instructions and protocols with other institutions. Diyanet's relations with other organizations and public institutions can be examined in three stages: its relations with non-governmental organizations, TDV, and ministries.

It is possible to say that the failed coup d'état in 2016 had- directly and indirectly- an effect on increasing the visibility of the Diyanet in the social sphere. As is known, this coup attempt was staged by a widespread so-called Fethullahist Terrorist Organization (FETO) which possessed its own foundations, associations, media organizations, and educational institutions in Türkiye and abroad. The report (TBMM Araştırma Komisyonu, 2017) published by the parliamentary commission of investigation in 2017 includes re-defined responsibilities of the Diyanet as well as other public institutions in the long run. The report indicates that the Diyanet is among the leading organizations that will take part in the struggle against religious communities, which have the potential to carry out some dangerous activities like

FETO. Moreover, the report has a critical tone about the laicism policies of the early republican period, which prohibited the activities of religious groups and organizations in Türkiye. Instead, it encourages the activities of public-spirited religious civil society organizations such as charities or humanitarian aid foundations on the condition that they work for the public interest and operate in accountable and transparent ways. On the other hand, the report also underlines the importance of determining by whom or how informal religious institutions will be accredited. However, according to the report, Diyanet is not able to fulfill its duty to determine whether these structures work for the benefit of society (ibid., 593). Instead, it is recommended that the Ministry of Interior and Diyanet cooperate in supervising and controlling national and international religious associations that provide humanitarian aid (ibid., 595). Moreover, it is emphasized that the position of Diyanet against non-governmental organizations and other religious organizations, the policy it follows, and its relations and responsibilities with them should be clarified. This means that Diyanet's job description can expand further in the years to come.

Diyanet's letter of opinion on this issue was also included in the same report (ibid., 597–598). In this letter, it is underlined that the Diyanet, with the support of the High Board of Religious Affairs, should collaborate with religious organizations and social formations in Türkiye that provide support in the provision of religious services and religious education in order to make more transparent and auditable structures without interfering with their freedoms. In addition to many other suggestions<sup>104</sup>, it was stated that Diyanet should be able to work in coordination with all public institutions and organizations that work with children, youth, families, and education in Türkiye. In fact, while these recommendations support the idea that the Diyanet should become an institution that is positioned above other religious civil society organizations, they also point to the attempts of the Diyanet to become an alternative structure to these religious non-governmental organizations functioning in the social domain.

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<sup>104</sup> In the letter sent by the Diyanet to the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM) commission, it was also recommended to establish a Religious Academy to train qualified religious personnel, fulfill personnel requests for religious and cultural activities, and support Diyanet in making mosques effective places other than worship. Since these issues were mentioned in the previous title, it is not included here.



Throughout the interviews, I observed that Diyanet officials lean more towards the idea of establishing a mentorship or guiding relationship with NGOs rather than cooperating. For example, interviewee 1 stated that many religious NGOs are doing their work properly, but because there is a gap in the abuse of religion, NGOs operating with religious motivations should be guided by a superior authority. The interviewee also underlined that these NGOs should be eager to be under the guidance of the Diyanet, the top authority representing the religion in Türkiye, and to be transparent.

In this context, the "Youth Workshop" organized by the General Directorate of Religious Services on November 15, 2018, can be shown as an example where the subject of "Diyanet's guidance to religious NGOs" became evident. NGOs that work with youth and have prominent "national, spiritual and religious" sensitivities participated in this workshop. In his opening speech, Ali Erbaş, President of Diyanet, stated that what can be done to equip young people with belief and civilization values and what can be done for a better future will be discussed in the workshop<sup>105</sup>. Issues such as how to reach young people, what difficulties are encountered, what are the solutions to the problems and what can be done together were discussed. Interviewee 5, one of the organizers of the workshop, pointed out the following on this issue

"(...) last month, on November 15, we held a workshop with around 60-70 people from 35 NGOs operating in Türkiye. We are currently preparing the final reports for this workshop. We will share some of it with the public. We will share some of it with NGOs and produce joint projects with these NGOs. In other words, just as we currently have spiritual guides in the dormitories of TDV, our religious officials and spiritual guides will take charge in the dormitories of these NGOs and in different regions at the next stage. Thus, we will have organized a system that is trusted and under the control of the state in a way. That is the real deal. The other dimension is that the situation of NGOs is legalized in the eyes of society. We are helping them. Plus, what we actually do is this: Every NGO has work. There are different departments such as dormitory work, home work, school work, press work, and university. We will be leading them. We will be guiding them in their work, so to

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<sup>105</sup> <https://diyanet.gov.tr/tr-TR/Kurumsal/Detay/12135/bu-ulkenin-butun-gencleri-bizimdir-ve-hepsine-ulasmaliyiz#> accessed on 24.09.2020  
<https://www.diyaret.tv/diyaret-isleri-baskani-prof-dr-ali-erbas%3B-bu-ulkenin-butun-gencleri-bizimdir-ve-hepsine-ulasmaliyiz> accessed on 14.09.2021  
<https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/bu-ulkenin-butun-gencleri-bizimdir-ve-hepsine-ulasmaliyiz/1312464> accessed on 14.09.2021

... speak. That's what we are doing. We have joint works with NGOs, that is, in all provinces and districts. So, we are going to keep it a little more professional. "

These statements show that Diyanet aims to supervise NGOs working on youth rather than cooperating with them. That is to say; this does not mean the division of duties between NGOs and the state.

The interviews points that the Diyanet has been distancing its relations with NGOs the post-15 July period. Although interviewees avoid expressing it directly, it is clear that they see the projects to be conducted with NGOs as risky<sup>106</sup>. When the interviewees asked whether they have collaborations with NGOs in Türkiye, they have mostly pointed to the services carried out with the TDV.

As expressed in Article 17 of the Law on Establishment and Duties of the Diyanet, Diyanet could cooperate with TDV in the framework of the duties assigned by Law when necessary. It has also been stated that the provisions of the Law on the Relations of Associations and Foundations with Public Institutions and Organizations (Law No. 5072) will not apply for the collaborations with TDV. One of the areas where this collaboration is undoubtedly intense is Hajj and Umrah. On the other hand, some interviewees stated that TDV is present in Diyanet's provincial organizations (in some mosques and mufti offices):

"(...) TDV has representations in our Mufti offices. For example, issues such as collecting aid and helping the poor in Ramadan are entirely under the leadership and contributions of (our) TDV. For example, aid was given to Syria or this year, 800 of our students from Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia came and stayed here. For them to see. One-month camp. 800 students came with the project "There is Brotherhood in My Summer". They (TDV) took care of them completely. Our foundation (TDV) works in coordination with the Diyanet with some charitable donations like this.<sup>107</sup> (interview with interviewee 3)

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<sup>106</sup> The main reason for this reservation was that Fethullah Gülen movement, which carried out a failed coup attempt, had a strong organization in civil society. In his 2020 speech, Süleyman Soylu, the then Minister of Internal Affairs, remarked: "*Unfortunately, Fethullahist Terrorist Organization (FETÖ) has abused civil society as it has abused everything else.*"(sabah.com.tr, 2020) Although many civil society organizations were shut down after the failed coup attempt on the grounds that they were affiliated with FETO, it seems that suspicions about civil society remained.

<sup>107</sup> "(...) özellikle müftülüklerimizde diyanet vakfının temsilcilikleri vardır. İşte yardım toplama konusunda, fakirlere yardım konusunda özellikle ramazan ayında vs. bu tamamen diyanet vakfımızın katkılarıyla olur, öncülüğünde olur. Diyelim Suriye'ye yardım yapıldı. İşte bu sene doğu Anadolu'dan

These statements show that TDV provides philanthropic services at the local level through the provincial organizations of Diyanet. However, it is seen that the Diyanet works with TDV on issues that include not only financial but also moral support.

In this sense, our TDV is in all the services of our presidency. It's not just family services. It is our supporter in all services. However, as you know, KAGEM also has its own services for family services. The services there continue in our provincial mufti offices. We also receive support from our foundation for the services of our family and guidance bureaus. This is somehow going on. Apart from that, there are these development agencies, especially in our project-based works. We have personnel presenting projects there. They are getting support. In this sense, we can say that we work together. Again, in local project-based studies, local associations and our family and religious guidance bureaus in our provincial mufti carry out projects and studies in coordination with the presidency's approval. Nevertheless, we are the known bureaus affiliated with our provincial mufti regarding family and religious guidance. We carry out family-oriented services under the coordination of our TDV and our presidency (the interview with interviewee 4).<sup>108</sup>

It is clear that today's Diyanet is neither only an institution "enlightening the public on religious issues" nor one "providing services related to worship." With the support of TDV, it operates as if it were a philanthropic social service provider, particularly at the local level.

Furthermore, Diyanet is in cooperation with other public institutions, particularly in the fields such as family, youth, etc. In this context, the Diyanet (specifically, two branches of the General Directorate of the Religious Services, Department of Family and Religious Counseling and the Department of Social and Cultural Services that carries out youth-related services) has signed some cooperation protocols with

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güneydoğu Anadolu'dan 800 tane öğrencimiz kaldı, buralara geldi. Buraları görsünler vs diye. Bir aylık bir kamp. "Yazında Kardeşlik Var" projesiyle 800 öğrencimiz geldi. Onlarla tamamen onlar (TDV) ilgilendi. Bunun gibi hayri bir kısım yardımlarla tamamen Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı ile koordineli bir biçimde diyanet vakfımız çalışmaktadır. (I3 ile yapılan görüşme)

<sup>108</sup> "Özellikle yani Türkiye Diyanet Vakfımız bu anlamda bizim başkanlığımızın bütün hizmetlerinde. Sadece aileye yönelik hizmetler değil. Bütün hizmetlerde destekçimiz bizim. Ama aileye yönelik hizmetlerde de özellikle kendi bünyesinde de KAGEM var malumunuz. Oradaki hizmetler devam etmekle birlikte il müftülüklerimizde. Aile ve rehberlik bürolarımızın hizmetlerine vakfımızdan destek alıyoruz da zaten. Bu bir şekilde devam etmekte. Onun dışında özellikle proje bazlı çalışmalarımızda bu kalkınma ajansları var. Oraya proje sunan personelimiz var. Onlardan destek alınmakta. Yani bu anlamda da beraber çalışıyoruz diyebiliriz. Yine yerelde proje bazlı çalışmalarda dernekler vasıtasıyla il müftülüğümüzün aile ve dini rehberlik büromuz. Yereldeki stk. Bizim de başkanlığında onay vermesiyle birlikte koordineli bir şekilde projeler ve çalışmalar yürütmekte. Ama biz daha çok aile ve dini rehberlik anlamında il müftülüğümüze bağlı malum bürolar. TDV miz ve başkanlığımız koordinesinde aileye yönelik hizmetleri yürütüyoruz (From the interview with interviewee 4)."

different ministries and other state institutions. The protocol between the Diyanet and the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services is one of the most important comprehensive ones<sup>109</sup>. The aims of this protocol are as follows.

- protection of family structure and values
- Strengthening the family to ensure that these values are healthily transferred to future generations.
- Raising society's awareness about the problems that threaten the family and the individual within the family and increasing the effectiveness of protective and preventive social services.
- Raising the awareness of family, women, children, young, old, and disabled individuals and contributing to the solution of problems by strengthening social support systems.

This protocol, which was renewed in 2018, replaced the protocols signed with the Social Services and Child Protection Institution in 2007, the General Directorate of Family and Social Research in 2008, and the Ministry of Family and Social Policies<sup>110</sup> in 2011. Interviewee 4 stated that the cooperation between the ministry and Diyanet has become stronger with the renewed protocol. He also emphasized that its renewal enabled both the elimination of the problems during its implementation and expansion of its scope.

One of the outputs of this protocol is “Coffeehouse Conversations Project”, which is a part of the "Protection of the Family Project"<sup>111</sup>. Within the scope of the project aimed to prevent violence against women, the Diyanet sent its own officials (specialists) to the field as well. These specialists talked to men about domestic violence in Friday sermons and in coffeehouses.

The protocols signed by Diyanet with other public institutions and organizations and their aims are as follows:

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<sup>109</sup> For seeing the cooperation protocol  
<https://dinhizmetleri.diyamet.gov.tr/Documents/PROTOKOL.pdf> accessed on: 4.12.2020

<sup>110</sup> Its name was changed as the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services in 2018

<sup>111</sup> <https://www.milliyet.com.tr/gundem/kahvehanede-aile-sohbetleri-projesi-2900803> accessed on 01.10.2020

- The protocols<sup>112</sup> have signed with the Ministry of Youth and Sports since 2013 includes some reciprocal commitments. In the scope of the protocol, the ministry aims to contribute to young people's physical and mental health and spiritual development (probably in youth centers of the Diyanet) through social, cultural, and sports activities. At the same time, the Diyanet, through its own personnel, provides moral, motivational, and spiritual guidance, religion, and values education to young people in institutions affiliated to the Ministry of Youth and Sports, sports facilities in dormitories, camps, and youth centers.
- The purpose of the protocol<sup>113</sup> signed with the Ministry of Health in 2015 is that the Diyanet provides moral motivation and moral support to patients, relatives, and hospital staff in hospitals, institutions, and organizations affiliated with the Ministry of Health in order to contribute to their recovery and to provide consultancy and guidance services on religious issues.
- The aim of the protocol<sup>114</sup> signed with the Ministry of Justice in 2011 is to provide religious services, moral development, and spiritual guidance to convicts and detainees in penitentiaries and educational homes, and to contribute to the process of reintegrating them into society by improving their religious and moral feelings. This protocol was renewed in 2019<sup>115</sup>.
- With the protocol<sup>116</sup> signed with the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority in 2016, the framework of the religious services to be provided by

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<sup>112</sup> For the latest one, see

<https://dinhizmetleri.diyamet.gov.tr/Documents/Gen%C3%A7lik%20ve%20Spor%20Bakanl%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1%20Protokol%C3%BC.pdf> accessed on 10.05.2022

<sup>113</sup>

<https://dinhizmetleri.diyamet.gov.tr/Documents/Sa%C4%9Fl%C4%B1k%20Bakanl%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1%20Protokol%C3%BC.pdf> accessed on: 05.09.2020

<sup>114</sup>

<https://www2.diyamet.gov.tr/DinHizmetleriGenelMudurlugu/SosyalKulturelIsbirligiProtokolleri/Adalet%20Bakanl%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1%20Protokol%C3%BC.pdf> accessed on: 4.12.2020

<sup>115</sup>

<https://dinhizmetleri.diyamet.gov.tr/Documents/Adalet%20Bakanl%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1%20Protokol%C3%BC.pdf> accessed on: 5.09.2021

<sup>116</sup>

<https://www2.diyamet.gov.tr/DinHizmetleriGenelMudurlugu/SosyalKulturelIsbirligiProtokolleri/Afad%20Protokol%C3%BC.pdf> accessed on: 4.12.2020

the Diyanet in the accommodation centers in the cities and temporary accommodation centers which are under the responsibility of AFAD, have been drawn. This protocol was renewed in 2019<sup>117</sup>.

- The first protocol<sup>118</sup> between the Turkish Green Crescent Society and the Diyanet was signed in 2014 and renewed in 2021. According to this protocol, he became one of the actors involved in rescuing individuals from addictions such as alcohol, tobacco, gambling, and technology, which are stated to threaten public health and safety, within the scope of the Diyanet Spiritual Counseling and Guidance Program.

On the other hand, Diyanet participates in projects initiated by other public institutions and organizations. For example, with a prime ministry circular issued in 2017, the Project for the Improvement of Working and Social Lives of Migrant Seasonal Agricultural Workers (METİP) was initiated to identify and eliminate the problems experienced by those who travel to other provinces with their families, especially children, in order to work as seasonal migratory agricultural workers is one of them. Interviewee 4 stated that if the project coordinators inform the mufti offices, the personnel of the Diyanet who work in the family and religious guidance offices in the regions where seasonal workers are located, will carry out special activities in order to inform the families and raise their awareness in terms of religious guidance.

### **5.3. Restructuring Church of Greece in Public Sphere**

This section demonstrates how the Church of Greece, the institutional organization of the majority religion in Greece, was restructured in the public sphere in the 2000s and the 2010s. Restructuring the Church of Greece in the public sphere refers to the steps taken in the 2000s to systematize and institutionalize the social welfare services provided by the Church, which traditionally had a "transcendentalist" or "other-worldly" identity.

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<sup>117</sup> <https://dinhizmetleri.diyamet.gov.tr/Documents/Afad%20Protokol%C3%BC.pdf> accessed on: 5.09.2021

<sup>118</sup> <https://dinhizmetleri.diyamet.gov.tr/Documents/Ye%C5%9Filay%20Protokol%C3%BC.pdf> accessed on: 5.09.2021

This section highlights the relationship between the Church's channels of outreach to different segments of society and the process of Europeanization and neoliberal austerity. This section analyses the systematic implementation of "social welfare services" led by the Church in five stages. The first is the restructuring process carried out in line with this perspective. The main focus here is church-based organizations. Second, the content and target groups of these services were analyzed. The third is the situation of the smallest unit of the church at the local level and, at the same time, the parishes in which these services have traditionally been organized. Fourth, the profiles of the people involved in providing these services were analyzed. Finally, observations are made on the church's and church-based organizations' cooperation in providing these services.

### **5.3.1. Church-based NGOs**

Social welfare services are extremely important for the Church of Greece's participation in society. Committees play an important role in the planning of social projects and welfare services offered by the Church. For example, there are 12 (synodal) committees that advise the Holy Synod. The composition of these committees, as well as other administrative matters concerning the Church, is regulated by the Statutory Statute of the Church of Greece No. 590/1977 (see Article 10). When necessary, sub-committees are also established under these committees to specialize in more specific matters.<sup>119</sup>

Let us take a closer look at one of these 12 committees, the "social welfare and benefits" (κοινωνικής προνοίας και ευποΐας) committee, because of its relevance to this study<sup>120</sup>. The committee consists of two separate member groups of five people, regular and alternative, chaired by one metropolitan. According to Law no 590/1977, this committee conducts necessary research and studies on agenda issues deemed essential. Thus, in the light of the analysis of current social problems and potential

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<sup>119</sup> See [http://www.ecclesia.gr/greek/holysynod/committees/committees\\_main.htm](http://www.ecclesia.gr/greek/holysynod/committees/committees_main.htm) accessed on: 24.08.2021

<sup>120</sup> See <https://www.ecclesia.gr/greek/holysynod/committees/welfare/welfare.htm> and <http://sekpe.org/> accessed on: 24.11.2021

suggestions, they provide consultancy to the Holy Synod, which has the authority to make decisions and to the committee members on decision making and implementation methods.

There are also “special synodic committees” consisting of 15 units. Special committees are formed in line with the social problems that the church considers important. For example, with the arrangements made in 1999, the Special Committee on Cultural Identity (Regulation No.140/1999) as well as Committee on Marriage, Family, Child Protection, and Demographic Problems (Regulation No. 135/1999) were established. On the other hand, after the 2000s, two more special committees were established for social needs. For example, one of them is the Committee on Women Issues (Regulation 153/2002), which was established in 2002, and the other is Immigrants, Refugees, and Repatriates (Regulation 172/2006), which was founded in 2006 due to the increasing immigration to Greece.

Besides the central level, the regional level through the dioceses and especially the local level through parish are traditionally important parts of the church hierarchy in welfare service provision. The Church of Greece consists of 81 dioceses which are large geographical-administrative regions<sup>121</sup>. The intellectual and administrative responsibility of each diocese belongs to the metropolitan bishop. Moreover, each diocese is divided into parishes. In the parishes, one or more clergymen (priests or deacons) offer their services. The parish is small but well-functioning unit of the Church of Greece in the provision of social services. Since the parishes are organized at the closest distance to the society, they are competent to identify the social needs and meet them. In fact, they were named a "cell of local development and social welfare support" in a seminar organized by The Pastoral Training Foundation of the Holy Archdiocese of Athens in 2019 with the participation of clergymen (ekklisiaonline.gr, 2019)<sup>122</sup>.

According to data given by Polyzoidis (2019:154-155), the church also provides for a large variety of other initiatives and institutions in different levels which are “14

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<sup>121</sup> See <http://www.ecclesia.gr/greek/Dioceses/Dioceses.asp> accessed on: 25.10.2020

<sup>122</sup> <https://www.ekklisiaonline.gr/nea/i-enoria-os-kyttaro-tis-topikis-anaptyxis-ke-kinonikoproniakis-stirixis-2/> accessed on: 25.10.2020



orphanages, 21 boarding schools (providing shelter and meals to poor students of the public universities), 16 nursery homes for the chronically ill or people with disabilities, 9 centers for mental health, 6 projects for the “help at home” for needy people, 21 clinics, 23 protection shelters, 20 kindergartens, 11 preschools, 23 schools, 207 vocational schools, 78 supporting schools, 4 student dormitories, 266 scholarships, 203 cultural centers, 142 “social groceries” (where people can source food and other items for free), 69 places for free of charge distribution of clothes, 3 doctor’s offices and 3 drugstores, 10 blood banks, and 266 scholarships”.

### **Church-based Organizations: Towards NGOization of the Church?**

As Makris & Meichanetsidis (2018) argue, the Church went beyond traditional philanthropic practices after the challenging economic crisis in Greece in 2009. In other words, philanthropy and social work for the Church have become a "preferable field of action," as the authors put it. In this framework, the Church needed more rational institutional structures to carry out these services, and a re-organization process started in this area (ibid., 252). Therefore, some church-based units gained NGO status in this process.

The most prominent of these is Apostoli, which replaced Solidarity (Allilegyi), the church-based organization founded in 2002. Solidarity had operated not only in Greece but also abroad. While operating in areas such as hunger, disease, poverty, war, terrorism, and aid in natural disasters in 3 different continents, mainly Africa, Asia, and Europe, it grappled with mostly against poverty and social excitement within Greece (Oikonamis, 2011:15-16). According to a report in Eleftherotypia in 2007, most of Solidarity's international development projects were partially co-financed by the General Directorate for International Development Cooperation of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs Hellenic Aid. Accordingly, 65% of the state funds transferred to NGOs between 2002-2004 were transferred to Solidarity (cited from Oikonamis, 2011). However, because of the corruption scandal and mismanagement, this organization was closed and replaced by a new church-based organization, Apostoli. Apostoli 2010 was founded by the Holy Archdiocese of Athens as NGO in 2010. Since then, this new NGO has been conducting

humanitarian, developmental, and educational activities both nationally and internationally. Its main purpose is to provide relief to people in need<sup>123</sup>.

The bishop I interviewed used the following statements regarding this issue:

For instance, my dioceses have 2 elderly houses, 4 preschools that means kindergarten, I have known other institutions under construction. if you add all those all over the Greece we have more than 2 hundred institutions, more than 3 hundred elderly houses ...those need to be coordinated. Because if you have EU funds, you have IMF monitoring all those need to be in a better way to understand and also organized, because you have to be very transparent, we have to be more accountable. For that reason, we have established and created Apostoli.. Apostoli now is in life for approximately ten years so you can understand that through this period of financial crisis and austerity measures, we have been in a way to have lot of experience concerning social activity not only in terms of orthodox networking but also in collaboration with other local Christian institutions such as Roman Catholic Church, the of England Anglican Church, Evangelical Church (from the interview with interviewee A).

It is possible to deduce from these expressions that the establishment of Apostoli in 2010 indicates a tendency in which services and projects carried out by the church have been institutionalized according to EU standards and the expectations of international networking.

Besides Apostoli, there are other church-based organizations that serve more specific groups. One of these is The Family Support Center (ΚΕΣΟ Κέντρο Στήριξης Οικογένειας- KESO), which we will discuss in this study. As its name suggests, it is an organization based in Athens, providing social services, especially in family and women-related issues. It was founded in 1999 by the Decision of the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece. It functioned as an office of the Holy Archdiocese of Athens under Archbishop Christodoulos and the current Archbishop of Athens and All Greece. From January 2013, by decision of Archbishop Ieronymos and the Permanent Holy Synod of Greece, it was transformed into a non-profit Ecclesiastical Foundation of the Holy Archdiocese of Athens (IAA)<sup>124</sup>. Interviewee C from KESO explained the main reason underlying the organizational transformation as follows:

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<sup>123</sup> See <http://mkoapostoli.com/en/identity/our-mission/> accessed on: 25.10.2020

<sup>124</sup> See <https://www.kesoiaa.gr/> accessed on 15.11.2020 and See <https://www.kesoiaa.gr/index.php/shmriwmadiythintrias/> / accessed on:14.05.2022

“there is a transformation regarding with legal issues. If the title is “the governmental”, we cannot get extra funding. That is why KESO become private sector<sup>125</sup> it now can legally submit proposal to get some extra funding and participate the programs. And it can get funds from the Europe. And that what needs to do”

Migration and, therefore, immigrants have been one of the critical realities of modern Greece in different periods. The Greek church did not watch these developments. In 1978, "the Integration Center for Migrant Workers (KSPM)" which was operating as the Holy Synod's department, was established for the financial and social integration of Greek returnees who went to German-speaking countries as workers then returned to Greece<sup>126</sup>.

Since the 1990s, the nature of immigration and immigrants to Greece has begun to changed. With an agreement between the World Council of Churches and the Church of Greece, services of the World Council of Churches in Greece with asylum seekers and refugees was transferred to KSMP in 1994 (Diamantopoulou, 2018:80). Moreover, KSMP founded a new office, Ecumenical Refugee Program. Thus, the framework of services was expanded to include asylum seekers and refugees from different nationalities. the "Integration Center for Migrant Workers-Ecumenical Refugee Program (KSPM-ERP)", a non-profit organization of the Church of Greece, was founded with Law No. 234 in July of 2012. Following a recommendation of the Center's Steering Committee, the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece approved the name change to "SYNYPARXIS Ecumenical Refugee Programme (ERP)" on February 3, 2021<sup>127</sup>. It should be noted that SYNYPARXIS means “coexistence” in English. I will henceforth use the acronym SYNYPARXIS-ERP to describe the organisation.

This organization aims to lend a helping hand to refugees coming from abroad (especially from the Middle East) to Greece. The governing committee of the

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<sup>125</sup> Here, the interviewee, by private sector terms, actually refers to the third sector that has gone outside the Church hierarchy and is not from the public sector.

<sup>126</sup> See <http://www.kspm-erp.com/history/?lang=en> accessed on 15.11.2020 and see <https://synyparxis.org/ποιοι-είμαστε-new/> accessed on: 14.05.2022

<sup>127</sup> This change took place after the interview process in Greece. In order to avoid confusion, only the abbreviation SYNYPARX-ERP will be used for the name of the organization in the following parts of the study.

organization consists of 5 clergy members from the church hierarchy. During the interview, the SYNYPARXIS-ERP official underlined that the staff (lawyers, sociologists, psychologists, administrative staff, etc.) involved in the implementation process consist of expert laypeople. However, these experts are not, as the interviewee calls, autonomous. In the policy-making process, the final decision-maker is the governing committee consisting of the clerics usually occupied the top position in the church hierarchy. This committee approves or rejects recommendatory reports in which SYNYPARXIS-ERP experts prepare. The content of these reports is based on experts' impressions, priorities, and experiences obtained from the field. Afterward, proposals approved by the committee are presented to some funding organizations. After the approval process, SYNYPARXIS-ERP experts put these plans into practice.<sup>128</sup>

One of the social issues prioritized by the Church of Greece is youth. The "Youth Foundation" was established in 1987 by the Church. In 2016, its name was changed to "The Ecclesiastical Foundation of Youth and Family" (Το Εκκλησιαστικό Ίδρυμα Νεότητας και Οικογένειας, NEOTITA). In 2016, its administrative structure started to operate under a new regulation approved by the Permanent Synod<sup>129</sup>. In the interview, NEOTITA official explained the rationale behind such a restoration with "the change of society and youth. According to him, as society and youth change, the needs also change, and therefore, re-organization became inevitable. The new Ecclesiastical Foundation consists of the following units<sup>130</sup>.

1. The Office of Youth,
2. The Foundation for Psychosocial Education and Support "Diakonia",
3. The Directorate of Pastoral Marriage and Family,
4. The Center for Environmental Education and Awareness,
5. The Open Youth Council
- And 6. The Women's Affairs Service.

The main task of the ecclesiastical foundation of Youth and Family, as will be explained in more detail in the following titles, is to provide pastoral care to the

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<sup>128</sup> The KESO official also mentioned a similar policy making process.

<sup>129</sup> This regulation was published in the Government Gazette No. 527.

<sup>130</sup> <https://neotita.gr/ποιοί-είμαστε/> accessed on: 23.10.2020

youth and family. Following the statements on the foundation's website, the primary purpose is to revive the parish life among families and young people and encourage their regular participation in the church through youth camps, artistic activities, and family counseling services. So, unlike the NGOs mentioned above, it is possible to argue that this foundation has a more spiritual approach to different social groups to provide social cohesion rather than offering material benefits within the scope of social welfare.

These developments indicate that church-based units are turning to an NGO-type organization to reach EU standards such as transparency and accountability. Not surprisingly, this results in asking the question of whether the church is NGOization in Greece. Some contend that the church's establishment of NGOs is evidence of its secularization, while others argue that church services have not been purposefully secularized as a consequence of the founding of NGOs. The interviewee B points to the significant contradictions created by viewing the church as NGO:

We do not lose the theological and spiritual aspects of religion. Religion (*the Church*) is not NGO for social welfare. We do not want this. Of course, this does not mean we neglect the social problems, but it is a matter of balance. Priorities... You should try to keep other aspects in a sort of balance. We are here to pray and also, we are also to do social work to help people who are not surviving by themselves. So, this is a general observation that we need to make not to reduce the Church, which is the body of Christ into an NGO. This is not to see religion as an NGO. This is not so difficult for other religions because in other religions, there is no understanding the son of God becoming man without losing his divinity or seeing the Church as the body of Christ. This is very hard for Christianity alone because Christianity has this particular theological understanding. The incarnation of the son of God becoming a man without losing his divinity and the Church being the body of Christ, so this is very hard in this theological context to see religion as a sort of NGO. It reduces the Church into a sort of materiality. Like a make it a practical organization. I am saying this because Christian theology is very particular in this aspect. (...) So, it is harder to combine this with something very material, like seeing religion as a bureaucratic social organization and so forth. That is why we need to keep this in mind not to reduce the Church as a sort of NGO. (...) Nevertheless, there are social problems. There is poverty, injustice. There are refugees, migrants, people with disabilities whatever...and the Church cannot remain indifferent, and the Church cannot ignore these problems and (cannot) keep staying within the church building and ... only pray... We need to engage in social activity to help the people who face the problems and create a better world.

Interviewee A emphasizes that the motivation of the Church in the provision and the quality of its services is different from those of the NGOs:

“I will say that the biggest difference that exists is the quality of services (...). We do not see someone as a source of money for the church. We see the other as a seed of love. Love is the motivation of the church. Loving the other is the main reason for our services, so you cannot see this in a state institution or an NGO because we don't look other as Muslim or black people to host him. We just see him as a human being.”

Instead, the adoption of secular-typed philanthropy understanding is a way to improve church services in difficult times like the economic crisis (Diamantopoulou, 2012).

We understand from the information obtained so far that it is possible to say that the the Church of Greece's has made a mandatory NGOization to be more effective in the field of social welfare and to reach the funds more efficiently. This situation can be interpreted as a need for a more transparent, accountable, and therefore institutionalized church structure.

### **5.3.2. Content of Church-based Services**

Today, the Church of Greece provides services targeting different parts of society, both in its local units (dioceses and parishes) and through church-based NGOs. The content of these services will be discussed in more detail below by category of service recipients.

#### **Services for Women and Family**

When we look at the central organization of the church, it is seen that there are two separate committees regarding both women and the family in the special synodic committee. The Special Synodic Committee on Marriage, Family, Child Protection, and Demographic Problems was established by Law no. 135 in 1999. Then, the Special Synodic Committee on Women's Affairs was founded by Law no. 153 in 2002. Both committees organize several conferences on different topics relating to their interests. As stated earlier, these committees are primarily advisory bodies where current issues are dealt with and discussed. Their members are academics and clergy, mainly at the top of the church hierarchy.

As for other religions, keeping the family together and tackling problems that threaten the unity of the family has been one of the central issues for Orthodox Christianity and its bureaucratic dimension, which is the Church. At this point, the Family Support Center (KESO), a church-affiliated organization explicitly organized on this subject, carries out important activities. The booklet "Alphabet of the Family"<sup>131</sup> published by KESO, begins with the words of Archbishop Cristodoulos: "*Give me good mothers so that I will give you good families. Give me good families so that I will give you a good world.*" This expression reflects the importance attributed to motherhood and family by the Church of Greece.

As expressed by the interviewee, KESO was originally formed by solidarity groups that came together under the church's roof to meet the food needs of low-income families. In the following period, the field of activity of the organization expanded and diversified. Services provided by the organization include social welfare benefits and support services by the social workers working for the KESO. For example, services such as vocational training, marriage and childcare counseling, parents' education through educational seminars, psychological support, medical services, legal advice are offered to young people. KESO also carries out some activities to solve problems that threaten families and society, such as one-parent families and spousal crises, domestic violence, human trafficking, especially trafficking of women and children, etc.

Current family-oriented services offered by KESO are divided into two groups, as mentioned above. The first is in-kind aid aimed at improving families' social wellbeing. The official I interviewed at KESO gave the following answer to a question I asked about the purpose of their organizations: "*What we dream is that it is a family whose members feel wealthy and do not feel poor. They should not miss opportunities because of less income. That is our goal.*" For example, through its "Social Grocery" (Κοινωνικό Παντοπωλείο) initiative, KESO distributes long-lasting foods as well as fresh, basic products and hygiene supplies to its beneficiaries, which it continues with the support of its sponsors<sup>132</sup>.

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<sup>131</sup> The booklet was obtained from the organization interviewed. There is no information regarding the date of publication on it.

<sup>132</sup> <https://www.kesoiaa.gr/index.php/premium/> accessed on: 14.05.2022

The second group of services is social support services. In this context, KESO experts provide social service and psychological support<sup>133</sup>. KESO social service experts help people develop skills and mechanisms for coping with crises and problems to improve their daily lives. These experts plan, coordinate, manage and implement support packages to help beneficiaries cope with their difficulties. They make home visits when necessary to follow up on the beneficiaries' status. In addition, psychologists provide free therapy to individuals who are experiencing psychological challenges as a result of domestic problems, unemployment, or other societal problems. Domestic violence is one of the most critical topics that KESO addresses<sup>134</sup>. It has been an accredited support organization for victims of domestic violence since 1999, according to the provisions of the KESO Charter. It is the official arm of the Holy Archdiocese of Athens (IAA) in the emergency treatment of victims. KESO provides counseling services in cases of domestic violence, offered by social worker, psychologist, and lawyer to support and protect victims and their children. It cooperates with many public institutions in this regard.

Since the KESO is a church-affiliated organization, it may be expected that the counseling services they provide include pastoral counseling services. However, the interviewee underlined that they do not provide such a service because their clients are not solely composed of Christian families today. She expressed her concern that restricting the target audience for these services would lead to discrimination.

The refugee flow from the middle eastern countries to Greece has changed the content of issues related to family and women. Refugee women and children constitute an important part of the social service range of the church in recent years. It is seen that KESO and Apostoli carry out some projects to integrate refugee women into European society. The interviewee B explained the current situation and problems of refugee women in Greece and what they do as a church-affiliated NGO:

(...) we have noticed that besides children, women also need to be supported. Traditional Syrian and Islamic paradigm is more male-oriented and paternalistic.

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<sup>133</sup> For details see <https://www.kesoiaa.gr/index.php/koinonikiypiresia/> and <https://www.kesoiaa.gr/index.php/psixologikistirixi/> accessed on 14.05.2022

<sup>134</sup> See <https://www.kesoiaa.gr/index.php/endooikogeniakivia/> accessed on 14.05.2022



The husband is the chief of the family. Usually, women stayed home and covered by a veil and making a child. I am simplifying. Many women are unable to do anything. The permission of their husband determines everything because not all Syrians are educated and open-minded. Families are coming from villages. (...) men have very preferential status in Islam, so they will not want to change. In the Islamic state of affairs, men have a dominant position, protect their family, the women are more or less to abide. Now the point is that if the people want to stay in Greece, they need to adapt here. They cannot create or separate a parallel society in which women are not respected in a way that we considered they should be respected. Of course, you know, they are free to have their religion, be involved in religious matters, and be free to worship. There is a minimum of values that these people who come to Greece need to respect. For instance, if a woman does not study or wants to be veiled, it is okay. It is her right. If she wants to stay home, make children, does not go to school, this is her right. Nevertheless, this must be her decision, not his husband's. We notice that as soon as many women came to Greece, they asked for education and vocational training and started taking away their veils. Because many Syrian complained to us, saying as "as soon as we came here, our women started not to obey us" and wanting to walk out alone without our permission." In the beginning, we had some opposition from Syrian and Afghani men. They said that they do not like these things. We said to them, this is Greece here we are how we are, and here women equal to men. They have the same right as men. If your women want to be educated, they have the right to be educated; if they want to be trained to have a profession, they have a right. They do not need to ask permission to do these things. If you do not like this, you can go back to your country. That was very successful. Then, we noticed we educate the children, women. We cannot leave the male population without education or training. *Otherwise, he says, they will get jealous, violent, and lazy*<sup>135</sup>. So, we set up educational programs and vocational training for men as well."

Moreover, the interviewee stressed that demands for these services come from refugee women, so the achievement of these services is high.

### **Services for Youth**

Children and young people are among the social groups that religious authorities attach the most importance to maintaining social cohesion. Today, individualization, technology, and drug use are the leading problems that threaten young people. So, many religious organizations around the world seek ways to keep them away from these dangers. In Greece, this role has been assumed by the Ecclesiastical Foundation of Youth and Family (NEOTITA), as mentioned above. If we classify the services shared on the website of the foundation, there are five main fields of activity<sup>136</sup>.

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<sup>135</sup> The sentence could not be fully transcribed due to the recording problem.

<sup>136</sup> <https://neotita.gr/category/δράσεις/> accessed on: 12.10.2020

- Seminars for counseling young people and their families: These seminars aim to provide pastoral counseling for young people and their families. The themes covered include issues such as youth problems, youth and parent relationships, and family problems.
- Summer schools and camps for kids and young people: activities of the foundation for children and young people such as summer schools and camps including (sometimes religiously based) some activities such as education programs on the subjects such as belief, spiritual life, values, principles, empathy, church attendance and travel, group games, theatrical plays etc.
- Conferences for catechism: Britannica (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2020) defines Catechism, which is a primarily product of Christianity, as “a manual of religious instruction usually arranged in the form of questions and answers used to instruct the young, to win converts, and to testify to the faith.” Conferences for catechism is seen to be among the most important and regularly repeated activities of NEOTITA. Some of the themes discussed in these meetings are as follows: Communication with people of different religions, communication with young people in high school age, development of gender-based proper personal traits, questioning the relationship (or conflict) between science and faith, the attitude of the church to modern challenges to bioethics etc.
- Aid campaigns for regions in need, for especially schools
- Artistic and cultural activities

It is understood that many of these activities are carried out in cooperation with the parishes. Moreover, the Greek Orthodox Church contributes to establishing social service institutions such as nurseries by cooperating with other foundations and NGOs that have or do not have an administrative link with it<sup>137</sup>.

### **Services for Refugees and Other Groups**

In the central hierarchy of the church, there is a commission called as the Special Synodic Committee for Immigrants, Refugees and Repatriates, which was

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<sup>137</sup> For example see the news <https://www.kathimerini.gr/society/561496993/archiepiskopos-ieronimos-i-anthropini-sofia-proerchetai-apo-tis-gnoseis-tis-empeiries-ta-grammata/> accessed on: 01.12.2021

established in 2006 to discuss migration and other problems caused by migration and to create some social policies for them. It is not an operational but advisory unit.

As stated above, SYNYPARXIS-ERP is a church-based organization established to solve the legal problems of asylum seekers and provide them with sociopsychological support. It was first established in 1978 in order to meet the needs of the Greeks who migrated from Greece to Western Europe in the hope of finding a job and to solve their adaptation problems they were likely to face on their return. However, the change in the type of immigration in the country caused the alteration of organizational goals.

Today, SYNYPARXIS-ERP mostly serves refugees and asylum seekers from the Middle East. According to the words of the official I interviewed, the organization proceeds on its way, taking advantage of the experience it has gained through its own citizens in the past:

“Greeks feel(experienced) this situation many times in our history. As I said before, there are Greeks who have same problems out of their country, mainly in Germany. The problems they have faced are the same problem with those of these people today” (from the interview with interviewee E).

According to both the information obtained from the interview and the website of SYNYPARXIS-ERP, the organization carries out some important services to solve the problems caused by the phenomenon of migration. The primary purposes of providing these services are as follows<sup>138</sup>:

- defending the dignity and rights of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and Greek returnees;
- providing information, counseling, legal aid, and social support to asylum seekers and refugees;
- managing the insurance and pension process for Greek returnees.
- carrying out some public awareness campaigns on immigration issues by producing special publications and special booklets, leaflets, meetings, forums, and so on, as well as organizing workshops and events.

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<sup>138</sup> <https://synyparxis.org/?lang=en> accessed on: 14.05.2022

SYNYPARXIS-ERP carried out many important projects<sup>139</sup>. For example, the "Rebuild our Lives-legal aid for refugees in Athens" project, conducted between 2017 and 2018, provided legal aid and social support to at least 400 asylum seekers and refugees in need of international protection. Thus, victims' access to their legal and social rights was improved. In addition, psychosocial support was provided to these people by professional psychologists working for SYNYPARXIS-ERP. In addition to legal aid and social assistance, "family reunification" is one of the most fundamental issues dealt with in the projects carried out by this program. In the context of the Dublin III Regulation as well as other family reunification procedures, the project aimed to bring together the families of many asylum seekers, some of whom live in Greece and others in various countries of Europe. It is observed that these projects are carried out in cooperation with various religious and non-religious organizations. SYNYPARXIS-ERP is currently running two more projects.<sup>140</sup> One of them is "Creation and operation of Shelters for Unaccompanied Minor Refugees and Migrants". With funds from the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund and national sources, SYNYPARXIS-ERP has established and then managed shelters for unaccompanied child refugees and migrants in the Athens region and Thessaloniki since April 2020. More than 200 children are served by over 100 personnel with various expertise in these facilities. Services relate to both meeting the basic needs of minors (housing, nutrition, legal support, health, education) as well as psychosocial support and preparation for social inclusion. These services are focused on the safety and protection of the minor, the development their personality, the ability to consciously exercise their rights, and ultimately their emancipation in a mutually beneficial way for themselves and the host community. Another ongoing program is the above-mentioned program called Rebuild our Lives.

SYNYPARXIS-ERP is not the only church-affiliated NGO that provides solutions to refugees' problems. Apostoli, which we can call the most known church's non-profit organization in Greece, carries out important studies on this subject. For example,

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<sup>139</sup> See <http://www.kspm-erp.com/old-programs/> accessed on: 22.10.2020 and <https://synyparxis.org/παλαιά-προγράμματα-new/> accessed on: 14.05.2022

<sup>140</sup> <https://synyparxis.org/τρέχοντα-προγράμματα-new/?lang=en> accessed on: 14.05.2022

Apostoli operates the Accommodation Facility for Unaccompanied Minors "Estia"<sup>141</sup> providing reception and accommodation services for 20 asylum seekers and refugees. As well as sheltering, the facility also provides psychological support and guidance facilitating social integration, creative participation, primary medical care, Greek and computer courses. What is more, to socialize unaccompanied minors, "Apostoli" and the Holy Archdiocese of Athens, in cooperation with the local population, organize a wide variety of sports, cultural and environmental activities.

The social groups that Apostoli offers social service and aid are not limited to refugees. For example, it provides special high-level accommodation services, psychological support and counseling to Apostoli patients and their caregivers in many facilities, especially for elderly people with Alzheimer's disease and patients with mental problems. On the other hand, Apostoli established and is still operating a Protected Apartment<sup>142</sup>, which is situated in Athens, Kypseli, for people who need psychosocial support. In addition to these, Apostoli also carries out many financial aid activities. For example, in order to combat poverty and social exclusion, it runs the programs "The church at home"<sup>143</sup> and "The Church on the Road"<sup>144</sup>. The aim of these programs is to provide free daily food distribution to the people in need, homeless people, foreigners and drug addicts and generally needy people with the help of more than 2000 volunteers - regardless of racial or religious discrimination. It also donates books to schools and libraries to improve young people's reading skills within the scope of the "I have a mission" program<sup>145</sup>. Moreover, there are social markets in different regions of Greece that Apostoli has established and continues to serve. Apostoli is seen to give financial and moral support to many different segments, from armed forces to prisoners. Education is also among the issues that Apostoli gives special importance to. For example, Greek lessons and lessons on

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<sup>141</sup> See <https://mkoapostoli.com/en/activities/facilities/accommodation-facility-for-unaccompanied-minors-estia-agios-dimitrios/> accessed on 29.10.20

<sup>142</sup> See <https://mkoapostoli.com/en/activities/facilities/protected-apartment/> accessed on 29.10.20

<sup>143</sup> <https://mkoapostoli.com/en/activities/programs/the-church-at-home/> accessed on 03.09.2021

<sup>144</sup> <https://mkoapostoli.com/en/activities/programs/the-church-on-the-road/> accessed on 03.09.2021

<sup>145</sup> <https://mkoapostoli.com/en/activities/programs/i-have-a-mission/> accessed on 03.09.2021

teaching Greek culture are given by Apostoli under "the second homeland" project for the integration of asylum seekers in Greece. In order to provide help and support for vulnerable families and their children, Apostoli founded a Center for Care and Education for Children in 2013. These examples can be increased.

Dioceses and parishes, which are the local organizations of the church, also play a major role in this regard. The bishop who was interviewed used the following statements on refugee issue:

"I have very good relations with the Muslim community (consisting of) Pakistanis, Gypsies, and Bangladeshes, so together we have an organized, very good network because, at that time, the biggest problem wasn't only the financial problem, but also the challenge of migrants not refugees. Migrant we have, fleeing from countries in order to find a better life and better work. They were staying in Greece. They, all of them, wanted to go to Europe. At that time, there were a vast number of migrants. No one was really taking care of them, so together with all those communities, we have established, first of all, to gain their trust, and then started to help them in many domains. Because in Greece, we have a refugee program which is based on helping legally migrants and refugees and in Apostoli helps practically to migrants and refugees with food, etc. We have 2 pillars. One is legally, the other is practically (based on) daily needs that we are trying to assist the people in collaboration with many other organizations in Greece. So, this is how we organize our social activities. I have to say it is not a must because we have to do because we are Christians. What I told to you at the beginning our conversation: Why we are doing that? After many years, after 15 years, when the historical role of analyzing and evaluating what the church has done during the crisis, it was not only about social care, but also about something which was very very important and very urgent, something that had to happen years ago in Greek society, social cohesion and social stability. Because if I, as a church, see you, I will start speaking to people that the other is not your enemy. You shouldn't walk away from issues of social division. So, you can imagine it was very easy to create a war in the city of Athens between the people who had been depressed by the other and the rich people. So, the whole role of the church during these ten years of financial problematic periods was very substantial, mainly "avoiding social divisions and social conflict" because we have maintained people. We are here to stand for you no matter who you are. We do not care if you are a leftist or a democrat. We do not care about those things. We just here to help you to serve you for your problems. After the end of this problematic situation, we are here to rebuild and re-solved the conflicts."

As can be seen, integration and social cohesion are key words in the expressions above. Similarly, Bishop of Dimitriadou and Almirou seems to use a very positive and unifying language for refugees and immigrants:

"I cannot accept anyone who refuses to offer to refugees and immigrants. For me, he is neither Greek nor Orthodox. Orthodoxy cares for any person no matter where they

come from. This is what Christ means. As long as we preach Christ this is what we will do it<sup>146</sup>,

These statements show that the clergy and the experts who work in church-based organizations mostly converge at the same point. Even though the Church is generally associated with right-wing politics and nationalism, it is observed that the Church's welfare services seem more inclusive<sup>147</sup>. For instance, not only Greek Orthodox Christians but also other ethnicities living in Athens can benefit from the Church's social services.

### **5.3.3. Micro-Diakonia**

The Christian idea of diakonia, which is built on solidarity motivated by God's compassion and mercy, provides the foundation for orthodox social action. As mentioned before, Orthodox churches have a history of providing local outreach in times of difficulty, typically through unofficial channels and charitable endeavors, through dioceses, monasteries, and church-based organizations, reflecting their decentralized nature. This form of orthodox solidarity, which involves offering charitable assistance locally to individuals and small groups in need, is often referred to as micro-diakonia (Molokotos-Liederman, 2012). Through the flow of information provided by regional dioceses, the Church is aware of the social needs and micro-socioeconomic circumstances in the area. It can therefore provide a social service that is considerably more organized and goal-oriented (ibid.).

Markoviti & Molokotos-Liederman (2017:122) point out that national orthodox churches have a much more decentralized structure than the Catholic Church. In other words, the latter has a more predominant centralized administrative structure dealing with social service-a charity-and social action and advocacy at the same time. Therefore, it is possible to claim that local units such as dioceses and parishes have a more significant role and function in the Orthodox world.

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<sup>146</sup> <http://en.protothema.gr/those-who-reject-refugees-are-neither-greeks-nor-christians-orthodox-bishop/> accessed on: 01.12.2020

<sup>147</sup> It is clear that a more detailed academic research is required to make a definite judgement on this issue.

The units of micro-diakonia such as local NGOs, monasteries, dioceses and parishes always function as a bridge between society and the Church. These are not only places where local people meet for religious purposes and worship but also units serving as social service providers. Especially the parishes have historically been units where the material and spiritual needs of the local people are met. The clergy in Greece still emphasize the importance of keeping the social role of the parish alive today. The bishop of Demetriados and Almyros Ignatios, points out as follows:

"parish cannot remain a place where we meet every Sunday to fulfill our religious duties. We have a duty to make it a vital center for the provision of spiritual work and charitable care, which function not as a service at specific times of the day but constantly as the living cell of the local community (tovima.gr, 2010) <sup>148</sup> "

One of the church's steps in this direction is "Parish Love Centers" (Κέντρα Ενοριακής Αγάπης). More than 40 centers in Athens, which operate in the parishes of Holy Archdiocese, provide portion of foods on daily basis to people in need <sup>149</sup>.

Father Vassilios, who is general director of the General Financial Fund of the Holy Archbishop of Athens, states that

"The basis of the social work of the Church is the parish. In the local parish meals, we can see both the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of the problem (Lakasas, 2015)."<sup>150</sup>

That is to say, this feature of the parishes makes it easier to bring the problem and the solution (such as the needy and the charitable) together. Interviewee A came up with similar explanations to Father Vassilios as follows:

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<sup>148</sup> «η ενορία δεν μπορεί να παραμείνει τόπος όπου συναντιόμαστε κάθε Κυριακή για την εκπλήρωση των θρησκευτικών μας καθηκόντων. Εχουμε χρέος να την αναδείξουμε σε ζωτική εστία προσφοράς πνευματικού έργου και φιλανθρωπικής φροντίδας, που θα λειτουργήσει όχι ως υπηρεσία σε συγκεκριμένες ώρες της ημέρας αλλά συνεχώς ως το ζωντανό κύτταρο της τοπικής κοινωνίας (tovima.gr, 2010)». <https://www.tovima.gr/2010/10/08/politics/perissoteri-sta-syssitia-logw-krisis/> Accessed on 15.11.2021

<sup>149</sup>See <http://filoptochi.gr/index.php/2014-11-04-13-33-08/kentra-enoriakhs-agaphs> Accessed on 09.09.2021

<sup>150</sup> «Η βάση του κοινωνικού έργου της Εκκλησίας είναι η ενορία. Στα κατά τόπους, ενοριακά συσσίτια μπορούμε να δούμε τόσο τις ποσοτικές όσο και τις ποιοτικές διαστάσεις του προβλήματος» (Lakasas, 2015) <https://www.kathimerini.gr/society/809810/echo-dei-anthropoys-na-tsakonontai-gia-ena-piato-fagitoy/> accessed on 14.12.2021



"our diocese (Neo İonia) has 22 parishes. This network helps me understand people's problems and monitoring, mapping, and finding a better way to solve them. Either it is for food, either it is for hot meals, either it is for clothing, either it is educational programs, it depends because you are in the urban society. Athens is the capital city and has 4 million inhabitants now in Athens, so we have an urban society. Problems and challenges are different in every part of Athens. In my diocese, in which I am responsible for three municipalities, I am responsible for approximately twenty thousand people this is my flock (...) I see the area mapping all the problems found since I am here five years in this position, so I know exactly what is taking place in every neighborhood from which system I know that through parish system. This network is very feasible and gives the possibility to understand what is taking place.)"

In the parishes, not only welfare services but also pastoral counseling service is provided to those in need. Interviewee D, the priest working in both NEOTITA and a parish in Athens, underlined that the church's counseling services are essential:

On the one hand, some sectarian Orthodox Christians who do not believe in science reject the expert's support. On the other hand, some of them are not able to get professional support from an expert due to financial inadequacies. So, they prefer to share their problems with the clerics in the parish. They come to the parish ...they know that priest gives good advices. On the one hand, he is not a scientist. He is not a psychologist. He cannot solve everything. But at the same time, he is very responsible, which makes him want to study more on these issues. And he has to be able to answer them and to solve the problems. He can give some good advice like telling them where they should go (from the interview with the interviewee D)."

Interviewee D also touched on some problems encountered during service delivery in parishes. Communication-related problems come first among these. He underlined that there are sometimes disconnections in communication between Parish and the center and trust problems among clerics having different beliefs and ideals. He stated that the ideal functioning should be as follows:

"The Jesus Christ is in the center, and social work is around him. Like this, a bishop is in the center and priests and diakonia are around him. (...) Do you know what the lyra is? It is a musical instrument. It is the bishop, and the strings are priests. They all together play music. "

Orthodox Church of Greece maintains welfare services intensively at the local and regional levels and largely informally. In other words, traditionally, the content of services provided at the local level is determined in line with local needs. In other words, dioceses and parishes also have sociological knowledge of the region where

they are located. On the other hand, the decentralized nature of these services offered by the Church makes it almost impossible to establish a standard on the quality and quantity of the service (Molokotos-Liederman, 2016:36).

The field study conducted by Fokas (2010) in the dioceses of Thiva and Livadeia provides a concrete picture of welfare services at the local level. While the state provides welfare services in Greece through a much more central system, the Church system, as stated above, offers a very decentralized welfare provision. As a result, as Fokas observed in Thiva and Livadeia, the church compensates for the inadequacy of state-provided social services. For example, while there is no state-run nursing home in either region, the only nursing home belongs to the church (ibid., 183). The clergy in parishes determine problems and social expectations in places where the state is far away or cannot reach sufficiently, and social service needs are high. Afterward, volunteers, organized under the roof of the parish and the leadership of the clergy, provide these services. For some social groups, this creates the impression that the parishes and dioceses fill the gap left by the state (see Fokas, 2010). Therefore, it is no coincidence that social services are identified with the church in the eyes of local people. It is also understood that the church has gone beyond the traditional understanding of welfare services at the local level. The perspective that sees the transfer of tradition to the next generation as a form of welfare is striking. In this context, the local church also serves as a youth center, complete with a library and computer lab, as well as a living area where artistic lessons are offered (ibid., 184).

#### **5.3.4. Orthodox Clergy and Professionalization**

Both priests and non-cleric experts play important roles in the presentation of the church's activities in the social domain. According to the booklet “the Testimony of Love” published in 2001 by the Church (cited by Anastassiadis, 2004:30) more than 60% of Church welfare institutions are managed by clergymen while 53% of the managers have a theology degree”. Both priests and non-clerics play important roles in providing the Church's activities in the social domain. Interviews with church-run organizations such as SYNYPARXIS-ERP and KESO indicate that salaried and volunteer laypeople (non-clerics) are also significant actors in the provision and

implementation of social services. For example, KESO official stated that in addition to one staff sent from the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, salaried social workers and project managers are employed in their centers in Athens. In addition to these, she stated that about 15 lawyers, doctors, and foreign language instructors who are actively involved in the implementation process are working "voluntarily". According to the data published by the Synodic Committee for Social Welfare and Benefits of the Church of Greece, in the year 2018, the volunteers amount to 14,945 persons (orthodoxianewsagency.gr, 2019)<sup>151</sup>.

Interviewee B explains why the church needs laypeople:

“We need to engage in social activity to help the people who face the problems and create a better world. Why does the Church establish organizations like Apostoli? Apostoli engages in social work because it is harder for priests to handle directly... Because social work has become very complicated... It has lots of rules. In order to operate an (welfare) institution, you need a lot of paperwork. You need permissions from administrative councils. It has been extremely complicated. Priests cannot engage themselves in all these bureaucratic works. It is very hard. It is not like as in medieval times or until very recently where the priests helped. In order to make things easier, the Church engages in organizations like Apostoli where priests can work there with laymen and laywomen in order in the name of the Church. But we keep the priests, you know, for other duties. (...) We need the documents whether the people really need help or not because they may pretend. Asking all these (details) is very hard for the priest. You know, paperwork. (...) All these should be done by layperson because we need the help of laypeople within the Church. Everything should not be concentrated on the clergy. We have organizations like Apostoli and many others like this. The Church uses them in order to promote welfare work.”

The fact that the Church of Greece employs social service experts and volunteer participation is high, social welfare services of the Church have gained a more secular status. Although the clergy is the ultimate decision-maker on documents, non-cleric experts and volunteers direct the implementation process to a large extent. The composition of the volunteers can be regarded as an indication of the church's relationship to society. Interviewee A, a highly educated and young church member, points to the steps he has taken towards determining the distribution of members in parish councils on a more pluralistic basis:

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<sup>151</sup> [https://www.orthodoxianewsagency.gr/aytokefales\\_ekklisies/ekklisia\\_ellados/to-megalo-filanthropiko-ergo-tis-ekklisias-apokalyptika-stoixeia/](https://www.orthodoxianewsagency.gr/aytokefales_ekklisies/ekklisia_ellados/to-megalo-filanthropiko-ergo-tis-ekklisias-apokalyptika-stoixeia/) accessed on 25.11.2020

When I became a metropolitan, I sent a letter to all my parishes saying to them that half of the people must be women in the parish councils. There was no such thing before. Also, I sent a second letter, 20 people need to be young... I try to engage young people in our activities. (...) Because the way that we restructure in our administration is based on grassroots, not the official decisions. (...)

Undoubtedly, these are significant steps for established religious organizations, which we can define as the most conservative and patriarchal elements of organizational ecology.

### **5.3.5. Collaborations**

The church has been in cooperation with the state since its foundation in Greece. The church has always been a complement to the state, especially in meeting social needs. Although there are some indications that the Church has approached the field of civil society in recent years, it is still debated whether the close relationship between the state and the Church in Greece continues. Interviewee B responded to the question I asked if this relationship continue as follows:

Yes, because the Church is the oldest and the largest non-governmental institution. However, it is a massive institution; almost 96% of Greek People are Orthodox Christians. We are not very religious as in the past, but we are not very secular either. So, the Church is a very important institution for the Greek people, and because of this, we are in cooperation with state authorities in areas of common interest like social welfare. Moreover, now the state has many problems because the state has actually informally delegated to the Church to help vulnerable groups. Informal way like you know. The state says to people, "I cannot sustain you because I have no money or allowance." So maybe they go to the Church and asks for help in that way. So, in many areas, the government, especially local authorities, operates with the Church. They cooperate in order to have a soup kitchen or social grocery, medical center. We both support, so we cooperate extensively whatever this is possible. Especially, we cooperate in areas like small islands or border areas where people have economic problems because of distance. It is very expensive if you live on a small island in the middle of the Aegean Sea, so we try to sustain these small communities.

Interviewee B's statements point out that the Greek Church, as in the past, has made up for the state's deficiencies in the delivery of social services and aids. In short, the church continues uninterruptedly in cooperation with the state, especially in the provision of public social services.

Moreover, it should be underlined that the Greek state still needs the support of the church in order to communicate more effectively with society. The importance of church-state cooperation has emerged more recently in the pandemic that the whole world is facing. It is stated that cooperation between the Ministry of Health and the Church contributes positively to the number of vaccinations, especially in the implementation of the vaccination program (kathimerini.gr, 2021)<sup>152</sup>.

Furthermore, the statements of interviewee C also reveal the relationship between central and local state institutions and church-run organizations. For example, they form partnerships with municipalities in the provision of services such as food distribution and medical assistance. On the other hand, there is also information exchange between institutions. The interviewee C states that they cooperate with the national migration organization. For example, they notify pregnant women in need of help and reach people to be helped. In addition, the interviews with two church members show that they had a belief that state-church cooperation increased the quality of service. For example, the priest in Agia Filothei (interviewee D), who is director of NEOTITA and runs the Pastoral Office of the Archbishopric for Marriage and Family Affairs, summarized the importance of this cooperation with an example:

“In the municipality of Filothei, they have organized a blood donation and collected five bottles of blood. Later, the parish of Filothei organized another blood donation. They collected some bottles of blood. So, we thought that we should organize together. They collected thirty bottles of blood, and you see how collaboration works.

Orthodox Church of Greece has established relations with international stakeholders, especially in the field of social services. For example, one of them is "The Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) which is the ecumenical agency on migration and integration, asylum and refugees, and against racism and discrimination in Europe<sup>153</sup>". Orthodox Church of Greece's connection with this

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<sup>152</sup> <https://www.kathimerini.gr/politics/561520573/emvoliasmoi-kai-synergasia-ekklisias-yp-ygeias-sti-synantisi-ieronymoy-pleyri/> accessed on 1.12.2021 However, it should be noted that there are serious differences of opinion among the clergy and there priests that organize an anti-vaccination campaign. See <https://www.politico.eu/article/science-vs-religion-greece-priests-anti-vaccine-coronavirus-movement/> accessed on 1.12.2021

<sup>153</sup> <https://ccme.eu/index.php/who-we-are/organisation/> accessed on 17.11.2020

commission has strengthened Greece's dialogue with Western Europe, especially in the refugee crisis. In a meeting of the organization, Dr. Antonios K. Papantonio (2014), who represented the Church of Greece, stated that the cooperation with CCME has increased even more, especially after the economic crisis that Greece suffered heavily and the asylum influx. He also underlined that Western European countries seem reluctant to take over some asylum seekers who came to Greece, but that CCME initiated a dialogue with Churches to inform, sensitize and involve them in the relocation process. In addition, this dialogue between the two organizations also enables joint projects to be carried out. Church of Greece and its church-related organizations participate in projects initiated by CCME and funded by the European Commission, the executive body of the European Union. For example, KSMP-ERP has been involved in the project named Trafficking in Human Beings: New Partnerships - (CAT), which aimed at sharing best practices and formulating practical responses and communication strategies to combat trafficking among NGOs, churches, public institutions and, law enforcement and judicial authorities.

It is observed that church-affiliated organizations, which have an organic relationship with the Church, especially after the 2000s, have made an outstanding contribution to the re-institutionalization process of the Church by collaborating with European supranational and international organizations. In other words, in addition to the potential of such collaborations to create new funding sources through projects, meeting the expectations of institutionalized international organizations that will demand financial transparency can also end the debates that have been on the agenda for years about the Church's wealth. For example, the church-affiliated organization Solidarity was shut down by current Archbishop Ieronymos II due to allegations of mismanagement and corruption, and Apostoli, which was opened in its place, which is a most potent and alive NGO of the Church now, is one of them. The fact that this new NGO is a member of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations and the EU EuropeAid can be regarded as an indicator of a new mentality and professionalism (Makris & Bekridakis, 2013:117).

According to Molokotos-Liederman's (2016:43) interview with Apostoli staff in 2013, Apostoli concluded an agreement with the International Orthodox Christian

Charities (IOCC), the largest Orthodox NGO offering humanitarian aid worldwide. This agreement is intended to help the Church of Greece's better organize, coordinate and implement its social work and fundraising ability. In addition to being a partner of Apostoli in the execution of joint projects, the IOCC also acts as a mentor or even a controller. The IOCC oversees the administration, accounting and implementation of some of the programs it finances; It also provides guidance for Apostoli to follow international standards set for NGOs (ibid). Since 2012, IOCC has collaborated closely with Apostoli, providing more than \$37 million in cash and in-kind assistance in response to the severe financial crisis. For instance, IOCC provides funding for Apostoli's monthly distribution of dry food parcels to the elderly and unemployed as well as hot meals to refugees and homeless individuals (iocc.org, n.d.).<sup>154</sup>

Furthermore, Apostoli works in cooperation with other local actors such as ministries and municipalities as well as international organizations. For example, according to the information on Apostoli's website<sup>155</sup>, Apostoli operates the Accommodation Facility for Unaccompanied Minors "Estia, which is a facility that offers the hosted people psychological support and advice on their social integration, creative engagement, primary medical care, Greek language, and computer courses as well as reception and accommodation services for 20 asylum seekers and refugees. This project is co-funded by the European Refugee Fund and the Ministry of Labor, Social Security, and Welfare. Moreover, these services are held through the cooperation of Apostoli and the Archbishopric of Athens with bodies of the local society. In addition, the integrated Alzheimer's and Related Disease Unit in which "Apostoli" provides specialized high-level hospitality services, psychological support, and counseling to patients and their caregivers is co-financed from the European Union and National Resources of the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity<sup>156</sup>. Social Market of "Apostoli which has been operating since 2012 in

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<sup>154</sup> <https://iocc.org/where-we-work/greece> Accessed on 05.03.2023

<sup>155</sup> <https://mkoapostoli.com/en/activities/facilities/accommodation-facility-for-unaccompanied-minors-estia-agios-dimitrios/#toggle-id-1> accessed on 17.11.2020

<sup>156</sup> <https://mkoapostoli.com/en/activities/facilities/alzheimer-center-karelleio/> accessed on:17.11.2020

Kallithea can be given as an example of Apostoli's cooperation with municipalities." It was founded by "Apostoli" in cooperation with the Municipality of Kallithea in Athens.<sup>157</sup>

#### **5.4. Statement of the Findings**

In this chapter, based on fieldwork, the restructuring of the Diyanet and the Church of Greece in the public sphere in the 21st century is analyzed in five different stages. Firstly, the reorganization processes were addressed. In this context, new units were established within the Diyanet. First, with the changes made in Law on the Establishment and Duties of the Presidency of Religious Affairs Law No. 633,, new departments were founded in areas targeting different social groups, and then their duties were elaborated through operational instructions (yönerge) and protocols signed with the ministries. Moreover, new bureaus and centers under the supervision of these departments began to be founded at the provincial mufti offices and mosques. In addition, Diyanet personnel have been placed in institutions under different ministries such as prisons and student dormitories. Therefore, Diyanet services spread over a wider area than before. In the example of the Church of Greece, some synodic committees which concentrate on various social issues were established within the central hierarchy of the church, providing policy recommendations to the holy synod members in accordance with social needs. However, the main major reorganization took place outside the church hierarchy. In other words, units previously affiliated to the church and serving on specific social issues have been transformed into NGOs, maintaining their church-based status. As stated by the interviewees, this is a crucial step to reach international standards and thus benefit from foreign funds, especially those of the EU. Therefore, it seems possible to claim that it is a Greek Church that gets closer to the third sector in terms of management mentality of social problems and needs, although the interviewees from the church claim otherwise. This is seen as an important factor that will ensure the independence of the church from the state.

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<sup>157</sup> <https://mkoapostoli.com/en/activities/social-markets/social-market-of-kallithea/> accessed on:17.11.2020



**Table 3. Summary of the Findings**

<b>Re-structuring</b>	<b>Diyanet</b>	<b>Church of Greece</b>
<b>Re-organization</b>	Establishment of new general directorates in the central organization Opening of local family offices, youth centers	(Establishment of synodal committees to investigate modern social problems since the 90s) Transformation of Church affiliated units to NGO
<b>Content of the services</b>	Counseling services based on religious teachings- (a new service type between social work and religious service) The transfer of this new type of service from western Christianity and its institutionalization in accordance with the political aims	Particular attention to services for the fight against poverty and the integration of asylum seekers. The process of reinstitutionalization of social welfare services provided by the Church in an unsystematic way, adopting a Western perspective.
<b>Local Level</b>	Establishment of family bureaus in mufti offices Opening of centers for youth and families in city centers Transforming mosques into a living space by going beyond being places of worship	The parish as a traditional structure that filled the public social service gap.
<b>Human Resources</b>	Increase in the number of Diyanet 's Street level bureaucrats	experts and volunteers as well as church members
<b>Collaborations</b>	Ministries TDV Distant attitude to NGOs (cooperation on the condition that Diyanet is a supervisor)	Public institutions (ministries, municipalities...) European higher councils Other NGOs in Greece and Europe

Secondly, the types of services with which these organisations have mainly participated in the public sphere in recent years were examined. The content of social projects and services they have conducted are diverse. Diyanet, in recent years, has speeded up establishing an unmediated relationship with the society through "socially-oriented religious services," as Diyanet officials call. The main instrument of this new strategy has been guidance or counseling services, targeting different segments of society. These pastoral counseling services have been offered through centers established inside and outside the mosque. In other words, it aims to solve issues such as divorce, alcohol and substance use, and technology addiction, which are defined as social problems by the Diyanet, through counseling provided within the framework of artificial Islam. It has been observed that the case of pastoral counseling, which has a long history in the Western Church tradition, was transferred to Türkiye through the Diyanet personnel sent to Europe. Furthermore, TDV, a foundation with organic ties with Diyanet, provides social welfare services at the local level and conducts social aid campaigns worldwide. On the other hand,

especially after the severe economic crisis that Greece experienced in 2009, the church became more visible in the social arena. During this challenging process, he established soup kitchens in the city center where all those in need (orthodox or non-orthodox) could benefit. In addition, it delivers basic needs such as clothing, housing, or medical aid to those in need through church-affiliated organizations. In the interviews, it was observed that these organizations made an intense effort to solve the problems of refugees and their integration into Greek society.

Thirdly, the focus was on the local social activities of the Diyanet and the Church of Greece. The local units of both religious organizations have been the first step to strengthen relations with the society. In the case of Diyanet, efforts to turn mosques into a center of attraction for youth, children, and women with non-prayer activities (library, sports activities, etc.) within the scope of the "living mosque project" have gained momentum in recent years. On the other hand, aid activities for local needs are organized through TDV representatives in mufti offices.

I should state that I do not have data on direct reorganization at the local level. However, two interviewees emphasized the importance of the social functions of local Orthodox solidarity units, known as *microdiakonia*. When it comes to religion and social welfare in Greece, diocese and parishes are historically the first thing that usually comes to mind. Anastassiadis (2010:53-54) points out that the development of a network at the local level provides the church with a subordinate bureaucracy and staff to survive since this means an increase in the number of people who support the continuity and strengthening of the church in society. Therefore, it is clear that increasing the effectiveness of the church in the social domain, both in city centers and at the local level, would be a very strategic step for both state and the church during the neoliberal times.

Fourthly, the impact of the restructuring of the Diyanet and the Church of Greece in the public sphere on their human resources was analyzed. The restructuring efforts have had various consequences on the personnel structures of both organizations. As stated before, one of the main criticisms brought to Diyanet is the severe increase in the number of personnel. The expansion of the services in the social domain

inevitably leads to excessive growth in the volume of employment of Diyanet personnel and the emergence of new titles. In recent years, it is observed that Diyanet has pushed its employees to generate social projects to appeal to different social groups. At the same time, they are the executors of projects approved by Diyanet's central hierarchy. Undoubtedly, this is one of the most interesting consequences of Diyanet's new service understanding for staff compared to the past. Furthermore, this new perspective has reinforced the belief among Diyanet's top bureaucrats that the standard education of religious personnel is insufficient. Although there are many faculties of theology in Türkiye, in-service training was taken further and the Diyanet Academy was established. Like Diyanet, the Church of Greece has always been criticized since clerics receive their salaries from the state. However, today, the transformation of some church units into church-affiliated NGOs and the fact that the services do not have a religious nature have led to the employment of secular staff who have different professions and volunteers. Therefore, although the service area of the church has expanded, the number of religious personnel receiving salaries from the state may remain at a limited level.

The last but not least, the cooperation of these organisations with public institutions and non-governmental organisations in the provision of services to different social segments was discussed. It is seen that Diyanet has been in intensive cooperation with state institutions, especially in recent years, through regularly repeated protocols. However, it is understood that Diyanet's approach to the NGOs, especially after the failed coup attempt experienced in Türkiye in 2016, changed. Namely, the interviews gave the impression that Diyanet's cooperating with NGOs creates a reservation. Considering that many NGOs and foundations were closed in the post-coup period because they were related to the coup's organizers, this is not an unwarranted reservation. It is understood that Diyanet wants to be in a position to supervise the NGOs in which it will work with, rather than an equal cooperation. On the other hand, it is observed that the Church of Greece continues to cooperate with public institutions in the center and local levels. The church's active involvement in solving the social problems that deepened, especially with the economic crisis and the ensuing refugee influx, contributed to its presence in civil society, which is claimed to be weak compared to other European countries. Most importantly,

institutions affiliated with the church have been subject to the supervision of some international organizations to maintain their existence on the basis of the principles of transparency and accountability, which are the essential components of institutionalization.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

The final chapter of this thesis concisely answers the research questions posed for the purpose of this study and summarizes the key findings. It then addresses its contributions to the literature as well as the study's limitations.

In this thesis, I examine the practices of religious regulation in Türkiye and Greece. In doing so, I put the established religious institutions, the Turkish Diyanet and the Church of Greece, at the center of my research. Historically, these institutions have been both objects and agents of religious regulations. I focus on the relationship between the restructuring processes of these institutions in the public sphere and the new policies of religious regulation that emerged because of the transformations in Türkiye and Greece in the 2000s and 2010s. Based on the findings, I conclude that the restructuring of these institutions in the public sphere has increased their access to society and thus their capacity to guide society. In this sense, I argue that as a result of the restructuring, Diyanet and the Church of Greece have mostly responded to the needs of the Turkish and Greek states for religious regulation in the 21st century.

Before moving on to this discussion, I will first explain how I operationalize the multidimensional concept of religious regulation. The concept gained popularity in the 1990s with supply-side theory, which explains the changing demand for religion regarding the quality and quantity of religious institutions and services. In other words, in this theory, religious regulation is seen as one of the main determinants of the level of religious participation and vitality. In this thesis, I put the concept of religious regulation at the center of the study, which is considered an independent variable by theories that explain religious participation from the supply side. The literature review shows that the concept is mostly used in a narrow sense that equates

regulation with religious restrictions. Considering the particularities of the cases examined, in this study, I use the term religious regulation to refer to all the interventions and adjustments to restrict or favour a religion. These regulations can take various forms, including regulating religion's role in politics, religious institutions, clergy, practices, and other aspects of religion (Fox, 2019). Moreover, countries can regulate majority and minority religions. States can regulate religions for different purposes. For instance, Politicians concerned about the power of religion to mobilize society or autocratic governments wishing to limit components of civil culture, such as religion, may resort to religious regulation. Moreover, the countries which adopt a secular approach or hold anti-religious stance may restrict religion whereas the others may officially support one or more religions. It should be noted that, as Fox emphasizes, while this support can offer benefits to the favored religion, it often comes with the intention of exerting influence and control over its practices and teachings. That is, support often leads to the state's desire to shape religious affairs in line with its policies. (ibid.).

In this sense, Türkiye and Greece are both countries where the majority religion is supported in various forms due to cultural and political background and where religious restrictions are applied, including majority religion. This thesis aims to show how the major transformations of the 21st century have affected the politics of religious regulation in Türkiye and Greece. The religious regulation policies pursued in Türkiye from the early Republican period until the 2000s were based on two axes. The first was the negative religious regulation approach, based on the restriction of religious movements that could threaten the hegemony of the new state elites. The other was the support of Sunni Islam as the majority religion, as Muslim identity has been an integral part of the understanding of the Turkish state since the Ottoman times (Lord, 2018). In this sense, the Diyanet represented the state's power to control religious life, while at the same time, as part of Turkish public administration, it was an indicator of the favoring of the majority religion. In Greece, On the one hand, the majority religion, Orthodox Christianity, was promoted by the state, while religious restrictions were implemented, especially regarding religious minorities. The church, which is the institutional structure of the majority religion, has been subject to both state support and state control at the same time.

During the transition to the 21st century in Türkiye, the authoritarianisation tendencies of the long AKP rule, which has a political Islamist character, have been a turning point in terms of religious regulation policies in Türkiye. In this process, there has been a shift towards positive regulation policies in which the majority religion is more supported by the state. One of the main indicators of this trend is the excessive expansion of the Diyanet in terms of budget and the number of religious personnel. It can be suggested that the main reason for this is to create social ground for the ruling power to implement its long-term policies more easily and strengthen its hegemony. In Greece, the social chaos caused by Europeanization efforts and neoliberal economic policies seems to have created a gradual change in both the regulation of religious minorities and the favoring of majority religion. Again, we can observe this orientation through the diversified content of the church's services.

This study aimed to show how changes in religious regulation policies have affected the social functions and status of these institutions. Therefore, in this thesis, I have analyzed how the changes in religious regulation policies in Türkiye and Greece have been reflected in the established religious institutions of the Diyanet and the Church of Greece. My argument is that the restructuring of established religious institutions in the public sphere responds to the changing religious regulation needs of Turkish and Greek States in the 21st century. It should be noted that I used the term public sphere to refer to the whole of the sphere of worship or non-worship in which religious institutions engage in activities related to worldly affairs, such as social welfare services or spiritual counseling. To this end, I conducted a field study to elaborate the details of the restructuring. In-depth interviews were conducted with experts in Türkiye and Greece, and primary and secondary sources were used. The findings suggest that as a result of restructuring, these institutions have increased their access to society and, thus, their capacity to direct it. As a result, the social functions of these institutions have been redefined in line with changing religious regulation policies. However, their status vis-à-vis the state has remained largely unchanged.

One more time, in light of my findings, let us take a glance at the restructuring process and its results.

By restructuring Diyanet in the public sphere, I mean steps taken since the 2000s and especially after the 2010s to create a separate service area called «outside mosque services (camii dışı hizmetler) or socially-oriented religious services (sosyal içerikli din hizmetleri). Outside mosque correspond to places and moments where Diyanet personnel can reach different segments of society, such as hospitals, elderly and childcare centers, prisons, student dormitories, or charity organizations. In addition, the Diyanet has opened some offices and centers to attract people to whom it does not have mass access. It has also attempted to turn mosques into "living, vibrant" spaces.

Law No. 6002 amending the Law on the Establishment and Duties of the Presidency of Religious Affairs and Certain Laws No. 633 in 2010, was an important turning point. Reorganization at different levels has expanded the Diyanet's service area. New departments have been established to coordinate and manage social religious services in the central organization of the Diyanet. Offices for families have been opened in provincial, district, and mufti's offices. In addition, in some metropolitan areas, centers have been founded, physically separate from mosques and mufti offices. Although a relatively flexible mosque management procedure was followed before, we see that mosque management became centralized to a large extent after the July 15 coup attempt. Mosques have also been transformed into new living spaces for young people, children, and women. Non-worshipping activities (e.g., calligraphy and marbling courses) are held in some mosques. Moreover, through protocols with other public institutions, Diyanet personnel have begun to be employed in other public institutions, such as student dormitories, youth camps, and prisons, to provide socially-oriented religious services.

By means of the re-organization, Diyanet has been able to fulfill its mission of enlightening society on religious issues much more actively. The target audience of the Diyanet is no longer limited to citizens who come to the mosque to receive religious services or call the alo fatwa hotline to find answers to their religious questions. With its personnel assigned to family and youth centers or student dormitories, hospitals, or prisons, which have become widespread across the country, the Diyanet is now wherever citizens are. Moreover, mosques have been transformed into living spaces where especially young people and children can socialize.



The mission of enlightening the society on religious issues has expanded not only in space but also in content. The content of the services provided in these areas is spiritual counselling and guidance offered by Diyanet personnel to people who face the difficulties of daily and worldly life. In other words, in recent years, Diyanet has been providing counseling and guidance services based on religious teachings to different social segments such as women, youth, prisoners, refugees and addicts. It was observed that these services were adapted to Diyanet in line with the reports prepared by Diyanet personnel who were sent to Western European countries to research and monitor church services in the social spheres. In addition to these practices, many social projects were put into practice through Diyanet.

There were some early attempts to realize such a socially-oriented service area offered by Diyanet. However, the systematization of this new service area was only possible in 2010s due to the changing political environment in Türkiye. Of course, the implementation of such a service model required a reorganization of the Diyanet, a new human resource profile, the reorganization of mosques as well as outside mosques, and the ability of the Diyanet to cooperate with other public institutions to deliver these services. In short, all these efforts point to a comprehensive restructuring of Diyanet in the public sphere.

Within the scope of this new field of service, solutions to everyday problems that family members, youth, and many other groups of society find no way out of are provided in a religious context. The main purpose of these services is to provide family members, young people, and those who have lost their way with a worldview. Problems that threaten social cohesion, such as drug and alcohol addiction, divorce, suicide or the threat of radical Islam among asylum seekers are among the problems that these services aim to address. Thus, with reference to Moberg (1962), it can be said that the socialization and social control capacity of the institution is strengthened. Moreover, given that these services are provided by the state, religion is now used as a policy tool to solve public problems.

Another determinant of Diyanet's ability to reach out to different segments of society is its human resources. The growing number of services offered by Diyanet exposed

the need for new preachers, particularly women. They started to be employed not only in the units affiliated with the Diyanet but also in the ministries and public institutions with which the protocol was signed. Furthermore, the Diyanet Academy, which trains individuals to perform these services, has recently been established. In other words, in addition to the theology education provided in Turkish universities, Diyanet founded its own academy for in-service training. Moreover, many universities have opened "spiritual counseling and guidance" graduate programs for religious officials who will be employed in this field. Religious services with a social context have created both a new job description and a new profession. The human resource structure of Diyanet is redesigned in accordance with the requirements of this service. Religious officials are no longer only facilitators of worship, but also social service providers. As Ali Bardakoğlu, former President of Diyanet, stated, in the provision of these services, Diyanet personnel are expected to be opinion leaders, not civil servants (see ntv.com.tr, 2010). It is observed that many preparations have been made so far to meet this expectation.

In conclusion, the research findings show that Diyanet was restructured in line with the needs of the state. Moreover, it indicates that the capacity of Diyanet to access and guide society has increased after restructuring in the public sphere. The authoritarianization of the political regime, which has a religious character, strongly promotes the institutional organization of Sunni Islam as the majority religion. The findings indicate that the Diyanet was restructured in line with the need for a new understanding of religious regulation. As a result of the restructuring, the Diyanet has strengthened its capacity to ensure social control. Thus, it is able to work in a way that is compatible with the long-term goals of the hegemonic power and to ensure its continuity.

By restructuring the Church of Greece in the public sphere, I refer to the steps taken since 2000s and 2010s to systematize and institutionalize the social welfare services provided by the Church, which traditionally had a "transcendentalist" or "other-worldly" identity. Through the restructuring of the Church of Greece, I aimed to show that this process and the redefinition of the Church's social functions reflect the changing understanding of religious regulation in Greece.

There are three levels to the analysis of the Church's reorganization. First, it is understood that the developments in Greece in the 2000s and some of the current problems that have emerged in connection with them have created the need for a more up-to-date organization of the synodal committees, which are essential components of the traditional hierarchical structure of the Church. "Social Welfare and Benefits" (κοινωνικής προνοίας και ευποιΐας), has for many years been one of the synodal committees. This shows that the Church's emphasis on social welfare services has not suddenly emerged in recent years. However, since the early 2000s, special committees have been formed to deal with different social problems. This can be seen as a reflection of the church's endeavor to become more systematically involved in the field of social work. It should be noted that these committees are advisory.

Second, although I do not have data on reorganization at the local level, it is necessary to mention the social functions of local Orthodox solidarity units, known as *microdiakonia*. Since the field of social work in the Orthodox organization is not centrally organized as in the Catholic Church, local units are traditionally at the center of social solidarity (see Molokotos-Liederman, 2012). Historically, the church's welfare initiatives in Greece have been local rather than national (Fokas, 2010:183). Previous research has shown that dioceses and parishes, the local organizations of the church, have traditionally provided local social services in unsystematic and informal initiatives in areas where the state has not reached enough. Given the social tragedy that occurred during the economic crisis, increasing the church's influence in the social sphere, both in city centres and at the local level, seems to be a potential strategic step for both the state and the church in the neoliberal era.

The third is the reorganization of church-based organizations, which was the focus of my fieldwork in Greece. Church-based organizations such as KESO and Apostoli, which have been transformed into NGOs in recent years, are the main evidence of the church's Western-type institutionalization efforts in the field of social work. The NGOs interviewed in this study previously operated under the Holy Archdiocese of Athens, but in the years following the deep economic crisis in Greece in 2009, they

were organized as NGOs by the decision of the Church hierarchy. As some interviewees implied, this made it easier for church-affiliated NGOs to receive financial support from Europe. Following the restructuring process, the church's social welfare practices have become much more transparent and accountable than in the past, thanks to the monitoring of European funding agencies. On the other hand, it can be argued that the active involvement of Athens-based NGOs has largely redressed the imbalance between the Church's local and central social welfare services. During the fieldwork, it was observed that church-based NGOs predominantly employed lay professionals. In addition, many volunteers specialized in areas such as law, health, education, etc. also worked here. Therefore, it can be said that this workforce composition gave these services a much more secular and professional appearance.

In 2018, the church-state separation initiative was approved by Archbishop Ieronymos II, who was understood to support change but was shelved over the objections of the pro-traditional holy synod. Even if no progress has been made in this area, there has been a gradual change in church-state relations. By supporting the transformation of church-based units into NGOs, the church was reorganized in accordance with Western norms and became an institution capable of fundraising independently of the state. I believe this has reduced the church's dependence on the state while at the same time increasing its capacity to reach out to society.

The services offered by church-based organizations in Greece are very diverse, but each of them specializes in a particular group. These are the family (KESO), youth (NEOTITA), refugees (KSMP-ERP or now SYNYPARXIS-ERP), and vulnerable groups in general (Apostoli). It should be noted that, as can be seen in many other many other faith-based organizations and established religious institutions (including Diyanet), these organizations specialize in these areas for reasons such as "keeping the family institution alive" or "socializing youth with traditional values". In other words, the very *raison d'être* of these institutions was most likely to keep conservative values and institutions alive in the face of modernization. For example, as mentioned earlier, SYNYPARXIS-ERP, which today provides a wide range of services for asylum seekers arriving in Greece, is the successor to the Integration

Centre for Migrant Workers, which was established in 1978 as a service of the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece to provide support services to Greeks returning from the German-speaking countries of Western Europe. This support center dealt with social security issues as well as problems that arose during their return and reintegration into Greek society. It would not be an over-interpretation to associate the establishment of a unit for the integration of this group with the Church's mission to protect and strengthen the Greek identity blended with Orthodoxy. While re-instilling this identity in the newcomers, it would also protect the insiders from the cultural imperialism of the West. However, Greece's Europeanization efforts in the 2000s and the struggle against the economic crisis and the concerns over immigration in 2010s seem to have changed the priorities and methods of the church as well as the religious regulation needs of the Greek state. Church-based NGOs prioritize "poverty alleviation" and "regulation of religious minorities" in line with the needs of the state. In this context, it was observed that the church-based NGOs carried out comprehensive activities. In addition to providing social aid, such as food parcels, medicine, health services, clothing, etc., to those in need without discriminating between language and religion, these organizations also provide support, such as language training, vocational training, or legal counseling, to facilitate the employment of refugees with the aim of social integration. Thus, it contributes to social solidarity and cohesion by alleviating the costs of the state's economic policies. Furthermore, it provides social control through the regulation of minorities. In short, cooperation has been strengthened by working as the arm of the state in these two areas.

I need to clarify two points regarding this comparison. In Türkiye, the dynamics of religious regulation changed due to the struggle between religious and non-religious elite groups within the state, whereas in Greece, a member of the EU, an external institutional force (actors of the Europeanization process) paved the way for this change. The restructuring in the public sphere supports Güralp's thesis (2018) that the state, which has the power to control religious life, is no longer using the Diyanet to control or limit religious life but to bring religion to the prominence in political and social life in line with the demands of the new political power in Türkiye. In other words, while the state's influence on religious life in Türkiye continues, the Diyanet,

which was established in the early Republican period to control religious life, is today seen to promote religion in the public sphere.

In Greece, the process of Europeanization of the state and the social unrest caused by neoliberal policies has led the Church towards Western-oriented isomorphism despite the objections of traditionalists in the hierarchy. In other words, some criticized the establishment of Church-based NGOs and their provision of services towards worldly problems for the threat of the NGOisation of the Church. On the other hand, the changes in the church's organizational and functional structure seem to align with the needs of the state, which was weakened by the economic crisis and had difficulty in ensuring social cohesion. In this sense, it can be said that this change contributed to the continuation of the Byzantine tradition of *synallilia*, based on partnership between state and religion.

I have argued that new religious regulation policies have revealed the need for strongly established religious institutions in both countries that can regulate society as agents. As I have already mentioned, the restructuring of the public sphere seems to have increased the access of these institutions to society, making them more powerful social actors. However, it should be noted that the Diyanet still functions, as in the past, as an apparatus under the control of the state, although it functions as an agent influencing and guiding society through socially-oriented religious services. On the other hand, the Church of Greece enjoyed relative autonomy, especially after the end of the military junta. Although it has sometimes taken a stance against state policies on issues that fall within its sphere (such as the removal of the religion section from identity cards or the construction of a mosque in Athens), most of the time, because of the benefits it receives from the state, it has worked as an arm of the state. However, it can be stated that after the restructuring, church-based NGOs have created an autonomous space in which the church can organize in the field of civil society and benefit from European funds, and therefore move away from state regulation. In this sense, while I agree with Karagiannis (2009) that the church was constructed as a structurally weak institution in the modern Greek state, I think that the restructuring process was an important step in its strengthening.

In the Introduction, I summarized the potential contributions of this thesis to the literature in three ways. The first relates to the use of the concept of religious regulation. In this thesis, I focused on the determinants of this phenomenon, which is usually treated as an independent variable in analyses of religious participation and vitality. Thus, I was able to examine the phases of religious regulation in different spatial and historical contexts. Moreover, I conceptualized the concept of religious regulation, which is usually narrowly examined in the literature with the meaning of "religious restriction", in a broad sense and treated it as a set of multidimensional practices. Thus, through the same case, I was able to show how both religious favoritism and religious restriction mechanisms work at the same time. The second is related to the uniqueness of the cases and the way in which the issue was dealt with in this study. Indeed, the cases of Türkiye and Greece, with reference to Gorski (2003), allowed me to analyze the issue with its sociopolitical and religio-cultural dimensions. In other words, through these cases, I was able to reflect on both the relations between religious and non-religious elites and the determinants of different religious traditions and worldviews in the practices of religious regulation. Moreover, by linking the regulation of religion to the process of restructuring of established religious institutions, I have addressed a specific dimension of the issue (regulation of religious institutions) that has been relatively under-studied. The third and final contribution of the study concerns the research methodology. In the field of religious regulation, there are comprehensive studies that have attempted to generate macro data. However, the imperatives of these studies to "ensure measurability" sometimes lead to the invisibility of some differences between cases. In such a field, it can be said that this study using qualitative research methods on a small number of cases fills the gaps, at least in the cases of Türkiye and Greece.

This thesis has some limitations, as any academic study does. These limitations are mostly related to the data collection process. Firstly, it can be argued that the number of those interviewed is relatively small. The main reason for this is the fact that the research was carried out in specifically identified units and organizations of established religious institutions. Furthermore, the number of people I could reach was limited by the fact that church hierarchy in Greece generally cannot speak English or my Greek is not at a level to conduct interviews. However, the fact that

the interviews were quite long, comprehensive and rich in data helped me overcome this limitation.

I should also note that in Türkiye the interviews were conducted in the native language of both myself and the interviewee. This allowed me to obtain more detailed responses than in Greece.

Second, I conducted fieldwork in Greece with limited budget and time. I was unable to extend my fieldwork because of the lockdowns imposed by the COVID 19 pandemic in 2020. However, this limitation was largely overcome by selecting interviewees from among experts in the field, conducting in-depth interviews using semi-structured questions, and extensively supplementing primary data with newspaper reports, official documents, and secondary data.



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## APPENDICES

### A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ  
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



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11 ARALIK 2018

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (IAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Doç.Dr. Yılmaz ÜSTÜNER

Danışmanlığınızı yaptığımız Feyza Kalav İDRİSOĞLU "Türkiye'de Devlet Tarafından Sunulan Din Hizmetlerine İlişkin Alan Araştırması" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay 2018-SOS-208 protokol numarası ile araştırma yapması onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımla bilgilerinize sunarım.

Prof. Dr. Tülin GENÇÖZ

Başkan

Prof. Dr. Ayhan SOL

Üye

Prof. Dr. Ayhan Gürbüz DEMİR

Üye

Prof. Dr. Yaşar KÖNDAKÇI (4.)

Üye

Doç. Dr. Ali Emre TURGUT

Üye

Doç. Dr. Emre SELÇUK

Üye

Doç. Dr. Üyes Pinar KAYGAN

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## **B. CURRICULUM VITAE**

Feyza Kalav-İdrisođlu

### **EDUCATION**

2014 - 2023 Middle East Technical University, PhD

- Department of Political Science and Public Administration
- GPA: 3,94
- Thesis Title: Regulating Religion in Türkiye and Greece: A Comparative Analysis Through Restructuring Established Religious Institutions in Public Sphere

2010 - 2014 Middle East Technical University, M.S.

- Department of Political Science and Public Administration
- GPA: 3,79
- Thesis Title: Staffing Norms Practice in Turkish Public Administration: A Critical Evaluation

2004 - 2009 Gazi University, B.A.

- Department of Public Administration
- GPA: 3,38

### **ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT**

- Research Assistant in Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Çankırı Karatekin University (2009-2010)
- Research Assistant in Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Middle East Technical University (2010-2020)
- Research Assistant in Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Çankırı Karatekin University (2020-ongoing)

### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

- 2010 – 2020, Teaching Assistant, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Middle East Technical University, Organizational Theory (ADM 3208)

- 2014 – 2020, Teaching Assistant, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Middle East Technical University, Foundations of Social Research (ADM 2311)

### **RESEARCH INTERESTS**

- Public Policy (particularly on religious affairs, gender equality, children rights and animal welfare)
- Public Administration (institutional restructuring, transformation in public services, organizational theory, disaster management, staffing and labor process in public sector)
- Turkish Politics (Religious regulation and religious bureaucracy in Türkiye)

### **LANGUAGES**

- Turkish (native),
- English (advanced)
- Greek (intermediate)

### **PUBLICATIONS**

#### **ARTICLES**

- Üstüner, Yılmaz., & Kalav-İdrisoğlu, Feyza. (2014). Kamu Çalışma Etiği ve Neo-Taylorist Uygulamalar: Türk Kamu Sağlık Hizmetinde Performansa Dayalı Ücretlendirme Örneği (Ethics and Neo-Taylorist Practices in Public Administration: The Case of Pay for Performance in Turkish Public Health Service). *METU Studies in Development*, 41(2), 177– 200.

#### **CHAPTERS in BOOKS**

- Kalav-İdrisoğlu, Feyza. (2015). Kamu Emek Sürecinde Yeniden Yapılanma: Norm Kadro Uygulamaları (Restructuring in Public Labor Process: Staffing Norms Practices). In G. Yücesan-Özdemir (Ed.), *Rüzgâra Karşı- Emek Süreçleri ve Karşı Hegemonya Arayışları* (pp. 141–174). Ankara: Nota Bene Yayınları.

#### **CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

- Kalav-İdrisoğlu, Feyza (2019). The Convergence between Religion and Social Services: The Case of the Diyanet (Din ve Sosyal Hizmetlerin Yakınsaması: Diyanet Örneği). 2019 ECPR General Conference, Wrocław-Poland

- Kalav-İdrisoğlu, Feyza (2018). Potential and Limitations of Resilience Thinking in Solving Gender-Based Problems During the Times of Crisis: The Case of Türkiye. 2018 Congress of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences, Tunis-Tunisa
- Üstüner, Yılmaz & Kalav-İdrisoğlu, Feyza (2017). “Dijitalleşme ve Otomasyon Karşısında Kamu Yönetimi ve Kamu Bürokrasileri (Public Administration and Public Bureaucracies in the Face of Digitalization and Automation). 15. Uluslararası Kamu Yönetimi Forumu KAYFOR 15 (15th International Public Administration Forum), Suleyman Demirel University, Isparta- Türkiye
- Üstüner, Y. & Kalav-İdrisoğlu, Feyza. (2013, March) Kamu Çalışma Etiği ve Neo-Taylorist Uygulamalar: Performansa Dayalı Ücretlendirme Örneği (Ethics and Neo-Taylorist Practices in Public Administration: The Case of Pay for Performance in Turkish Public Health Service), II. Kamu Etiği Kongresi (2nd Public Ethics Conference), TODAİE, Ankara-Türkiye
- Kalav-İdrisoğlu, Feyza. (2013, December), Kamu Yönetiminde Norm Kadro Çalışmaları: Beklentiler ve Sonuçlar Üzerine Eleştirel Bir Değerlendirme (Staffing Norms Practices in Turkish Public Administration: A Critical Evaluation on Expectations and Consequences), 13. Ulusal Sosyal Bilimler Kongresi (13rd National Social Sciences Conference), METU, Ankara- Türkiye
- Kalav-İdrisoğlu, Feyza. & Üstüner, Yılmaz. (2015, October) Türkiye’de Kamu Hizmeti Çalışan Beklentileri ve Artan Profesyonelleşme Riskleri (Expectations of Public Employees in Türkiye and Increasing Risks of Professionalization), XIII. Kamu Yönetimi Forumu (KAYFOR 13) (13rd Public Administration Forum), Selçuk University, Konya-Türkiye

#### **CERTIFICATES & SEMINARS ATTENDED**

- Olympia Summer Academy 2017, Summer School, Nafplio-Greece, 09.07.2017-19.07.2017
- The National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, 2019 Summer Course in Modern Greek Language
- Impact Measurement & Management for the SDGs by Duke University (online course- in progress)

#### **GRANTS & AWARDS**

- Toni M. Cross - William D. E. Coulson Aegean Exchange Program 2019, Fellowship Grant for Ph.D. candidates by American Research Institute (ARIT)



## C. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu tez, Huntington'ın (1996: 158) ünlü eseri *Medeniyetler Çatışması*'nda belirttiği gibi coğrafi olarak Batı ile Doğu arasında yer alan, aynı zamanda Batı Hıristiyanlığının bittiği ve Ortodoks Hıristiyanlığı ile İslam'ın başladığı yerde bulunan iki komşu ülke olan Türkiye ve Yunanistan'da dinin düzenlenmesini (religious regulation) ele almaktadır<sup>158</sup>. Oldukça kapsamlı ve çok boyutlu olan konu, yerleşik dini kurumlar olan Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı (Diyanet) ve Yunanistan Kilisesi'nin kamusal alanda yeniden yapılandırılması çerçevesinde analiz edilecektir. Bu çalışma, dinin düzenlenmesine yönelik politika değişikliklerinin Diyanet ve Yunanistan Kilisesi'nin toplumsal işlevlerini ve statülerini nasıl etkilediğini göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu tezde, yerleşik dini kurumların kamusal alanda yeniden yapılandırılmalarının, 21. yüzyılda Türk ve Yunan Devletlerinin dinin düzenlenmesine yönelik değişen ihtiyaçlarına cevap verdiğini iddia ediyorum.

Bu çalışma aşağıdaki araştırma sorularını ele almaktadır:

- Türkiye ve Yunanistan'da 21. Yüzyılda (2000'ler ve 2010'larda) yaşanan siyasi ve ekonomik gelişmeler dinin düzenlenmesine ilişkin politika ve yaklaşımları nasıl etkilemiş veya değiştirmiştir?
- Dinin düzenlenmesine ilişkin değişimler yerleşik dini kurumların toplumsal işlevlerini ve statülerini nasıl etkilemiştir? Yerleşik dini kurumlar bu değişimlere nasıl ve ne ölçüde uyum sağlamıştır?
- Dini kurumların kamusal alanda yeniden yapılandırılması, devletlerin dinin düzenlenmesine ilişkin ihtiyaçlarına nasıl yanıt vermiştir?

### **Çalışmanın Tasarımı**

Bu tez altı ana bölümden oluşmaktadır. Birinci bölüm olan giriş, çalışmanın amacı, araştırma soruları, çalışmada analiz edilecek vakaların seçimi, araştırma metodolojisi ve çalışmanın literatüre katkısı ile başlamaktadır.

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<sup>158</sup> Huntington'ın bu ifadeleri Avrupa'nın coğrafi sınırlarını çizmek için kullandığı belirtilmelidir: "*Avrupa nerede biter? Avrupa, Batı Hıristiyanlığının bittiği, İslamın ve Ortodoksluğun başladığı coğrafyada biter.*"

İkinci bölüm kavramsal çerçeveye ayrılmıştır. Öncelikle bu çalışmada dinin düzenlenmesi/regülasyonu (religious regulation) kavramının nasıl operasyonel hale getirildiği tartışılmıştır ve kavramın detaylı analizi yapılmıştır. Bunu dinin düzenlenmesinde ve din-devlet ilişkisinin sınırlarının çizilmesinde etkili olan faktörler takip etmiştir. Bir sonraki kısımda dinin düzenlenmesi ile ilişkili çeşitli teorik yaklaşımlar sunulmaktadır. Bu bölümün son kısmı, dini kurumların dinin düzenlenmesinin hem nesnesi hem de öznesi olarak nasıl ikili bir işlev gördüğünü ortaya koymaktadır. Bu bölümde ayrıca kamusal alan kavramının bu tezde hangi bağlamda kullanıldığı da vurgulanmaktadır.

Üçüncü bölüm Türkiye'de dinin düzenlenmesine yönelik girişimlere ve bunların tarihsel süreç içerisindeki değişimine odaklanmaktadır. Türkiye'deki yerleşik din kurumu olan Diyanet'in dinin düzenlenmesindeki rolüne özel bir yer verilmektedir. Bu bölüm ikili bir dönemselleştirmeye dayanır. İlk bölümde erken Cumhuriyet döneminden 2000'li yıllara kadar dininin düzenlenmesine yönelik uygulamalar ele alınmaktadır. Bu bölümde, erken Cumhuriyet elitlerinin dinin düzenlenmesine yönelik anlayış, arkasındaki gerekçelerle birlikte sunulmaktadır. Türkiye'de dini kısıtlamaların (religious restrictions) ve iltimasın/kayırmacılığın (religious favoritism) eş zamanlı olarak nasıl işlediği tartışılmaktadır. İkinci dönem, İslamcı bir karaktere sahip olan AKP'nin 2002 yılında tek başına iktidar olması ve sonrasında Türkiye'de siyasi rejimin neoliberal otoriterlik yoluna girmesiyle devam etmektedir. Bu dönem dinin düzenlenmesi konusunda bazı süreklilik ve değişimleri içermektedir. Diğer bir deyişle bölüm, erken cumhuriyet dönemindeki dinin düzenlenmesi ilişkin eğilim ve uygulamaların, laik ve dini elitler arasındaki mücadele çerçevesinde nasıl değiştiğine dair genel bir çerçeve sunmaktadır. Diyanet'in yeni düzenleme politikalarına nasıl adapte edildiği de tartışılmaktadır.

Dördüncü bölüm, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndan kopmasından bu yana Yunanistan'da izlenen dinin düzenlenmesine yönelik politika ve uygulamalara ayrılmıştır. Bir önceki bölümde olduğu gibi, ülkedeki yerleşik din kurumu olan Yunanistan Kilisesi'nin devlet ile ilişkisine ve dinin düzenlenmesindeki işlevine özel önem verilmektedir. Bu bölüm de iki döneme ayrılmıştır. İlk bölüm Yunanistan'da din-devlet ilişkilerinin ana hatlarını ele almakta ve dini kısıtlamalar ve

iltimasın/kayırmacılığın temel göstergelerini tartışmaktadır. İkinci bölüm ise daha eklektiktir. Özellikle 2000'li yıllarda Avrupalılaşıma adımlarının ve özellikle 2009 yılında yaşanan derin ekonomik kriz sonrası uygulamaya konulan neoliberal ekonomi politikalarının dinin düzenlenmesinde nasıl zorunlu bir değişim yarattığını gösteriyorum. Bu bölüm ayrıca yoksulluk ve dini çeşitlilikle başa çıkmak için Kilise'nin toplumsal işlevinin nasıl yeniden tanımlandığını da göstermektedir.

Beşinci bölüm, Diyanet ve Yunanistan Kilisesi gibi yerleşik dini kurumların kamusal alanda yeniden yapılandırılmasını incelemektedir. Bu bölüm, yeniden yapılandırma süreçlerinin ve sonuçlarının daha iyi anlaşılmasını sağlayacak bir saha çalışmasına dayanmaktadır. Bu nedenle ilk olarak örneklem, veri toplama, sınırlılıklar ve veri analizi de dahil olmak üzere araştırma metodolojisinin temel unsurları sunulmaktadır. Bunu, hem Diyanet'in hem de Yunanistan Kilisesi'nin kamusal alanda yeniden yapılandırılmasına ilişkin bir açıklama takip etmektedir. Birincil ve ikincil kaynaklardan elde edilen verilerin saha çalışmasının bulgularını tamamladığı bu bölümde, yeniden yapılanma süreci, yeniden örgütlenme, hizmetlerin içeriği ve hedef kitlesi, yerel örgütlenmeler, insan kaynakları ve yerleşik dini kurumların paydaşlarıyla olan işbirlikleri açısından incelenmektedir.

Altıncı bölüm, bir önceki bölümde elde edilen bulgular çerçevesinde araştırma sorularını yanıtlamaktadır. Ayrıca bu bölümde, bu tezin literatüre katkısı ve çalışmanın sınırlılıkları da yer almaktadır.

### **Kavramın Operasyonelleştirilmesi**

Öncelikle dinin düzenlenmesi (religious regulation) kavramını açıklığa kavuşturmak gerekmektedir. Beckford ve Richardson (2007) din ve düzenleme analizinin iki taraflı olabileceğine işaret ederler. Analizin bir tarafı, dini öğretilerin ve kurumların içinde buldukları toplumdaki düşünce ve eylemleri düzenleme kapasitesine odaklanır. Bu tür bir sosyolojik analizde din bir düzenleme aracıdır. Analizin diğer tarafı ise dinin ya da dini kurumların dış askeri ya da siyasi kurumlar tarafından nasıl ve ne ölçüde düzenlendiğine odaklanır. Burada din, düzenlemenin nesnesidir (a.g.e., 396). Dinin düzenlenmesinin (religious regulation) kavramsallaştırması, analizin

ikinci yönüyle ilgili literatürden ortaya çıkmış olsa da, bu tezde de işaret edileceği üzere, dinin düzenlenmesi, dinin ve dini kurumların toplumu düzenleme kapasitesinden bağımsız değildir. Alanın önde gelen akademisyenlerinden Fox (2019), dinin düzenlenmesini, devletin çoğunluk dinleri de dahil olmak üzere ülkedeki tüm dinler üzerinde bir kısıtlama (restriction) veya kontrol (control) uygulaması olarak tanımlamaktadır. Kısıtlama, çeşitli biçimlerde dini engellemeyi amaçlarken, kontrol genellikle dinin desteklenmesiyle iç içe geçmektedir (a.g.e., 5, 19). İncelenen vakaların özelliklerini göz önünde bulundurarak, bu çalışmada dinin düzenlenmesi kavramını, bir dini kısıtlamak (religious restriction) veya desteklemek (religious favoritism) için yapılan tüm devlet müdahalelerini ve düzenlemelerini ifade etmek için kullanıyorum. Bu girişimlerin aynı zamanda yerleşik din kurumlarının toplumu düzenleme kapasitelerinden de faydalandığını belirtmem gerekir.

### **Vakaların Seçimi**

Öncelikle Türkiye ve Yunanistan örneklerini neden seçtiğime kısaca değinmem gerekir. Karşılaştırmalı araştırmanın birçok avantajı olmasına rağmen, vaka seçimine ilişkin endişeler genellikle kaçınılmazdır. Adam Przeworski'nin isabetli bir şekilde ifade ettiği gibi, "seçim konusunda endişelenmedikçe, yani her seferinde gözlemlerimizin nasıl üretildiğini sormadıkça iyi bir karşılaştırmalı araştırma yapamayız" (aktaran Ebbinghaus, 2005). Sosyal bilimler literatüründe Türkiye ve Yunanistan birçok yönden karşılaştırılmaktadır. Tarihsel ortaklıklar, kültürel yakınlıklar ve örtüşen bölgesel hedefler bu çalışmaların temelini oluşturmaktadır. Bazı karşılaştırmalı çalışmalar da doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak Türkiye ve Yunanistan'daki din ve devlet ilişkilerini incelemiştir. Örneğin, Beylunioğlu (2009) yüksek lisans tezinde Türkiye ve Yunanistan'daki din-devlet ilişkilerini, 2000 ve 2004 yıllarında her iki ülkede kimlik kartlarından din hanesinin kaldırılması ya da farklı bir dinin yazılması girişimleri üzerine ortaya çıkan tartışmalar üzerinden incelemiştir. Fabbe (2013), Yunanistan ve Türkiye'de devletin konsolidasyon süreçleri ile dini hoşgörünün kabulü arasındaki ilişkiyi geçmişten günümüze kronolojik olarak incelemiştir. Grigoriadis (2012) ise "Kutsal Sentez: Yunan ve Türk Milliyetçiliğine Dini Aşılama" adıyla Türkçeye de tercüme edilen çalışmasında Türk ve Yunan milliyetçiliğinin din ile nasıl harmanlandığını karşılaştırmalı olarak incelemiştir.

Bu çalışmada, vakaların seçiminde üç ana faktör etkili olmuştur. Bunlardan ilki, her iki ülkenin de dini alana devlet müdahalesi geleneğine sahip olmasıdır. Literatürde bu durum genellikle dinsel-kültürel karakterleri ve önceki imparatorluklardan devraldıkları mirasla açıklanmaktadır. Bu konuyu biraz daha detaylandıralım. Modern Türkiye ve Yunanistan yüzleri Batı'ya dönük iki ülke olmalarına rağmen, pek çok Batılı muadillerinden ayrıldıkları temel konu din-devlet bağı olmuştur. Din-devlet ilişkilerinin düzenlenmesine dair tartışmaların genel çerçevesini oluşturan sekülerleşme tezlerinin altında yatan temel varsayımlar bu ayrımı netleştirmektedir. Retoulas'ın (2011:374-375) altını çizdiği gibi, bu tezler Katolik-Protestan değerler üzerine inşa edilmiştir. Dolayısıyla, din ve devlet arasındaki ilişkiyi Batı sosyal ortamının teolojik-felsefi varsayımlarına göre tanımlayarak, aralarındaki düalist ilişkiyi evrensel bir gerçeklik olarak tasvir etmişlerdir. Türkiye ve Yunanistan'daki din-devlet ilişkileri, birbirleri arasındaki tüm farklılıklarına rağmen, Doğu geleneklerini yansıtmaktadır. Retoulas'a (2011) göre, din-devlet bağı Türkiye'de "İslami vahdet-i vücud (varlığın birliği) tasavvuf" değerleri üzerine inşa edilirken, Yunanistan'da "Ortodoks Hıristiyan" geleneğine dayanmaktadır. Bunları Katolik-Protestan gelenekten ayıran temel fark, seküler ve dini olan (dini hiyerarşi) arasındaki ilişkinin tekçi (monistik) doğasıdır. Başka bir deyişle, Batılı anlamda din-devlet düalizmine dayalı bir laiklik anlayışı bu vakalar için söz konusu değildir. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndan doğan modern Türk ve Yunan devletlerinde din ve devlet ilişkileri bu miras üzerine kurulmuştur. Ancak, esas olarak dünyevi olan ile kutsal olan arasındaki dini bağlara dayanan modern öncesi *synallilia* (işbirliği ve beraberlik), modernleşme sürecinde daha seküler bir içerik kazanmıştır (a.g.e.).

Bu örneklerin seçilmesini anlamlı kılan bir diğer faktör de hem Türkiye'nin hem de Yunanistan'ın çoğunluk dinlerini (sırasıyla Sunni İslam ve Ortodoks Hıristiyanlık) destekliyor olmasıdır. Yöntemler farklı olsa da, çoğunluk dinlerini destekleme arzusu, Türkiye ve Yunanistan'da dine yönelik düzenlemelerin temel nedenlerinden biridir. Devlet tarafından güçlü bir şekilde desteklenen bu dinler aynı zamanda giderek daha fazla devlete bağımlı hale gelmiştir. Bunun başlıca nedeni Türkiye'de devlet ile Sunni İslam ve Yunanistan'da Ortodoks Hıristiyanlık arasındaki tarihsel güçlü bağlardır. Başka bir deyişle, çoğunluk dinleri ulusal kimliğin önemli bir parçası olarak görüldüğünden ve bu milliyetçi-kutsal kimliğin toplumun

mobilizasyonundaki önemi nedeniyle, devletler hem Türkiye'de hem de Yunanistan'da ilk yıllardan beri bu dinleri tercih etmişlerdir. Grigoriadis (2012), dini modern, merkezileşmiş ve Batılılaşmış bir ulus-devlet kurmanın önünde bir engel olarak gören Türk ve Yunan liderlerin, bağımsızlık savaşları sırasında halk desteğini artırmak için dini sembollere başvurmak zorunda kaldıklarının altını çizmektedir. Ancak, ulus-devletlerin kurulması ve otokratik yönetimin pekiştirilmesinden sonra, dini kurumları devlete tabi kılmak için önemli girişimlerde bulunmuşlardır (a.g.e., 92). Ulus-devlet inşa sürecinin başında devlet elitlerinin sahip olduğu laiklik perspektifi hem Türk hem de Yunan toplumlarında çok az karşılık bulmuştur. Sonraki dönemde her iki ülkenin elitleri de ulusal kimliklerinin eksik parçasının din olduğunu fark ettiler. Kuruluş yıllarında izledikleri din politikasını terk ettiler. Sonuç olarak, Yunan olmanın Ortodoks Hıristiyanlıkla (Heleno-ortodoksluk) ve Türklüğün Sünni İslamla (Türk-İslam sentezi) harmanlandığı "kutsal sentezlere" yönelmişlerdir (a.g.e., 92-95).

Vakaların seçimindeki üçüncü faktör, hem Türkiye'de hem de Yunanistan'da yerleşik dini kurumların dinin düzenlenmesinin nesnesi olduğu gerçeğidir. Başka bir deyişle, dini kurumlar ve din adamları, ulus-devletin inşası sürecinden bu yana her iki ülkede de dinin düzenlenmesinin araçları olmuştur. Bu uygulamanın arkasında, her iki ülkenin de Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndan miras aldığı, din adamlarını ve onların toplumu harekete geçirme kapasitelerini kontrol etme ihtiyacının yattığı söylenebilir. Karahanoğulları (2017), din ve devlet arasındaki bağın, devlet inşası sürecinde tarafların "işbirliği anlaşması" (bir tür ortaklık) veya "ayrılık" kararına bağlı olarak farklı biçimler alabileceğine işaret etmektedir. Türkiye ve Yunanistan'ın devlet inşa süreçlerinde, din adamları ile bu ülkelerin bağımsızlık mücadelelerini destekleyen devlet elitleri arasında zımnî bir anlaşma olduğu tartışılabilir. Örneğin, modern Türkiye'nin inşası sırasında, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndan devralınan dini kurum (ulema) yeni cumhuriyet rejimini desteklemiş ve yönetici elitlerle uzlaşmıştır (Lord, 2018: 24) . Bu aktörler, 1924 yılında kamu yönetiminin bir parçası olarak kurulan Diyanet'in çatısı altında toplanmıştır. Böylece modern Türkiye'de din (1801-1905 yılları arasında Fransa'da olduğu gibi) bir kamu hizmeti olarak örgütlenmiştir (Karahanoğulları, 2017). Dolayısıyla, Diyanet bünyesinde devlet memuruna

dönüştürülen dini aktörler yeni ulus devlet tarafından absorbe edilmişlerdir (Lord, 2018: 24).

Diyanet, bir yandan devletin din üzerindeki kontrolünün bir aracı olurken, diğer yandan da devletin çoğunluk dinine ayrıcalık tanıdığına açık bir göstergesi olmuştur. Diyanet en başından beri bir devlet tüzel kişiliğidir. Bu nedenle Diyanet tarafından sunulan hizmetler kamu personeli olarak istihdam edilen din görevlileri tarafından sağlanmaktadır. Ancak özellikle son 20 yılda birçok bakanlığı aşan bütçesi, personel sayısındaki hızlı artış ve genişleyen hizmet yelpazesi bu sözleşmenin niteliğindeki değişimin bir yansıması olarak okunabilir.

Yunan Devleti'nin inşası sırasında Ortodoks Rumların bağlı olduğu İstanbul Ekümenik Patrikhanesi'nin üst düzey din adamları, Yunan devrimcilerin bağımsızlık mücadelesine mesafeli yaklaşmıştır. Hatta devrimcilerin Osmanlı Devleti ile uzlaşmasını desteklemişlerdir (Clogg, 2014: 28; Milas, 1994: 143, Stamatopoulos, 2014: 36-37). Öte yandan, yeni kurulan Yunan devletinin ilk valisi Kapodostrias bu talebi açıkça reddederken, Yunan ulusunu bağımsız bir devlet altında birleştirmek isteyen devrim yanlısı Korais, ulusal bir kilisenin birleştirici gücünü vurgulamış ve devrim yanlısı Ortodoks din adamlarına çağrıda bulunmuştur (a.g.e., 38-39). Sonuç olarak, 1833 yılında devlet elitleri ve din adamlarından oluşan bir komisyon tarafından Yunanistan Kilisesi kurulmuştur. Ancak, Stamatopoulos'un da altını çizdiği gibi, patrikhaneye bağlılık ve devlete boyun eğme, yeni Kilisenin aynı anda ele alması gereken iki ayrı konuydu (a.g.e., 35).

Yunanistan Kilisesi nihayet 1850 yılında İstanbul Ekümenik Patrikhanesi'nden bağımsızlığını ilan etti, ancak bu kez yeni Yunan devletine bağımlı hale geldi. Örneğin kral, Kutsal Sinodu oluşturan beş üyeyi onaylama hakkına sahipti. Ayrıca kutsal sinodun toplantılarına da katılırdı (Veković, 2020: 39). Demokrasiye geçişin bir parçası olarak, Yunanistan Kilisesi'nin özerkliği, 1975 Anayasası ve kilisenin "kamu hukuku tüzel kişiliği" (Νομικό πρόσωπο Δημοσίου Δικαίου, N.P.D.D) olduğunu ilan eden Kilise Tüzüğü (590/1977) ile bir dereceye kadar restore edilmiştir. Bu kavram Yunan hukuk sisteminde kamu yararına hizmet etmek üzere kamu yetkisini kullanmaya yetkili, kendi kendini yöneten kamu kuruluşlarını

tanımlamak için kullanılmaktadır. Ayrıca, bu statü mali kaynaklar ve bazı vergi ayrıcalıklarının yanı sıra devlet kontrolünü de beraberinde getirmiştir. Ayrıca, Yunanistan'daki din görevlilerine devlet tarafından ödeme yapılmaktadır. Başka bir deyişle, din görevlileri kamu personeli olarak istihdam edilmektedir. Günümüzde Kilise bazı konularda devletten özerklik elde etmiş olsa da ortaklığın devam ettiği pek çok hayati konu bulunmaktadır.

Dolayısıyla, Karagiannis'in (2009:142) de belirttiği gibi, hem Türkiye'de hem de Yunanistan'da devlet kontrolü eski güçlü dini kurumların hareket alanını daraltmaya ve sınırlandırmaya yönelmiş ve nihayetinde başarılı olmuştur. Aynı zamanda, bedeli devletin gölgesinde kalmak olsa da Diyanet ve Yunanistan Kilisesi'nin birçok ayrıcalığa sahip olduğu açıktır.

### **Türkiye ve Yunanistan'da Dinin Düzenlenmesi**

Türk ve Yunan devletleri 2000'li yıllardan itibaren ve özellikle 2010'lu yıllarda büyük dönüşümler yaşamışlardır. Bu dönüşümleri doğru analiz edebilmek için, dinin düzenlenmesine ilişkin tutum ve uygulamaları ulus devlet inşası sürecinden itibaren takip etmek gerekmektedir.

Türkiye'de tek parti döneminde dinin düzenlenmesine ilişkin uygulamalar iki hat üzerinden işlemiştir. Birinci hat "dinin negatif düzenlenmesi" (Reardon, 2019)" ya da başka bir deyişle dini kısıtlama uygulamalarını içermektedir. Bu amaçla eğitim, hukuk ve sosyal yardım gibi toplumsal kurumlar kapsamlı bir şekilde dinden ayrıştırılmış, 1925 yılında çıkarılan Takrir-i Sükûn Kanunu ile tekke ve zaviyeler gibi dini örgütlenmeler kapatılmış ve irtica ile bağlantılı oldukları iddiasıyla bazı partilerin siyasi yaşamlarına son verilmiştir. Bu düzenleyici uygulamalar, tek parti iktidarının hegemonyasına ve erken cumhuriyetin modernleşme ideallerine yönelik potansiyel tehditleri en aza indirmek için hayata geçirilmiştir. Modern Türkiye'deki din-devlet tartışmalarında erken Cumhuriyet dönemi, bu dinin düzenlenmesine ilişkin uygulamaları nedeniyle "agresif sekülerizm"(assertive secularism) (Kuru, 2007) veya "hasmane ayrışma" (hostile separation) (Casanova, 2009) olarak anılmaktadır.



Erken Cumhuriyet döneminde dinin düzenlenmesinin diğer eksenini devlet iltiması ya da kayırmacılığıdır (state favoritism). Bu bağlamda, Osmanlı ulemasının yeni devlet elitleriyle işbirliği yapmasıyla resmi bir İslam anlayışı geliştirildi. Resmi İslam bir kamu yönetimi örgütü olarak Diyanet altında örgütlenirken, diğerleri yasadışı ilan edilerek yeraltına itildi. Başka bir deyişle, bu süreçte Türkiye'de devlet ve yerleşik dini kurum iç içe geçmiştir. Bu, devletin dini kayırmacılık yoluyla kontrol etmesinin açık bir örneğidir. Türkiye'de "laik devlet" tezini eleştirenler, erken Cumhuriyet dönemi de dahil olmak üzere Müslüman kimliğinin devlet anlayışının ayrılmaz bir parçası olduğunu (Lord, 2018) ve bu dönemdeki düzenleyici uygulamaların İslam karşıtı olmaktan uzak olduğunu savunmaktadır. Buna göre, dini düzenleme girişimleri, modernleştirilmiş ve millileştirilmiş dini kayırmayı veya ayrıcalıklı kılmayı içeriyordu (Lewis, 1968; Retoulas, 2011).

İslamcı partilerin kapatılması, siyasi yasaklar ve kamusal alanda dini sembollerin kullanılması (üniversitelerde başörtüsü olayları) gibi krizler 2000'lere kadar devam etmiştir. Hiçbir zaman yasal olarak tanınmamış olmalarına rağmen, popüler İslam'ın unsurları olarak kabul edilen tarikatlar ve dini cemaatler devlet tarafından görmezden gelinmiş ve fiili olarak varlıklarını sürdürmüşlerdir. Kamusal alandaki görünürlükleri 1980 darbesinden bu yana artmıştır (Yıldırım, 2019).

Öte yandan, devlet çoğunluk dini (majority religion) daha yoğun bir şekilde desteklemeye devam etmiştir. Bu eğilimin bir yansıması da din eğitimi alanında görülmüştür. Din derslerinin 1940'ların sonlarından itibaren müfredata dahil edilmesi, 1950'den itibaren İmam Hatip Okullarının yeniden açılması, sonraki yıllarda sayılarının hızla artması ve buna paralel olarak ilahiyat fakültelerinin açılması gibi girişimler bunun örnekleridir. Ayrıca, 1970'lerde sistematik bir ideoloji olarak sunulan Türk-İslam sentezi devlet politikalarını şekillendirmeye başlamıştır (Grigoriadis, 2012). Buna ek olarak, bir kamu kurumu olan Diyanet 1961 yılında anayasallaşmış ve 1965 tarihli 633 sayılı Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Kuruluş ve Görevleri Hakkında Kanun ile görev alanı genişletilmiştir. Görece düşük olan bütçesi 1990'ların ilk yarısında artmış ancak "post modern darbe" olarak adlandırılan 28 Şubat 1998 sürecinden sonra tekrar azaltılmıştır. Başka bir deyişle, dinin düzenlenmesinin bir ayağı zaman içinde gerilerken, diğeri "büyük ölçüde" konsolide edilmiş olarak devam etmiştir.

2002 yılında İslami bir karakteri olan AKP'nin iktidara gelmesi ve uzun iktidarı boyunca siyasi rejimin otoriterleşme eğilimine girmesi, Türkiye'de din-devlet bağı açısından yeni bir dönemin başlangıcı olmuştur. Bu süreçte laik bürokrasi ile İslamcı siyaset arasındaki ikilik, ikincisi lehine sona ermiştir. Eğitim ve sosyal yardım gibi sosyal kurumlarda de-sekülerleşme süreci hızlanmıştır. Resmi din ile popüler İslam arasındaki denge yeniden sağlanmıştır. Diyanet, personel, bütçe ve ilerleyen bölümlerde daha ayrıntılı olarak tartışılacağı üzere- hizmet yelpazesi açısından muazzam büyüklüğe sahip bir kurum haline gelmiştir. Bu bölümdeki tartışmaların da gösterdiği gibi, devletin dinin örgütlenmesindeki rolü ve çoğunluk dini ile bağları güçlenmiştir.

Öztürk (2019: 94) Kemalist elitlerin dinin kamusal yaşamdaki görünürlüğüne kısıtlama eğilimlerinin altını çizer. Öte yandan AKP, dini kamusal alanda daha görünür kılmayı sağlayacak düzenlemeler yapmaktadır. Neoliberal otoriterliğin pekişmesi, dini sembollerin ve kabullerin toplumsal yaşamı ve kurumları şekillendirme kapasitesini artırmış görünürken, çoğunluk dini olan Sünni İslam'ın kamusal alandaki varlığına yönelik kısıtlamalar azalmıştır. Din, ulusal kimliğin ayrılmaz bir parçası haline gelmiştir.

Özetle, 2000'lerden sonra Türkiye'de dinin düzenlenmesine ilişkin bazı sayfalar kapanırken, yenileri açılmıştır. Daha önce de belirttiğim gibi, otoriterleşme süreci dinin düzenlenmesi açısından yeni ihtiyaçlar yaratmıştır. Hem Erken Cumhuriyet kadroları hem de AKP hükümeti dini alanı düzenlemeye yönelik politikalarına başvurmuştur. Başka bir deyişle, modern Türkiye'de devletin dini alana müdahalesi ve devlet-din bağı temelde aynı kaldı. Ancak, kullanılan düzenleme teknikleri 2000'lerden ve özellikle 2010'lardan bu yana belirgin biçimde değişmiştir. Otokratik rejimlerde dinin düzenlenmesini tartışan Reardon'a (2019) atıfla, bu değişim erken Cumhuriyet kadrolarının dinin negatif düzenlenmesi anlayışından AKP hükümetinin pozitif düzenleme mekanizmalarına geçişi olarak yorumlanabilir. Pozitif düzenleme, devletin dinle ilgili konularda daha destekleyici olduğu anlamına gelmektedir. Yeni bir düzenleme politikasına ihtiyaç duyulmasının iki nedeni vardır. Bunlardan biri, şaşırtıcı olmayan bir şekilde, AKP'nin siyasal İslamcı karakteridir. Diğeri ise otoriter bir hükümetin hegemonik gücünü pekiştirmek amacıyla liderin uzun vadeli hedeflerini desteklemek için örgütlü dinin gücünü kullanmasıdır (ibid:9).

Ortodoks Hristiyanlığın resmi din olduğu Yunanistan'da dini alanı düzenlemeye yönelik yaklaşım ve uygulamalar tarihsel olarak dini kayırmacılık ve dini kısıtlamalar olmak üzere iki yönlü olmuştur. Daha açık bir ifadeyle, bir yandan çoğunluk dini olan Ortodoks Hristiyanlık devlet tarafından desteklenirken, diğer yandan özellikle dini azınlıkları ilgilendiren konularda dini kısıtlama politikaları uygulanmıştır. Bu tespite ek olarak, Kilise'nin dinin düzenlenmesindeki rolü ve konumunun çok daha karmaşık olduğunu bir kez daha vurgulamakta fayda vardır. Bir yandan Kilise'nin ayrıcalıklı konumu ülkenin anayasası tarafından tanınırken, diğer yandan Kilise modern Yunanistan'ın kuruluşundan bu yana seküler otoritenin gölgesinde kalmıştır.

Yapılan bir araştırmaya göre Yunanistan, Avrupa ülkeleri arasında dini kayırmacılığın en yüksek olduğu ülkedir (bkz. Pew Research Center, 2019: 123). Yunanistan Anayasası'nın 3. Maddesi, Ortodoks Hristiyanlığın ülkede hâkim din (prevailing religion) olduğunu ilan etmekte ve Yunanistan Kilisesi'ne anayasal statü vermektedir. Kilise "kamu hukuku tüzel kişiliğine" sahiptir. Yunan devleti, yıllık 200 milyon Avro olduğu tahmin edilen din adamı maaşlarının finansmanı, din adamlarının dini ve mesleki eğitimi ve okullarda din eğitimi alanlarında Yunanistan Kilisesi'ni sübvansede etmeye devam etmektedir (Office of International Religious Freedom, 2023). Kilise Tüzüğü'ne göre Kilise, gençlerin eğitimi, orduda dini hizmetlerin sağlanması, koruma altındakilerin bakımı gibi ortak çıkarları ilgilendiren konularda devletle işbirliği yapmaktadır.

Çoğunluk dinine yönelik iltimasın çeşitli nedenleri vardır. Bu bölümde bu nedenleri göstermeye çalıştım. Şimdi tekrar özetleyeyim. Ortodoks Hristiyanlık Yunan kültürünün ayrılmaz bir parçası olarak kabul edilmektedir. Geçmişte sol partiler, kilise ve devletin ayrılmasını kurumsal olarak desteklemeseler bile, ulus ve kilise arasındaki kültürel birliğin önemini vurgulamışlardır (Prodromou, 1993). Ayrıca, kilise kendi yetki alanına giren konularda bazen hükümetlerle ters düşse de, çoğu zaman devlet politikalarını meşrulaştırabilmiştir. Kilisenin 1967-1974 yılları arasında askeri cunta rejiminin anti-komünist propagandasına verdiği destek (Veković, 2020) veya hükümetin uyguladığı neoliberal kemer sıkma politikalarının teolojik söylemlerle meşrulaştırılması (Kessareas, 2019) buna örnek olarak gösterilebilir. Son

olarak, Yunanistan'da Kilise, Katolik-Protestan geleneğe kıyasla aşkınıcı yönünü her zaman ön planda tutmuş olsa da, görece zayıf bir sivil toplum yapısına sahip olan Yunanistan'da Kilise, özellikle cemaat düzeyinde sosyal refah hizmetleri aracılığıyla kamu yararına katkıda bulunan en önemli aktörlerden biri olmuştur.

Daha önce de belirtildiği gibi, madalyonun diğer yüzünde dini kısıtlamalar bulunmaktadır. Yunanistan, son yıllarda Avrupa İnsan Hakları Mahkemesi (AİHM) raporlarında dini azınlıkların haklarına yönelik kısıtlama ve ihlallerden en sık bahsedilen ülkelerden biri olmuştur (Markoviti, 2019). Bu kısıtlamalara örnek olarak Trakya'daki Müslüman azınlığın müftülerinin hükümet tarafından atanması, okullarda din derslerinin muaf tutulmasındaki zorluklar ve nadiren uygulansa da anayasada yer alan din değiştirme yasağı (ABD Dışişleri Bakanlığı, 2022), dini azınlık gruplarının yasal statüsü, ibadet özgürlüğü ve ibadethanelerin kurulması gösterilebilir.

Kısıtlamalar azınlık dinleriyle sınırlı değildir. Yukarıda da belirtildiği gibi, Kilise'nin düzenlenmesi, devlet kayırmacılığı ile dinin devlet tarafından kontrolü arasındaki ilişkiyi açıkça ortaya koyan bir vaka olduğu için ayrı bir parantezi hak etmektedir. Bavyera döneminde devletin Yunanistan Otosefal Kilisesi'ni kurması, devletin ulus-devlet oluşum sürecinde Kilise'nin manevi gücünden faydalanma ve kilise hiyerarşisini kontrol etme arzusundan kaynaklanmıştır. Mitralaxis (2017b), devlet ve kilise arasındaki eşitsiz ilişkiye en başından beri dikkat çekmektedir. "Yunanistan'ın otosefal Kilisesi'nin Yunan Devleti ile olan ilişkisinin, doğal olarak farklı ve bağımsız iki kurum/kuruluş arasındaki etkileşim ve karşılıklı etki ilişkisi olmadığını, daha ziyade yaratıcı ve yaratım, kullanıcı ve araç, çerçeve ve içerik arasındaki bir ilişki olduğunu" iddia etmektedir (a.g.e., 166). Özellikle askeri darbenin sona ermesi ve 1970'lerin sonunda demokratik restorasyonun başlamasından bu yana Kilise'nin özerkliğini sağlamaya yönelik önemli yasal düzenlemeler yapılmış olsa da, devletin Kilise üzerindeki hiyerarşik üstünlüğü hiçbir zaman tamamen sona ermemiştir. Her ne kadar adaylar Kilise hiyerarşisi tarafından önerilse de, Yunanistan Cumhurbaşkanı resmi olarak hala Kilise'nin tüm piskoposlarını atama yetkisine sahiptir. Yunan hükümeti ayrıca kilisenin tüzüğünü değiştirme ve tüzüğe uymayan sinodları (kilise konseyleri) askıya alma yetkisine de sahiptir (Fox, 2018: 154). Ayrıca devlet, dini

alanı "Eğitim ve Din İşleri Bakanlığı" aracılığıyla da düzenlemektedir. Bakanlığın din işlerine ilişkin görevleri, Yunanistan'da devletin yalnızca çoğunluk dininin yönetiminde değil, aynı zamanda azınlık dinlerinin düzenlenmesinde de baş aktör olduğunu göstermektedir. Bakanlığın görev alanı, din eğitiminden dini personelle ilgili konulara kadar uzanan geniş bir yelpazeyi kapsamaktadır.

Öte yandan, Koliopoulos & Veremis'in altını çizdiği gibi, Yunan Devleti'nin Kiliseye ve çoğunluk dinine tanıdığı ayrıcalıklar vardır. Örneğin, Kiliseye ülkenin ulusal kalkınmasında önemli bir rol atfedilmiştir ve bağımsızlık savaşından bu yana kilise Yunan milliyetçiliğinin ve kültürünün ayrılmaz bir parçası olarak sunulmuştur. Kiliseye bağlı din adamları devlet memuru statüsündedir. Ayrıca daha önce de belirtildiği gibi Ortodoks Hristiyanlık Yunanistan'da hakim olan dindir (prevailing religion). Anayasa din değiştirmeyi yasaklayarak Ortodoksluğu koruma altına almaktadır. Bu ayrıcalıklar Yunanistan Kilisesi'ni amaçlanandan daha muhafazakar bir örgüt haline getirirken, kilisenin Yunanistan'ın AB üyeliğinin gerektirdiği yapısal değişikliklere direnmesine de yol açmıştı (Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002: 148-149).

2000'li yıllardaki Avrupa entegrasyon süreci ve 2010'lu yıllardaki neoliberal kemer sıkma politikaları, Yunanistan'da dini alana yönelik düzenlemelerin güncellenmesine yönelik bir ihtiyaç yaratmış görünmektedir. Bunlardan ilki azınlık dinlerinin düzenlenmesiyle ilgilidir. 1990'lardan sonra Sovyet ülkelerinden ve 2000'lerde özellikle Orta Doğu'dan gelen göçmenler, oldukça homojen bir nüfusa sahip olan Yunanistan'da kaçınılmaz olarak dini çeşitliliğin artmasına neden olmuştur. Öte yandan 2009 yılında yapılan bir araştırma, ülkedeki toplumsal düşmanlığın diğer Avrupa ülkelerine kıyasla oldukça yüksek olduğunu göstermiştir (Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, 2009: 22, 25). Aynı zamanda, özellikle ekonomik krizden sonra, aşırı sağcı siyasi parti Altın Şafak daha görünür hale gelmiştir. Ülkenin sosyal uyumu tehdit eden bu gelişmelerin, Avrupa Birliği üyesi olan Yunanistan'ı azınlıklara yönelik hükümet politikalarında güncellemeler yapmaya zorladığı anlaşılmaktadır. Nispeten yeni bir çalışma, dini kısıtlama oranının diğer Avrupa ülkelerine kıyasla hala yüksek olduğunu gösterse de, araştırmalar Yunanistan'ın 2007-2017 yılları arasında dini kısıtlama oranının azaldığı birkaç Avrupa ülkesinden biri olduğunu göstermektedir (bkz. Pew Research Center, 2019: 94).

İkincisi ise Kilise'nin düzenlenmesi ile ilgilidir. 2009'daki ekonomik kriz ve ardından neoliberal kemer sıkma politikaları nedeniyle yoksulluğun derinleşmesi, toplumsal huzursuzluğun artmasına yol açtı. Devletin kamu refahı hizmetlerinin sağlanmasında kaçınılmaz olarak gerilemesi ve Yunanistan'da güçlü bir sivil toplum geleneğinin olmaması, bu alanda deneyimli bir kurum olan Kilise için yeni bir alan açmıştır. Bu durum, kilisenin meşruiyetini yenilemesine ve kamu yararını sağlayabilecek alternatif bir aktör olarak devlet karşısındaki konumunu güçlendirmesine olanak sağladı.

### **Diyanet ve Yunanistan Kilisesi'nin Kamusal Alanda Yeniden Yapılandırılmaları**

Türkiye ve Yunanistan'da 2000'li ve 2010'lu yıllarda yerleşik din kurumlarının kamusal alanda yeniden yapılandırılmasına yönelik bir dizi adım atılmıştır. Bu süreçte her iki kurum da daha dünyevi sorunlara ve toplum odaklı hizmetlere yönelmiş, merkezi ve yerel düzeyde<sup>159</sup> yeniden örgütlenme sürecine girmiş, personel yapısını hizmetlerinin niteliğine göre güncellemiş ve paydaşlarıyla işbirlikleri kurmuştur. Kamusal alan terimini, dini kurumların sosyal refah hizmetleri veya manevi danışmanlık gibi dünyevi işlerle ilgili faaliyetlerde bulunduğu ibadethane veya ibadethane dışı alanların bütünü olarak işlevselleştirdiğimi belirtmek gerekir.

Diyanet'in kamusal alanda yeniden yapılandırılmasıyla, 2000'li ve özellikle 2010'lu yıllarda "cami dışı hizmetler veya sosyal odaklı din hizmetleri" olarak adlandırılan ayrı bir hizmet alanı oluşturmak için atılan adımları kastediyorum.

Yunanistan Kilisesi'nin kamusal alanda yeniden yapılandırılmasıyla, geleneksel olarak "aşkınıcı" veya "öte-dünyacı" bir kimliğe sahip olan Kilise tarafından sağlanan sosyal refah hizmetlerinin sistematikleştirilmesi ve kurumsallaştırılması için 2000'li ve 2010'lu yıllarda atılan adımlara atıfta bulunuyorum.

### **Araştırma Yöntemi**

Yukarıda da belirtildiği gibi, kamusal alanda yerleşik dini kurumların yeniden yapılandırılmasının 21. yüzyılda Türk ve Yunan Devletlerinin dinin düzenlenmesine

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<sup>159</sup> Bu tespit Türkiye örneği için yapılmıştır.

yönelik deęişen ihtiyalarına cevap verdięini iddia ediyorum. Bu amala, yeniden yapılandırma süreci ile yeni düzenlemelere duyulan ihtiyaç arasındaki iliřkiye odaklanıyorum. Bu iliřkiyi gösterebilmek amacıyla 2018 ve 2019 yıllarında Türkiye ve Yunanistan'da derinlemesine uzman mülakatları gerçekleştirerek bu vakalara ilişkin birincil verileri topladım. Bu alıřmaya bařladığımda her iki kurumun da öteki dünyaya yönelik hizmetlerden ziyade dünyevi hayatla ilgili hizmetlere yöneldięi dikkatimi çekmiřti. Bu amala Diyanet'in bazı birimlerinde ve özellikle Yunanistan Kilisesi'ne baęlı kuruluşlarda bir yeniden yapılanma olduęunu gözlemledim. Dolayısıyla saha alıřmamı bu birim ve kuruluşlarla sınırlı tuttum. Diyanet'teki görüşmeciler bir başkan yardımcısı ve Din Hizmetleri Genel Müdürlüğü'ne baęlı dört daire başkanından oluşurken, Yunanistan'daki görüşmeler, kilise hiyerarřisinden görüşmecilerin yanı sıra kilise temelli sivil toplum örgütlerinin uzman ve yöneticileriyle gerçekleştirildi. Yarı yapılandırılmış mülakat sorularımı, yeniden yapılanmanın ana eksenleri olarak gördüğüm ve ek veriye ihtiyaç duyduğum beř konu çerçevesinde oluřturdum: Yeniden örgütlenme, birimlerin hizmet içerikleri, yerel faaliyetler, insan kaynakları yapıları ve dięer paydařlarla işbirlikleri. Ayrıca saha alıřmasından elde ettiğim verileri, her iki kurumdan elde ettiğim belgeler/yayımlar, resmi protokoller ve online platformlarda Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı ve Yunanistan Kilisesi ile ilgili ıkan haberlerle tamamladım ve güçlendirdim.

### **Bulgular ve Tartıřma**

Yukarıda belirttiğim gibi, yerleřik din kurumlarının yeniden yapılandırılmalarına ilişkin bulgularımı beř ana bařlık řeklinde sınıflandırdım. Bunlar yeniden örgütlenme, hizmet içerikleri, yerel düzeydeki gelişmeler, insan kaynakları ve paydařlarla olan iş birlikleridir. Bu bağlamda her iki yerleřik din kurumunun yeniden yapılandırılmasına ilişkin elde ettiğim bulgular řu řekildedir:

2000'li yıllardan itibaren Diyanet'in topluma doğrudan erişimini güçlendiren bir takım adımlar atılmış ve 2010 yılında ıkarılan 633 sayılı Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Kuruluş ve Görevleri Hakkında Kanun ile Bazı Kanunlarda deęişiklik yapan 6002 sayılı Kanun bu eğilimi güçlendiren önemli bir dönüm noktası olmuřtur.

Farklı düzeylerdeki yeniden yapılanma hizmet alanını genişletmiştir. Diyanet'in merkez teşkilatında sosyal din hizmetlerini koordine etmek ve yönetmek üzere yeni birimler kurulmuştur. İl, ilçe ve müftülüklerde ailelere yönelik bürolar açılmıştır. Ayrıca, kimi büyükşehirlerde camilerden ve müftülüklerden fiziksel olarak ayrı olacak şekilde Diyanet'e bağlı gençlik merkezleri açılmıştır. Daha önce görece esnek bir cami yönetimi usulü izlenirken, 15 Temmuz başarısız darbe girişiminden sonra cami yönetiminin büyük ölçüde merkezileştiği görülmektedir. Camiler aynı zamanda gençler, çocuklar ve kadınlar için yeni yaşam alanlarına dönüştürülmüştür. Bazı camilerde ibadet dışı faaliyetler (örneğin hat ve ebru kursları) düzenlenmektedir. Ayrıca, diğer kamu kurumlarıyla yapılan protokoller aracılığıyla, Diyanet personeli öğrenci yurtları, gençlik kampları ve cezaevleri gibi diğer kamu kurumlarında sosyal odaklı din hizmetleri sunmak üzere görevlendirilmeye başlanmıştır.

Böylece Diyanet, toplumu dini konularda aydınlatma misyonunu çok daha aktif bir şekilde yerine getirebilmektedir. Diyanet'in hedef kitlesi artık sadece camiye gelip dini hizmet alan ya da alo fetva hattını arayıp dini sorularına cevap arayan vatandaşlarla sınırlı değildir. Ülke genelinde yaygınlaşan aile ve gençlik merkezleri ya da öğrenci yurtları, hastaneler ya da cezaevlerinde görevlendirilen personeliyle Diyanet artık vatandaşın olduğu her yerde faaliyet göstermektedir. Ayrıca camiler, özellikle gençlerin ve çocukların sosyalleşebileceği yaşam alanlarına dönüştürülmüştür.

Toplumu dini konularda aydınlatma misyonu sadece mekân olarak değil içerik olarak da genişlemiştir. Bu alanlarda verilen hizmetlerin içeriğini, günlük ve dünyevi hayatın zorluklarıyla karşılaşan kişilere Diyanet personeli tarafından sunulan manevi danışmanlık ve rehberlik hizmetleri oluşturmaktadır. Başka bir deyişle, Diyanet son yıllarda kadınlar, gençler, mahkûmlar, mülteciler ve bağımlılar gibi farklı toplumsal kesimlere dini öğretilere dayalı danışmanlık ve rehberlik hizmetleri sunmaktadır. Bu hizmetlerin, sosyal alanlardaki kilise hizmetlerini araştırmak ve izlemek üzere Batı Avrupa ülkelerine gönderilen Diyanet personelinin hazırladığı raporlar doğrultusunda Diyanet'e uyarlandığı gözlemlenmiştir Bu uygulamaların yanı sıra Diyanet aracılığıyla birçok sosyal proje de hayata geçirilmeye devam etmektedir.



Diyanet tarafından sunulan bu tür bir sosyal odaklı hizmet alanını hayata geçirmek için bazı erken girişimler olmuştur. Ancak bu yeni hizmet alanının sistematik hale getirilmesi, Türkiye'de değişen siyasi ortam nedeniyle ancak 2010'lu yıllarda mümkün olabilmiştir. Elbette böyle bir hizmet modelinin hayata geçirilmesi Diyanet'in yeniden yapılanmasını, yeni bir insan kaynağı profilini, camilerin yanı sıra cami dışı kurumların da yeniden örgütlenmesini ve Diyanet'in bu hizmetleri sunabilmek için diğer kamu kurumlarıyla işbirliği yapabilmesini gerektirmiştir. Kısacası, tüm bu çabalar Diyanet'in kamusal alanda kapsamlı bir şekilde yeniden yapılandırılmasına işaret etmektedir.

Bu yeni hizmet alanı kapsamında aile bireylerinin, gençlerin ve toplumun diğer birçok kesiminin içinden çıkamadığı gündelik sorunlara dini bağlamda çözümler sunulmaktadır. Bu hizmetlerin temel amacı, aile bireylerine, gençlere ve “yolunu kaybetmiş olanlara” bir dünya görüşü kazandırmaktır. Uyuşturucu ve alkol bağımlılığı, boşanma, intihar ya da sığınmacılar arasındaki radikal İslam tehdidi gibi sosyal uyumu tehdit eden sorunlar bu hizmetlerin ele almayı amaçladığı sorunlar arasındadır. Böylece, Moberg'e (1962) atıfla, kurumun sosyalleşme ve sosyal kontrol kapasitesinin güçlendirildiği söylenebilir. Dahası, bu hizmetlerin devlet tarafından sağlandığı düşünüldüğünde, din artık kamusal sorunların çözümünde bir politika aracı olarak kullanılmaktadır.

Diyanet'in toplumun farklı kesimlerine ulaşabilmesinin bir diğer belirleyicisi de sahip olduğu insan kaynağıdır. Diyanet'in sunduğu hizmetlerin sayısının artması, özellikle kadınlar olmak üzere yeni vaizlere ihtiyaç duyulmasına yol açmıştır. Bu kişiler sadece Diyanet'e bağlı birimlerde değil, protokol imzalanan bakanlık ve kamu kurumlarında da istihdam edilmeye başlanmıştır. Ayrıca bu hizmetleri yerine getirecek bireyleri yetiştiren Diyanet Akademisi de yakın zamanda kurulmuştur. Başka bir deyişle, Türkiye'deki üniversitelerde verilen ilahiyat eğitimine ek olarak Diyanet, hizmet içi eğitim için kendi akademisini kurmuştur. Ayrıca birçok üniversitede bu alanda istihdam edilecek din görevlileri için "manevi danışmanlık ve rehberlik" yüksek lisans programları açılmıştır. Sosyal içerikli din hizmetleri hem yeni bir iş tanımı hem de yeni bir meslek oluşturmuştur. Diyanet'in insan kaynakları yapısı bu hizmetin gereklerine uygun olarak yeniden dizayn edilmektedir. Din

görevlileri artık sadece ibadet eden değil, aynı zamanda sosyal hizmet sunan kişilerdir. Eski Diyanet İşleri Başkanı Ali Bardakoğlu'nun da belirttiği gibi, bu hizmetlerin sunumunda Diyanet personelinin memur değil kanaat önderi olması beklenmektedir (bkz. ntv.com.tr, 2010). Bu beklentinin karşılanması için bugüne kadar pek çok düzenlemenin yapıldığı görülmektedir.

Sonuç olarak, araştırma bulguları Diyanet'in 21. yy'da devletin ihtiyaçları doğrultusunda yeniden yapılandırıldığını göstermektedir. Dahası, kamusal alandaki yeniden yapılanma sonrasında Diyanet'in topluma erişme ve yönlendirme kapasitesinin arttığına işaret ediyor. Dini bir karaktere sahip olan siyasi rejimin otoriterleşmesi, çoğunluk dini olarak Sünni İslam'ın kurumsal örgütlenmesini güçlü bir şekilde teşvik etmektedir. Bulgular dinin alanın düzenlenmesine yönelik ortaya çıkan ihtiyaçların Diyanet'in yeniden yapılandırılmasına neden olduğuna işaret ediyor. Yeniden yapılandırma sonucunda Diyanet toplumsal kontrolü sağlama kapasitesini güçlendirmiştir. Böylece toplumu hegemonik iktidarın uzun vadeli hedefleriyle uyumlu ve onun sürekliliğini sağlamaya yönelik bir şekilde çalışmaktadır.

Yunanistan Kilisesi'ne ilişkin bulgular ise şu şekildedir. İlk olarak, 2000'li yıllarda Yunanistan'da yaşanan gelişmeler ve bunlara bağlı olarak ortaya çıkan bazı güncel sorunların, sinodal komitelerin daha güncel bir şekilde organize edilmesi ihtiyacını doğurduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Kilise'nin geleneksel hiyerarşik yapısının unsurları. "Sosyal Refah ve Yardımlar" (κοινωνικής προνοίας και ευποιίας), uzun yıllar boyunca sinodal komitelerden biri olmuştur. Bu da Kilise'nin sosyal refah hizmetlerine verdiği önemin son yıllarda aniden ortaya çıkmadığını göstermektedir. Ancak 2000'li yılların başından bu yana farklı sosyal sorunlarla ilgilenmek üzere özel komiteler oluşturulmuştur. Bu durum, kilisenin sosyal hizmet alanına daha sistematik bir şekilde dahil olma çabasının bir yansıması olarak görülebilir. Bu komitelerin tavsiye niteliğinde olduğu unutulmamalıdır.

İkinci olarak, yerel düzeyde doğrudan yeniden örgütlenme konusunda elimde veri olmadığını belirtmeliyim. Ancak görüştüğüm iki kişi, mikrodiyakonya olarak bilinen yerel Ortodoks dayanışma birimlerinin sosyal işlevlerinin önemini vurgulamıştır.

Yunanistan'da din ve sosyal refah söz konusu olduğunda, tarihsel olarak genellikle ilk akla gelen piskoposluk ve cemaatlerdir. Anastassiadis (2010:53-54), yerel düzeyde bir ağın geliştirilmesinin kiliseye hayatta kalması için alt bir bürokrasi ve personel sağladığını, çünkü bunun kilisenin toplumdaki sürekliliğini ve güçlenmesini destekleyen insanların sayısında artış anlamına geldiğini belirtmektedir. Ekonomik kriz döneminde ortaya çıkan toplumsal trajedi göz önüne alındığında, hem kent merkezlerinde hem de yerel düzeyde kilisenin toplumsal alandaki etkinliğini artırmak, neoliberal dönemde hem devlet hem de kilise için çok stratejik bir adım olarak görünmektedir.

Üçüncüsü ise Yunanistan'daki saha çalışmamın odak noktası olan kilise temelli kuruluşların yeniden örgütlenmesidir. Son yıllarda STK'lara dönüşen KESO ve Apostoli gibi kilise temelli kuruluşlar, kilisenin sosyal hizmet alanındaki Batı tipi kurumsallaşma çabalarının başlıca kanıtlarıdır. Bu çalışmada görüşülen STK'lar daha önce Atina Başpiskoposluğuna bağlı olarak faaliyet göstermiş, ancak 2009 yılında Yunanistan'da yaşanan derin ekonomik krizi takip eden yıllarda Kilise hiyerarşisinin kararıyla STK olarak örgütlenmişlerdir. Bazı görüşmecilerin de ima ettiği gibi, bu durum kiliseye bağlı STK'ların Avrupa'dan mali destek almasını kolaylaştırmıştır. Yeniden yapılanma sürecinin ardından kilisenin sosyal yardım faaliyetleri, Avrupa fon ajanslarının denetimi sayesinde geçmişe kıyasla çok daha şeffaf ve hesap verebilir hale gelmiştir. Öte yandan, Atina merkezli STK'ların aktif katılımının Kilise'nin yerel ve merkezi sosyal yardım hizmetleri arasındaki dengesizliği büyük ölçüde giderdiği söylenebilir. Saha çalışması sırasında kilise temelli STK'ların ağırlıklı olarak meslektan olmayan profesyonelleri istihdam ettiği gözlemlenmiştir. Ayrıca hukuk, sağlık, eğitim vb. alanlarda uzmanlaşmış çok sayıda gönüllü de burada çalışmıştır. Dolayısıyla bu işgücü kompozisyonunun bu hizmetlere çok daha seküler ve profesyonel bir görünüm kazandırdığı söylenebilir.

2018 yılında kilise-devlet ayrılığı girişimi, değişimi desteklediği anlaşılan Başpiskopos Ieronymos II tarafından onaylanmış ancak gelenek yanlısı kutsal sinodun itirazları üzerine rafa kaldırılmıştır. Bu alanda bir ilerleme kaydedilmemiş olsa da kilise-devlet ilişkilerinde kademeli bir değişim yaşanmıştır. Kilise temelli birimlerin STK'lara dönüşmesi desteklenerek kilise Batı normlarına uygun olarak

yeniden örgütlendi ve devletten bağımsız olarak kaynak yaratabilen bir kurum haline geldi. Bu durumun kilisenin devlete olan bağımlılığını azaltırken aynı zamanda topluma ulaşma kapasitesini de artırdığını düşünüyorum.

Yunanistan'daki kilise temelli STK'lar tarafından sunulan hizmetler çok çeşitlidir. Her biri bir ya da birden çok sosyal gruba yönelik hizmetlerde uzmanlaşmıştır. Bunlar aile (KESO), gençlik (NEOTITA), mülteciler (KSMP-ERP veya şimdi SYNYPARXIS-ERP) gibi hassas gruplardır (Apostoli). Diğer birçok inanç temelli kuruluşta ve yerleşik dini kurumlarda (Diyanet dahil) görülebileceği gibi, bu kuruluşların "aile kurumunu canlı tutmak" veya "gençleri geleneksel değerlerle sosyalleştirmek" gibi nedenlerle bu alanlarda uzmanlaştıklarını belirtmek gerekir. Başka bir deyişle, bu kurumların varlık nedeni büyük olasılıkla modernleşme karşısında muhafazakâr değerleri ve kurumları canlı tutmaktır.

Başka bir deyişle, bu kurumların varlık nedeni büyük olasılıkla modernleşme karşısında muhafazakâr değerleri ve kurumları canlı tutmaktır. Örneğin, daha önce de belirtildiği gibi, bugün Yunanistan'a gelen sığınmacılara geniş bir yelpazede hizmet sunan SYNYPARXIS-ERP, 1978 yılında Yunanistan Kilisesi Kutsal Sinodu'nun bir hizmeti olarak Batı Avrupa'nın Almanca konuşulan ülkelerinden dönen Yunanlılara destek hizmetleri sağlamak üzere kurulan Göçmen İşçiler Entegrasyon Merkezi'nin halefidir. Bu destek merkezi, sosyal güvenlik konularının yanı sıra geri dönüşleri ve Yunan toplumuna yeniden entegrasyonları sırasında ortaya çıkan sorunlarla da ilgilenmiştir. Bu grubun entegrasyonu için bir birim kurulmasını Kilise'nin Ortodokslukla harmanlanmış Yunan kimliğini koruma ve güçlendirme misyonuyla ilişkilendirmek aşırı bir yorum olmayacaktır. Yeni gelenlere bu kimliği yeniden aşılarken, içeridekileri de Batı'nın kültürel emperyalizminden koruyacaktı. Ancak Yunanistan'ın 2000'li yıllardaki Avrupalılaşıma çabaları ve 2010'lu yıllarda ekonomik krizle mücadele ve göç kaygıları, Yunan Devleti'nin dini alanı düzenlemede yeni bir yaklaşıma olan ihtiyacının yanı sıra Kilisenin önceliklerini ve yöntemlerini de değiştirmiş görünüyor.

Kilise temelli STK'lar devletin ihtiyaçları doğrultusunda "yoksulluğun azaltılması" ve "dini azınlıkların düzenlenmesi" konularına öncelik vermektedir. Bu bağlamda

kilise temelli STK'ların kapsamlı faaliyetler yürüttüğü gözlemlenmiştir. Bu kuruluşlar, dil ve din ayrımı gözetmeksizin ihtiyaç sahiplerine gıda kolisi, ilaç, sağlık hizmetleri, giyim vb. sosyal yardımlarda bulunmanın yanı sıra, toplumsal entegrasyon amacıyla mültecilerin istihdamını kolaylaştırmak için dil eğitimi, mesleki eğitim veya hukuki danışmanlık gibi destekler de sağlamaktadır. Böylece devletin ekonomi politikalarının maliyetlerini hafifleterek toplumsal dayanışma ve uyuma katkıda bulunuyor. Ayrıca, azınlıkların düzenlenmesi yoluyla sosyal kontrol sağlamaktadır. Kısacası, bu iki alanda devletin kolu olarak çalışarak işbirliği güçlendirilmiştir.

Bulgular, yeniden yapılanmanın bir sonucu olarak bu kurumların topluma erişimlerinin ve dolayısıyla toplumu yönlendirme kapasitelerinin arttığını göstermektedir. Sonuç olarak, bu kurumların toplumsal işlevleri dinin düzenlenmesine ilişkin ortaya çıkan yeni ihtiyaçlar ve politikalar doğrultusunda yeniden tanımlanmıştır. Ancak devlet karşısındaki statüleri büyük ölçüde değişmemiştir. Diğer bir deyişle her iki kurum da devletlerin dini alanı düzenleme eğilimlerine uygun olarak hizalanmaktadırlar. Yani devlet ile aralarında düalizme dayalı olmayan hiyerarşik bir ilişki söz konusudur.

Bu karşılaştırmayla ilgili iki noktayı açıklığa kavuşturmam gerekiyor. Türkiye'de dinin düzenlenmesine ilişkin tutum ve dinamikler devlet içindeki seküler ve dindar elit gruplar arasındaki mücadele nedeniyle değişirken, AB üyesi Yunanistan'da bu değişimin önünü açan dışsal bir kurumsal güç (Avrupalılaştırma sürecinin aktörleri) olmuştur. Kamusal alandaki yeniden yapılanma, Gülalp'in (2018) dini hayatı kontrol etme gücüne sahip olan devletin artık Diyanet'i dini hayatı kontrol etmek ya da sınırlandırmak için değil, Türkiye'deki yeni siyasi iktidarın talepleri doğrultusunda dini siyasi ve toplumsal hayatta ön plana çıkarmak için kullandığı tezini desteklemektedir. Başka bir deyişle, Türkiye'de devletin dini hayat üzerindeki etkisi devam ederken, erken Cumhuriyet döneminde dini hayatı kontrol etmek için kurulan Diyanet'in bugün dini kamusal alanda teşvik ettiği görülmektedir.

Yunanistan'da devletin Avrupalılaştırma süreci ve neoliberal politikaların yol açtığı toplumsal huzursuzluk, hiyerarşideki gelenekçilerin itirazlarına rağmen Kilise'yi Batı

odaklı izomorfizme yönelmiştir. Diğer bir deyişle, Kilise merkezli STK'ların kurulmasını ve dünyevi sorunlara yönelik hizmetler sunmasını Kilise'nin STK'laşması tehdidi nedeniyle eleştirenler olmuştur. Öte yandan, kilisenin örgütsel ve işlevsel yapısındaki değişikliklerin, ekonomik kriz nedeniyle zayıflayan ve toplumsal uyumu sağlamakta zorlanan devletin ihtiyaçlarıyla örtüştüğü görülmektedir. Bu anlamda, bu değişimin din ve devlet arasındaki ortaklığa dayanan Bizans *synallilia* geleneğinin devamına katkıda bulunduğu söylenebilir.

Dinin düzenlenmesine yönelik yeni yaklaşım ve politikaların, her iki ülkede de toplumu özne olarak düzenleyebilecek güçlü dini kurumlara olan ihtiyacı ortaya çıkardığını ileri sürdüm. Daha önce de belirttiğim gibi, kamusal alanın yeniden yapılandırılması bu kurumların topluma erişimini artırmış ve onları daha güçlü toplumsal aktörler haline getirmiş görünmektedir. Bununla birlikte, Diyanet'in geçmişte olduğu gibi hala devletin kontrolünde bir aygıt olarak işlev gördüğünü, ancak sosyal içerikli din hizmetleri aracılığıyla toplumu etkileyen ve yönlendiren bir aktör olarak işlev gördüğünü belirtmek gerekir.

Öte yandan Yunanistan Kilisesi, özellikle askeri cuntanın sona ermesinden sonra göreceli bir özerkliğe sahip olmuştur. Zaman zaman kendi alanına giren konularda devlet politikalarına karşı bir duruş sergilemiş olsa da (kimlik kartlarından din hanesinin kaldırılması ya da Atina'da bir cami inşa edilmesi gibi) çoğu zaman devletten aldığı yardımlar nedeniyle devletin bir kolu gibi çalışmıştır. Ancak yeniden yapılanma sonrasında kilise temelli STK'ların kilisenin sivil toplum alanında örgütlenebileceği ve Avrupa fonlarından yararlanabileceği özerk bir alan yarattığı ve dolayısıyla devletin etki alanından kısmen de olsa uzaklaştığı söylenebilir. Bu anlamda, Karagiannis'in (2009) kilisenin modern Yunan devletinde yapısal olarak zayıf bir kurum olarak inşa edildiği görüşüne katılmakla birlikte, yeniden yapılandırma sürecinin kilisenin güçlenmesinde önemli bir adım olduğunu düşünüyorum.

### **Literatüre Katkı ve Sınırlılıklar**

Bu çalışmanın literatüre üç şekilde katkı sağlaması beklenmektedir. Bunlardan ilki dinin düzenlenmesi kavramının kullanımıyla ilgilidir. Bu tezde, dini katılım ve

canlılık analizlerinde genellikle bağımsız bir değişken olarak ele alınan bu olgunun belirleyicilerine odaklandım. Böylece dinin düzenlenmesinin farklı mekânsal ve tarihsel bağlamlarda geçirdiği evreleri inceleyebildim. Ayrıca, literatürde genellikle "dini kısıtlama" anlamıyla dar bir şekilde incelenen dinin düzenlenmesi kavramını geniş anlamda kavramsallaştırdım ve çok boyutlu bir pratikler bütünü olarak ele aldım. Böylece aynı vaka üzerinden hem dini iltimas hem de dini kısıtlama mekanizmalarının aynı anda nasıl işlediğini gösterebildim.

İkincisi, vakaların özgünlüğü ve konunun bu çalışmada ele alınış biçimiyle ilgilidir. Gerçekten de Türkiye ve Yunanistan vakaları, Gorski'ye (2003: 110) referansla, meseleyi sosyopolitik ve dinsel-kültürel boyutlarıyla analiz etmemi sağladı. Başka bir deyişle, bu vakalar aracılığıyla hem dindar ve dindar olmayan elitler arasındaki ilişkiler hem de farklı dini geleneklerin ve dünya görüşlerinin dinin düzenlenmesine ilişkin uygulamaların belirleyicileri üzerine düşünebildim. Dahası, dinin düzenlenmesini yerleşik dini kurumların yeniden yapılandırılması süreciyle ilişkilendirerek, konunun nispeten az çalışılmış belirli bir boyutunu (dini kurumların düzenlenmesi) ele aldım.

Çalışmanın üçüncü ve son katkısı ise araştırma metodolojisi ile ilgilidir. Dinin düzenlenmesine ilişkin literatürde makro veri üretmeye çalışan kapsamlı çalışmalar mevcuttur. Ancak bu çalışmaların "ölçülebilirliği sağlama" zorunlulukları kimi zaman vakalar arasındaki bazı farklılıkların görünmez olmasına yol açmaktadır. Böyle bir alanda, az sayıda vaka üzerinde nitel araştırma yöntemlerini kullanan bu çalışmanın, en azından Türkiye ve Yunanistan örneklerinde bu boşluğu doldurduğu söylenebilir.

Her akademik çalışmada olduğu gibi bu tezin de bazı sınırlılıkları bulunmaktadır. Bu sınırlılıklar çoğunlukla veri toplama süreciyle ilgilidir. İlk olarak, görüşülen kişi sayısının görece az olduğu söylenebilir. Bunun temel nedeni, araştırmanın yerleşik dini kurumların özel olarak belirlenmiş birim ve organizasyonlarında gerçekleştirilmiş olmasıdır. Ayrıca, Yunanistan'daki kilise hiyerarşisinin genellikle İngilizce bilmemesi ve aynı şekilde benim Yunanca dil bilgimin görüşme yapabilecek düzeyde olmaması ulaşabildiğim kişi sayısını sınırlandırmıştır. Ancak

görüşmelerin oldukça uzun, kapsamlı ve veri açısından zengin olması bu sınırlamanın üstesinden gelmeme yardımcı oldu. Türkiye'de görüşmelerin hem benim hem de görüşülen kişinin ana dilinde yapıldığını da belirtmeliyim. Bu nedenle Diyanet sahasında Yunanistan'a kıyasla daha detaylı yanıtlar aldığımı söylemem gerekir.

İkincisi, Yunanistan'da saha çalışmasını sınırlı bütçe (her ne kadar burs almış olsam da) ve zamanla yürüttüm. COVID 19 pandemisinin 2020'de getirdiği sokağa çıkma yasakları nedeniyle saha çalışmamı genişletemedim. Ancak bu sınırlılık, görüşülen kişilerin alandaki uzmanlar arasından seçilmesi, yarı yapılandırılmış sorularla derinlemesine mülakatlar yapılması ve birincil verilerin gazete haberleri, resmi belgeler ve ikincil verilerle kapsamlı bir şekilde desteklenmesiyle büyük ölçüde aşılmıştır.



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